

The Hindu EDITORIAL ANALYSIS

27th 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. Exert (प्रभाव डालना)

Meaning: To apply or put forth effort, influence, or pressure.

Synonyms: Apply, exercise, wield, enforce

Antonyms: Withdraw, relax, neglect, cease

Example: China exerts significant control over the global rare earth supply chain.

2. Reinforce (मजबूत करना)

Meaning: To strengthen or support.

Synonyms: Fortify, bolster, enhance, amplify

Antonyms: Weaken, undermine, diminish, erode

Example: China's ban on rare earth technologies reinforces its dominance in the sector.

VOCABULARY

3. Robust (मजबूत)

Meaning: Strong and effective in all or most situations.

Synonyms: Sturdy, resilient, vigorous, durable

Antonyms: Fragile, weak, delicate, feeble

Example: Kazakhstan is building a robust rare earth extraction industry with international partnerships.

4. Proximity (निकटता)

Meaning: Nearness in space, time, or relationship.

Synonyms: Closeness, nearness, adjacency, vicinity

Antonyms: Distance, remoteness, separation, isolation

Example: Kazakhstan's proximity to India makes it a favorable partner for rare earth imports.

VOCABULARY

5. Dissent (मतभेद)

Meaning: Holding or expressing an opinion different from the majority.

Synonyms: Disagreement, opposition, objection

Antonyms: Agreement, consensus, harmony

Example: The judge's dissent highlighted an alternate perspective on the case.

6. Edifice (संरचना)

Meaning: A large and imposing structure; often metaphorically referring to a complex system.

Synonyms: Structure, building, framework

Antonyms: Ruin, dismantlement

Example: The edifice of modern education relies on both traditional and digital teaching methods.

VOCABULARY

7. Invincible (अजेय)

Meaning: Too powerful to be defeated or overcome.

Synonyms: Unbeatable, invulnerable, indomitable

Antonyms: Vulnerable, weak, conquerable

Example: The team appeared invincible throughout the tournament, winning all their matches.

8. Exhibit (प्रदर्शित करना)

Meaning: To show or display something.

Synonyms: Display, reveal, demonstrate

Antonyms: Conceal, hide, withhold

Example: The museum exhibits various artifacts from ancient civilizations.

VOCABULARY

9. Capitulation (समर्पण)

Meaning: The action of surrendering or ceasing to resist an opponent.

Synonyms: Surrender, submission, yield

Antonyms: Resistance, defiance, opposition

Example: The team's early capitulation in the game left the fans disappointed.

10. Leash (नियंत्रण)

Meaning: A restraint or control over something.

Synonyms: Control, restriction, tether

Antonyms: Freedom, release, liberation

Example: The company kept a tight leash on expenses to stay within budget.

VOCABULARY

Phrasal Verbs:

1. Pack off

Meaning: to send (someone) away

2. Read up

Meaning: acquire information about a particular subject by studying it intensively

3. Romp through

Meaning: to do something quickly and easily

4. Rough up

Meaning: beat someone up

VOCABULARY

Idioms & Phrases

1. White as a sheet

Meaning: (of a person) very pale, especially from shock

2. The big time

Meaning: the state of being famous or successful

3. Never in a million years

Meaning: something is extremely unlikely or impossible

VOCABULARY

4. Living beyond your means

Meaning: to spend more money than you receive as income

5. In the interim

Meaning: in the time between two things happening; until a particular event happens

Article for Reading

**Tapping into
Kazakhstan's rare
earths potential**

As the world accelerates its transition to cleaner energy through cutting-edge technology, the demand for rare earths has increased globally. India, the third-largest carbon emitter, is pivoting to renewable energy and faces a growing need for rare earths. Despite being the fifth-largest holder of rare earth elements, India relies heavily on China for imports as it lacks advanced technologies for extraction. Amid supply chain disruptions and security concerns tied to China's dominance in this sector, New Delhi is diversifying its sources through agreements with the U.S., Latin American, and African countries to mitigate dependency on China. In this context, Kazakhstan emerges as a promising and strategically closer alternative. China accounts for over one-third of the global rare earths' possession and around 70% of its production, with India sourcing around 60% of its imports from Beijing. This heavy reliance stems from India's insufficient domestic production to meet the demands of critical sectors like electronics, defence, and clean energy.

