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Q1

(a) Discuss the role of ethics and values in enhancing the following three major components of Comprehensive National Power (CNP) viz. human capital, soft power (culture and policies) and social harmony. (b) "Education is not an injunction, it is an effective and pervasive tool for all-round development of an individual and social transformation". Examine the New Education Policy, 2020 (NEP, 2020) in light of the above statement.

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2020 · GS IV · 10 marks · Ethics and Human Interface

Ethics and Human Interface: Essence, determinants and consequences of Ethics in-human actions; dimensions of ethics; ethics - in private and public relationships. Human Values - lessons from the lives and teachings of great leaders, reformers and administrators; role of family, society and educational institutions in inculcating values.

Core demand of the question

- (a) Discuss the role of ethics and values in enhancing the following three major components of **Comprehensive National Power** (CNP) viz. human capital, **soft power** (culture and policies) and social harmony
- (b) "Education is not an injunction, it is an effective and pervasive tool for all-round development of an individual and social transformation." Examine the New Education Policy, 2020 (NEP, 2020) in light of the above statement

Revision summary

CNP is more than force; ethics thickens human capital, **soft power** and harmony.

Exclusion, fake science and communal speech are power leaks.

Soft power needs kept promises and a culture that does not humiliate.

- **NEP 2020 aims at all-round development:** foundational learning, flexibility, equity, vocational and civic formation.

Without teachers, devices and inquiry, the same Policy becomes another command.

Introduction

A republic is not only tanks and GDP. Part (a) asks how ethics thicken three quiet muscles of **Comprehensive National Power**. Part (b) asks whether NEP 2020 treats education as a command or as a tool that grows a whole person and a fairer society.

Body**(a) Ethics, values and three components of CNP**

- **Comprehensive National Power** is the usable sum of a country's hard and soft capacities: people, economy, military, science, culture, diplomacy and internal cohesion.

- Ethics and values do not replace steel. They decide whether steel is trusted, whether talent stays, and whether the house does not burn while the army parades.

Human capital

- Human capital is health, skill, honesty of work and the will to learn. Values of dignity and equal opportunity decide who is allowed to become capital.
- A child kept out of school by caste, gender or a hungry household is a power deficit, not a private sorrow.
- **Integrity in classrooms and offices converts training into output:** a nurse who does not sell a bed, a scientist who does not fake a paper, a soldier who does not loot.
- Empathy and fairness in labour - the Code on Wages, 2019 spirit, not only the gazette - keep migrants and women in the workforce instead of pushing them out as cheap, disposable hands.
- **Constitutional morality (Articles 14, 15, 21, 21A) is therefore a CNP policy:** exclusion wastes brains the treasury already paid to grow.

Soft power (culture and policies)

- **Soft power is attraction:** culture, education, films, yoga, democracy, disaster help, and policies others wish to copy.
- Values of pluralism, non-violence in public speech, and hospitality to a guest make Indian culture exportable; majoritarian humiliation makes it a scarecrow.
- Policy credibility is a value. A visa, a vaccine gift, or a climate pledge that is kept is **soft power**; a pledge that is theatre is not.
- The Non-Aligned Movement's moral voice, and later vaccine Maitri, worked only while they looked like duty rather than a bargain with a weaker neighbour.
- Censorship that fears a book, or a riot that films well, spends decades of cultural capital in a week.
- Ethics in diplomacy - pacta sunt servanda, restraint in arms export, honest statistics - is how a rising power is believed.

Social harmony

- Harmony is not silence. It is conflict contained by law, fraternity and a shared public square (**Article 51A(e)**).
- **Hatred, rumour and selective policing split the CNP:** internal troops then police their own streets instead of watching a border.
- Values of sarva dharma sambhava, due process, and punishment that does not wear a community's face keep the Union as one labour market and one tax base.
- Example: a riot after a rumour on a phone is a CNP event - factories close, tourists cancel, and a neighbour reads weakness.
- Example: a district that feeds every community in a flood, without a form that asks the wrong identity, is harmony as logistics, which is power.
- Ethics here is the daily refusal to treat a citizen as a vote-bank enemy. Without that refusal, human capital and **soft power** leak through the same crack.

(b) NEP 2020: education as development, not injunction

- **An injunction is a command:** sit, copy, fear the exam, obey the teacher's rank. Development is growth of body, mind, skill, character and the power to live with others.
- The quoted claim is right as an aim. NEP 2020, approved in July 2020, is best read as an attempt to move the system from injunction toward that aim - with gaps that still look like command.

- **All-round development in the Policy:** foundational literacy and numeracy; a 5+3+3+4 design that takes early childhood seriously; arts, sports and vocational exposure; mother-tongue / home-language teaching in the early years; and a claim that report cards should show more than a rank.
- **Social transformation in the Policy:** equity and inclusion chapters, Gender Inclusion Fund, Special Education Zones, and the intent that a first-generation learner is not a residual afterthought.
- **Not an injunction, in design:** multidisciplinary higher education, multiple exit options, Academic Bank of Credits, and less of a single high-stakes board as the only door - these treat the learner as a person with paths, not as a file to be stamped once.
- **Character and constitutional values:** NEP names ethics, scientific temper and rootedness. That is education as civic formation, which GS-IV should welcome, provided it does not become a second sermon syllabus.
- **Limits that still smell of injunction:** if mother-tongue policy is imposed without teachers and books, it becomes a command that hurts the poor who already paid for English as a ladder.
- If "Indian knowledge" is taught as uncritical glory rather than as inquiry, the Policy's scientific temper is contradicted.
- If digital-first classrooms ignore the child without a smartphone, NEP's equity chapter is an injunction on paper and an exclusion in the ward.
- Examination culture, coaching markets and underpaid contract teachers can still turn a beautiful Policy into the old command: mark, rank, obey.
- **Ethical reading:** implement NEP as a right to develop - Early Childhood Care and Education, nutrition, trained teachers, and a school that does not humiliate a caste or a girl - not as a circular that only renames the timetable.
- Social transformation will not arrive from a PDF. It will arrive if a municipal school in a basti actually gets the library, the sport and the counsellor the Policy promised.

Flow diagram

Ethics and values -> Human capital
 Ethics and values -> Soft power
 Ethics and values -> Social harmony
 Human capital -> Comprehensive National Power
 Soft power -> Comprehensive National Power
 Social harmony -> Comprehensive National Power
 NEP 2020 -> All-round development
 NEP 2020 -> Injunction if only circulars
 All-round development -> Social transformation

Conclusion

Ethics raises CNP by growing includable talent, believable culture and a street that does not riot. NEP 2020 is a design for all-round development rather than a mere command, but only delivery - teachers, equity, inquiry rather than sermon - will keep it from becoming a new injunction.

Facts & figures

Comprehensive National Power

A strategic-studies idea of national capability as a bundle of military, economic, scientific, human and socio-political strengths, not GDP or troops alone.

National Education Policy, 2020

Union Cabinet approval in July 2020; 5+3+3+4 structure, foundational literacy, multidisciplinary higher education and an equity mandate.

Article 21A and the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009

The justiciable floor of schooling; NEP sits on this right rather than replacing it.

Article 51A(e)

Fundamental duty to promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood; the constitutional name for social harmony as a public ethic.

Soft power

Joseph Nye's term for attraction through culture, values and policies; India has used yoga, diaspora, democracy and humanitarian aid as instruments.

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