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**INDIAN INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**  
**INDRAPRASTHA ESTATE, RING ROAD, NEW DELHI**

**ANNUAL ESSAY PRIZE COMPETITION-2025**

Entries are invited for the Annual Essay Prize Competition-2025.  
The value of the prize for the competition will be as under:

First Prize	Rs. 10,000/-
Second Prize	Rs. 7,000/-
Third Prize	Rs. 5,000/-

Any competitor who has got a prize on one occasion will not, on any subsequent occasion, be eligible for an equivalent or lower prize. The joint authorship of essays shall not be allowed and any essay with joint authorship shall not be considered for competition.

The topics for the competition are:

**Annual Essay Prize Competition 2025**

- (i) Era of Artificial Intelligence
- (ii) Social Media: Challenges and Opportunities
- (iii) Ease of Living

The essay writers are expected to cover the following aspects in their respective entries:

Focus Area to be covered

**TOPIC 1. Era of Artificial Intelligence**

**1.Introduction:**

Artificial intelligence (AI) has emerged as an important driver in the current era of rapid technological growth, transforming many facets of human life and work. Challenges that once were previously unimaginable are now being addressed with remarkable ease, as AI technologies become

increasingly embedded in everyday reality. Advancements in artificial intelligence (AI) are no longer limited to the domain of science fiction; they have become an integral part of everyday life. It has emerged as a powerful tool in governance, offering immense potential to improve public administration, citizen engagement, and policy efficiency. Governments across the world, including in India, are increasingly integrating AI into core functions to achieve sustainable development, reduce human error, enhance service delivery, and respond effectively to dynamic social needs. However, with its transformative potential come concerns regarding data privacy, accountability, ethical use, and equitable access.

## **2. Artificial Intelligence Market**

The AI market is expanding rapidly on a global scale. The global artificial intelligence industry was estimated to be worth USD 196.6 billion in 2023, and it is projected to increase at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 36.6% between 2024 and 2030, according to a report by Grand View Research (2024). By 2030, the worldwide market is expected to grow to a scale of over USD 1.8 trillion, reflecting a sharp increase in research, deployment, and investment across all industries. The combination of big data, cloud computing, sophisticated algorithms, and ever-more-powerful computing infrastructure is driving this expansion. Additionally, the artificial intelligence (AI) ecosystem in India is experiencing rapid growth, marked by a substantial rise in research, innovation, and practical applications across diverse sectors. India has adopted a holistic approach to AI, focusing on social development, economic advancement, and leveraging AI for public benefit. In alignment with its vision of "Making AI in India" and "Making AI Work for India," the government has approved the nationwide India AI Mission with a significant investment of ₹10,371.92 crore. These advancements are positioning the country alongside developed nations, including members of the G7 and G20.

On March 18th of this year, the US-India Artificial Intelligence Initiative was launched by the Indo-U.S. Science and Technology Forum (IUSSTF), aiming to establish a dynamic platform for knowledge exchange, research and development opportunities, and enhanced bilateral collaboration. Globally, investments in cognitive and AI solutions are projected to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 50.1%, reaching USD 57.6 billion by 2021, driven by substantial adoption across multiple industries.

### **3. Background:**

The theoretical and technological foundations of artificial intelligence (AI) were mostly created during the previous 70 years by computer scientists like Alan Turing, Marvin Minsky, and John McCarthy. AI is not a brand-new phenomenon. AI is already present in many sectors of the economy and in many governments. We are now on the verge of the exponential era of AI as businesses learn to unlock the value hidden in massive amounts of data, owing to nearly limitless computer power and falling data storage costs.

AI can analyse large datasets to provide insights that aid evidence-based policymaking and strategic planning, leading to more informed and effective decisions. AI is transforming data-driven decision making by using sophisticated algorithms to quickly and efficiently evaluate enormous volumes of data. Artificial Intelligence (AI) may detect hidden patterns, correlations, and trends that human analysts might miss by analysing both structured and unstructured data. With the use of this skill, organisations may make well-informed judgements devoid of intuition or insufficient knowledge, by relying instead on data-driven insights.

