

The Hindu

EDITORIAL ANALYSIS

23th 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. Coerced (विवश करना)

Meaning: Persuaded or forced to do something by using threats or pressure.

Synonyms: Compelled, forced, pressured

Antonyms: Allowed, permitted, freed

Example: The workers were coerced into relocating to Libya.

2. Plight (दुर्दशा)

Meaning: A dangerous, difficult, or otherwise unfortunate situation.

Synonyms: Predicament, hardship, trouble

Antonyms: Fortune, blessing, comfort

Example: The Prime Minister acknowledged the plight of Indian workers abroad.

VOCABULARY

3. Circumvent (चकमा देना)

Meaning: To find a way around an obstacle or avoid a rule cleverly.

Synonyms: Evade, bypass, dodge

Antonyms: Adhere, comply, confront

Example: Agents often circumvent regulations to exploit workers.

4. Repatriate (स्वदेश वापस भेजना)

Meaning: To send someone back to their own country.

Synonyms: Return, restore, deport

Antonyms: Retain, keep

Example: Many workers were repatriated due to unsafe conditions abroad.

VOCABULARY

5. Ratified (अनुमोदित करना)

Meaning: Approved or confirmed officially.

Synonyms: Endorsed, validated, sanctioned

Antonyms: Rejected, denied, opposed

Example: Amendments must be ratified by at least half of the State Assemblies.

6. Militates (प्रभाव डालना)

Meaning: To be a powerful factor in preventing or opposing something.

Synonyms: Opposes, contradicts, hinders

Antonyms: Supports, favors, encourages

Example: Frequent elections militate against the rationale of cost-cutting.

VOCABULARY

7. Ostensible (प्रकट / दिखावटी)

Meaning: Stated or appearing to be true, but not necessarily so.

Synonyms: Apparent, supposed, outward

Antonyms: Genuine, real, authentic

Example: The ostensible reason for simultaneous elections is cost reduction.

8. Stark (साफ / स्पष्ट)

Meaning: Clear, sharp, and often harsh in appearance or outline.

Synonyms: Blunt, severe, plain

Antonyms: Subtle, mild, vague

Example: The plight of Indian workers abroad stands in stark contrast to the nation's diplomatic ambitions.

VOCABULARY

9. Dire (गंभीर)

Meaning: Extremely serious or urgent.

Synonyms: Grave, critical, severe

Antonyms: Minor, trivial, insignificant

Example: Indian workers in non-ECR countries often face dire consequences.

10. Imperative (अनिवार्य)

Meaning: Absolutely necessary or required.

Synonyms: Essential, crucial, mandatory

Antonyms: Optional, unimportant, unnecessary

Example: It is imperative to address the challenges of labour exploitation.

VOCABULARY

Phrasal Verbs:

1. Nail down

Meaning: To secure, finalize, or determine something firmly and decisively.

2. Rule out

Meaning: To eliminate or exclude something as a possibility.

3. Count on

Meaning: To rely or depend on someone or something.

4. Point out

Meaning: To highlight or draw attention to something.

VOCABULARY

Idioms & Phrases

1. A crushing blow

Meaning - A hurtful action

2. A crying shame

Meaning - A disgrace; something unfair that make us feel sorry for the victimised

3. A cushy job

Meaning - An easy job that is not demanding or difficult

VOCABULARY

4. A cut above the average

Meaning - Higher than normal

5. Add fuel to fire

Meaning - To make matters worse

Article for Reading

**Away from home: On
the plight of the Indian
worker**

The story of 16 Indian workers allegedly deceived into working under inhumane conditions in Libya highlights the persistent issue of labour exploitation faced by millions of Indians abroad. According to government reports, these workers, who had travelled to the United Arab Emirates for employment, were later coerced into relocating to Benghazi, Libya, to work in a cement factory. While the Indian mission has been providing them with food and supplies, the workers cannot leave without the necessary exit permits. This incident is far from isolated. In June, a fire at a labour camp in Mangaf, Kuwait, claimed the lives of at least 40 Indians. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent visit to Kuwait has brought attention to the plight of Indian workers, particularly those in labour camps. Despite Mr. Modi's acknowledgment of Kuwait's support for its over one-million-strong Indian community, the dangers faced by Indian workers remain a concern.

