

Write TWO essays, choosing from the following, in about 1000-1200 words each.

1. Technology makes democracy more democratic
2. There is no meaning of economic prosperity if it is not accompanied by social justice.
3. Embracing the Fourth Industrial Revolution.
4. Demography of India - Visible dividend or Invisible disaster.

1. Technology makes democracy more democratic

Manoj, a high school ~~graduate~~ ^{pass out} from a small village in Bihar used to work in one of the cybercafes at district place. His village lacked all season roads to connect nearest town. Villagers faced many hurdles, especially during medical emergencies in getting to town ~~to get~~ faster. Villagers ~~are~~ unaware about one day a person came to Manoj's cyber cafe to file RTI. With his Manoj to filed one to know the status of road project. And he was shocked with the reply that road was already built years ago and functioning smoothly. Armed with this information he mobilized his villagers and protested before collector's office to do the rightful.

This example shows how use of technology can ~~also~~ enhance power of citizen to exercise his rights effectively. Simple RTI application helped these villagers to ~~also~~ receive what was rightfully theirs and expose corruption in government. good

In various ~~domains~~^{ways} technology has enabled citizen's ~~to~~ participation in democratic functions. Starting ~~from~~ elections, which is the major distinction ~~between~~ authoritarian & democratic regime. But ~~mere~~ organizing election for namesake does not make political system really democratic. Citizens should be able to take informed ^{good} decisions while voting and election should be free and fair. Incumbent government should never get upper hand in it.

Technology has played great role in fulfilling these criteria of democratic elections. Use of erm machines has made booth capturing rigging ~~very~~ nearly impossible. Vote manipulation has become far difficult. ~~With~~ single sms voter can know background of contestant such as his education, criminal record etc. With plan of linking aadhar with voter id and use of biometrics, voting could become fool proof and voter friendly.

Space for review

Ques Another feature of democracy is timely grievance addressed. Many villages in our country lack permanent government structures to address problems of commoners. Situated at district centres and available only for specific time of the day, ~~not to mention~~ the crowd already waiting to be heard. This all makes grievance redressal time consuming & expensive. If representatives of people are not available to ~~solve~~ ^{resolve} their issues ~~as~~ then how can it be called democracy. 2

Technology makes instant resolution possible. Recent rescue operation ~~by~~ External Affairs Ministry is testimony to this fact. Migrant labour posted his video on twitter about his exploitation at the hands of employer in Saudi Arabia and his wish to comeback to India. Similarly Common service Centres installed under digital India helps villagers to reach out to various government agencies and convey their problems. This way technology reaffirms the fact that government in democracy exist for the people.

Space for review

good answer

But if people are unaware about or how government functions, they won't be able to know whom to convey their grievances.

good Opaqueness in governance is ~~characteristic~~ of authoritarianism. Also people should be able to monitor progress or policies meant for their development.

Applications such as RTE *→ repetitive* keep citizens informed about all such decisions. It gives a common access to vast array of information with click of button. Technology has made unimaginable task possible with such an ease. With digitization or PDS supply chain, citizens can now track their entitlement online. Earlier they have to depend on word-of-mouth to access their monthly ration. And many would miss out on their share. Now everytime grain enter their village for distribution, they receive sms on phone. Thus technology helping citizens to claim what is rightfully theirs and keep them informed about it.

Democracy is also characterized by participation of its citizen in policy making, which is described by Lincoln as government by the people. But ~~due~~ to large geographical size of country and its huge population it is not possible for everyone to do so. Thus ~~government~~ get only handful get to run government. Eventually ~~their~~ policies reflect ~~every~~ major town or attitude that is unreflective of ground level realities.

Again technology comes handy in resolving this issue and making democracy more democratic. Portals like myGov have become quite popular among educated youth as it provide them platforms to discuss, debate on national issues and suggest policy measures to government. We have more than 300 million social media users and almost all major government department now have their presence on it. Citizen can simply post ~~their~~ feedback about any program or respective department. This creates environment of community vigilante and builds popular pressure on government

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to perform better.

