

The Hindu EDITORIAL ANALYSIS

20th March 2025

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

1. Discretion (विवेक)

- **Meaning:** The freedom to decide what should be done in a particular situation.
- **Synonyms:** Prudence, judgment, circumspection
- **Antonyms:** Recklessness, indiscretion, thoughtlessness
- **Example:** The judge used his discretion to impose a lighter sentence on the first-time offender.

2. Ostensibly (प्रकट रूप से)

- **Meaning:** As appears or is stated to be true, though not necessarily so.
- **Synonyms:** Apparently, seemingly, supposedly
- **Antonyms:** Actually, truly, really
- **Example:** He was ostensibly on a business trip, but he spent most of his time sightseeing.

3. Indignation (क्रोध/आक्रोश)

- **Meaning:** Anger or annoyance provoked by unfair treatment.
- **Synonyms:** Resentment, outrage, wrath
- **Antonyms:** Satisfaction, acceptance, contentment
- **Example:** The unfair dismissal of employees sparked public indignation and protests.

4. Triumphalism (विजयोल्लास /अभिमान)

- **Meaning:** Excessive celebration or pride in a victory or achievement.
- **Synonyms:** Boastfulness, arrogance, exultation
- **Antonyms:** Humility, modesty, restraint
- **Example:** The leader's triumphalism after the election victory alienated many of his supporters.

5. Envisage (परिकल्पना करना)

- **Meaning:** To imagine or expect something in the future.
- **Synonyms:** Foresee, anticipate, visualize
- **Antonyms:** Ignore, disregard, neglect
- **Example:** The new policy envisages a cleaner and greener environment for future generations.

6. Astutely (चतुराई से)

- **Meaning:** Showing an ability to accurately assess situations or people and turn this to one's advantage.
- **Synonyms:** Shrewdly, cleverly, wisely
- **Antonyms:** Foolishly, naively, ineptly
- **Example:** She handled the negotiations astutely, ensuring the best outcome for her company.

7. Fanned (उत्तेजित करना/फैलाना)

- **Meaning:** To stir up or increase the intensity of something.
- **Synonyms:** Inflame, provoke, intensify
- **Antonyms:** Suppress, extinguish, calm
- **Example:** His remarks fanned the flames of controversy.

8. Mediocrity (मामूलीपन)

- **Meaning:** The quality of being average or unremarkable.
- **Synonyms:** Ordinary, averageness, dullness
- **Antonyms:** Excellence, brilliance, distinction
- **Example:** The project was plagued by mediocrity due to lack of innovation and enthusiasm.

9. Rankled (कष्ट देना)

- **Meaning:** To cause continuous irritation or resentment.
- **Synonyms:** Irritate, annoy, vex
- **Antonyms:** Soothe, comfort, calm
- **Example:** His unfair criticism rankled her for days after the meeting.

10. Subtle (सूक्ष्म)

- **Meaning:** So delicate or precise as to be difficult to analyze or describe.
- **Synonyms:** Delicate, fine, nuanced
- **Antonyms:** Obvious, blunt, direct
- **Example:** The artist's work displayed a subtle use of color that required close attention to appreciate.

VOCABULARY

One-word substitute:

1. Impossible to remove or destroy completely:

Ineradicable

2. A dramatic or theatrical performance using gestures and expressions without speech:

Pantomime

3. Compensation or amends made for a wrong, injury, or damage:

Reparation

4. A person or party involved in a lawsuit:

Litigant

VOCABULARY

Phrasal Verbs

1. Cut down (on)

Meaning: To reduce the amount of something.

2. Bring up

Meaning: To mention a topic in conversation; to raise a child.

3. Fill out

Meaning: To complete a form or document.

4. Run out (of)

Meaning: To use all of something and have none left.

VOCABULARY

Idioms & Phrases

1. Crocodile tears

Meaning: False or insincere expressions of sorrow

2. A wild goose chase

Meaning: A futile or hopeless pursuit

3. A fish out of water

Meaning: To feel uncomfortable or out of place in a particular situation

VOCABULARY

4. A snake in the grass

Meaning: Someone who is deceitful or hides their true intentions

5. Curiosity killed the cat

Meaning: Being too curious or inquisitive can lead to trouble or danger

Article for Reading

**Safe from space: on
the return of the
NASA mission space
crew**

In the early hours (IST) of March 19, a SpaceX crew capsule bearing NASA astronauts Sunita Williams, Barry Wilmore, Nick Hague, and Roscosmos cosmonaut Aleksandr Gorbunov splashed down off the Florida coast. Ms. Williams and Mr. Wilmore had returned to the earth after nine months in the International Space Station (ISS), whereas they had originally been expected to spend eight days in the course of testing Boeing's Starliner crew capsule. The Starliner saga has now concluded, but not before it twisted the reality of human spaceflight out of context, making it sound like a caper rather than a testament to the virtues of protocol. Following Starliner's launch in June 2024, a series of malfunctions left Ms. Williams and Mr. Wilmore onboard the ISS before the capsule returned empty to the ground in September. The events spurred concerns and indignation in the popular imagination, swirling around a dearth of information both NASA and Boeing were reluctant to fill.

