

खण्ड-A / Section-A

उम्मीदवारों को
इस भाग में
लिखना पना है।
Candidates
must not
write on
this margin

Q.1 If you look into someone's face long enough, eventually you feel that you are looking into yourself.

यदि आप किसी के चेहरे को काफी देर तक देखते हैं, तो अंततः आपको महसूस होता है कि आप अपने भीतर ही देख रहे हैं।

Q.2 We can easily forgive a child who is afraid of the dark; the real tragedy of life is when men are afraid of the light.

हम उस बच्चे को आसानी से क्षमा कर सकते हैं जो अंधेरे से डरता है; जीवन की वास्तविक त्रासदी तब होती है जब लोग रोशनी से डरते हैं।

Q.3 It is the province of knowledge to speak and it is the privilege of wisdom to listen.

बोलना ज्ञान का क्षेत्र है और श्रवण करना बुद्धि का विशेषाधिकार है।

Q.4 Drop the question what tomorrow may bring, and count as profit every day that fate allows you.

यह प्रश्न छोड़ दें कि कल क्या हो सकता है, और हर उस दिन को लाभ के रूप में गिनें जो भाग्य आपको अनुमति देता है।

Q.2.

We can easily forgive a child who is afraid of the dark; the real tragedy of life is when men are afraid of the light

An unexamined life is not worth living

- Socrates

It is said that change is the only constant. With time, collective conscience of people involves to include new paradigms, the

interpretation of which might have been different earlier.

This is exemplified in the manner in which the ideas of war & conquest have evolved over centuries, to understand that principles of human rights & self-determination are universal, & their abrogation untenable.

In olden times, leaders were judged according to their military prowess & generalship. Such was the weight given ~~go~~ to the idea of war capabilities, that generals like Julius Caesar had almost a divine status, with even future kings adopting titles like "Tsar" or "Kaiser" to show their likeness to him.

But, in recent times, self awareness & transformation have allowed us to see war for the evil it is. Today, a leader who invades another

Sovereign power is not revered, but seen as a tyrant, an anathema to modern life. This can be seen in the reaction of the world to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, with our Prime Minister, although at the head of a neutral country, said that: "This era must not be of war"

Some men are afraid of the light of understanding & acceptance of peace & co-existence as a principle of modern society & shunning of wars in principle; which is the real tragedy.

It is easy to forgive a person who is uninformed or immature, since his/her mistake can be rectified with time. But, the real tragedy is when people who have knowledge & information to not being able to see what is good for society. ~~The~~ People

refuse to see the light due to entrenched biases, lack of self awareness, and refusal to accept differing opinions, which leads to detrimental situations. In this essay, we will see how failing to see the light can cause harm, & how seeing the light & transformation is beneficial for the world.

Ignorance: Not always bliss

Ignorance is the mental block put on a person's ~~light~~ mind that prevents them from having viable perceptions of the conditions around them.

In history, there have been many examples where this ignorance has led to havoc.

A leader cannot afford to be ignorant to needs of his people. As Ronald Reagan said, "A government's first"

responsibility is to protect the people".

This ignorance shown by leaders can be due to a lack of understanding of governance, a lack of care for the citizenry, or a bit of both.

An example in this regard is of the Roman Emperor Commodus. Although he had inherited a burgeoning & colourful Empire from his father, his ignorance towards his duties, as well as his lack of awareness towards the happenings in his empire, led to a condition known as "beginning of the end of the Roman Empire". If only he could have seen the light, & worked towards development, he would have been remembered in a better light today.

Development of people also requires economic growth. All ideologies of economics deal with increase in wealth & furthering

development, in theory. But, in practice, the situations change, & require acceptance of the fact that rigidness cannot be the norm, & ignoring the flaws of one's policies will cause a tragedy.

~~As~~ This was seen in the difference in the theory & practice of Communism as an economic theory. Although the theoretical concept of "utopia" makes us happy, but ignoring the ~~pro~~ practical inapplicability of these ideas led to the ultimate downfall of the Soviet Union, while the changes made by the Chinese, after seeing the light, helped them to become a wealthy nation.

Growth also involves societal change. Societal ethics continues to change with time, & so must the

people with it. Gradually, the ideas of egalitarianism have been accepted as a default in society, & people who do not believe in social justice are a tragedy.

This is ~~emo~~ exemplified in the rising Crimes against Scheduled Castes & Scheduled Tribes according to NCRB. There is a need to inculcate the ideas of humanism & love for all, & Changing of default ideas.

Change is also fundamental to science. Scientific inquiry & reform helps us to better ourselves, but not everybody is ready to accept new principles. This is due to lack of self awareness & failure of imagination, along with inability to let go of redundant thoughts.

An example of this is the Catholic Church's persecution of Copernicus & Galileo after they disproved the Bible's theory of the solar system & position of the Earth.

