LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

Q1. Should criminals in prison be given the opportunity of learning and education ? Give reasons in support of your answer.

Ans: Modern prisons are no longer the dark dungeons of the middle ages where even the rays of the sun could not penetrate. Human rights are observed scrupulously in all civilised countries even in jails. These prisons are gradually becoming reform houses. Under the prevailing conditions criminals are given the opportunity of self improvement. Provision is made for learning and education. The light of knowledge, it is hoped, will reform the criminals, change their thoughts and make them responsible citizens. They will join the mainstream, give up crime and contribute to the well-being of society and nation. Instead of physical torture and mental agony, love and sympathy be used to transform the bitterness, cruelty and evil bent of mind. Let us hate sin and crime, not the sinner and criminals. Hence, the criminals should be given opportunity of learning and education in prison.

Q2. What precautions were taken for the smooth conduct of the O-Level German examination in prison and why ?

Ans: James Roderick Evans was a smart fellow. He was known as 'Evans the Break' among the prison officers. He had escaped from prison three times. Now he was taking O-Level German Examination in prison.His solitary cell was located in D-Wing, which had two heavy gates—outer and inner. Both were locked securely. Evans's cell was kept under strict observation. Prison officer Mr Stephens watched his activities every minute through the peep-hole. Mr Jackson, the incharge of D-Wing, was in constant touch with the Governor on phone. The Governor himself listened in to the conversation in the cell. During his stay in prison, Evans was not allowed to have any visitor or letters.

All potential weapons such as knife, scissors, nail-file and razor had been removed from the cell of Evans. The contents of the suitcase of the invigilator, Reverend S. McLeery were also thoroughly searched. Even the paper-knife was taken away. In short, all precautions had been taken to see that Evans did not get a means to escape.

Q3. How was Evans able to devise foolproof plan for escape from prison as well as items for disguise in spite of severe restrictions and strict observation ?

Ans: First, Evans joined the 0-Level German night classes in last September. He was the only student. The Governor had appointed a teacher from the Technical College. Since Governor did not check on the person, a friend of Evans joined as German teacher. He was in contact with him everyday and visited him even on the eve of the examination to say good luck. The plan was devised slowly—from September to June.

Reverend S. McLeery, who was to invigilate, was bound and gagged in his flat. A friend of Evans replaced him as invigilator. McLeery put on double clerical collar, two black clerical fronts. He carried a pair of reading glasses and the semi-inflated rubber ring for piles in his suitcase.

Evans had friends in the Examination Board as well. The correction slip fixed the hotel and provided exact time of start of paper. Two

more telephone calls proved handy—One asking for prison-van for court and the other for giving instructions to Stephens. It was near the Examination Board that Evans as "injured McLeery" got a car to change his make¬up and clothes and escape to Golden Lion. Here, it is worth-mentioning that the silent prison officer and the driver, who drove the prison van from the Golden Lion and helped Evans escape, were his friends.

Q4. What factors, other than friends, do you think, contributed to the success of the plan of the escape devised by Evans?
Ans: Evans's calm, pleasant, amusing temperament and his insight into the working of the minds of prison authorities helped him a lot. He devised everything carefully and executed the plan skilfully. Every detail was worked out beforehand. For example, he knew that Mr Jackson who used rough tone, had some compassion for him deep inside. He granted Evans's request to keep the filthy looking red and white bobble hat on his head during the examination. It was, in fact, a device to hide his recently closely cropped hairs. Secondly, he knew that the whole prison machinery blindly goes by assumption. He impersonated McLeery and posed to be injured. No one checked the injured "McLeery". The hasty conjecture was that Evans, impersonating McLeery, had hit the parson and escaped. It prevailed. The police was after run away Evans while the real Evans left the prison with the police as the only witness. He claimed to have seen Evans driving. When they reached Examination Board he acted as if he was quite weak. The police officer phoned for an ambulance and left Evans there. He got into the car his friends had kept for him and disappeared from the scene. Thus, his ingenuity, presence of mind and theatricality also helped him.

Q5. What lapses on the part of the police and prison authorities helped Evans to escape from the prison?
Ans: In spite of elaborate precautions and careful arrangements, Evans succeeds in slipping away. Certain lapses on the part of the police and prison authorities contribute to it. The Governor, who smells a rat in every call and tries to cross check it, fails at vital moments. For example, no one tries to verify the identity of the German teacher, the invigilator, the "injured" McLeery, the driver of prison-van and the "silent" prison officer who handcuffs Evans at the Golden Lion hotel. Sometimes, appearance—the outward form and dress— deceives as it is accepted to be genuine. The criminals impersonate even the prison officer and driver. The Detective Superintendent too acts hastily. He does not drive to the Rad- cliffe and get the "injured" McLeery admitted there. This provides him God-sent opportunity to disappear. The greatest lapse is on the part of the Governor who nabs Evans at Golden Lion hotel and fails to bring him to jail as he gets tricked by the prison-van, "silent" prison officer and driver. Had he waited for police escort, Evans would not have escaped yet again.

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