As their stay was expanded to nine months, curiosity swelled over their well-being. While this response was natural, speculation fuelled by insufficient updates and political propaganda in the U.S. also fanned misinformation that cast Ms. Williams and Mr. Wilmore as having been “stranded” in space. If the “stranded” narrative captures the gist of Starliner’s failure, it misses the inalienable contingencies at the heart of human spaceflight. Ms. Williams herself has sought to downplay the use of such terms. Over the years, but especially in the wake of the Challenger and Columbia shuttle disasters in 1986 and 2003, NASA has instituted procedures its personnel are required to follow in a variety of situations where events buck a pre-planned sequence. One is that astronauts onboard malfunctioning spacecraft can move to the ISS, which is always prepared to host such visitors. But many actors framed NASA as weak-willed for sticking to its protocols.

When it scrubbed a prior launch attempt of the capsule that returned the astronauts for technical reasons, supporters of U.S. President Donald Trump accused the agency of infirmity rather than acknowledging it as a well-known safety measure. Narratives that overlook the simple fact that two veterans were picked to pilot Starliner's first crewed flight belie the existence of multiple safety checkpoints and the great lengths to which space agencies go to ensure one unexpected outcome does not spell catastrophe. People, including in India — where concern for Ms. Williams parallels a growing pride in the country's budding human spaceflight programme owing to her Indian ancestry — would do well to replace notions of triumphalism in space with good old “safety first”. Also, space agencies should realise the importance of clear, timely communication as an integral part of safety protocol.

Summary

The passage discusses the return of NASA astronauts Sunita Williams and Barry Wilmore, along with two other crew members, from the International Space Station (ISS) after an unexpectedly extended nine-month stay due to malfunctions in Boeing's Starliner crew capsule. Originally expected to stay for only eight days, their prolonged presence led to widespread speculation, misinformation, and political narratives framing them as "stranded." However, the passage argues that such interpretations ignore established NASA safety protocols, which allow astronauts to remain safely on the ISS in case of technical failures. It highlights the need for better communication from space agencies to prevent misinformation and emphasizes that human spaceflight should prioritize safety over sensationalism and triumphalism.

Tone:

The tone of the passage is analytical, informative, and corrective. It provides a factual account of the events while critiquing misinformation and political narratives. The passage also adopts a measured and cautionary stance, advocating for a balanced understanding of spaceflight challenges and the importance of safety protocols.

Reading Comprehension

Based on the above passage, answer the following questions:

Question 1:

Which of the following best explains why the Starliner mission was perceived as a failure?

(A) NASA was unable to communicate with the astronauts for an extended period.

(B) The capsule malfunctioned and returned empty to Earth instead of bringing back the astronauts.

(C) The ISS was not equipped to handle additional astronauts for such a prolonged period.

(D) Boeing failed to meet its commitment to provide real-time safety updates.

(E) None of the above

Question 2:

What is a key lesson the passage suggests regarding space exploration?

- (A) Human spaceflight should focus on reducing mission costs above all else.**
- (B) The U.S. should prioritize its own space program over international collaboration.**
- (C) Misinformation can be avoided with clearer and more timely communication from space agencies.**
- (D) The public should be less concerned about astronaut safety in well-regulated missions.**
- (E) None of the above**

Question 3:

How does the passage depict the role of political influence in the perception of the Starliner mission?

- (A) It was used to criticize NASA's decision-making and paint it as weak.**
- (B) It was leveraged to promote Boeing's advancements in space technology.**
- (C) It had no impact on how the public perceived the mission.**
- (D) It was instrumental in convincing the astronauts to remain on the ISS longer.**
- (E) None of the above**

Article for Skimming

**Telecom tribunal
reforms to handle
data protection pleas**

In early January this year, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) released the draft Digital Personal Data Protection Rules, 2025 (Rules) under the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023 (Act). Several criticisms of this draft have emerged, which include the Union government's discretion to appoint members to the Data Protection Board (DPB or Board). Since the DPB has quasi-judicial functions, the control of the executive over appointments to the DPB have raised concerns on the separation of powers and the independence of the DPB. The Act and draft Rules also state that appeals from the DPB's decisions will be filed in digital form before the Telecom Disputes Settlement and Appellate Tribunal (TDSAT). The TDSAT must dispose of appeals within six months. The feasibility of this dispute resolution mechanism is questionable. However, there are three institutional reforms that will equip the TDSAT to handle appeals from the DPB. These are the appointment of a technical member with expertise in data protection; increased capacity to swiftly dispose of appeals, and, technological updates to process digital filings.