Ⓐ This is also exemplified in a phenomenon seen worldwide known as "climate change denial". Proponents of this idea fail to see the light, in the form of overwhelming evidence that climate change is real. Failure to combat it will be a tragedy in the form of worldwide havoc.

Transformation for betterment

Seeing the light, & changing ourselves can help us look at the world in a new manner, to make suitable changes for betterment of ourselves as well as of society.

Ⓐ ⓧ Cultures of our time do consist of situations where transformation led to betterment & development of society.

An example is of Gautam Buddha, who despite being born in luxury, saw the light on meeting an old dying man, & transformed himself into a spiritual being, to bring happiness to him as well as to all around him. He understood the meaning of life & spread it to others.

Leaders understand their purpose is betterment of the people. To that measure, they sometimes change course in their path for the same. For example, while early Indian nationalist movements were for increased Indian participation in government, our leaders saw the light in the early 20th century, that only "Swaraj" will be able to help India regain its glory.

Sporting achievements bring glory not only to oneself, but to the entire country. In the drive for sporting excellence, the difference between middeling athletes & legends is the

fact that legends saw the light at an earlier stage & transformed themselves.

This is seen in the trajectory of Virat Kohli's career, who, after a lacklustre 2011 IPL season, changed his dietary regiments, despite being a food lover. This change enabled him to become a global superstar to bring laurels to himself as well as the country, & setting up a positive example in society.

Seeing the light also helps to change society for the better. The Renaissance period in Europe brought them out of the ~~dark~~ Dark Ages, & led to ideas of humanism, love for man & scientific inquiry to the fore, which have become a crucial part of modern civilization.

One of the gravest threats our civilization faces is that of climate change. The unabated fossil fuel use after Industrial Revolution has

caused immense damage to the environment. It was only in the last 50 years that we have seen the light, that our actions are having a tragic effect on nature. This helped us to take strides in ~~achieving~~ moving towards net zero emissions & sustainable development.

Seeing the light is not only understanding what is happening or has happened, but also what might happen in the future. Anticipating future events can help prevent tragedies that might befall on us due to unpreparedness.

Keeping this in mind, the Indian government has planned various plans & initiatives for technological governance, seeing that it is the immediate future.

Policies like SC Policy, 6G Policy, Setting up of Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, as well as planning for emerging technologies like "AI for All" strategy, frameworks for Quantum technology & a National Framework for Blockchain show that we have seen the light, & are trying to not be left behind in the future, which would be a tragedy

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NEXT
IAS

खण्ड-B / Section-B

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- Q.5 Truth, like a torch, the more it is shook, it shines.
सत्य, मशाल की तरह है, इसे जितना अधिक हिलाया जाता है, यह उतना ही चमकता है।
- Q.6 Art is I; science is We.
कला मैं है; विज्ञान हम है।
- Q.7 Only the dead have seen the end of the war.
केवल मृतकों ने ही युद्ध का अंत देखा है।
- Q.8 Act as if it were impossible to fail.
कार्य ऐसे करें जैसे कि विफल होना असंभव ही था।

Q8. Act as if it were impossible to fail

The journey of a thousand miles
begins with a ^{single} ~~single~~ step

— Confucious

The British Empire was known as
"the Empire on which the sun
never sets", such was the expanse
& strength of it. To think that such
an empire could be challenged by
a simple man, with a loathi in hand
was thought of as a farcical idea.

When Mahatma Gandhi started his
Dandi March against the salt law,

he did it with the firm conviction that it was what was right for Indian society.

Even though he knew of the mighty challenge that he faced in front of British might, he continued his march, gathering hundreds of supporters along the way, as well as inspiring thousands & millions across the nation.

He did not fear the risk of failure, as he knew that the task of achieving Indian independence was a hard & arduous one. In the end, the March did pose a great challenge to British authority, & became a conductor of light for other movements in the future, ultimately leading to independence.

Some tasks are difficult & unimaginable, but they still must be done. Some objectives are too important to cover behind the fear of failure. This endeavour requires motivation, spirit of sacrifice, patience, courage & compassion to succeed. In this essay we will learn about how mental fortitude & self-efficacy can help achieve our goals, & also how blind overconfidence can be to our detriment.

The secret to Happiness is Freedom, & the
Secret to Freedom is Courage
- Thucydides

Happiness is not only happiness of oneself, but happiness of all mankind. This happiness manifests itself in increasing quality of life & unshackling of constraints.

For the socially downtrodden, reformers have taken positions to uplift them from lower rungs of society. Challenging social norms is a difficult task, but one that needs patience, & a disregard of fear of failure to act.

This spirit was shown by Raja Ram Mohan Roy, who was the pioneer of social change, & is regarded as the "father of Indian Renaissance". In his conviction in his ideas, & belief that he ultimately would succeed, he started the Brahmo Samaj to inculcate ideas like humanism, gender justice, anti-untouchability, anti-orthodoxy, & widow remarriage. Ultimately, his ideas did gain acceptance in society, although not in his own lifetime, due to his actions disregarding fear of failure

Fear of failure is extremely common in Scientists & innovators. There is a need to inculcate patience, courage & a belief in themselves to achieve their goal.

