

The Hindu EDITORIAL ANALYSIS

31st December 2024

**PREPARE FOR BANK (PO/ CLERK), SSC, UPSC,
State PSC, CAT, CTET, RAILWAY EXAMS, CDS,
TET, NDA/AIRFORCE, NET and all Govt.
Exams**

VOCABULARY

1. Tumultuous (उथल-पुथल से भरा)

Meaning: Characterized by disorder, confusion, or turbulence.

Synonyms: Turbulent, chaotic, stormy

Antonyms: Calm, peaceful, stable

Example: The stock market experienced a tumultuous week with significant fluctuations.

2. Stem (रोकना)

Meaning: To stop or restrict the flow or growth of something.

Synonyms: Halt, restrain, curtail

Antonyms: Encourage, foster, promote

Example: The government introduced measures to stem the rising inflation.

VOCABULARY

3. Precariously (अस्थिरता से)

Meaning: In a way that is not securely held or in a position likely to collapse.

Synonyms: Unsteadily, insecurely, dangerously

Antonyms: Securely, safely, steadily

Example: The climber stood precariously on the edge of the cliff.

4. Sputtering (झटके से बंद होना)

Meaning: Making a series of soft explosive sounds; working in a way that shows inconsistency.

Synonyms: Stumbling, faltering, stammering

Antonyms: Flowing, smooth, consistent

Example: The old car started sputtering as it climbed the steep hill.

VOCABULARY

5. Inevitability (अनिवार्यता)

Meaning: The quality of being certain to happen.

Synonyms: Certainty, necessity, surety

Antonyms: Uncertainty, doubt, improbability

Example: The inevitability of change is a constant in life.

6. Quibble (झगड़ना)

Meaning: A slight objection or criticism about a trivial matter.

Synonyms: Nitpick, cavil, fuss

Antonyms: Agree, accept, commend

Example: They quibbled over the color of the curtains instead of focusing on the renovation plan.

VOCABULARY

7. Foray (प्रवेश/आक्रमण)

Meaning: A sudden attack or incursion; an initial venture into a new field.

Synonyms: Raid, expedition, attempt

Antonyms: Retreat, withdrawal

Example: His foray into entrepreneurship proved to be highly successful.

8. Purveyor (प्रदाता)

Meaning: A person or group that supplies goods or services.

Synonyms: Supplier, vendor, provider

Antonyms: Consumer, buyer

Example: The purveyor of quality chess equipment was a key supporter of the tournament.

VOCABULARY

9. Confluence (संगम)

Meaning: The junction of two or more things, especially rivers or ideas.

Synonyms: Convergence, union, meeting

Antonyms: Divergence, separation

Example: A confluence of factors led to the company's unprecedented success.

10. Unequivocal (स्पष्ट)

Meaning: Leaving no doubt; unambiguous.

Synonyms: Clear, unmistakable, categorical

Antonyms: Ambiguous, uncertain, unclear

Example: The minister's speech was an unequivocal declaration of support for the new policy.

VOCABULARY

Phrasal Verbs:

1. Pitch in

Meaning: to begin working or to contribute to a common task

2. Psych out

Meaning: make someone less confident

3. Snuff out

Meaning: to put an end to, kill, or destroy something completely

4. Zip around

Meaning: to move quickly from one place to another

VOCABULARY

Idioms & Phrases

1. Draw a longbow

Meaning - to exaggerate in telling stories

2. Run around the circles

Meaning - to keep doing or talking about the same thing without achieving anything

3. Boil the ocean

Meaning - undertaking an impossible task

VOCABULARY

4. Down for the count

Meaning - having failed in something that you are doing

5. Step up your game

Meaning - to enhance performance, quality, skills, or talents

Article for Reading

**Currency concerns: on
the rupee**

It has been a tumultuous time for the Indian rupee even as the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has been actively stepping into the foreign exchange market to stem its free fall in pursuit of what it calls an 'orderly' exchange movement. The rupee had hit an all-time low of 85 to the U.S. dollar on December 19. Last Friday, it came precariously close to the 86-mark before a late intervention by the central bank pulled it back to 85.53. A confluence of factors at work have hurt the rupee in recent times, including the sustained outflows of foreign portfolio investments from securities markets after key indices peaked in late September. Overstretched stock valuations, a demotivating corporate performance in the July-September quarter, and China's economic stimulus, nudged emerging market portfolios from Mumbai to Beijing.

The Donald Trump factor added a fresh headwind with the dollar strengthening since his U.S. presidential electoral victory, and emerging market currencies were further rattled by his warning of a 100% tariff on BRICS nations for a common currency plan to challenge the dominance of the U.S. dollar in global trade. Even before fears about Mr. Trump's generally protectionist stance on trade matters materialise, India's goods trade story is sputtering. Record trade deficits and import bills are going to show up in this quarter's current account deficit, which is expected to double from around 1.2% of GDP in the second quarter. Services trade is still throwing up a surplus but the uncertainty around the H-1B visa regime will be a key monitorable, despite Mr. Trump's latest soothing comments on the system. The previous RBI Governor, Shaktikanta Das, did well to forthrightly dismiss the BRICS currency as just an idea in the air, and stress that India has no de-dollarisation agenda.