First, there must be a technical member with expertise in data protection on the TDSAT. Tribunals are seen as better equipped to handle sector-specific matters, since they have technical members with sectoral expertise. Section 14C of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India Act, 1997 states that a member of the TDSAT should have been a Secretary to the Government (or the equivalent thereof) for at least two years or have expertise in “technology, telecommunications, industry, commerce or administration”. The TDSAT is ostensibly equipped to handle appeals under the TRAI Act and the Telecommunications Act, 2023. However, the increasingly important field of data protection poses a unique set of concerns and challenges, and matters relating to telecommunications are fundamentally distinct from matters concerning privacy and data protection. Such appeals may involve understanding and applying legal provisions on consent, access to personal data, and the processing, storage, transfer and unauthorised use of personal data.

These issues are substantially different from issues in the telecom sector, which underscore the need for specialised knowledge in data protection laws and privacy principles. Any such appointment will require an amendment to Section 14C of the TRAI Act to necessitate the appointment of a technical member with expertise in data protection and privacy. Second, any move to designate the TDSAT as an appellate tribunal must consider its capacity to hear and dispose of appeals. Interestingly, the TDSAT was not always envisaged to be the appellate body for the DPB. The 2018 Bill on personal data protection proposed the establishment of a new tribunal, consistent with the recommendation of the Justice B.N. Srikrishna committee report to set up a new tribunal or confer powers to an existing tribunal. This changed in 2022, when another Bill proposed that appeals be filed with High Courts. This may have been counterintuitive, as the increasing workload of High Courts has, over time, translated into the proliferation of tribunals.

Question 4:

Why is the feasibility of TDSAT's role in handling DPB-related appeals questioned?

- (A) TDSAT lacks jurisdiction over matters related to data protection.**
- (B) TDSAT must handle appeals within six months, which may not be practical.**
- (C) TDSAT only has members with backgrounds in technology and administration, not privacy laws.**
- (D) TDSAT is primarily a regulatory body, not a quasi-judicial tribunal.**
- (E) None of the above**

Question 5:

Which historical shift in legislative proposals influenced the appellate structure for DPB-related cases?

- (A) The 2018 Bill proposed a separate tribunal for DPB appeals, but later proposals suggested High Courts instead.**
- (B) The 2018 Bill originally suggested that appeals go directly to the Supreme Court.**
- (C) The 2022 Bill proposed that DPB decisions should be reviewed by an independent data privacy commission.**
- (D) The Justice B.N. Srikrishna committee initially proposed that TDSAT should be the exclusive appellate body.**
- (E) None of the above**

Today's Descriptive Question

Precis Writing:

Original Text:

The Edtech sector, which witnessed an unprecedented boom during the COVID-19 pandemic, is now facing a sharp decline, leading to what many call the bursting of the Edtech bubble. During lockdowns, online learning platforms thrived as schools and colleges shifted to remote education, resulting in massive investments and rapid expansion in the sector. However, as offline learning resumed and economic conditions tightened, many Edtech firms struggled to sustain their growth. Several factors contributed to this downturn. With schools, coaching centers, and universities reopening, the demand for online-only learning models has dropped significantly. Parents and students now prefer hybrid or offline learning, making it difficult for Edtech companies to retain customers. Additionally, aggressive marketing strategies, high customer acquisition costs, and unsustainable business models led to financial strain on many startups.

As funding slowed due to global economic uncertainty, mass layoffs, closures, and consolidation became common in the industry. Despite these challenges, Edtech is not entirely doomed. The future of the sector lies in hybrid learning models, personalized education, skill-based training, and AI-driven solutions. Companies that adapt, innovate, and offer value-driven services will survive and thrive. Governments and institutions can also play a role by integrating technology with traditional learning to create a balanced and effective education ecosystem. While the Edtech bubble may have burst, the sector can still evolve into a sustainable model with the right strategies.

Precis:

The Edtech sector's rapid growth during COVID-19 has now declined as offline education resumes and economic conditions tighten. Factors like reduced demand, unsustainable business models, and funding slowdowns have led to layoffs and closures. However, the sector can survive by shifting to hybrid learning, skill-based training, and AI-driven education. With innovation and integration with traditional learning, Edtech can still have a sustainable future.