Additionally, AI speeds up decision timelines and increases efficiency by automating repetitive operations like data processing and analysis. This boosts decision-making processes. Artificial intelligence (AI)-powered predictive analytics projects future patterns and results, supporting risk management and strategic planning. Rapid insights are made possible

by real-time decision support systems, which allow for quick reactions to changing circumstances.

The Artificial Intelligence for Sushaasan (AI4Sushaasan) will focus on the development and application of AI for good governance. Its main objective is to make sure AI technologies are used responsibly and ethically for good governance and government policy implementation to get India closer to our **Hon'bl Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's \$5 trillion economic target.**

Artificial Intelligence) is increasingly being adopted by governments around the world for a variety of purposes due to its potential to enhance efficiency, effectiveness, and decision-making processes.

#### **4. India's New AI Stack and the IndiaAI Mission: Building Digital Public Infrastructure for Development**

India is already reshaping our polity, our economy, our security, and even our society. AI is writing the code for humanity in this century,” said Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the AI Action Summit in Paris, where India co-chaired with France. His words reflect the nation’s growing leadership in shaping the future of Artificial Intelligence (AI). The Government of India has launched the IndiaAI Mission, a landmark initiative designed to transform India into a global hub for AI development and deployment. With a Cabinet-approved outlay of ₹10,371.92 crore over five years, the mission is envisioned as a public-private partnership (PPP) model that will bridge systemic gaps in India’s AI ecosystem and ensure the benefits of AI reach all strata of society.

#### **5. The IndiaAI Mission: Strategic Pillars and Implementation**

The IndiaAI Mission aims to build a comprehensive ecosystem that fosters AI innovation by democratizing computing access, enhancing data quality, developing indigenous AI capabilities, attracting top AI talent, enabling industry collaboration, providing startup risk capital, ensuring socially impactful AI projects, and promoting ethical AI. This mission drives responsible and inclusive growth of India's AI ecosystem

through following seven pillars.,

- IndiaAI Compute
- IndiaAI Innovation Centre (IAIC)
- IndiaAI Datasets Platform
- India AI Application Development Initiative
- IndiaAI FutureSkills
- IndiaAI Startup Financing
- Safe & Trusted AI

These pillars are designed to create a robust, inclusive, and ethical AI ecosystem while promoting innovation, entrepreneurship, and social good.

**Developmental Vision:** Inclusive, Responsible, and Sovereign AI- India's AI approach centers on AI for public good, particularly in underserved regions. Applications such as:

- Early warning systems for climate risks
- Remote AI-assisted diagnostics
- Machine translation for regional languages

...are designed to bridge digital divides. The mission emphasizes India language models, ensuring access for the 90% of Indians not fluent in English. Ethical concerns—such as bias, surveillance, and misinformation—are proactively addressed through the stack's governance layer.

## 6. Challenges to Address

Despite its transformative potential, AI adoption in India faces several challenges:

- Ethical concerns: Bias, lack of human oversight
  - Critical thinking decline: Over-reliance on AI tools
  - Environmental impact: High energy consumption of data centers
  - Workforce displacement: Especially in low-skilled sectors
- Carbon footprint: Need for sustainable AI
  - Data privacy & security: Regulatory gaps

- Overuse & premature deployment: Risk of ineffective models
- Skill gaps: Insufficient AI-trained workforce
- Infrastructure deficits: Inadequate cloud and compute resources
- Data access & quality issues: Fragmented and under-annotated datasets

**7. Conclusion :** In conclusion, the emerging areas of AI development hold immense transformative potential across sectors, from healthcare and education to climate action and governance. However, the responsible advancement of these technologies requires a deliberate focus on ethical governance, transparency, and inclusivity. Governments, academic institutions, and industries must work together to build regulatory frameworks, support interdisciplinary research, and invest in digital infrastructure that ensures AI benefits are equitably distributed. Strengthening public sector readiness, encouraging open-source collaboration, and fostering global partnerships will be critical to addressing potential risks while maximizing AI's potential for sustainable and inclusive development.

