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ST. JOSEPH'S COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), BANGALORE – 27
I BA JIP END SEMESTER EXAMINATION: JANUARY 2021
JN-119 – WRITING AND THE ETHICAL PRACTICE OF JOURNALISM

Time- 2 ½ hrs

Max Marks- 70

Instructions:

1. This paper is for students of I semester JIP
2. The paper has THREE SECTIONS and TWO printed pages.
3. You are allowed to use a dictionary.
4. Do not exceed the word limit

I. Read this letter from *Harper's Magazine*

A Letter on Justice and Open Debate

Our cultural institutions are facing a moment of trial. Powerful protests for racial and social justice are leading to overdue demands for police reform, along with wider calls for greater equality and inclusion across our society, not least in higher education, journalism, philanthropy, and the arts. But this needed reckoning has also intensified a new set of moral attitudes and political commitments that tend to weaken our norms of open debate and toleration of differences in favour of ideological conformity. As we applaud the first development, we also raise our voices against the second. The forces of illiberalism are gaining strength throughout the world and have a powerful ally in Donald Trump, who represents a real threat to democracy. But resistance must not be allowed to harden into its own brand of dogma or coercion—which right-wing demagogues are already exploiting. The democratic inclusion we want can be achieved only if we speak out against the intolerant climate that has set in on all sides.

The free exchange of information and ideas, the lifeblood of a liberal society, is daily becoming more constricted. While we have come to expect this on the radical right, censoriousness is also spreading more widely in our culture: an intolerance of opposing views, a vogue for public shaming and ostracism, and the tendency to dissolve complex policy issues in a blinding moral certainty. We uphold the value of robust and even caustic counter-speech from all quarters. But it is now all too common to hear calls for swift and severe retribution in response to perceived transgressions of speech and thought. More troubling still, institutional leaders, in a spirit of panicked damage control, are delivering hasty and disproportionate punishments instead of considered reforms. Editors are fired for running controversial pieces; books are withdrawn for alleged inauthenticity; journalists are barred from writing on certain topics; professors are investigated for quoting works of literature in class; a researcher is fired for circulating a peer-reviewed academic study; and the heads of organizations are ousted for what are sometimes just clumsy mistakes. Whatever the arguments around each particular incident, the result has been to steadily narrow the boundaries of what can be said without the threat of reprisal. We are already paying the price in greater risk aversion among writers, artists, and journalists who fear for their livelihoods if they depart from the consensus, or even lack sufficient zeal in agreement.

This stifling atmosphere will ultimately harm the most vital causes of our time. The restriction of debate, whether by a repressive government or an intolerant society, invariably hurts those who lack power and makes everyone less capable of democratic participation. The way to defeat bad ideas is by exposure, argument, and persuasion, not by trying to silence or wish them away. We refuse any false choice between justice and freedom, which cannot exist without each other. As writers we need a culture that leaves us room for experimentation, risk taking, and even mistakes. We need to preserve the possibility of good-faith disagreement without dire professional consequences. If we won't defend the very thing on which our work depends, we shouldn't expect the public or the state to defend it for us.

I.A. Answer the following questions in 150 words each (3x10=30).

1. What do you know about similar things happening in India? How has the Indian media reported it? Write a short note.
2. How have you encountered debates on free speech in the Indian media in the last one year? What shape does that debate take when you consider the case of Kunal Kamra commenting on a Supreme Court decision?
3. Do you agree that there is a "tendency to dissolve complex policy issues in a blinding moral certainty." Does the proposed beef ban in Karnataka lend itself to consideration along this angle?

II. Read this piece from WDSU news. Edit it to about 150 words and give it a headline. Explain your choice of words for the headline (10+5=15)

Google users in the U.S., Europe, India and other parts of the world were briefly unable to access their Gmail accounts, watch YouTube videos or get to their online documents during an outage Monday.

Tens of thousands of complaints popped up around 7 a.m. Eastern along the East Coast of the U.S. The vast majority of those people, about 90%, could not log in, according to the site Downtetector.

The inability to sign in prevented users accessing other platforms through Google, including mobile video games.

The disruption was an early jolt on the East Coast for parents who were waking children up for school Monday. Millions of students are relying on Google for online instruction during the pandemic, including platforms like Google Docs.

The problem appeared to cleared up just before 8 a.m.

"The problem with Gmail should be resolved for the vast majority of affected users," said Google's parent company, Alphabet, at 7:52 a.m.. "We will continue to work towards restoring service for the remaining affected users."

Downtetector, which tracks website outages, reported the problem affected users across the world, but appeared especially widespread in the northeastern U.S., Britain and other parts of Europe. Japan, Malaysia and India also looked to be more affected.

III.A. Write about a normal day of lockdown in 150-200 words. (1x15=15)

III.B. Write a journaling account in 10 sentences of your experience of attempting this question paper. (1x10=10)