

International Institute of Information Technology, Hyderabad
(Deemed to be University)

Rethinking Corruption in India (HS8.401)

Mid Sem Exams

Max. Time: 90 mins

Max. Marks: 50

22 Sept 2025

Attempt Either Section A or Section B

Section A

Answer any two. Each answer should be about 500–700 words (40–45 minutes).

Question 1: Explain the two different forms of informality in the economy: elite and subaltern. How do these relate to the functioning of the modern capitalist economy?

Question 2: How did the colonial invention of bureaucratic propriety reshape the meaning of corruption in India?

Question 3: Explain how and why the idea of the gift economy reshapes our understanding of corruption in India.

Section B

Answer all questions in Part I and Part II. In Part III answer any two out of three. Marks as indicated. Word limits are indicative.

Part I Answer all. About 50–70 words each. 3 Marks each.

Q1. Define “primitive accumulation”.

Q2. What is a hundi, and how did it function in precolonial trade?

Q3. According to Bernard Cohn, what role did the census play in colonial India?

Q4. State one key argument made by Nicholas Dirks in *The Scandal of Empire*.

Part II Answer all. About 100-120 words each. 6 Marks each

Q5. Explain how surplus is different in capitalist and pre-capitalist economies?

Q6. What does Polanyi mean by embeddedness, and how does this help us understand the precolonial Indian economy?

Q7. Briefly describe the logic of gift exchange in Mauss, and explain why colonial administrators misinterpreted it as bribery.

Part III Answer any two out of three. About 200 words each. 10 marks each.

Q8. How did the colonial state redefine caste-kinship credit networks as illicit? Draw on examples from Guha, Martin, or R.K. Ray.

Q9. Discuss the idea of corruption as capital escaping state regulation. How does this relate to black money in India?

Q10. How did discourses of purity in politics reshape understandings of corruption in India?