According to the Ministry of External Affairs, there are around 13 million Indian nationals abroad, with most in the Gulf countries. These workers, who lack eligibility for citizenship in their host countries, contribute significantly to India's economy through remittances — about \$111 billion in 2022. However, their personal gains are often limited. Many are burdened by recruitment fees, loans for travel and relocation, and exploitative work conditions such as the kafala system in the Gulf countries. The Indian government has made attempts to regulate labour migration. The introduction of the e-Migrate system over a decade ago for workers travelling to 18 countries requiring Emigration Clearance (ECR) was a step forward. However, labour contractors and agents, operating in international networks, often circumvent these safeguards. Moreover, these protections do not extend to non-ECR countries such as Israel and Russia, where Indian workers have faced dire consequences, including death in conflict zones.

Reforming India's Emigration Act, stricter monitoring of recruitment agents, and demanding higher compensation guarantees from foreign employers are necessary. Yet, a more sustainable solution lies in fostering equitable economic growth in India. Ultimately, in cases like that of the workers in Libya, the government is often left with no choice but to repatriate them. However, many return to a bleak future. For most, the harsh realities of life overseas still appear preferable. Rather than merely celebrating the success of its diaspora, India must use platforms such as the Pravasi Bharatiya Sammelan to address the struggles of these workers. Their plight remains in stark contrast to India's growing economic and diplomatic ambitions on the global stage.

Summary

The passage highlights the persistent issue of labour exploitation faced by Indian workers abroad, as exemplified by 16 Indian workers allegedly deceived into inhumane conditions in Libya. It discusses the vulnerabilities of Indian workers in Gulf countries and beyond, including unsafe living conditions, recruitment fraud, and exploitative practices like the kafala system. Despite contributing significantly to India's economy through remittances, these workers often face dire personal circumstances. Government initiatives such as the e-Migrate system have been introduced to regulate labour migration, but loopholes persist. Comprehensive reforms, stricter monitoring, and fostering equitable economic growth in India are suggested as long-term solutions. The passage calls for greater focus on addressing these workers' struggles rather than just celebrating India's diaspora achievements.

The tone is concerned, critical, and empathetic, emphasizing the urgency of addressing labour exploitation and systemic failures while highlighting the broader socio-economic challenges faced by Indian workers abroad.

Reading Comprehension

Based on the above passage, answer the following questions:

Question 1:

Which of the following is suggested as a more sustainable solution to address the plight of Indian workers abroad?

- a) Reforming India's Emigration Act to include stricter recruitment monitoring.**
- b) Demanding higher compensation guarantees from foreign employers.**
- c) Promoting equitable economic growth within India.**
- d) Strengthening the e-Migrate system for all destination countries.**
- e) None of the above**

Question 2:

What systemic issue exacerbates the plight of Indian workers in Gulf countries?

- a) High recruitment fees and loans taken for relocation.**
- b) Lack of diplomatic representation in Gulf countries.**
- c) Unavailability of legal work permits for Indian workers.**
- d) Absence of remittance opportunities in the Gulf.**
- e) None of the above**

Question 3:

What is one major limitation of the e-Migrate system as discussed in the passage?

- a) It does not address issues faced by workers in conflict zones like Libya.**
- b) It cannot regulate recruitment agents operating in non-ECR countries.**
- c) It fails to protect workers from exploitative work conditions in Gulf countries.**
- d) It does not provide financial assistance to workers in distress.**
- e) None of the above**

Article for Skimming

**Pie in the sky: On the
idea of simultaneous
elections**

With the Union government introducing two Bills in the Lok Sabha to implement its idea of simultaneous elections to the Lok Sabha and the State Assemblies, the stage is set for Parliament to debate the feasibility, or otherwise, of the idea of what the government calls “One Nation, One Election”. With the Opposition pressing on a division of votes on the introduction of the Bill — 263 for and 198 against — the writing on the wall was clear. The government does not have the two-thirds majority in Parliament to pass the constitutional amendments to facilitate simultaneous elections. A 39-member House panel will examine the two Bills. The content in the Bills themselves are in line with the recommendations of a committee headed by former President of India Ram Nath Kovind that envisaged simultaneous Lok Sabha and Assembly elections as a first step, followed by municipal and panchayat polls within 100 days of the general election.

