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Date: 16-4-19

**ST. JOSEPH’S COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), BANGALORE**

**IV SEMESTER BSC/ BA FINAL EXAMINATION APRIL 2019**

**General English- NSA/ SSA/ EJP/ CPE Special Course (GE 414)**

**Time: 2 ½ hours Max marks: 70**

**INSTRUCTIONS**

1. This booklet contains **FIVE** printed sides.

2. This paper is meant for NSA/SSA students who have opted for the Special Course and for IV Semester EJP/CPE students

3. You will lose marks for exceeding word limits.

4. You are allowed to use a dictionary during the examination

**I. Read the following excerpt from the essay ‘Back to the Future’ by Ammu Joseph written for Aditi De’s Book *Multiple City:***

Last Night, I had a dream.

I was dutifully polishing brassware, gifted by friends and relatives over the years, which have sadly turned into mill stones thanks to the effusion of unidentified gases emanating from unmentionable effluents flowing through the storm water drain behind our house. I was, of course, thinking dark thoughts and muttering under my breath about the BDA, the BMP, the BWSSB and other benighted ‘planners’, ‘administrators’, and ‘service providers’ of Bangalore, whose accumulated sins of omission and commission were now being visited upon us, hapless and increasingly hopeless citizens for whose benefit they exist and on whose paid-up taxes they run.

In the midst of this, out poured a large vaporous being bearing an uncanny resemblance to an ex-chief minister turned prime minister turned no minister, who claimed to be a genie. And, as is the wont of such freshly freed spirits, he promptly offered to grant me three wishes to turn Bengaluru back into a land of *haalu* (milk)and honey.

It didn’t take me long to decide that my first wish would relate to traffic congestion, which has not only become a major bane of life in Bangalore, but, to me, symbolizes its infrastructural crisis, closely linked as the problem is to the scarcity of public transport, paucity and poor quality of roads and, of course, the ineffectuality of zoning.

My second wish had to be about restoring the greenery and water bodies that accounted for Bangalore’s fast- fading reputation as a garden city. This, to me, is not simply about ‘beautification’- a term favoured by city authorities, although their concept of civic beauty generally does not involve nature. It has as much to do with natural resources and climatic conditions as with the quality of life, as well as the physical and mental health experienced by citizens.

I figured my third wish should be about refashioning the cityscape, which has completely altered the look and feel of Bangalore over the past decade: its traditional houses and colonial bungalows giving way to multi-storey buildings.

Now that I knew what I wanted I was not sure how to proceed . Having never dealt with a genie before I had no idea what the self-appointed grantor of wishes expected from the would-be grantee: a simple list of requests or a full-fledged project proposal- mission statement, conceptual framework, target group, projected outcomes, budget, monitoring mechanism, et al.? Since our friend was still out for the count, I banished such vexing thoughts from my head and took off on a flight of fancy instead. And here’s a glimpse of life in my little middle-class, semi-urban corner of the city of my imagination:

I wake up in the morning to the sounds of birds twittering on the trees that line all the beautifully asphalted streets in my neighbourhood. I look out of the window and see that some senior citizens are already walking along the wide, even footpaths towards one of the many parks in the area where residents can congregate to enjoy fresh air, socialize, exercise, have a round of chess or Scrabble at specifically designed places, supervise toddlers playing in the kiddies’ corner or keep an eye on pets frolicking in the dog-run.

In the early evening, children home from school will occupy the space for a refreshing round of sport. Of course, they also have a choice of indoor games like table tennis, a modest gym in the area’s community centre, which boasts a library and a room for playing cards and board games. The centre offers multi-purpose spaces for cultural activities, yoga, lectures and discussions and, of course, the monthly residents’ meeting at which civic issues are aired and sorted out, with municipal officials or political representatives in attendance, when necessary.

I set out for a brisk morning walk in our little version of Lalbagh, created out the grassland at the far end of our colony (blessed with a small, recently resuscitated lake), thanks to the efforts of the environmentalists among fellow residents, who successfully lobbied against the conversion of the open land into a commercial-cum-residential complex.

After breakfast, I put my segregated garbage out for collection in the pilfer-proof covered bins provided by a consortium set up by neighbours of the nearby village; the local raddi-walla collects the paper and plastic while a group of once-unemployed youth have built a thriving business out of recycling the biodegradable waste, using a corner of our mini Lalbagh for vermiculture and supplying organic manure for use in private gardens as well as public parks in the neighbourhood and beyond.

Setting out for work, I wait at the end of our street for the van that conveniently connects our area to the nearest station of the railway that encircles the city. The frequent shuttle service, which follows a circular route within the suburb, picks up and drops residents at various points along the way.

