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| **ST. JOSEPH’S COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), BANGALORE-27** |
| **BA-EJP--VI SEMESTER: END-SEMESTER EXAMINATIONS: APRIL 2019**  **JN 6213: Covering International Relations & Development** |
| **Time: 2 ½ HOURS Max Marks- 70**  **Instruction:**   1. **This paper is meant for VI semester students of BA-EJP course who have opted for the Development Journalism elective.** 2. **You are allowed to use a Dictionary.** 3. **You will lose marks for exceeding the suggested word-limit.** 4. **This paper contains FIVE pages and THREE sections.** |

1. **Read the following article by Mathew Idiculla, in ‘The Hindu’, published on August 16th, 2018 and answer the questions that follow.**

The Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences awarded jointly to William D. Nordhaus and Paul M. Romer for their respective contributions in integrating climate change and technological innovation into macroeconomic analysis is interesting. Both laureates designed methods for addressing questions related to creating conditions for “long-term sustained and sustainable economic growth”. While Mr. Nordhaus is credited for creating a quantitative assessment model that analyses the relationship between economy and climate, in Mr. Romer’s case, it is for his pioneering work on “endogenous growth theory” that highlights how knowledge and ideas drive economic growth.

Mr. Romer, who was till recently the chief economist of the World Bank, has gone beyond the realm of theory and become a man of action in attempting to implement some of his economic ideas on the ground. Building on his theoretic work on economic growth, he has been championing the creation of “Charter Cities” — new cities with distinct rules that foster innovation and economic growth. These are characterised as “start-up cities” that experiment with reforms by breaking out of the existing state system. Since the nation-state is too big a unit to try out new rules, Mr. Romer proposes built-from-scratch cities as the ideal site at which new rules and institutions are introduced to attract investors and residents.

The idea of “Charter Cities” should be of interest to developing countries such as India grappling with strategies for rapid urbanisation. Mr. Romer has been proselytising leaders from developing nations to create “Charter Cities” by setting apart tracts of uninhabited land for this civic experiment. The host country is required to enact a founding legislation or a charter that lays down the framework of rules that will operate in the new city. A developing country can host the “Charter City” in its territory by “delegating” some of the responsibilities of administration to a developed country.

Predictably, Mr. Romer has come under immense criticism for promoting what seems to be a thinly disguised version of neo-colonialism. Poorer countries are urged to make a Faustian bargain: relinquish sovereignty over certain territories ostensibly in exchange for economic growth. But he justifies his grand plan by arguing that unlike colonialism, which was coercive, “Charter Cities” offer choice: people have the freedom to decide to move into it. Based on their preferences, individuals can “vote with their feet”. However, they do not have the right to vote to decide how the city is run. Hence, “Charter Cities” go against the basic principles of democracy and citizenship.

The presence of foreign governments in administering “Charter Cities” is not just incidental but intrinsic to this grand scheme. In a TED talk, in 2009, Mr. Romer remarked that British colonial rule in Hong Kong “did more to reduce world poverty than all the aid programs that we’ve undertaken in the last century”. Hong Kong is relevant also because it was Deng Xiaoping’s inspiration for creating a set of special economic zones in China in the 1980s. However, Mr. Romer has been less successful in evangelising world leaders to adopt his idea. His first attempt to introduce “Charter Cities” in Madagascar in 2008 collapsed when the President who favoured the idea was greeted by violent protests and finally removed in a coup. The next attempt, in the Honduras, also failed as the Supreme Court there, in 2012, declared the creation of “Charter Cities” to be unconstitutional.

Given its neo-colonial trappings and poor track record, “Charter Cities”, as an idea, should have been fundamentally unattractive for a country such as India. Nevertheless, an editorial in a leading Indian business daily urged the Narendra Modi government to take the idea seriously and drew parallels with the Presidency Towns of British India. Commentators have also suggested that emerging economies (India and China) can create and govern new cities on their own. The model of a built-from-scratch city often cited in this regard is the Songdo International Business District in South Korea. However, this eco-friendly “smart city” with the best of hi-tech amenities is threatening to be an underpopulated, lifeless ghost town.

India’s experience in creating new cities with parallel rules and governance systems has also been fraught with conflicts. Lavasa, a city near Pune which was developed by a private company, has been caught up in environmental disputes for many years. The Dholera Special Investment Region and Gujarat International Finance Tec-City, which were initiated by Mr. Modi when he was Gujarat Chief Minister, have not really taken off. The various investment regions housed within the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor have also made slow progress. The initial idea of creating 100 new cities as “smart cities” has been reformulated as a programme for redeveloping merely a small portion of existing cities.

