

D 102502

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Name.....

Reg. No.....

PG ENTRANCE EXAMINATION, APRIL 2024

PHILOSOPHY

Time : Two Hours

Maximum : 100 Marks

1. Read the following passages and answer the questions given below :

A long-time smoker dies of lung cancer. The family says the smoking caused it; the physician says it was the victim's weak lungs; and the tobacco company (who paid the physician) blames it on everything except the smoking.

Who is right ? Well, they all are. And no one is.

Let's take a simple case: you strike a match and it lights. Most of the time we'd say the striking was the cause of the lighting. But in fact, there were many other factors as relevant to the lighting as the striking. For starters, it's obviously crucial that the match was coated with appropriate chemicals, that it was made of a flammable wood, that oxygen was present, and so on. Equally necessary were the physical properties of the surface on which it was struck: had it been struck on butter or on water or on your nose, it would not have lighted. And even more fundamentally, we must include the very laws of physics and chemistry which dictate that when matches so made are so struck etc., a lighting will ensue.

But even these are just the beginning. For it was also necessary that no stiff wind was blowing; that no rain was falling and that you were not in the shower; that no earthquake covered the match in debris; and that no other gases antagonistic to lighting were present. So too was it necessary that no other match or lighter or fire-breathing dragon had lit the match before it was struck, that it did not spontaneously disappear at the moment of striking, and that (most generally) God did not intervene with some inconvenient anti-lighting miracle.

In short, we can't simply say that the striking of the match caused its lighting. We ought rather to say that more or less everything existing in the universe caused the lighting, as well as more or less everything not existing.

I'm sure the tobacco companies will be happy to hear that the same goes for the lung cancer.

Turn over

I wonder why they never invite philosophers to testify.

- (a) Do you support the singularity of cause ? Why ?
- (b) Finding the notion of cause to be too complex, what can be considered as cause in a practical sense ?
- (c) Will you sue the tobacco company for the death? Justify your answer.
- (d) How will you evaluate the physician's position ?

(20 marks)

2. Answer the following :

- (a) How is philosophy different from other disciplines of knowledge ?
- (b) Are humans free to act ? Why is the concept of freedom connected with morality ?
- (c) Briefly describe branches of philosophy concerned with values.
- (d) How is religion different from science ?

(20 marks)

3. Comment on the following :

- (a) "Truth is God".
- (b) "Patriotism cannot be our final spiritual shelter; my refuge is humanity"
- (c) "To be is to be perceived".
- (d) "God is dead".

(20 marks)

4. Briefly explain the key ideas of the following thinkers :

- (a) Descartes.
- (b) Sartre.
- (c) Aurobindo.
- (d) Vivekananda.

(20 marks)

5. Write short essays on the following :

- (a) Do you think that democracy is the best form of government ? Justify your answer.
- (b) What is humanism ? Is humanisation of politics necessary ? Discuss.

(20 marks)