

PRESIDENCY COLLEGE
Admission Test- 2007
PHILOSOPHY HONOURS

Full Mrks-100

Time-2hrs

Answer Q. no. 1 & 4 in English and the rest in English or Bengali.

1. Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions in your own words: 25

... If you were asked, "How do you know that there is a book in front of you?" you might well reply, "Because I can see it and touch it"----what could be more obvious? It would certainly seem that you can know many things about the world----that physical things exist, and what their characteristics are----by seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, tasting. It is primarily through seeing and touching that we know *that* physical things exist: we see the chair, and then we sit on it; but all our senses on various occasions inform us of *what* a thing's characteristics are : we can see that it is red, smell its pungent odor, taste its bitterness, feel its hardness, hear it being struck.

It is not all as simple as this, of course. Sometimes we have sense-experiences when there is nothing at all to be perceived: we may be having a hallucination, such as when we are thirsty and think we see water and trees in the desert and there are none there. Or sometimes what we see is really there, but we think it has one characteristic when it really has another; if we are color-blind, we think it is gray when it is green; or we may see one kind of thing, which is really there, but mistake it for another, as when in the darkness or fog we mistake a dog for a wolf, or a donkey for a horse.

These are all *perceptual errors* ... It is commonly believed that the existence of perceptual errors shows that our senses are fallible, but it would be more accurate to say that our *judgment* is fallible. Our senses haven't really deceived us: we have been led (on the basis of our sense-perceptions) to make judgments that we subsequently find to be untrue; had we withheld judgment ---had we not taken the donkey to be horse---there would have been no error. The error is always one of judgment, not of sensation. All the senses can do is present us with experiences, which we then classify, sometimes erroneously.

It is worth noting also that when we make a perceptual error owing to incomplete or fragmentary sense-experiences, it is always *further* sense-experiences that lead us to discover our error. If you are not sure this is a real apple, bite into it or cut it open and see whether it is made of wax; if you are not sure that it's a man walking down the road in the distance, wait till he comes closer and then judge, or look through a pair of binoculars; if you are not sure you hear a clock ticking in the next room, go there, approach the source of the sound, and then judge. There is no cure for erroneous judgments based on sense-experiences but other judgments based on *further* sense-experiences. So the fact of error based on sense-experience does not show that we must appeal to something over and above sense-experience; it only shows that we need more sense-experience, and that if we had waited to have it, we would not have made the mistaken judgment in the first place.

Thus far we have been speaking only of the so called "external senses", those through which we get information about the outside world. But there are also the "internal senses", acquainting us with our own internal states (feelings, attitudes, moods, pains, and pleasures), as well as our own mental operations such as thinking, believing, and wondering. In these cases we do not have *sense-organs* at all; nevertheless, on the basis of certain experiences we *are* entitled to state certain propositions. But the only propositions we are here entitled to assert are about our own internal states: for example, I am having a toothache, I feel drowsy, I feel ill this morning, I am thinking about next summer's vacation, and so on. In all these cases the fact that we are having

the experience in question is the only guarantee we have or need for the truth of the proposition. If I have a headache, this is all that is required to make the proposition "I have a headache" true. The proposition "I have a toothache" is about nothing but my present experience, so having the experience is enough to make that proposition true.

- a) Do you think that sense-experience can be regarded as a source of obtaining knowledge? 5
- b) Are our senses fallible? 5
- c) Cite of your own two examples of perceptual errors and explain how they occur. 5
- d) What is the remedy for perceptual errors? 5
- e) What serves as the guarantee for the truth about our own "internal states"? In this respect do you find any difference between this kind of truth and truth about external physical world? 5

2. Write an essay on : Global Warming and You (not exceeding 250 words). 25

3. Answer the following questions briefly :

- i) Suppose poets are birds, then how can you justify that poets fly, with a single sentence/proposition? 2
- ii) If Ram is older than Shyam and Shyam is older than Jadu , then how are Ram and Jadu related ? Can you cite another example of similar type of relation? 2
- iii) If perception is considered a source of knowledge , then what in your opinion ,can be the instrumental cause of it ? 2
- iv) Learning being an act , how can it be improved by practice ? 2
- v) Suppose a car runs 15 km per hour each day, now on a particular day x expects it will run 18 km per hour, while y expects it will run 12km per hour- which is more probable ? Why? 2
- vi) All men are perfect and This blue table is not table, both are false —what is the difference between these two ? 2
- vii) 'Some stones are not precious' is true, now what is the equivalent affirmative form of it? 2
- viii) Ram deposits his money in bank. How can the italicised word be used in different sense- give an example with a sentence . 2
- ix) If x says he /she knows car driving, philosophers hold the opinion that x has the particular ability --how will you explain the situation- as actual or potential ? 2
- x) Name two Principal Upanisads . 2
- xi) Who are the authors of 'Principia Mathematica' and 'Hind-Swaraj' ? 2
- xii) Comment on (with three sentences) any current social problem of India that is considered as violation of the principle of equality . 3

When we survey our lives and endeavors, we soon observe that almost the whole of our actions and desires is bound up with the existence of other human beings. We notice that our whole nature resembles that of the social animals. We eat food that others have produced, wear clothes that others have made, live in houses that others have built. The greater part of our knowledge and beliefs has been communicated to us by other people through the medium of a language which others have created. Without language our mental capacities would be poor indeed, comparable to those of the higher animals; we have, therefore, to admit that we owe our principal advantage over the beasts to the fact of living in human society. The individual, if left alone from birth, would remain primitive and beast like in his thoughts and feelings to a degree that we can hardly conceive. The individual is what he is and has the significance that he has not so much in virtue of his individuality, but rather as a member of a great human community, which directs his material and spiritual existence from the cradle to the grave.

A man's value to the community depends primarily on how far his feelings, thoughts, and actions are directed toward promoting the good of his fellows. We call him good or bad according to his attitude in thus respect. It looks at first sight as if our estimate of a man depended entirely on his social qualities.
