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SECTION A

2. The imagination imitates. It is the critical spirit that creates.

"If you can imagine it,
you can create it"

Humanity is a beautiful species, more so than its distinct quality of intelligence. The charm lies in its thinking capacity and its stubbornness to make the dreams come true. We often come across the words "Who would have thought ... ?". This reflects the imaginative capacity of humans and the baffling results of its creation.

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Let us move back to 15th century towards a humble state of Florence. It was threatened by the army of Roman Church. Florence recruited a war engineer, Leonardo da Vinci, who created world's first re-loadable canon purely from his imagination. This single invention instilled fear into the army of Church, eventually saving Florence.

Another example from 17th century of John Nash shows us the importance of human imagination. A gifted mathematician, he deduced Game

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Theory that revolutionized decision-making process of whole humanity. This applied to computers, politics, et al and eventually won him the prestigious Nobel Prize.

All these creations were made possible due to only one factor: Imagination of human mind. It begs us to ask the question, "What is Imagination" and "what does it do?".

Imagination is the thinking capacity of human mind, quite unlimited in nature, as it unlocks infinite opportunities. It all circles back to creation of possibilities and

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allowing humans to unlock their full potential. It gives critical thinking capacity and facilitates creation of newer things.

It is only fair if we assign imagination the importance, for it has allowed continuance of generations. This has effects on all the aspects of our lives as it touches and influences humanity in every possible way.

In the socio-cultural sphere, it has allowed growth & evolution of human society. The Indian Philosophy of "Tat Tvam Asi", which

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translated to "You become what you think", holds great relevance throughout our existence. It has allowed for development of spiritual component of our lives. The notion of integration of human soul with the universal soul not only has guided ethical & moral precepts of society, but also gave it spiritual meaning.

It is only natural that this imagination led to creation of a strong foundation of Indian Civilization. It allowed us to survive throughout this long course of history. Not only it impacted individuals, but impacted civilization as a whole.

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A greater influence ~~is~~ on Political sphere as well. The political thinkers such as Rousseau, Mills, et al impacted creation of modern revolutions such as American, French, Indian freedom struggle. It resulted into creation of republic states and availability of fundamental rights to citizens.

So much so, this ability allowed Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar to imagine and create the Indian Constitution. It ~~can~~ instilled the values of Justice, Liberty, Equality and Fraternity among others; ~~hitherto~~ hitherto not applied to our polity.

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The creation allowed fight against discrimination and upliftment of dalits.

It also had a spillover effect in the Economic realm of human existence.

The dream of living a comfortable life only gave impetus to the profit motive of human undertakings. The subsequent creation of wealth has improved the standard of living of people.

This has now evolved to modern day startup ideas that aim to solve the larger socio-economic problem of the masses. A worthy mention here

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would be the example of Elon Musk.
He has transformed his imagination to create revolutionizing technologies applied in Paypal, Tesla, SpaceX and other companies.

Ever since humans invented the wheel, they haven't looked back. It has now evolved to use in automobiles easing the human mobility. From the creation of aircraft by Wright Brothers to use of drones, human imagination has brought it far.

How then, it is important to ask, the imagination & subsequent creation channeled for humanity's profit.



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Imagination is dependent on the freedom of human mind. This coupled with competence gives unlimited possibilities to humans.

Freedom of human mind is most proactive at the young stage. Tapping this potential at a younger age holds the key for advancement. Not only does this benefit the present time, it allows us to provide solution to ever-present problems.

Women Issues have been in question since the patriarchal setup came into being. We have created a setup which is not only unethical,

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but impedes the dignity of a section of humanity. It is important to channelize our imagination to think of an egalitarian and equitable society.

Not only this, we need to exceed our imagination to create a setup which is enabling for women. This shall ensure their effective participation and facilitate our civilization of move forward. It is only true that we humans cannot walk on a single leg. A perfect balance is necessary to enjoy an unimpeding life, something that we all strive to achieve.

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This cycle of imagination and creation is a double edged sword. It also leads to destruction and negative uses. When Albert Einstein wrote the equation " $E = mc^2$ ", he knew the course of history had changed. It can be used to generate clean & efficient energy, useful for the masses. But it was first used to make Nuclear Bombs, only to be used on Nagasaki and Hiroshima.

It is thus very important to use the power of our imagination to create something better and beneficial.

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The importance of "I have a dream..." speech of Martin Luther King Jr. is well understood in human history. Taking cues from it, we can embark on a journey of self-realization and ending discrimination amongst fellow humans.

This will only allow us to put our best way forward and unlock the potential of creation. This is something only humanity has blessed with. And "with great power comes great responsibility."

This ability of ours, needs to be used judiciously to solve our problems.

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We have an impending disaster in the form of Climate Change. With our best efforts, we can hope to conquer this challenge and emerge a victorious civilization, yet again!

The words of Rabindranath Tagore hold relevance more than ever in this regard:

"Where the mind is without fear
and the head is held high,
Where the knowledge is free,

Into that heaven, awake!
Let my country awake!
Let the humanity awake!