However, China's past actions of disrupting critical technology and mineral supply due to bilateral issues give rise to fears as it tries to exert control over the critical mineral industry. China's monopoly in global and Indian rare earth demand leverages its position to dictate supply chain terms. China recently halted the supply of antimony, crucial for flame retardants, solar cells, batteries, and military gear, citing national security concerns. This move, along with a ban in December 2023 on critical technologies for extracting rare earths and producing magnets, reinforces China's grip on the sector. Meanwhile, reduced ore supplies from Russia — mainly antimony concentrates used in wind and solar energy production — have intensified China's concerns as both the largest producer and consumer of rare earths. Russia's invasion of Ukraine has further exposed the risks of concentrated supply chains, resulting in India and Western nations to seek sustainable, diversified alternatives.

In this context, Kazakhstan, a close ally of India, offers a viable alternative to meet India's rare earth demands. Kazakhstan is among the richest sources of rare earths. With New Delhi's increasing engagement with Astana through the 'Connect Central Asia' policy and connectivity initiatives such as the International North-South Transport Corridor, a rare earth partnership could unlock significant economic benefits for both nations. Kazakhstan holds 15 of the 17 known rare earth elements and, with advanced extraction technologies, could dent China's dominance in this sector. Astana already has extraction agreements with Japan and Germany, while the U.S., South Korea, and the European Union have recently joined exploration and production deals to tap its rare earth reserves. Kazakhstan's extraction of rare earth elements like dysprosium is projected to grow significantly between 2024 and 2029.

Part for Skimming

The country's President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev recently highlighted rare earths as the "new oil" for Kazakhstan's economy. The country hosts one of the world's three full-cycle beryllium and scandium factories, crucial for telecommunications, and is among the four global manufacturers of tantalum and niobium, essential for nuclear reactors and clean energy. Astana is expanding its role in rare earth and strategic mineral production with investments in tungsten, battery materials, and magnets. Its vast mining potential in rare earth elements can complement India's efforts in this sector. The Kazakh government is prioritising advanced technologies and partnerships to strengthen its presence in emerging fields like lithium and heat-resistant alloys. Additionally, Kazakh metallurgical plants extract bismuth, antimony, selenium, and tellurium, and use imported technologies to produce gallium from alumina and indium from polymetallic ores, all of which are essential for renewable energy production.

India's COP29 pledge to achieve 500 GW of renewable energy by 2030 highlights the importance of rare earth elements like dysprosium in advancing clean energy technologies. India lacks capacity across the rare earth supply chain but plans a 400% increase in mining output over the next decade. India's over-reliance on China and possible global shifts after the U.S. regime change underscore the need for diversification. India-Kazakhstan collaboration can enhance India's resource security, reduce dependence on China, and support sustainability by procuring rare earth through domestic extraction and import sources through partners in closer proximity. Apart from India's direct connectivity challenges with Kazakhstan, there is a lack of necessary extraction technologies in both countries.

Nevertheless, the ‘India-Central Asia Rare Earths Forum’, proposed by National Security Adviser Ajit Doval during the second India-Central Asia Summit in Astana, aims to boost partnerships and private sector investment, potentially combating these challenges. It could facilitate bilateral training, joint mining ventures, shared geological data and expertise, sustainable extraction practices, and create a regional market to reduce reliance on China.

Summary

The passage discusses the global rise in demand for rare earth elements (REEs) driven by the transition to renewable energy and advanced technologies, with India's growing dependency on imports from China due to limited domestic production capabilities. It highlights India's efforts to diversify its sources, focusing on Kazakhstan as a strategic and resource-rich alternative.

Kazakhstan's rare earth potential, existing extraction technologies, and partnerships with countries like Japan, Germany, and the U.S. are emphasized as key advantages. Collaborative initiatives, such as the proposed India-Central Asia Rare Earths Forum, are presented as solutions to challenges like connectivity and technology gaps, aiming to strengthen India's resource security and reduce dependence on China.