But all this becomes possible when citizen are well educated or at least digitally literate, when they are aware about best governance practices and when they have ^{unrestricted} access to knowledge.

Revolutionary technology or internet comes to rescue in this problem. It has given citizen access to voluminous data accessible from any corner or country provided it has connectivity. Many open online courses have made quality education available at free or cost. Easily accessible to even those school drop outs who wish to resume their career but shy away owing to stigma attached with elderly education. An informed citizen is essential for democracy to remain one and technology provides lots of avenues for the same.

In democracy each individual is to be treated equally. And this does not remain restricted to voting exercise. Even in governance voice of poor should be treated equally with that of rich & powerful. But we don't see this as reality in world's largest democracy. Cronyism is quite prevalent in various layers of government. Then how technology reverses ~~balances~~ this trend and give voice to weaker?

Answer lies with 4th pillar of democracy which is media. Technology has made media pervasive and strongly equipped. It reaches to victim way before any government help could. Use of satellite communication, internet and social media it has expanded its reach and influence tremendously. Be it story of farmer suicides in Latur or case of sedition against JNU student, media has generated immense popular support to compel government to undertake right course of action.

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Media has also helped in unearthing cases of corruption in government. A corrupt political system which ~~to~~ usurp what is rightfully of citizen can never be termed as democratic. Corruption ~~could~~ be existing in system due to many reason such as large discretion of civil servant, vested interest in decision making, inefficiency in delivery of essential goods. Corruption ~~can~~ be is analogous to louse sucking blood from animal, as it sucks away very essence of democracy.

Technology has tremendously helped in ~~red~~ minimizing scope of corruption. Jandhan Aadhar - mobile (JAM) Trinity in delivery of subsidy to poor section is one such example. E ~~transacting~~ natural resources such as telecom spectrum has reduced nepotism. My MP app allows individual to know what ~~biwork~~ ~~best~~ MP is ~~doing on part~~ done in parliament. This act as ~~whip~~ against inefficient legislatures.

Technology ~~makes~~ ease availability, accessibility, affordability and accountability of governance. It treats ~~each~~ user equally in country like India divided into numerous fractions of caste & religion. It provides equal voice to most exploited and gives it ray of hope to be heard. Technology enhances and eases participation of citizen in working of their country which instills the feeling of belongingness in them. This in turn ensures adherence to their duty as citizen which is also essential in furthering democratic functioning. Technology breaks away from status quoism and opens the door for young minds to readily participate in governance. This instills fresh energy in democratic polity and ensures its continuance.

good (But technology is ~~not~~ force multiplier not a force in itself) This prone to be misused by vested interests as well. ~~Destiny~~ ^{outcome} of technology depends upon the intention behind its use.

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As Karl Marx has described about false class consciousness technology could be used by powerful individual to create false belief that everything in governance is smooth and right and ~~also~~ also to shape ideology of people to make them demand what is essentially harmful to them. Technology can also enable too powerful to run government remotely and make it look like democratic. Manufacturing Consent

So technology has potential to promote as well as subvert democracy. Its future depends on agency utilizing it. But it can safely be said in context of India, that technology has enabled many ignored sections of society to voice their concern and become part of government's decision making. Yet more technological reforms are to be done to reach out to every nook & corner of society and take along every citizen in prosperity of nation and technology ~~would~~ be ~~necessary~~ meritarily would be essential part of those reforms.

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2) There is no meaning of economic prosperity, if it is not accompanied by social justice.

India is one of the most diverse countries in the world. We have people belonging to different religion, caste, ethnicity living together. Large section of this population belonging to backward caste even after 70 years of independence owing to many social factors which prohibits their development. Caste status being major factor. One can not wish away his caste identity and associated rights & obligations with this identity irrespective of what individual achieves on secular parameters. Caste is dominant factor charting out life experience and opportunities of individual. This precisely is the reason why we're reservation policy based on social backwardness and not on economic backwardness. So our state policy too believes that mere economic prosperity is insufficient in absence of social justice.

Good

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Historically, Dalits have been most discriminated sections of society. Their touch ~~and~~ sometimes even ~~spat~~ ^{spit} was considered polluting. They were excluded from ^{dignified} means of livelihood, social gatherings and ~~inherently~~ ^{inherently} considered inferior. Thus widely abused and harassed.

