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Q5

(a) "Great ambition is the passion of a great character. Those endowed with it may perform very good or very bad acts. All depends on the principles which direct them." - Napoleon Bonaparte. Stating examples mention the rulers (i) who have harmed society and country, (ii) who worked for the development of society and country. (150 Words, 10) (b) "If a country is to be corruption free and become a nation of beautiful minds, I strongly feel there are three key societal members who can make a difference. They are father, mother and teacher." - A. P. J. Abdul Kalam. Analyse. (150 Words, 10).

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2017 · GS IV · 10 marks · Probity in Governance

Probity in Governance: Concept of public service; Philosophical basis of governance and probity; Information sharing and transparency in government, Right to Information, Codes of Ethics, Codes of Conduct, Citizen's Charters, Work culture, Quality of service delivery, Utilization of public funds, challenges of corruption.

Core demand of the question

- (a) Napoleon: great ambition is the passion of a great character; good or bad acts depend on the principles that direct them. Give rulers who harmed society and country, and rulers who worked for development
- (b) **A. P. J. Abdul Kalam**: father, mother and teacher can make a country corruption-free and a nation of beautiful minds. Analyse

Revision summary

Napoleon is right that ambition takes the colour of the principles that steer it.

Harmful rulers include Hitler, Stalin, Pol Pot, extractive colonialism and Emergency excess; developmental examples include **Ashoka's** turn, Lincoln, Mandela, and institution-builders such as **Nehru** and Shastri.

- **Kalam's father, mother and teacher form the first ethic**: queue, truth and curiosity.

They cannot replace CAG, police and courts, but without them those offices fill with already bent adults.

Beautiful minds are integrity plus inquiry, not marks without shame at a stolen rupee.

Introduction

Napoleon is saying that size of will is not virtue; the compass is. Kalam is saying that the first compass is drawn at home and at school, before the first bribe is offered in an office.

Body**(a) Ambition, principles, and two kinds of rulers**

- Ambition is a strong desire to achieve and to matter. In a ruler it can build a canal or empty a prison into a grave.
- Napoleon is right that character without principle is power looking for a use. Principle here means a public ethic: the people are not fuel.
- Harmful ambition treats the country as a private stage. Developmental ambition treats the office as a trust.

Rulers who harmed society and country

- Adolf Hitler turned ambition and a racial principle into genocide and a world war; Germany and Europe paid in corpses and ruin.
- Joseph Stalin industrialised with terror, famine and camps; the State's strength was real and so was the mass death.
- Pol Pot's Cambodia showed how a "pure" political principle can murder a society.
- In Indian memory, colonial extraction under the British Raj subordinated Indian welfare to metropolitan gain; famines and de-industrialisation were not accidents of weather alone.
- Among Indian political failures, Emergency excesses of 1975-77 - detention without the usual safeguards, press curbs, and forced programmes in some places - showed how even an elected ambition can injure constitutional morality.
- Local tyrannies - a landlord-politician who runs a district as a pocket borough - are the same pattern at a smaller scale.

Rulers and leaders who worked for development of society and country

- **Ashoka** after Kalinga turned conquest toward dhamma, welfare and a public ethic of restraint, which Indian political thought still cites.
- Akbar's attempt at a broader imperial ethic, including sulh-i-kul, sought a political community that was not only one sect's property.
- Abraham Lincoln held a union together against slavery's expansion; the cost was terrible, the principle was a wider freedom.
- **Nelson Mandela** used power after prison to restrain revenge and to build a constitutional order, which is development of a moral kind, not only of roads.
- In India, **Jawaharlal Nehru**'s stress on science, institutions, adult franchise and a non-aligned dignity set a developmental frame, with flaws that later generations must name.
- Lal Bahadur Shastri's call for discipline in food and his simple life tied ambition to restraint.
- **A. P. J. Abdul Kalam** as President modelled a teacher-scientist in the highest ceremonial office, linking technology to a decent national self-respect.
- **The test for a serving officer is the same as Napoleon's:** a strong will to finish a dam or a raid is good only if law, rights and the weakest person still count.

(b) Father, mother and teacher

- Kalam is not cancelling police, CAG or the Lokpal. He is naming the first factory of conscience.
- A child who sees a parent buy a marksheet or beat a queue learns that the State is a shop. A child who sees a parent refuse a short-cut learns a cost.
- The mother, in Kalam's triad, is often the first instructor in care and in shame at a stolen rupee; the point is parenting, not a law that only women must be moral while men buy the ticket.
- The teacher is the first public officer the child meets. A teacher who sells grades or humiliates a caste produces both corruption and ugly minds.
- Beautiful minds, for Kalam, meant curiosity, integrity and compassion, not only high marks. Science without ethics is a better weapon.

- Schools that run only for board ranks and tuitions will not deliver his triad. Value education that is a weekly slogan also will not. The **hidden curriculum** - punctuality, no leaked paper, no fee for a seat - will.
- **Limits of the quote:** a clean home cannot defeat a dirty recruitment board alone. Institutions still matter. Kalam's claim is that without the three, institutions inherit already bent people.
- **Policy that follows the quote:** early childhood care, unpaid care recognised so parents have time, teacher training and status, and an end to political capture of school appointments.
- For a corruption-free country, father, mother and teacher are necessary and not sufficient. They are the seedbed. Law is the fence.

Flow diagram

Great ambition -> Principles
Principles -> Tyranny and extraction
Principles -> Constitutional development
Father mother teacher -> Conscience and curiosity
Conscience and curiosity -> Public integrity
Institutions -> Public integrity

Conclusion

Ambition is morally empty until principles choose the victim or the citizen. History is full of both kinds of ruler. Kalam's father, mother and teacher grow the principles before the file; offices and statutes must still punish the adult who forgets them.

Facts & figures

Emergency, 1975-77

A period of suspended normal constitutional safeguards, used in ethics papers as an Indian example of ambition injuring liberty.

Ashoka and dhamma

After Kalinga, rock edicts stress welfare, restraint and a public moral teaching; a classical Indian picture of power under principle.

Nelson Mandela

Used post-apartheid office to limit revenge and to back a constitutional order, showing ambition yoked to reconciliation.

A. P. J. Abdul Kalam

Scientist and President who repeatedly named parents and teachers as the root of a decent, capable republic.

Hidden curriculum

What a school actually rewards - leaked papers or honest work - which teaches more than the moral-science period.

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