For the amendments to conduct municipal elections, they would have to be ratified by at least half of the State Assemblies. The Constitution Amendment Bill seeks to add a new provision that will provide for the timeline for simultaneous elections and as per the wording in the Bill, this could happen only in 2034 unless the Lok Sabha terms prior to that are curtailed for some reason. Other provisions echo the Kovind committee recommendations — for example, if a State Assembly gets dissolved before five years of its term, after the “appointed date” — the date for synchronising Lok Sabha and Assembly elections — fresh “midterm” elections will be held but the new Assembly will not have a full five-year tenure. Its tenure will end five years from the “appointed date”. The Bill also provides the Election Commission the option to defer or not hold Assembly elections to a particular State, but the full term of that Assembly will still coincide with that of the Lok Sabha elections. These provisions are anti-federal.

The idea of conducting multiple elections to an Assembly before the stipulated five-year period also militates against the ostensible rationale provided for the idea of introducing simultaneous elections — cost-cutting. The idea of federalism, sharing power at different levels of governance, is tied to the exclusive importance and roles demarcated to them and elections are a way for voters to exercise their specific concerns related to these different levels of government. By subsuming the electoral cycles into one time frame, the idea of simultaneous elections has the potential to diminish the importance of each tier, which is also in line with the centralising tendencies of the BJP/NDA regime. This makes it imperative for those committed to federalism to steadfastly oppose this idea.

Question 4:

Which of the following undermines the rationale of cost-cutting in simultaneous elections?

- a) The necessity of multiple elections for Assemblies dissolved midterm.**
- b) The increased administrative burden on the Election Commission.**
- c) Higher compensation demands from State governments.**
- d) The need for additional constitutional amendments to synchronize elections.**
- e) None of the above**

Question 5:

Why might simultaneous elections be seen as aligning with the BJP/NDA regime's tendencies?

- a) They promote financial efficiency and administrative ease.**
- b) They prioritize uniformity in governance across levels.**
- c) They centralize power by subsuming State-specific electoral concerns.**
- d) They strengthen federal principles by aligning terms of governance.**
- e) None of the above**

Today's Descriptive Question

- Write an essay of 200 words about highlighting the importance of Voting in Democratic Societies.

Voting is a cornerstone of democratic societies, embodying the principles of freedom and equality. It is a fundamental right and responsibility that allows citizens to influence government decisions and policies. Through voting, individuals can express their preferences for leaders and legislation, ensuring that their voices are heard and considered in the political process.

One of the primary importance of voting is that it legitimizes the government. When citizens participate in elections, they consent to be governed by the elected officials, thereby strengthening the democratic framework. High voter turnout is indicative of a healthy democracy where the populace is engaged and invested in the governance of their country. Moreover, voting promotes accountability among politicians.

Elected officials are more likely to be responsive to the needs and concerns of their constituents if they know that their re-election depends on their performance. This accountability is crucial for good governance, as it encourages transparency, responsiveness, and integrity in public office. Voting also ensures representation. In diverse societies, it is vital that all groups have a say in how they are governed. By participating in elections, minority and marginalized groups can elect representatives who understand and advocate for their specific interests and rights.

In conclusion, voting is essential for maintaining the health and vitality of democratic societies. It empowers citizens, ensures government accountability, and promotes fair representation, all of which are crucial for the functioning of a just and equitable society.

- **Write a letter to request a salary increase from the Manager.**

[Your Name]

[Your Address]

[City, State, ZIP Code]

[Email Address]

[Phone Number]

[Date]

[Manager's Name]

[Company Name]

[Company Address]

[City, State, ZIP Code]

Subject: Request for Salary Increase

Dear [Manager's Name],

I hope this message finds you well. I am writing to discuss the possibility of a salary increase.