Post independence, ~~country~~ ^{Article-17} has formulated law banning untouchability and formulated numerous policies and schemes to rehabilitate Dalits to better occupations, securing them from demeaning jobs. Now we even have Dalit Chamber of Commerce to promote interests of Dalit entrepreneurs. Many have accumulated great amount of wealth. But most of them complain about discrimination and prejudices they have to face in business network.

Recent incident of suicide of Rohit Verma too depicts similar story. ^{Even} Being PhD student ~~and~~ he was confronted with great degree of discrimination at the hands of teacher and upper caste student. This shows more economic

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Don't quote examples that are subjudice

Wellbeing & prosperity or educational advancement did not bring social justice to Dalits in country. In respect of their standing in economic parameters, ~~but~~ they are subjected to overt or covert kind of discrimination and prejudices.

Economic prosperity too have failed to bring much change in lives of women.

Financial dependency is considered to be major cause behind women's low status in household.

But most of working ^{class} women find themselves with double burden. They're to take care of domestic chores irrespective of their working status.

And still male in family has final authority in domestic decision making. Instead of elevating

their social status, many come to see ~~working~~ working class women as deviant.

Violence against women too have not ended with their economic standing. Be it public place or domestic sphere, most of them are subjected to exploitation and harassment. Economic prosperity has actually been borne for many

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Women have got ~~economic~~ freed

economic freedom but yet to

realise social freedom

women. Lower class women enjoy many more freedoms than their upper class / caste counterparts.

Social stigma attached with disability too does rarely subside with their economic prosperity. Though money makes their life comfortable but this does not necessarily free them from prejudices people hold about them. Society sees them as helpless and needy, incapable of living life independently. Very few would really believe in their capability. Their success too is evaluated on separate criteria thus denying them full integration with society. If this disability is combined with gender or old age they would experience near complete exclusion from society. And economic prosperity can no longer come to rescue.

That is why Ambedkar during in constitutional assembly had emphasized on providing social rights to weaker and vulnerable sections of society. mere political rights or economic wellbeing can not substitute historical

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give example of preamble

prejudices. In absence of social rights, ~~people~~ discriminated individuals would always remain on fringes of society, never fully integrated.

~~There is~~ ~~but~~ social justice is most important ~~that~~ parameter to judge progress of any nation. How minority and weaker section of society is treated by majority and government? Do they have freedom to express their opinion freely? Are their basic rights equally protected? ~~and~~ Is everybody is treated equally ~~as far~~ before law? Such parameters ~~judge~~ gives idea about inclusive growth of any nation. If there's equality of opportunity, everyone can fulfill their dreams. Thus leading to better human development.

On the other hand mere economic prosperity without social justice can not promise this. For instance, America is considered world's most powerful & richest nation. But it is also one with ~~most~~ largest income disparity. Blacks even today face discrimination,

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though is less overt form. They are the most backward section and also heavily represented in criminal activities. Large section of American population is facing problems of depression. So even after becoming wealthy, people are not happy.

Contrastingly small, ~~new~~ hilly nation Bhutan features top most in ~~ranking~~ ranking of world happiness index. Here people have enough to fulfill their basic needs but most importantly have peace of mind. Which necessarily breeds from promise of equal treatment and protection of rights. People participate in their own development with government machineries. Society is largely free from crimes, corruption and unnecessary restrictions.

These examples show limited role of economic prosperity in overall well being or not only individual or select groups but also in well being of nation at large.

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But this does not mean that economic prosperity ~~in itself~~ is or no use. Famous political thinker Karl Marx had described ownership of economic resources as source of power. So economic prosperity can lead to higher social status gradually. ~~Historically~~ this has been proved. Many backward caste after acquiring large wealth ascended to higher positions of caste ranking in 2-3 generations.

Thus economic prosperity becomes means to achieve social justice. In case of women, financial means has reduced her ~~total~~ dependency on male counterpart and also ~~has~~ given her some say in domestic decision making which was missing altogether.