I wave to my neighbour, who is heading towards the Inner Ring Road in her car, which she needs to go to a concert at the other end of town in the evening. On such occasions, she parks in one of the large parking lots placed at regular intervals along both the ring roads around the city and then takes a share-taxi from there to her workplace. It is not worth driving directly to her boutique in the city centre since the tax on private vehicles with just a single occupant entering the core business district is quite high.

My other neighbour does not have that problem because he belongs to a car pool. He is all praise for the mid-town underground parking facilities, which not only preserve the look of the city while freeing up space on the roads but also enable people to comfortably walk to their destinations. My family, too, now loves weekend browsing in the pedestrian plazas that Bangalore’s famous shopping boulevards, Commercial Street and Brigade Road, have become.

After work, in the evening I take a taxi to the main railway station, where the monorail from the airport located some distance from the city connects with the multi-faceted urban transport system. I had arranged to meet an out-of-town friend who had arrived on a late afternoon flight there, so we would ride the commuter train back to my part of the town together.

As we cross the familiar bridge over the storm water drain, my friends looks around, puzzled: ‘Hey, where is your infamous *nallah*?’ I am pleased to point to the jogging track to the left of us and to the sculpture garden to the right of us, both sitting atop the cleaned-up trench through which only rain water now flows.

Outside the house, I look around and see a group of elders walking home from the park, couples setting out for their evening run, children cycling back from music or dance classes at the community centre, young people waiting for the shuttle to take them to their favourite hang-outs in the suburb’s commercial hub, the few vehicles on the road stopping for pedestrians waiting at the zebra crossing…

And I think: ‘Into this heaven, oh genie, let my city awake!’

I guess that was the thought that woke me up.

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

1. “I was dutifully polishing brassware, gifted by friends and relatives over the years, which have sadly turned into mill stones thanks to the effusion of unidentified gases emanating from unmentionable effluents flowing through the storm water drain behind our house.”, says Ammu Joseph. Narrate a similar experience and discuss the idea of a city through the images of construction, repair, and damage.
2. Looking back, what would you not want from old Bangalore (or any other place you grew up in) to be part of your present? Give reasons for your answer.
3. How do you connect to Ammu Joseph’s image of a future Bangalore? Is her imagined vision of a future Bangalore a possibility? Discuss.
4. **Read this poem titled ‘Directions’ by Pratibha Nandakumar from Aditi De’s  *Multiple City* before attempting the questions that follow:**

‘The Hanuman temple street is one way now,

come from the old pond side, it’s right opposite

the big banyan tree’

Chandru wanted his mother to close down the old house

and move with him to America,

she wanted to give me

a pair of traditional brass lamps,

‘An heirloom piece, so come and take it’

It was not the old familiar place any more

In less than two kilometres I had lost my way

four times. Asking for directions is

a woman’s preoccupation, they say

The auto driver was quick:

‘Oh, it’s right next to the next road hump,

just slow down and you will hit it’

I missed it.

The traffic police was more helpful:

‘Just go back and it’s at the first signal’

It was the same one I had passed

The doctor in the fancy car was more specific:

‘Take a right, it’s right next to the super-speciality

diagnostic centre; you can’t miss it’

His right was my left.

Surely they were on a weekend picnic;

the SUV was full of sweatshirts and football:

‘It’s behind the gym, auntie, just drive on’

What gym?

The postman, I thought, would lead:

‘I am going on the other beat, this is the old number,

now all that has changed, 88 comes after 97, ask anyone’

The, priest, aha, he will definitely know the banyan tree,

there must be a temple and the old pond near the tree:

‘What pond? There is no pond here, all the water has dried up,

I take my holy dip under a tap, it doesn’t even wet me whole,

this is the house next to the xerox shop, the old lady rented out a

portion of the garage for my son, he will show you, tell him

his father is going to the market, will come later’

I just stood there, wondering which way to turn

Someone was frantically waving out from a window.

It was grandmother. I looked around.

The asbestos sheet roof: super-speciality diagnostic centre,

next to a corner called gym, behind number 97,

opposite to the signal without lights turning right to the hump,

a small tree sort of a trunk cut into half, an old temple

hiding behind a giant billboard calling out freshness, my old ancestral

home that was going to be pulled down to make way for a mall.

 *Translated from Kannada by the author*

1. **A. Answer the following in about 150 words each: (2x10= 20)**
2. Discuss the different images of Bangalore that you encounter in the poem.
3. Are people from Bangalore terrible at giving directions? Use the poem to substantiate your answer.

**III. Answer the following in about 250 words each: (1x20= 20)**

1. Many cities have to sacrifice their environmental and architectural heritage in the name of development. How would you describe the word development in the context of the growth of a city and is this sacrifice the only way development can function? Substantiate your answer using specific cities as examples.