The tone of the passage is informative and analytical, with a focus on providing detailed insights into geopolitical and economic considerations surrounding rare earth elements. It also carries a strategic and optimistic undertone, emphasizing opportunities for collaboration and growth.

Reading Comprehension

Based on the above passage, answer the following questions:

Question 1:

Why is Kazakhstan considered a viable alternative to China for India's rare earth demands?

- a) It is one of the largest exporters of antimony concentrates.**
- b) It possesses advanced technologies for rare earth extraction.**
- c) It is a member of the International North-South Transport Corridor.**
- d) It has established extraction agreements with Japan and Germany.**
- e) None of the above**

Question 2:

What is one of the main challenges India and Kazakhstan face in their rare earth collaboration?

- a) Lack of strong political ties between the two countries.**
- b) Insufficient rare earth reserves in Kazakhstan.**
- c) Absence of the necessary extraction technologies in both countries.**
- d) Lack of direct connectivity between India and Kazakhstan.**
- e) None of the above**

Question 3:

What does the term “new oil” signify in the context of rare earth elements for Kazakhstan?

- a) Rare earth elements are as crucial to Kazakhstan’s economy as oil once was.**
- b) Rare earths are replacing oil as the primary energy resource.**
- c) Kazakhstan is shifting its focus entirely away from oil to rare earth production.**
- d) Rare earth mining requires the same level of investment as the oil industry.**
- e) None of the above**

Question 4:

Why does India heavily rely on China for rare earth imports?

- a) China provides rare earth elements at the lowest global price.**
- b) India lacks sufficient domestic production and advanced extraction technologies.**
- c) China has exclusive rights to rare earth mining in India.**
- d) Rare earth elements from China are of higher quality than those from other sources.**
- e) None of the above**

Question 5:

What is a key goal of the proposed 'India-Central Asia Rare Earths Forum'?

- a) To reduce India's connectivity challenges with Central Asian countries.**
- b) To increase Kazakhstan's rare earth production by 400%.**
- c) To explore alternative energy sources other than rare earths.**
- d) To establish a regional market to decrease reliance on China.**
- e) None of the above**

Today's Descriptive Question:

- **Write an essay of 250 words about the importance of Health Insurance in Modern Society.**

Health insurance has become a cornerstone of modern society, providing individuals and families with financial security against unforeseen medical expenses. In a world where healthcare costs are steadily rising, health insurance acts as a protective shield, ensuring that quality medical care is accessible to all, regardless of their financial situation.

One of the most significant advantages of health insurance is the peace of mind it offers. Medical emergencies, such as accidents or sudden illnesses, can lead to exorbitant costs that can deplete savings and push families into financial hardship. Health insurance mitigates this risk by covering a substantial portion of medical expenses, including hospitalization, surgeries, and medication.

Moreover, health insurance encourages preventive care. Many policies include coverage for regular check-ups, vaccinations, and screenings, promoting early detection of diseases. This not only improves overall health outcomes but also reduces the long-term financial burden of treating advanced illnesses.

In modern societies, where lifestyle-related conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, and heart diseases are on the rise, health insurance ensures access to specialized treatments and critical care without delay. It also bridges the gap between individuals and advanced healthcare technologies that might otherwise remain unaffordable.

Health insurance benefits extend beyond individuals to the economy as a whole. It reduces the strain on public healthcare systems and fosters productivity by ensuring a healthier workforce.

In conclusion, health insurance is not merely a financial product but a vital tool for safeguarding health and well-being. Its importance in modern society cannot be overstated, as it provides security, promotes health, and contributes to societal stability.

- **Write a letter to an insurance firm requesting them to change the residential address.**

[Your Name]
[Your Current Address]
[City, State, ZIP Code]
[Date]

The Manager
[Insurance Firm Name]
[Branch Address]
[City, State, ZIP Code]

Subject: Request for Change of Residential Address

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to formally request an update to the residential address associated with my insurance policy. Please find the details of my policy below:

Policy Number: [Your Policy Number]

Policyholder Name: [Your Full Name]

Due to my recent relocation, I would like to update my address in your records to ensure I receive all correspondence without delay. My new residential address is as follows:

[Your New Address]

[City, State, ZIP Code]

I kindly request you to update your records and confirm the address change at the earliest convenience. Enclosed with this letter, I have attached a copy of [proof of new address, e.g., utility bill, lease agreement, or government ID] for your verification.