As society moves more towards being consumeristic, role of economic might would

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Only measure. It is lifestyle and not one's caste that ~~decides~~ social standing of individuals in Urban India. ~~This would only~~ In class based society, towards which India is moving economic ~~prosperity~~ standing would be defining criteria for one's life experiences and opportunities. So economic prosperity can make up for and remedy social injustice.

But for nation to survive and prosper, social justice ~~still~~ is a major factor. This can not be remedied by economic prosperity. Social justice does not mean giving everyone similar treatment. But it is about providing equality or opportunity to lead good life. It is about protecting basic rights of each and every individual and empowering vulnerable & weaker sections of society. Mere ~~can~~ economic prosperity would make nation hollow from inside with its citizen alienated.

Space for review



UPSC TREE - Personal Feedback

Name - Nèkhil

Topic - Technology & democracy.

Dear Nèkhil,

Your essay makes an interesting reading. Your thought process is very well aligned to the topic of the essay and does enter to the theme.

Here are few ideas to enrich your essay.

- 1) Try to correct your handwriting. It is clear & legible but few letters need extra effort. Take care of your (f)s & (e)s. A little caution while writing will do to correct this.
- 2) For this essay, you have started with an anecdote/story, choose a better and stronger story for this case.
- 3) Use of critical words are good and you have used them wisely, keep it up.
- 4) The essay requires little critical aspects.
- 5) The essay also lacks diversity. A good no. of example and strategy is already given.



UPSTREE - Personal Feedback

For this essay in the portal: DO check it.

6) coherence is there in your essay, but a little extra effort can make it better.

7) Few critical words such as twitter diplomacy, e-governance etc are missing. Try to include them in your essay.

8) you have discussed the major part of essay in generalistic perspective, try to give it an edge by discussing particular. For eg:-

Technology → rural farmer

→ women

→ urbanite

→ environment (campaigns)

→ legislative process (getting view from public on certain bill)

9) Also you can diversify along :-

tech → fiscal democracy

tech → issue of right to privacy

tech → manufacturing consent

10) A good deal of example is already given for this essay. DO check the strategy in portal. That can give a broader perspective and help you write even a better essay on this topic.

- Best of Luck -

Marks

language, aesthetics, critical incls, brevity - 10/25

content, diversity, critical aspect - 50/100

60/125



UPSTREE - Personal Feedback

Name - Nikhil

Topic - Economic prosperity & Social justice

Dear Nikhil,

Although you have given good attempt for this essay, here are few ideas to enrich the content:-

- 1) you have to use some data to give the account of prosperity of India (~10% growth post-1991).
- 2) yet, our social indicators are bad:-
 - ✓ give name of reports & rank to indicate your analysis
 - ✓ Gross Happiness Index
 - ✓ Human dev. Index etc
- 3) Also mention if there is no social justice even after economic prosperity then what will happen?
 - ✓ Regional disparity
 - ✓ Naxalism
 - ✓ civil war / conflict
- 4) you have to give a picture of what social justice means. (use John Rawls concept)
- 5) Give examples of ↑ ^{countries with} high per capita but no social justice.

UPSCTREE - Personal Feedback

6) You have started the essay ~~from~~ directly from Indian perspective. Take a bird's eye view of global picture. Frg:-

USA :- Racism, Black-White divide

Gulf countries:- High per capita yet no social justice.

7) The above examples across globe will add richness to your essay.

8) Also diversify by pitting social justice against each section of society:-

- women
- child (child labour - not social justice)
(Malnutrition - ")
- old age people and no geriatric care
- Dnyanga (disabled) people and

no barrier free access to public facilities.

9) Do mention concept of social mobility ~~and~~ and how we can achieve that.

10) What are the obstacles to realize social justice :- casteism, ethnicity, poverty, illiteracy, inadequate healthcare, ~~the~~ patriarchal society etc.

In a nutshell, you have to take each social indicators and see how they are doing and what are the obstacles. How to overcome them.

- keep writing -

- Best of luck -

Marks

Language, aesthetics, brevity - 9/25

content, density, critical aspect - 30/100

39/125