- You are organizing a team-building event for your office. Write an email inviting employees to participate.

To:@gmail.com

Subject: Join Us for an Exciting Team-Building Event!

Dear [Team/Colleagues],

We are thrilled to invite you to our upcoming Team-Building Event, designed to foster collaboration, strengthen connections, and, most importantly, have fun together!

Date: [Insert Date]

Venue: [Insert Location]

Time: [Insert Time]

This event will feature engaging activities, team challenges, and opportunities to bond with colleagues in a relaxed and enjoyable setting.

It's a great chance to step away from our usual routines and build stronger teamwork skills.

Please confirm your participation by [RSVP Deadline] so we can make the necessary arrangements. If you have any questions, feel free to reach out.

Looking forward to seeing you all there!

**Best regards,
[Your Name]
[Your Designation]
[Company Name]**

Match the column

- 1. Crocodile tears**
- 2. A wild goose chase**
- 3. A fish out of water**
- 4. A snake in the grass**
- 5. Curiosity killed the cat**

- A. To feel uncomfortable**
- B. Being too curious can lead to trouble**
- C. Someone who is deceitful**
- D. False expressions of sorrow**
- E. A futile or hopeless pursuit**

Answer:

1-d

2-e

3-a

4-c

5-b

Vocabulary

1. Discretion:
2. Ostensibly:
3. Indignation:
4. Triumphalism:
5. Envisage:
6. Astutely:
7. Fanned:
8. Mediocrity:
9. Rankled:
10. Subtle:

RC ANS

1.

Ans: B

Explanation:

The passage states that “Following Starliner’s launch in June 2024, a series of malfunctions left Ms. Williams and Mr. Wilmore onboard the ISS before the capsule returned empty to the ground in September.” This highlights that the failure was due to Starliner’s inability to safely return the astronauts as originally planned.

Why Other Options Are Incorrect:

(A) Incorrect: The passage does not mention a communication breakdown.

(C) Incorrect: The passage states “astronauts onboard malfunctioning spacecraft can move to the ISS, which is always prepared to host such visitors.” So, the ISS was indeed equipped.

(D) Incorrect: The passage says NASA and Boeing were reluctant to fill the information gap, but it does not explicitly state that Boeing had committed to real-time updates.

2.

Ans: C

Explanation:

The passage states, “Also, space agencies should realise the importance of clear, timely communication as an integral part of safety protocol.” This underscores the need for transparency to counter misinformation.

Why Other Options Are Incorrect:

(A) Incorrect: Cost reduction is not a focus of the passage.

(B) Incorrect: No such argument about U.S. prioritization is made.

(D) Incorrect: The passage stresses safety first rather than ignoring concerns.

3.

Ans: A

Explanation:

The passage states, “When it scrubbed a prior launch attempt of the capsule that returned the astronauts for technical reasons, supporters of U.S. President Donald Trump accused the agency of infirmity rather than acknowledging it as a well-known safety measure.” This indicates that political narratives framed NASA’s safety measures as a sign of weakness rather than responsible decision-making.

Why Other Options Are Incorrect:

(B) Incorrect: The passage does not mention political efforts to promote Boeing.

(C) Incorrect: Political influence clearly impacted how the mission was perceived.

(D) Incorrect: The astronauts’ extended stay was due to technical reasons, not political influence.

4.

Ans: B

Explanation:

Reference from Passage:

The passage states that “The TDSAT must dispose of appeals within six months. The feasibility of this dispute resolution mechanism is questionable.” This suggests that meeting this deadline consistently may be difficult, raising concerns about whether the tribunal can function effectively.

Why Other Options Are Incorrect:

- (A) Incorrect as the passage states that TDSAT does have jurisdiction over data protection matters under an amended framework. The concern is about feasibility, not jurisdiction.
- (C) Incorrect because, while the passage mentions a need for a technical member with expertise in data protection, the main feasibility concern is the six-month deadline.
- (D) Incorrect since TDSAT is a quasi-judicial appellate body, not merely a regulatory entity.

5.

Ans: A

Explanation:

Reference from Passage:

The passage states, “The 2018 Bill on personal data protection proposed the establishment of a new tribunal,” but in 2022, another Bill “proposed that appeals be filed with High Courts.” This shift in approach led to concerns about the feasibility of handling DPB-related appeals.

Why Other Options Are Incorrect:

(B) Incorrect as there is no mention of the 2018 Bill proposing Supreme Court appeals.

(C) Incorrect because no independent data privacy commission is mentioned in the passage.

(D) Incorrect since the Srikrishna committee report recommended a new tribunal, not TDSAT as the exclusive appellate body.

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