The following are the primary areas of focus for essay writing:

- 1. Public Services and Governance**
- 2. Policy Formulation and Decision Making**
- 3. Public Safety and Security**
- 4. Healthcare and Social Services**
- 5. Transportation and Infrastructure**
- 6. Cyber Security and threat analytics**
- 7. Environmental Monitoring, Sustainability, and Disaster Management**
- 8. Education and Workforce Development**
- 9. Legal Research and Judiciary**
- 10. Public Grievance Redressal**
- 11. Agriculture and Food Security**
- 12. Banking and Rural Financial Services**
- 13. Clean Water and Sanitation**

- 14. Manufacturing and Logistics**
- 15. Social Media Monitoring for Law Enforcement**
- 16. UNSDG – United Nations Sustainable Development Goals**
- 17. Data Privacy & Security: Regulatory gaps**
- 18. Carbon footprint: Need for sustainable AI**
- 19. Ethical framework and Governance.**

## **Topic 2. Social Media: Challenges and Opportunities**

The manner in which Benedict Anderson has penned, “Imagined communities” in the 90’s, it stand has been amply vindicated by the popularity and usage reach of the Social Media where in people need not be in tangible touch with each other but can still communicate with, “Immediacy” and be part of reach others lives and more importantly can influence of nations and their populace. What it refers to it, is, the idiom that people are far removed from each other residing and working in different settings all cross the globe while they so reside, they also communicate with each other through means of communication, transport and now the eugenics of Social Media which is another mode of citizen centric connectivity.

The guidelines and the format of the Social Media theme can be of the following and underwritten which the contestants have to adhere to. We will delve inside the actual details and the facts of the narrative and the text of the essay later but lets settle for a collectivist endeavor for the essay theme mentioned herewith.

**The following can serve as potent pointers for the essay:**

### **1.) The concept of Social Media**

In a world and a comity of nations and hoi polloi subsisting in a distant but avidly connected world, people and agencies relate to each other in the ream of intangibilities where in communication posts of the order of distant relatives and agencies can communicate publicly and seamlessly over the matrices of global propagation and communication. It was the Pentagon in the seventies which initiated the concept of the” Intranet” which was later on replicated by the rest of the Governmental agencies and the corporate sector in order to connect and communicate in an infallible manner. For people to be

empowered Social Media is also being utilized by the Government of the day in order to execute the Regimental schemes and look for timely and opportune feedback from the citizens where the Government can ameliorate in order to better the function of the Government.

- 2.) People want to participate and be part and parcel with the “Going ons” of national and official communication. Thus arises the need of individual publishable presence which portals such as X, Instagram and Facebook facilitate for the people which do not have access to the Print and Electronic Media. Thus in order to gainfully express themselves and give a vent to one’s own individual ideas and persona, citizens need a n access to the outside world where in they can lets say exchange conflicting views and perceptions about how Trump’s tariff Regime is posing to be a challenge to the rest of the comity of natty nationalities and economists of the larger world.
- 3.) Dissent and the freedom of expression themes have become the order of the day as far as the functioning of the Social Media is concerned. Politically and ideologically the social media portals sometimes become the modern day, “ Akharas” where in regimental armies of fans and supporters slug it out on the mediascape with trolling becoming the order of the day.
- 4.) The Social Media construct is a new manner of innovation where denizens of a nation can shout out aloud, “Yes! I have been published” giving a vent out to the aspirations of the general populace. Thus, in a manner the theme of social media is a also replete with menaces as the freedom of expression clause has its limitations. In a manner, it can be contended that Social Media has also invigorated the popular rebellions such as the Arab Spring when a clothes seller in Tunisia initiated the entire uprising through the Social Media.
- 5.) Media landscapes and the diversity of roles fulfilled by tech companies have been evolving at a high pace and will continue to do so. Democracy now requires that we engage in a collective learning process to organize online content moderation in a manner compatible with the requirements of international standards on freedom of expression. From



this perspective, the need for a mechanism capable of ensuring an effective public supervision of content moderation on social media platforms is increasingly recognized on all sides.