Initiatives such as “Charter Cities” seek to supersede the politico-economic institutions in the global south by building cities on a *tabula rasa*— a clean slate. The guiding logic is that creating built-from-scratch cities with parallel rules and institutions can drive economic growth. What is most alarming about such thinking is the assumption that it is possible to create sanitised technocratic cities uncontaminated by politics. It ignores the pre-existence of multiple social and political claims over space in these supposed clean slates. Despite the failure of many such new cities and private governance regimes, the allure of creating grand castles in the air refuses to die down. Such initiatives need to be challenged for both their ignorant and implausible premise as well as their iniquitous normative framework.

**I.A Answer ALL the questions that follow. (10x3=30) (150 words each)**

1. The writer suggest that the Charter Cities project goes beyond ‘the basic principles of democracy and citizenship’, do you agree/disagree with the writer? Substantiate.
2. The writer says that a similar experiment in India has been ‘fraught with conflicts’, do you agree/disagree with the writer? Draw on your experiences living in a city to elaborate on your agreement or disagreement with the writer.
3. Frame TEN questions for an interview with Noble Laureate, Paul Romer on the concept of ‘Charter Cities’
4. **Read the following speech delivered by Naomi Klein, at a rally in Union Square Park, New York City, organised by Latino community organisation, UPROSE. This extended version was published in ‘The Intercept’ magazine on September 21st, 2018.**

**I’VE BEEN DIGGING** into disaster capitalism for a couple of decades now. For those of you who are new to the term, disaster capitalism is about how the already rich and powerful systematically exploit the pain and the trauma of collective shocks — like superstorms or economic crisis — in order to build an even more unequal and undemocratic society.

Long before Hurricane Maria, Puerto Rico was a [textbook example](https://theintercept.com/2017/05/09/puerto-ricos-123-billion-bankruptcy-is-the-cost-of-u-s-colonialism/). Before those fierce winds came, the debt — illegitimate and much of it illegal — was the excuse used to ram through a brutal program of economic suffering, what the great Argentine author [Rodolfo Walsh](http://www.historyisaweapon.com/defcon1/walshopenletterargjunta.html), writing about four decades earlier, famously called miseria planificada, planned misery.

This program systematically attacked the very glue that holds a society together: all levels of education, health care, the electricity and water systems, transit systems, communication networks, and more.

It was a plan so widely rejected that no elected representatives could be trusted to carry it out. Which is why in 2016 the U.S. Congress passed the Puerto Rico Oversight, Management, and Economic Stability Act, known as PROMESA. That law amounted to a financial coup d’etat that put Puerto Rico’s economy directly in the hands of the unelected Financial Oversight and Management Board. In Puerto Rico, they call it La Junta.

The term fits. As Greece’s former Foreign Minister Yanis Varoufakis puts it, governments used to be overthrown with tanks — now it’s with banks.

It was in this context — with every Puerto Rican institution already trembling from La Junta’s assaults — that Maria’s ferocious winds came roaring through. It was a storm so powerful it would have sent even the sturdiest society reeling. But Puerto Rico didn’t just reel. Puerto Rico broke.

Not the people of Puerto Rico, but all those systems that had already been deliberately brought to the brink: power, health, water, communication, food. All those systems collapsed. And let us be clear: It was that combination of disaster capitalism and an extraordinary hurricane that stole so many precious lives.

A few lives were lost to wind and water, yes, but the vast majority died because when you systematically starve and neglect the very bones of a society, rendering it dysfunctional on a good day, such a society has absolutely no capacity to weather a true crisis.

That is what the research tells us, those studies Donald Trump so casually denies: The major causes of death were people being unable to plug in medical equipment because the electricity grid was down for months; health networks so diminished they were unable to provide medicine for treatable diseases. People died because they were left to drink contaminated water because of a legacy of environmental racism. People died because they were abandoned and left without hope for so long that suicide seemed the only option.

Those deaths were not the result of an unprecedented “natural disaster” or even “an act of God,” as we so often hear.

Honoring the dead begins with telling the truth. And the truth is that there is nothing natural about this disaster. And if you believe in God, leave her out of this too.

Listen to Naomi Klein and journalist Juan Gonzalez discuss the Puerto Rican crisis on Intercepted.

God isn’t the one who laid off thousands of skilled electrical workers in the years before the storm, or who failed to maintain the grid with basic repairs. The fatal logic of economic austerity did that. God didn’t give vital relief and reconstruction contracts to politically connected firms, some of whom didn’t even pretend to do their jobs. God didn’t decide that Puerto Rico should import 85 percent of its food — this archipelago blessed with some of the most fertile soil in the world. God didn’t decide Puerto Rico should get 98 percent of its energy from imported fossil fuels — these islands bathed in sun, lashed by wind, and surrounded by waves, all of which could provide cheap and clean renewable power to spare.