The government must also issue an unequivocal statement to this effect in public fora and in diplomatic parleys to put the issue to rest. It is true that the currencies of other emerging markets have taken a bigger hit and a falling rupee bodes well for exporters, but India also needs to worry about importing inflation, especially on inelastic items such as edible oil and crude petroleum. Moreover, foreign investment flows are uncertain as is the U.S. monetary policy outlook for 2025. There is also a limit to the extent the central bank can deploy forex reserves to manage the rupee's trajectory, and the Finance Ministry has conceded that recent exchange rate movements cramp the freedom for monetary policymakers. India's present economic woes are linked to domestic drivers such as faltering consumption and reluctant investments. With the rupee coming under pressure, the country's external resilience could be tested as well in 2025, and policymakers must gear up to manage this new risk.

Summary

The passage discusses the challenges faced by the Indian rupee amidst its depreciation against the U.S. dollar and the measures taken by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to stabilize its value. Contributing factors include foreign investment outflows, weak corporate performance, overstretched stock valuations, and global influences such as China's economic stimulus and the strengthening U.S. dollar, exacerbated by Donald Trump's policies and statements. India's trade deficits, rising import bills, and concerns about the H-1B visa regime add to the economic strain. While a weaker rupee may benefit exporters, the risks of importing inflation and uncertain foreign investment flows pose significant challenges. The passage emphasizes the importance of clear policy communication and strategic management to safeguard India's economic resilience in 2025.

The tone of the passage is analytical and cautionary, as it examines the multifaceted issues affecting the rupee and India's economy while warning about potential risks that policymakers must address.

Reading Comprehension

Based on the above passage, answer the following questions:

Question 1:

What is the expected impact of the current trade deficit on India's economy?

- a) A decrease in the current account deficit.**
- b) An increase in the services trade surplus.**
- c) Doubling of the current account deficit as a percentage of GDP.**
- d) Reduced inflation on imported goods.**
- e) None of the above**

Question 2:

What stance did the previous RBI Governor, Shaktikanta Das, take regarding the proposed BRICS currency?

- a) He supported its introduction to reduce dependency on the U.S. dollar.**
- b) He dismissed it as an impractical idea.**
- c) He called for a pilot project to test its feasibility.**
- d) He suggested that India lead the BRICS currency initiative.**
- e) None of the above**

Question 3:

Which of the following factors has not contributed to the rupee's recent decline?

- a) Sustained outflows of foreign portfolio investments.**
- b) Overvalued stock indices and poor corporate performance.**
- c) Strengthening of the U.S. dollar post-Trump's victory.**
- d) India's decision to pursue a de-dollarisation agenda.**
- e) None of the above**

Article for Skimming

**Queen's gambit: on
Koneru Humpy's
chess win**

There was almost a sense of inevitability to the World rapid chess championship that concluded in New York on Sunday (India time). Given the astonishing year that India has had in chess, it was as if there had to be an Indian champion, and Koneru Humpy ensured there was one. The 37-year-old from Vijayawada won the women's World rapid championship after defeating Indonesia's Irene Sukandar in the final round. This is the second World rapid title for Humpy, which she won first in 2019. This is even more remarkable as she had been seeded 10th and had to face several younger rivals. Chess is getting younger and younger. D. Gukesh proved it just a fortnight ago in Singapore, when he became the youngest world champion in history at 18. Gukesh's victory came in the classical variety of chess, while Humpy's was in a format of much shorter time control. The fact that it has not been her favourite format — which remains classical — makes her success even more special.

Ironically, she has never won the classical World championship, though she has come close in the past. The latest triumph should inspire her to mount another challenge for the trophy that matters the most. Humpy's success is only the latest reminder about India's stature as the superpower in international chess. In September this year, India's men's and women's teams emerged as champions at the Chess Olympiad, in which just about every country took part. Only the former Soviet Union and China have claimed a twin gold at the Olympiad before. India is now to world chess what the Soviet Union was for decades. The country may still have to go a long way before it could rival the popularity that chess enjoyed in the USSR during its golden days but India is churning out world beaters with remarkable consistency.

An active chess federation despite the internal quibbles, a familiar tale for Indian sport, huge parental support, increasing interest from the corporate sector and the availability of Grandmasters as coaches across the country have all contributed to the Indian chess revolution, which was begun by five-time World champion Viswanathan Anand. But for India to retain its position as the global giant in the mind game, more has to be done. Except for a few States such as Tamil Nadu, chess still does not get the recognition it deserves. Recently, Tania Sachdev, a member of the victorious Indian women's team at the Olympiad, had to go public about the lack of support for chess from the Delhi government.