**The following order can serve as the general guideline for the essay:**

- 1.) Introductions and multiple definitions of the term and phenomenon termed as, “Social Media”.
- 2.) Explanation of the term, “ Simulacra”.
- 3.) Historical back grounder of Social Media
- 4.) The debate between Freedom of Expression and the national security concerns of the nation/ land
- 5.) The global regulatory norms of Social Media
- 6.) The Domestic/ Indian and American regulatory norms of Social Media
- 7.) Trolling and Defamation on the Web: A challenge to peace, sanity, civility and order
- 8.) Enhancement of Language skills, expression and interactivity across the nations, Institutions and geo spatial boundaries
- 9.) Conclusion and Recommendations from the author

**Topic-3. Ease of Living**

**Introduction**

Economic growth and material well-being, measured in terms of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), no doubt is important indicator for development of the country; but alone it is not sufficient for ensuring the welfare of societies. Therefore, the main challenge is to create a more comprehensive perspective on growth that includes aspects that are not limited to economic performance. The ultimate aim of development is to improve overall living conditions for the citizens rather than just expansion of economic output. The ease of living is a major indicator of development of a country and an important goal to pursue to improve wellbeing of citizens. Good governance is realised in true sense only when citizens get the benefits of government services without delay and development becomes meaningful only when it enhances everyday experiences and improves the quality of life for all citizens.

## **Ease of Living: Concept & Meaning**

The term "ease of living" describes the general standard of living that people in a town, city, or nation experience. It indicates whole quality of life that individuals and communities experience, on economic, social, environmental, and cultural aspects. It denotes how easily and comfortably people are able to meet their daily needs and aspirations, which includes access to basic services, safety, mobility, environment, employment, housing, and social and cultural opportunities. The phrase is being used more and more in urban planning, governance, and policy evaluation to assess the effectiveness of administrative measures in fostering citizen-friendly environment. The main idea of Ease of Living is that people should be able to lead fulfilling lives without unnecessary burdens or obstacles.

It is a holistic concept which denotes well-functioning, inclusive and sustainable society. Citizens expect a smooth, hassle free and comfortable life devoid of shortages and struggles, which ensures a dignified and respectable existence in our daily lives. But, this is difficult to achieve as it involves to an extensive array of governance concerns and also requires cooperation and commitment on the part of every citizen.

No doubt the progress of technology and improvements in availability of services and commodities has resulted in quality of life especially in urban areas. However, many issues still continue to persist; one of the main hurdle still remains in the form of citizens' interactions with any government department. Due to all pervading corruption, which is getting institutionalized, has eroded the trust of citizens in the whole system of governance. It not only imposes unnecessary cost to the citizen but also entails delays, harassment and humiliation.

"Ease of Living" is present government's top priority. The government has taken many reforms in the legal and governance systems. These involve repealing the archaic laws and taking up certain governance reforms with innovative approaches to chronic problems to ensure ease of living. The government has

not only focussed on improving the Ease of Doing Business but has constantly emphasised upon improving 'Ease of Living' for citizens across different sectors. This has been brought about by lesser government interference and simplification of cumbersome processes. Thus reforms in laws, administrative and judicial reforms, improvement in basic amenities, accessibility of services for all, overhaul of our education system and healthcare system are prerequisites to improve ease of living for the citizens.

### **Ease of Living Index for the cities**

More and more Indians are migrating to cities from rural areas with aspiration of a better quality of life and economic and social opportunities. By 2050 India is projected to add 416 million urban dwellers to the world's urban population and would be home for about 58% of the total global population. This poses a lot of challenges for the cities to cope with. With rising concentration of people and a limited resource, cities require efficient management and planning to sustain themselves and promote people's well-being and prosperity. Therefore, with increase in urbanization, it becomes pertinent to measure and improve Ease of Living to ensure that cities and nations not only grow in size, but are places to live with human dignity. The Government of India has taken a number of initiatives like the Smart Cities Mission, AMRUT, HRIDAY, Swachh Bharat Mission, and PMAY, among others, to make Indian cities healthy, attractive and sustainable, and to improve the quality of living of its people.