Please let me know if any additional documentation or information is required to process this request.

I would appreciate it if you could confirm the update via email or phone at your earliest convenience. My contact details are:

Email: [Your Email Address]

Phone: [Your Phone Number]

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

**Yours sincerely,
[Your Full Name]**

Match the column

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| 1. White as a sheet | A. something is extremely unlikely |
| 2. The big time | B. very pale, especially from shock |
| 3. Never in a million years | C. in the time between two things happening |
| 4. Living beyond your means | D. the state of being famous or successful |
| 5. In the interim | E. to spend more money than you receive |

Answer:

1-b

2-d

3-a

4-e

5-c

Vocabulary

1. Exert:
2. Reinforce:
3. Robust:
4. Proximity:
5. Dissent:
6. Edifice:
7. Invincible:
8. Exhibit:
9. Capitulation:
10. Leash:

Rc ans

1.

Answer: b) It possesses advanced technologies for rare earth extraction.

Explanation:

Reference: "Kazakhstan... with advanced extraction technologies, could dent China's dominance in this sector."

Kazakhstan is highlighted as a promising partner due to its advanced extraction technologies, which are essential to process rare earth elements and challenge China's dominance.

a) Incorrect: The passage does not mention Kazakhstan as an antimony concentrate exporter.

c) Incorrect: While Kazakhstan is part of the International North-South Transport Corridor, this is not the primary reason for its viability.

d) Incorrect: Agreements with Japan and Germany are mentioned but are not directly linked to its suitability for India's demands.

2.

Answer: c) Absence of the necessary extraction technologies in both countries.

Explanation:

Reference: "There is a lack of necessary extraction technologies in both countries."

The passage notes that both India and Kazakhstan face challenges due to the lack of necessary extraction technologies, even though Kazakhstan is investing in advanced methods.

- a) Incorrect: The two countries share strong ties, as indicated by initiatives like the 'Connect Central Asia' policy.
- b) Incorrect: Kazakhstan is among the richest sources of rare earth elements.
- d) Incorrect: While connectivity is a challenge, the lack of extraction technology is more critical.

3.

Answer: a) Rare earth elements are as crucial to Kazakhstan's economy as oil once was.

Explanation:

Reference: "The country's President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev recently highlighted rare earths as the 'new oil' for Kazakhstan's economy."

The metaphor "new oil" underscores the economic importance of rare earth elements, positioning them as a critical resource for Kazakhstan's future development.

b) Incorrect: Rare earths are not described as a replacement for oil but as a new pillar of economic growth.

c) Incorrect: There is no evidence of a complete shift away from oil.

d) Incorrect: The passage does not compare investment levels between oil and rare earths.

4.

Answer: b) India lacks sufficient domestic production and advanced extraction technologies.

Explanation:

Reference: “India relies heavily on China for imports as it lacks advanced technologies for extraction.”

India’s reliance on China stems from its insufficient domestic production capabilities and lack of advanced technologies for rare earth extraction.

a) Incorrect: Pricing is not mentioned as the primary reason for India’s reliance.

c) Incorrect: There is no mention of China holding exclusive rights to Indian rare earth mining.

d) Incorrect: Quality is not mentioned as a factor.

5.

Answer: d) To establish a regional market to decrease reliance on China.

Explanation:

Reference: “It could facilitate... sustainable extraction practices, and create a regional market to reduce reliance on China.”

The proposed forum aims to foster partnerships, investments, and sustainable practices, ultimately creating a regional market to reduce dependence on China.

- a) Incorrect: Connectivity challenges are acknowledged but not the primary goal of the forum.
- b) Incorrect: The forum’s goal is not specific to production increases in Kazakhstan.
- c) Incorrect: The focus is on rare earth collaboration, not alternative energy sources.

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