Over the past [time period, e.g., year], I have taken on additional responsibilities and contributed significantly to our team's success, including [briefly mention specific achievements or contributions]. I believe my efforts and the value I bring to the company merit a review of my current compensation.

I am committed to continuing my hard work and dedication to our team's goals. I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss this request further and explore how my compensation can better reflect my contributions and the current market standards.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

[Your Contact Information]

Match the column

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. A crushing blow | A. Higher than normal |
| 2. A crying shame | B. A hurtful action |
| 3. A cushy job | C. A disgrace |
| 4. A cut above the average | D. To make matters worse |
| 5. Add fuel to fire | E. An easy job |

Answer:

1-b

2-c

3-e

4-a

5-d

Vocabulary

1. Coerced:
2. Plight:
3. Circumvent:
4. Repatriate:
5. Ratified:
6. Militates:
7. Ostensible
8. Stark:
9. Dire:
10. Imperative:

RC ANS

1.

Answer: c) Promoting equitable economic growth within India.

Explanation:

Reference: “Yet, a more sustainable solution lies in fostering equitable economic growth in India.”

The passage underscores that while regulatory reforms are important, fostering equitable economic growth in India would reduce the need for workers to seek employment abroad under exploitative conditions.

a) Incorrect: While important, reforming the Emigration Act is presented as a regulatory fix, not a long-term solution.

b) Incorrect: Compensation guarantees are a necessary measure but not sustainable in isolation.

d) Incorrect: Strengthening the e-Migrate system addresses immediate concerns but not the root causes.

2.

Answer: a) High recruitment fees and loans taken for relocation.

Explanation:

Reference: “Many are burdened by recruitment fees, loans for travel and relocation, and exploitative work conditions.”

The passage points out that many Indian workers are burdened by high recruitment fees and loans, which worsen their financial situation and make them vulnerable to exploitation.

b) Incorrect: Diplomatic representation is not cited as a significant issue.

c) Incorrect: The issue is with exploitative systems, not the availability of permits.

d) Incorrect: Remittance opportunities are a positive outcome, not a systemic issue.

3.

Answer: b) It cannot regulate recruitment agents operating in non-ECR countries.

Explanation:

Reference: “Moreover, these protections do not extend to non-ECR countries such as Israel and Russia, where Indian workers have faced dire consequences, including death in conflict zones.”

The passage highlights that the e-Migrate system’s protections are limited to ECR countries and do not extend to non-ECR countries like Israel and Russia, where workers have faced severe challenges.

a) Incorrect: While the system does not address conflict zones, the limitation lies specifically with non-ECR countries.

c) Incorrect: The issue of work conditions in Gulf countries is tied to the kafala system, not the e-Migrate system.

d) Incorrect: Financial assistance is not mentioned as a responsibility of the e-Migrate system.

4.

Answer: a) The necessity of multiple elections for Assemblies dissolved midterm.

Explanation:

Reference: “The idea of conducting multiple elections to an Assembly before the stipulated five-year period also militates against the ostensible rationale provided for the idea of introducing simultaneous elections — cost-cutting.”

The passage highlights that holding multiple elections for Assemblies dissolved midterm undermines the cost-cutting rationale, as it results in additional electoral processes.

b) Incorrect: Administrative burden is not explicitly linked to cost-cutting in the passage.

c) Incorrect: Compensation demands are not discussed.

d) Incorrect: Amendments are a procedural requirement, not a cost-related issue.

5.

Answer: c) They centralize power by subsuming State-specific electoral concerns.

Explanation:

Reference: “This makes it imperative for those committed to federalism to steadfastly oppose this idea.”

The passage critiques the centralizing tendencies of the BJP/NDA regime, arguing that simultaneous elections could diminish the distinct importance of State-level governance and electoral cycles.

- a) Incorrect: Financial efficiency is presented as a rationale, not as a tendency of the regime.
- b) Incorrect: Uniformity in governance is not explicitly linked to centralizing tendencies.
- d) Incorrect: The passage argues that federal principles are undermined, not strengthened.

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