An example of this was Thomas Edison, who failed multiple times trying to invent the light bulb, but ultimately succeeded due to his courage & perseverance. He never faltered in his self belief, which enabled him to achieve this feat. He later said: "I have not failed, I have devised a thousand ways not to build a light bulb". This attitude ~~to~~ enabled him to be remembered as one of the greatest inventors of all time.

Attitude of leaders towards prevailing nature of society can change the future & fate of that

society. But leaders need to show fortitude, & disregard the idea of failure to bring about a positive change.

This was identified by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk Pasha, who changed the face of Turkish society. Despite resistance from theological quarters, he was able to transform Turkey into a secular democratic republic, by undertaking various reforms like women's education, modernisation, converting the Hagia Sophia into a museum & evolving a democratic constitution, all because, in his own mind, he could not fail.

When failure isn't an option

There are situations where one cannot afford to fail, & has to act in a way to not lose the motivation to achieve our goals.

Nations facing an existential crisis have to act in a defiant manner to external forces. This defiance was shown by the actions of Winston Churchill in World War II. Even under the threat of an invasion he never considered defeat as an option, & his able leadership was able to stem the tide & defeat Nazism, a great peril of our world.

A The greatest modern day peril of our world is the environmental crisis that we face today. In this, failure is not an option, as there is no planet B. Motivation & perseverance to promote climate action has been shown by Greta Thunberg, whose protests have garnered world wide interest into

Combating climate change. Even after knowing the scale of effort required to achieve her goals, she has shown immense courage to do so.

Overconfidence : A Tragedy

Sometimes, when we act like we cannot fail, there can be a sense of overconfidence, which can lead to failure. Considering our abilities as well as conduciveness of conditions is essential to achieving our goals.

History is rife with examples where such overconfidence has led to failure. The failures of both Hitler & Napoleon in their Russian campaigns was due to

their beliefs that they could not fail, & not paying attention to sound strategies & supply line maintenance.

Overconfidence in our abilities can also lead to us not paying attention to economic & scientific soundness. There is a need to inculcate temperance & self awareness to understand the consequences of our actions in the short as well the long term.

This unsoundness in policy was shown in the Sri Lankan Agriculture Policy, of 100% organic farming immediately. The thought that they could not fail ultimately led to crashing of the food supply, causing food security, economic insecurity & the ensuing political turmoil.

The Golden Mean

Aristotle talks about the "Golden Mean": a path between two extremes as an ideal path.

Balance of judgement, & walking the line between confidence & overconfidence is one of the keys of success.

One must be ready to change & challenge our beliefs to suit public & societal goals, as well as personal achievement. It is beneficial to have a back up plan.

In UPSC preparation, seeing the competition, it is always helpful to have temperance & a solid back up plan. Yes, the self-belief is needful & essential, but adopting a golden mean can help us achieve our goals.

Similar willingness to change was also shown during the 1991 reforms, where the core idea of social welfare was retained, but the economy was opened up for investment to further societal goals.

There can be victory in defeat. Some battles are fought only to show that someone is fighting.

"Courage is disregard of fear,
not absence of it"

- Nelson Mandela

When the Persian Empire under Xerxes waged war in the Aegean Peninsula, King Leonidas of Sparta knew that the Greek city states would not be able to win on their own.

In his quest to unite them, he chose to lead by example, taking only three-hundred Spartans to face the million strong Persian Army. in Thermopylae

Although he knew that his forces were no match for the Persians, he believed that his sacrifice would be able to unite Greece & face the Persian threat. He knew that he would not fail, one way or another. In the end, his sacrifice did unite Greece, & they were able to push back the Persian invasions in the Battle of Plataea & Battle of Salamis, fulfilling Leonidas' aims. Hence, it can be said that act like you cannot fail

Space for Rough Work



Space for Rough Work

Benefits of Seeing the light

1. Pol. - Cassius' Parthia
Campaign

His - Hitler

Eco. - Communism
failure

Soc. - Social justice
Communists

Env. - Climate change
denial

Leged -

Science - Attack of
Church on
Galileo

Intro.
Intro.
Pol.

Phil. - Buddha

His - Change of goal to
swaraj

Env. - CBDR

Eco. - Sports - Fahli

Soc. - Renaissance

S&T

Change of attitude towards
war - Caesar to Putin

Conc. - Upskilling, Reskilling

2. Thesis

Pol. - Ataturk ✓

Tech. - Edison ✓

Soc. - R. R. Mohan Roy ✓

Env. - Greta ✓

History - Churchill & WWII } Can't afford
to fail

Leicester
Sports border city 2015 16

Plan B

- UPSC preparation
- 1991 reforms

Anti-Thesis

Hitler
• Vietnam War ✓
• Soviet Space Prog.

• SL agri policy ✓

✓ Intro. - Gandhi

✓ Conc. - Thermopylae