These were decisions made by people working for powerful interests.

Because for 500 uninterrupted years, the role of Puerto Rico and Puerto Ricans in the world economy has been to make other people rich, whether by extracting cheap labor or cheap resources or by being a captive market for imported food and fuel.

A colonial economy by definition is a dependent economy. A centralized lopsided and distorted economy. And as we have seen, an intensely vulnerable economy.

And it isn’t even right to call the storm itself a “natural disaster.” None of these record-breaking storms are natural anymore — Irma and Maria, Katrina and Sandy, Haiyan and Harvey, and now Florence and Mangkhut, which battered parts of Asia this week.

The reason we are seeing records shattered time after time is that the oceans are warmer and the tides are higher. And that’s not God’s fault either. It’s the fault of governments protecting the interests of the fossil fuel companies and agribusiness giants that pay for their campaigns.

This is the deadly cocktail — not just a storm, but a storm supercharged by climate change slamming headlong into a society deliberately weakened by a decade of unrelenting austerity layered on top of centuries of colonial extraction, with a relief effort overseen by a government that makes no effort to disguise its white supremacy.

Maria just blew so hard she tore all the genteel disguises off these brutal systems, leaving them stark naked for the world to see. The hurricane and FEMA’s endless failures pushed Puerto Rico over the edge. But we have to talk about why Puerto Rico was teetering so precariously on the precipice in the first place.

We also need to stop talking about incompetence. Because if it were incompetence, there would be some effort to fix the underlying failures. To rebuild the public sphere, design a more secure food and energy system, and stop the carbon pollution that guarantees even more ferocious storms in the coming decades.

Yet we have seen the precise opposite. We have seen nothing but more disaster capitalism — using the trauma of the storm to push massive cuts to education, hundreds of school closures, wave after wave of home foreclosures, and the privatization of some of Puerto Rico’s most valuable assets.

And just as Trump denies the reality of thousands of Puerto Rican deaths, he also denies the reality of climate change. Which his administration must do in order to push dozens of toxic policies that makes the crisis even worse.

Such is the official  response to this modern-day catastrophe: Do everything possible to make sure that it will happen again and again. Do everything possible to bring on a future in which climate disasters arrive so fast and so furious that even gathering together to mourn the dead on painful anniversaries could, for our children, come to seem like an unattainable luxury. They will already be in the throes of the next emergency, like people in the Carolinas, Kerala, and the Philippines are right now.

That is why dozens of Puerto Rican [organizations](http://juntegente.org/), under the banner of JunteGente, are standing together to demand a different future. Not just a little bit better but radically better. Their message is a clear one: that this storm must be a wakeup call, a historic catalyst for a just recovery and just transition to the next economy. Right now.

That begins with auditing and ultimately erasing an illegal debt, and firing La Junta because its very existence is an affront to the most basic principles of self-government. Only then will there be the political space to redesign the food, energy, housing, and transportation systems that failed so many — and replace them with institutions that truly serve the Puerto Rican people.

This movement for a just recovery draws on local brilliance and protected knowledge to make the most of the richness of the soil, as well as the power of the sun and wind.

Today I am reminded of the words of Dalma Cartagena, one of the great leaders of Puerto Rico’s agro-ecology movement: “Maria hit us hard. But it made our convictions stronger. Made us know the correct path.”

The era of planned misery and deliberately designed dependence is over. It’s time to plan for joy and design for liberation. So that when the next storm comes — and it will — the winds will roar and the trees will bend, but Puerto Rico will show the world that it can never be broken.

**II.A Answer ANY TWO of the following questions( 150 words each). (2X10=20)**

1. Write a report based on this speech. Give your report a headline.
2. What is your understanding of the term ‘disaster capitalism’? Draw from the passage and elaborate.
3. The speaker quotes Greece’s former Foreign Minister Yanis Varoufakis ‘governments used to be overthrown with tanks — now it’s with banks.’ What is your understanding of this statement? Draw on your reading/consumption of news to answer this question.
4. **Write a 300-350 word answer on either of the two topics (1x20=20)**

You have seen several fiction and non-fiction films this semester, write a note on the use of film for development journalism. Pick one of the films that you have seen in class, summarize the narrative and discuss how it has furthered your understanding of development journalism

**OR**

What has been your experience covering protests this semester? Draw on your on- ground reportage experience and write a note on the protest(s) you covered.

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