Question 4:

What does the passage attribute the Indian chess revolution to?

- a) Financial support from the central government.**
- b) A strong chess federation and contributions by Grandmasters as coaches.**
- c) The widespread popularity of chess across all Indian states.**
- d) Exclusive government funding for chess tournaments.**
- e) None of the above**

Question 5:

What concern did Tania Sachdev raise regarding chess in India?

- a) The lack of sufficient tournaments for women.**
- b) The unavailability of rapid chess training programs.**
- c) The absence of Grandmasters as coaches for women players.**
- d) The lack of support from the Delhi government for chess.**
- e) None of the above**

Today's Descriptive Question:

- **Write an essay of 200 words about the ethical implications of Genetic Engineering.**

Genetic engineering, the manipulation of an organism's DNA, poses significant ethical challenges. On one hand, it offers tremendous potential for advances in medicine, agriculture, and other fields. For instance, genetic engineering can be used to eliminate hereditary diseases, enhance crop yields, and even extend human life. These possibilities raise hopes for a future where suffering is minimized and resources are abundant.

However, the ethical implications are profound. The alteration of human genes, particularly germline editing, raises concerns about "playing God" and the potential for unintended consequences that could affect future generations. The possibility of creating "designer babies" with selected traits also introduces ethical dilemmas regarding social inequality and the devaluation of diversity. There is a fear that genetic engineering could lead to a new form of eugenics, where only those who can afford genetic enhancements will benefit, exacerbating existing social divides.

Moreover, the long-term effects of genetic modifications are unknown, and the potential for misuse by governments or corporations adds another layer of concern. The ethical debate surrounding genetic engineering thus revolves around the balance between potential benefits and the risks of unforeseen and possibly irreversible consequences, highlighting the need for careful regulation and global ethical consensus.

- **Write a resignation letter addressed to the manager of the company.**

[Your Name]

[Your Address]

[Email Address]

[Date]

[Recipient's Name]

[Company Name]

[Company Address]

Subject: Resignation letter

Dear [Recipient's Name],

I am writing to formally resign from my position as [Your Position] at [Company Name], effective [Last Working Day, typically two weeks from the date of the letter].

This decision was not easy, as I have greatly enjoyed working at [Company Name] and am grateful for the opportunities I've had to learn and grow professionally. However, after careful consideration, I have decided that it is time for me to pursue new challenges and opportunities.

I am committed to ensuring a smooth transition and am happy to assist in training my replacement or handing over my responsibilities in the coming weeks. Please let me know how I can best help during this period.

Thank you for the support and guidance you have provided during my time here. I have appreciated the chance to be part of such a dynamic team, and I look forward to staying in touch.

I wish the company continued success in the future.

**Sincerely,
[Your Name]**

Match the column

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| 1. Draw a longbow | A. having failed in something that you are doing |
| 2. Run around the circle | B. undertaking an impossible task |
| 3. Boil the ocean | C. to enhance performance |
| 4. Down for the count | D. to exaggerate in telling stories |
| 5. Step up your game | E. to keep doing the same thing without achieving anything |

Answer:

1-d

2-e

3-b

4-a

5-c

Vocabulary

1. Tumultuous:
2. Stem:
3. Precariously:
4. Sputtering:
5. Inevitability:
6. Quibble:
7. Foray:
8. Purveyor:
9. Confluence:
10. Unequivocal:

Rc ans

1.

Answer: c) Doubling of the current account deficit as a percentage of GDP.

Explanation:

The passage states that the current account deficit is expected to double due to record trade deficits and import bills.

Reference: "Record trade deficits and import bills are going to show up in this quarter's current account deficit, which is expected to double from around 1.2% of GDP in the second quarter."

2.

Answer: b) He dismissed it as an impractical idea.

Explanation:

Shaktikanta Das clearly stated that the BRICS currency was just "an idea in the air" and emphasized India's lack of a de-dollarisation agenda.

Reference: "The previous RBI Governor, Shaktikanta Das, did well to forthrightly dismiss the BRICS currency as just an idea in the air."

3.

Answer: d) India's decision to pursue a de-dollarisation agenda.

Explanation:

The passage clearly states that the previous RBI Governor dismissed the idea of a de-dollarisation agenda, implying India has not pursued such a policy.

Reference: "Shaktikanta Das ... stress that India has no de-dollarisation agenda."

4.

Answer: b) A strong chess federation and contributions by Grandmasters as coaches.

Explanation:

The passage credits the chess federation, Grandmaster coaches, parental support, and corporate interest as key factors behind India's chess revolution.

Reference: "An active chess federation ... increasing interest from the corporate sector and the availability of Grandmasters as coaches."

5.

Answer: d) The lack of support from the Delhi government for chess.

Explanation:

The passage specifically mentions Tania Sachdev speaking out about the lack of government support for chess in Delhi.

Reference: “Tania Sachdev ... had to go public about the lack of support for chess from the Delhi government.”

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