

Regulars

- 4 To Our Readers
- 7 Editorial

News and Events

- 8 Nation this Month



- 16 World this Month

- 23 National and International Updates

- 31 Regional News



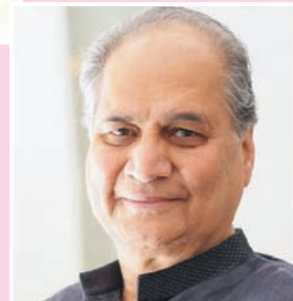
Career News

- 34 Employment and Career News
- 34 Forthcoming Competitive Examinations

Current Affairs

- 35 Sports World
- 38 Science and Technology
- 40 Economic Scenario
- 51 Memorable Points
- 53 Environment, Ecology, Biodiversity and Climate Change Round-up
- 56 Important Concept in News

- 61 DIVYA DARPAN



INSPIRING YOUTH : INTERVIEWS

- 77 Ashwini Kumar Upadhyay
Topper—Uttar Pradesh Judicial
Services Exam., 2018
(84th Rank)



World Panorama

- 79 (i) Ukraine Crisis and India



- 81 (ii) Putin's Significant Visit to India

Personality Development

- 84 Work Ethos

FOCUS

- 85 (1) Green Hydrogen/Green Ammonia Policy 2022 :
A Wise Move Towards National Hydrogen Mission
- 87 (2) Global Forest Goals

ARTICLES

Environmental Article

- 89 India Ratifies Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer

- 91 Special Study Material for M.P.P.S.C. State Services/ Forest Services Preliminary Exam., 2021 : MADHYA PRADESH—History, Art and Culture

Indian Economy Article

- 105 India's Agriculture Policy and MSP Conundrum

Business Ethics Article

- 108 Business Ethics : Issues and Challenges



Healthcare and Agriculture Article

- 111 Pulses for Nutritious Food and Sustainable Agriculture (Pulses are Considered as 'Protein For the Poor')

National Security Article

- 112 How to Face the Drone Challenge

Renewable Energy Article

- 114 New and Renewable Energy : Growth and Development

Socio-Economic Scene Article

- 118 Self-Help Groups (SHG) : Role in India's Socio-Economic Development

Virtual Currency Article

- 122 Proxy Conflict with Virtual Currency

Software Technology Article

- 124 The Software Behind the Bollywood Films

Historical Article

- 126 Causes of Decline of Buddhism in India

International Relations Article

- 128 India and Israel : Three Decades of Partnership

PUBLIC WELFARE ARTICLE

- 132 Govt. Schemes/Plans/Projects/Missions : Current Updates

- 134 Compendium

YEAR END REVIEW, 2021

- 137 Council of Scientific and Industrial Research



- 140 Prominent Historical Personalities of India

- 142 Current Questionnaire

- 146 Trade and Industry

SOLVED QUESTIONS PAPERS

- 149 Civil Services (Mains) Exam., 2021 : General Studies-I

- 158 Uttar Pradesh Post Graduate Teacher Exam., 2021 : History

- 165 Rajasthan P.S.C. Police Sub-Inspector Exam., 2021 : General Studies-II

- 172 S.S.C. Combined Graduate Level Exam., 2019 (Tier-I)

- 196 NABARD Grade 'B' Officer Exam., 2017 : Quantitative Aptitude

SOLVED MODEL PAPERS

- 181 Forthcoming UPSC Civil Services (Pre.) Exam., 2021 : General Studies-I

- 189 Forthcoming M.P.P.S.C. State Services/Forest Services (Pre.) Exam. : General Studies-I

YOUR PAGES

- 199 Essay Contest

- 201 Debate Contest

- 204 Concentric Quiz

- 207 Results

- 208 Test Your Knowledge



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The Importance of Trifles

Ravan earned the animosity of his brother Vibhishan considering him as a person of no consequence. He dismissed the fact of his opposition as a mere trifle. From all appearances it was a trifle because Vibhishan enjoyed no power. He had neither an army to support his cause nor had he the support of anyone in the court. But his opposition to Ravan proved to be the undoing, rain and destruction of the latter. What appear to us as simple trifles prove sometimes very important, nay, in most cases they very radically and irresistibly change the very course of life. How can we afford to ignore the trifles while our very existence is composed of small things. This earth itself is made of small particles called atoms and yet one single atom represents the whole world of matter, possessing all power of the matter. The vast amounts of waters of the oceans are made up of the countless drops and yet one single drop is in no way different in quality from the waters of the mighty oceans. A single spark of fire may set ablaze the entire civilization, which no waters can extinguish. And yet the same holocaust can be averted by extinguishing that single spark with a little amount of water if prompt attention is paid to the potential of the single spark to cause colossal damage. Neglect of trifles proves sometimes very disastrous, while timely action dealing with the trifles leads to unimaginable successes in life.

When India suffered from food shortage during the Prime Ministership of Lal Bahadur Shastri, Shastriji took the vow not to eat food made of cereals on Mondays and exhorted the countrymen to do the same in order to help ease the critical situation. People in different quarters dismissed it as trifle. But if arithmetic is any guide to us, the food saved by keeping the vow ran into millions of tonnes each year. The saving could substantially reduce the amount of payments incurred in importing food-grains. Yet how careless we are in matters such as this ! We give feasts and dinners and the wastage of food material that takes place, sends shudders down the spine not of everyone but only of those

who realize the importance of trifles. Substantial amounts of food are allowed to go down the drain daily, why ? Because we dismiss it as a trifle. Similarly we waste substantial amount of electricity by our carelessness and neglect of national interest. Only the amount that is wasted could be enough for running hundreds of factories.

National consciousness has not dawned upon us and we waste millions of man hours in strikes, agitations, postponement of work, red-tapism and futile mud slinging on opponents. On the face of it, these might appear trifles, but the cumulative effect of these negative factors tear asunder the very fabric of our polity. Small acts of indiscipline on the part of students at the earlier stages are condoned as mere trifles, yet the same go on gathering proportion with the passage of time. When students enter life these confirmed habits of indiscipline prevent them from doing their best in the jobs in which they are placed. Every slip on the part of a man, which is dismissed as a trifle, has far-reaching effect not only on the life of the man concerned, but on the larger life of the nation and the human race. The neglect of a trifle may cost a man his life and the country its freedom. If a soldier in a hide-out utters a single sound he might invite bullet into his mouth from the enemy's rifle, thereby inviting death upon himself and his companions, and if he is posted at a strategic point, might be instrumental in endangering the freedom of the country. Can he afford to dismiss the uttering of a sound as a mere trifle and be saved ? That is why soldiers are trained to practise being as dead as a door nail while in hiding in the territories controlled by the enemy. In family life small acts of carelessness on the part of the husband of the wife may lead to their estrangement and then to divorce.