

GENERAL ENGLISH

Time Allowed : Three Hours

Maximum Marks : 100

QUESTION PAPER SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS

Please read each of the following instructions carefully before attempting questions.

There are **SIX** questions and all are to be attempted.

The number of marks carried by a question / part is indicated against it.

Answers must be written in **ENGLISH** only.

Candidates are required to write clear, legible and concise answers and to adhere to word limits, wherever indicated. Failure to adhere to word limits may be penalized.

Any page or portion of the page left blank in the Question-cum-Answer Booklet must be clearly struck off.

1. Write an essay on any *one* of the following topics in about 800 words : 30
- (a) Can the Reservation Policy ensure social justice ?
 - (b) Responsibility of news media in India
 - (c) Free speech as a democratic right
 - (d) Hazards of pollution and possible solutions
 - (e) Representation of women in Indian cinema

2. Make a précis of the following passage in about one-third of the original length, using your own words : 30

Indians are known for jealously preserving their cultural identity. They continue to cling to their norms of endogamy, marital stability and family solidarity, kin orientation, religion and mother tongue. They are always nostalgic about Indian food and their women tend to stick to their lovely *saris*.

As for the mechanisms of their cultural preservation, mention must be made of temples and gurdwaras, practice of *keertan* and *akhand path*, audio cassettes of devotional songs, video cassettes of *Ramayan* and *Mahabharat*, festivals and functions, and ethnic associations and organisations. What is more, even picnics provide occasions to reinforce old cultural practices. For instance, I was truly astonished to see *antakshari* (a verbal game in which the last letter of the verse recited by one participant has to be used as the starting letter of the verse by another participant) played in Sanskrit hymns in a picnic of Indians in Salt Lake City in USA.

Overseas Indians adhere to their traditional culture so ostensibly that at times it appears that they are more Indian in their cultural orientations and practices than resident Indians in India. Take, for instance, the Sikhs who are quick to take to modern ways in India but they tend to be rather orthodox abroad. Even those Indians who couldn't care less for their culture in India become quite observant of it in foreign lands.

Why do Indians get so faithful to their culture in foreign lands while at home they seem to favour Western culture ? Several explanations come to mind. One, that they find in their culture a defence mechanism against a sense of insecurity in alien settings. Two, that they might be banking on their culture as a compensatory mechanism for the loss of status in foreign lands. Three, maybe there is something in the Indian culture — perhaps its adhesive quality — that accounts for it. Four, maybe it is a sense of pride of belonging to one of the oldest cultures of the world that makes them so reverent to it. Fifth, it may well be so because the immigrants get stuck to their conception of Indian culture of the time when they had left India and remain blissfully unaware of the changes it has undergone since then.

As important as it is, the question of cultural identity of overseas Indians needs careful scrutiny. It involves several issues. The first is the issue of how Indians abroad perceive their self-identity. Do they view themselves as Indians or as Punjabis, Gujaratis, etc. ? In other words, do they identify themselves in terms of pan-Indian identity or in terms of a parochial ethnic category. According to Fisher (1980) Indians have difficulty in organising as Indians. More often than not they tend to identify themselves in terms of narrow ethnic categories. By and large Fisher is right. The only thing I may add is that perhaps it is the context that determines their self-identity. It seems that while dealing with the non-Indians they tend to take on pan-Indian identity. But when it comes to interacting among themselves their regional, linguistic or religious identities take precedence. A second issue is how others look upon Indians. Are they viewed as Indians or as Asians ? That depends on several things including their relative numerical strength in the host country. Wherever Indians form a substantial group, they are viewed as Indians having a distinctive identity. In the countries where their number is small and the ethnic groups of other nationalities are also present they tend to be bracketed with the other Asians.

Even at the risk of sounding outrageous, it may be remarked that perhaps too much is made in the existing literature of the instinct of cultural preservation and identity of Indians in foreign settings. For one thing, perhaps every ethnic group tends to stick to its culture in strange surroundings about as fastidiously as do the Indians. Are Chinese immigrants any different from Indians ? It requires a comparative study of various immigrant communities, including Indians, to maintain that the Indians stand out among others. For another, there is no dearth of contradictory evidence to show that any number of Indians have abandoned their culture in favour of the cultures of their adopted lands. Third, there is a generational context to it. While the first generation immigrants tend to stick to Indian culture with vigour, the second and subsequent generations give evidence of distancing from it.

(731 words)

3. Write a paragraph in about 200 words on any *one* of the following expressions / statements : 10

- (a) It is better to conquer yourself than to win a thousand battles.
- (b) Politics makes strange bedfellows.
- (c) Strike the iron while it is hot.
- (d) To be yourself in a world that is constantly trying to make you something else is the greatest accomplishment.
- (e) If you want to test a man's character, give him power.

4. Use the following words in sentences so as to bring out their meaning clearly. Do not change the form of the word. No credit will be given for a vague or ambiguous sentence. 2×5=10
- (a) acrimony
 - (b) credulous
 - (c) itinerant
 - (d) precarious
 - (e) bereavement
5. Use the following idioms and phrasal verbs in sentences so as to bring out their meaning clearly : 2×5=10
- (a) fall through
 - (b) throw a spanner
 - (c) go overboard
 - (d) come a cropper
 - (e) drive home
6. Correct the following sentences without changing their meaning. Do not make unnecessary changes in the original sentence : 1×10=10
- (a) His daughter-in-law is a M.A. in English.
 - (b) Rina has been deprived from her share in her father's property.
 - (c) All the books in the old library has perished.
 - (d) The aggrieved man said that he will not forgive the wrong-doer.
 - (e) Despite of the doctor's advice, he smoked.
 - (f) The principal could not attend the meeting in account of illness.
 - (g) In the court-room the advocate referred an old case.
 - (h) The old man was so weak to climb the stairs.
 - (i) My father has stopped living in the official quarter.
 - (j) They cannot issue the ticket unless you do not pay the fare.