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SECTION - B

6. Smart Power is neither hard nor soft.
It is both.

International Arena is a great stage of intersecting interest. Sovereign goals hold the most important place in a country's priority list. With 193 countries in the world (part of United Nations) there exist 193 different goals, all important and all mighty.

Let us understand the perspective of use of power from different point of views. Russia often depends on its hard power to advance its interests.

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This is evident from recent military buildup near Ukraine border. This approach has brought limited results as evident from Russia's position in geopolitical arena.

Contrastingly, South East Asian nations do not hold much military prowess but influence greatly via their cultural relations. This soft power of theirs, again, has only brought limited results. This is evident on their dependence on other powers for South-China sea dispute.

It is evident that these two contrastingly opposite approaches are not enough for a country to advance its sovereign interests. This warrants

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the use of smart power.

Before understanding smart power, we need to understand the tenets of Hard power and soft power.

Hard power is defined by the military and economic might of a country. Utilization of this might allows to influence the decisions of other countries and stakeholders.

It has an immediate and direct impact, allowing a country to overpower the other stakeholders. It is tangible in nature and has a "push" factor to it. It lays the claims explicitly with a mighty push.

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On the other hand, soft Power is defined by other intangible factors. These include culture of a country, its history and diplomacy. It greatly influences the people-to-people ties. This enhances the persuasive power of a country and increase the power of attraction.

Thus it is characterized by the "pull" factor that aims to influence both hearts and minds of stakeholders. It banks on the power of relations, as evident from fact that India exercises its civilizational ties in the neighbourhood to maintain peace.

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The combination of both these push (Hard Power) and pull (Soft Power) factors constitute the SMART Power. It manifests in different spheres of international diplomacy. It emanates from mutual respect of interests & concerns while maintaining good relations.

Thus, as parts of smart Power, Hard power is the necessary condition; but it is the soft Power that makes the sufficient condition for good relations. Not only does this make advancement of sovereign goals easier, it makes their achievement imperative.

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Smart Power has wide reaching benefits. It helps in maintaining good diplomatic ties. This was made evident when India used both the hard & soft channels to get back IAF pilot Abhinandan in 2019. It leads to enhanced people-to-people ties, as evident from India - Nepal relations despite recent setbacks.

It also allows to boost the tourism & trade industry by facilitating cross border movement of people and goods. This is evident from example of Turkey which regularly features in top tourism destinations over the world.

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Furthermore, this leads to development & assimilation of culture of a country. India has historically hosted an open, robust and welcoming culture. This substantiates the smart power of India throughout the history.

These benefits are not trivial. These hold the greatest importance in the changing geopolitical realities of 21st century. A prudent example of 2 greatest powers of the world, i.e. USA & China, would help us to understand this notion in a better way.

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USA holds the mightiest military signifying its hard power. This has allowed its goals to take shape over the years. This is evident from its exercise of power in Middle-East and influence in Western countries of Europe.

It also holds great soft Power via Hollywood, democratic practices and open society. This has allowed USA to maintain great ties even with its "adversaries". For example, many Russian actors work in Hollywood to make a living. Tourism industry also allows it to project the personal ties alongwith economic might.

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China has also followed the footsteps closely. It has been flexing its military muscles recently alongwith projection of its economic might. This has even allowed China to traverse difficult terrains. For example, South East Asian countries, Japan, Australia, etc. signed RCEP trade deal despite territorial differences.

Soft power is also utilized proactively, owing to its Buddhist culture. This allowed deepening of Sino - Nepal relations in the recent times via Trans-Himalayan Connectivity & Network Deal.



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The balance of Hard and soft powers, as demonstrated by USA & China, holds the key to understand soft power. The lessons hold great value for India as well. It is civilizational, moral, political, diplomatic and ethical responsibility of India to rise as a global power & find its rightful place in world arena.

India holds deep potential. In Hard power, India has 4th strongest military and is 5th largest economy in the world (2021). India recently showed its military might via surgical strikes, Galwal clashes,

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Doklam skirmishes, et al. Economic might was shown by exporting important healthcare products to needy countries.

India also holds great soft power owing to its civilizational ties, historical relations and diplomatic friendships. Recently launched "Vaccine Maitri" programme projected India nothing less than a Robinhood for poor countries around the world.

Much still needs to be done.

The potential India has and the position India is in depict greatly contrasting realities. India needs to grow its hard power in absolute terms

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and soft power in ideological terms.
The delicate balance would allow India to use its smart power to achieve the aim to be a "Vishwaguru" or "leader of the world".

The realities are changing. Multi-national corporations are now rising and having more "smart power" than many countries. It is imperative to traverse these evolving roles via multilateralism to form a just world order.

These evolving realities are giving way for the idea of "cosmopolitanism" which entails

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the future ready concept of "Global Citizens". This notion is giving newer meanings to the world order and pushing globalisation to newer roles.

Effective use of smart power to achieve integration of sovereign goals would help in achieving an equitable world arena. This would essentially allow the world to become a single family and realise the aim of "Vasudaiva Kutumbakam".