The 'Ease of Living' Index was launched by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) in January 2018. The objective of the Index is to assist the cities systematically to assess themselves against global and national benchmarks and encourage them to shift towards an 'outcome-based' approach to urban planning and management. The Ease of Living framework has strong link to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as the indicators for the assessment covers several metrics critical to track progress towards the SDGs in an urban environment. The Index aims to quantify the ease of living of citizens living in the cities across three pillars: quality of life, economic ability, and sustainability.

The four important pillars investigated under the 'Ease of Living' Index are - Institutional, Social, Economic and Physical that represent the broad conceptual elements that define ease of living. The Ease of Living Index assesses the well-being of Indian inhabitants in 111 cities based on four parameters: Quality of Life, Economic Ability, Sustainability, and inhabitants Perception Survey.

Accordingly, the essay writers may cover one or more areas. Some issues are suggested below:

**1. Governance and Public Services**

- Efficiency and transparency of government services
- Digital access and ease of interaction with public offices
- Citizen participation in decision-making
- Legal, Judicial and Police reforms

**2. Infrastructure Deficiencies**

- Mobility and Transport
- Quality and accessibility of public transport
- Road infrastructure and traffic management
- Need for improvement in basic amenities like electricity and water supply
- Limited digital connectivity (e.g., internet access)

**3. Housing and Urban Planning**

- Affordable housing
- Overcrowded or poorly planned urban areas
- Inadequate sanitation and waste management systems
- Access to utilities like water, electricity, and sanitation

**4. Healthcare Accessibility and Education**

- Availability and quality of healthcare and education
- Access to affordable and inclusive services

**5. Safety and Security**

- Law and order situation
- Safety for vulnerable groups including women, children, and the elderly

## **6. Environmental Concerns**

- Air and water pollution
- Poor waste disposal
- Loss of green spaces and biodiversity
- Green spaces and sustainable urban planning

## **7. Economic Challenges**

- Unemployment or underemployment
- Rising cost of living
- Lack of economic opportunities in rural areas
- Ease of doing business for citizens and entrepreneurs

## **8. Governance and Public Services**

- Bureaucratic red tape and corruption
- Poor service delivery (licenses, permits, etc.)
- Lack of citizen participation in governance

## **9. Social Inequality**

- Discrimination based on caste, gender, race, or religion
- Unequal access to public services
- Marginalization of vulnerable populations

## **10. Digital Divide**

- Unequal access to digital tools and platforms
- Limited digital literacy
- Exclusion from online services like e-governance or education

## **General Guidelines for the Essay**

The essay should be in English or Hindi language. The length of an essay should be approximately around 5000 words. An essay exceeding 5500 word limit shall not be accepted. The contestant must indicate the total number of words of the essay, failing which it shall not be accepted. All essays must be typed in double space on only one side of the paper and those entries which do not adhere to the stipulation shall be deemed to be rejected. It should be submitted in triplicate under a “nom-de-plume” or “alias”. The full name and address of the competitor

should be mentioned on a separate sheet and enclosed in a sealed envelope bearing the nom-de- plume on the outer cover with the following inscription.

**Annual Essay Prize Competition – 2025, Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi**

All essays should be sent to the Director General, Indian Institute of Public Administration, Indraprastha Estate, Ring Road, New Delhi-110002, by Speed Post and soft copy through email: [trgiipa@yahoo.co.in](mailto:trgiipa@yahoo.co.in), so as to reach him not later than **August 31, 2025**. The envelope should be marked “Annual Essay Prize Competition – 2025”. The entries received after the due date may not be entertained.

The essay will be adjudged by a body of judges and the award of the judges shall be final. The institute reserves the right not to make any award if none of the essays submitted meets the necessary standard. Any essay which receives an award shall become the joint intellectual property of the author and IIPA.

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**N.B. Intending competitors who wish to seek any further clarification may write to the Director General, Indian Institute of Public Administration, Indraprastha Estate, Ring Road, New Delhi-110002**