

【VII】 次の(A), (B)の設問に答えよ。(A)36点, (B)14点)

(A) 次の英文を読んで、下の設問に最も適切な解答をせよ。特に指示のない選択式の設問は記号(アイウエ…)を1つ選んで解答し、“Choose TWO answers.”と指示のある問いに対して解答する場合は、記号はアイウエオ順に解答すること。

Since the mid-20th century, the term “due diligence” has been commonly used mainly in the financial industry. Simply put, it refers to a process of taking reasonable care or taking the proper steps. So, for example, before agreeing to buy or sell stocks, a company or person should perform due diligence to collect information and analyze the risks so they can make the best decision.

These days, another type of due diligence is gaining recognition in the business world. It’s called “human rights due diligence” and the guiding principles set by the United Nations outlines how business enterprises should bear a responsibility to take appropriate measures against potential or actual human rights violations in the workplace. If a company identifies the risk of bullying, gender-based harassment, or other unacceptable behavior among its employees, 1 it needs to act promptly to eliminate the risk and prevent human rights violations from occurring.

Human rights due diligence applies to third-party partners outside of a company as well. As most companies expand their business operations overseas, it becomes more difficult to monitor all the parties which belong to their extensive supply chain, from production to distribution and sales. In some developed countries, including the UK, France and Australia, due diligence is mandatory and companies are required by law to meet a higher standard of human rights protection for their workers. On the other hand, in many developing and emerging countries, 2 companies have to watch out for forced labor, child labor or other illegal labor practices at local farms or factories. In reality, it can be costly and time-consuming, especially for large-scale multinational corporations, to exercise due diligence at every point throughout their global business network.

Despite 3 these difficulties, companies should 4 prioritize human rights protection over everything else. As proven in some past cases, if a company neglects due diligence and sacrifices the welfare of its workers, it has to pay 5 a high price. If a company is criticized by the media or penalized by the government, its reputation will be spoilt. Consumers may lose faith in the company or boycott its products. Even worse, the damage it suffers may affect its entire business for years to come. In contrast, when people are assured that their individual dignity is respected in the workplace, their productivity is likely to improve and so is their team’s performance.

Thus, companies should accept and fulfill their responsibility to protect the human rights of all the people involved in their business, regardless of their age, gender, nationality, race or religious belief.

問1 According to the first paragraph, which of the following is true about “due diligence”?

- ア The term has been commonly used since the early 20th century.
- イ It refers to a process of finding reasonably priced goods.
- ウ The term has been used only among legal professionals.
- エ It should be performed before a financial transaction.

問2 Choose one of the following and complete the sentence below to summarize the underlined part 1.

A company needs to respond quickly to ().

- ア make sure that the workplace is free from the risk of human rights violations
- イ close down the office where human rights violations have actually occurred
- ウ cut ties with foreign suppliers whose past record shows human rights violations
- エ warn its employees that they have to live with the risk of human rights violations

問3 Which of the following is closest in meaning to underlined part 2?

- ア Companies have to keep a watchful eye on local operations in countries where illegal labor practices are widespread.
- イ Companies have to watch out for illegal immigrants who often attempt to enter local farms or factories by force.
- ウ Companies have to pay more to local factory or farm workers because they often switch jobs in search of higher wages.
- エ Companies have to hire locals regardless of their age and force them to work long hours because of labor shortages.

問4 What do “3 these difficulties” refer to?

- ア the difficulties of performing due diligence throughout a company’s supply chain
- イ the difficulties of finding lawyers who specialize in human rights due diligence
- ウ the difficulties of traveling around the world to negotiate with local partners
- エ the difficulties of managing farms or factories in developing and emerging countries