

The Hindu EDITORIAL ANALYSIS

20th February 2025

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

1. Rapprochement (सुलह)

- Meaning: The establishment or resumption of harmonious relations.**
- Synonyms: Reconciliation, reunion, détente**
- Antonyms: Estrangement, discord, hostility**
- Example: The recent diplomatic talks signaled a rapprochement between the two rival nations.**

2. Dispute (झगड़ा)

- **Meaning:** A heated argument or disagreement.
- **Synonyms:** Quarrel, conflict, altercation
- **Antonyms:** Agreement, harmony, peace
- **Example:** The two leaders had a public quarrel over the border issue.

3. Turmoil (अराजकता)

- **Meaning:** A state of great disturbance, confusion, or uncertainty.
- **Synonyms:** Chaos, disorder, upheaval
- **Antonyms:** Peace, stability, order
- **Example:** The political turmoil in the region has led to widespread protests.

4. Outrageous (अपमानजनक)

- **Meaning:** Shockingly bad or excessive.
- **Synonyms:** Scandalous, disgraceful, appalling
- **Antonyms:** Acceptable, reasonable, modest
- **Example:** The outrageous remarks made by the leader sparked global condemnation.

5. Expatriates (प्रवासी)

- **Meaning:** People who live outside their native country.
- **Synonyms:** Emigrant, migrant, foreign resident
- **Antonyms:** Native, local, citizen
- **Example:** Many expatriates send money back home to support their families.

6. Decisive (निर्णायक)

- **Meaning:** Settling an issue; producing a definite result.
- **Synonyms:** Conclusive, crucial, determining
- **Antonyms:** Indecisive, uncertain, inconclusive
- **Example:** His decisive leadership helped the company navigate through the crisis.

7. Resumption (पुनरारंभ)

- **Meaning:** The action of starting something again after a pause.
- **Synonyms:** Restart, continuation, renewal
- **Antonyms:** Cessation, halt, suspension
- **Example:** The resumption of diplomatic ties brought hope for peace.

8. Unrestrained (अविनियमित)

- **Meaning:** Not controlled or held back.
- **Synonyms:** Free, unchecked, uninhibited
- **Antonyms:** Restrained, controlled, limited
- **Example:** His unrestrained enthusiasm for the project was contagious.

9. Condemnation (निंदा)

- **Meaning:** The expression of very strong disapproval.
- **Synonyms:** Criticism, denunciation, censure
- **Antonyms:** Praise, approval, endorsement
- **Example:** The government's actions drew international condemnation.

10. Ruinous (विनाशकारी)

- **Meaning:** Causing great damage or distress.
- **Synonyms:** Catastrophic, devastating, disastrous
- **Antonyms:** Successful, fortunate, beneficial
- **Example:** The military's intervention in the region had disastrous consequences.

VOCABULARY

One-word substitute:

1. Lack of skill, ability, or competence.

Ineptitude

2. A container or space used for holding something.

Receptacle

3. Impossible to remove, eliminate, or destroy.

Ineradicable

4. To pronounce words clearly and distinctly.

Enunciate

VOCABULARY

Phrasal Verbs:

1. Bang on

Meaning – Exactly right or accurate.

2. Bargain down

Meaning – To persuade someone to reduce the price of something.

3. Barge in

Meaning – To enter a place or interrupt a conversation rudely or abruptly.

4. Bash in

Meaning – To violently crush or dent something by hitting it.

VOCABULARY

Idioms & Phrases

1. Get with the program

Meaning – To accept and adapt to a new way of doing things; to follow instructions or expectations.

2. Give one's right arm

Meaning – To be willing to make a great sacrifice for something.

3. Give someone a hand

Meaning – To help or assist someone.

VOCABULARY

4. Go against the grain

Meaning – To act in a way that is contrary to what is usual, expected, or accepted.

5. Go bananas

Meaning – To become extremely excited, angry, or crazy.

Article for Reading

**Russia reset: On the
U.S., Russia, their
first major diplomatic
interaction**

The talks between U.S. and Russian officials in Riyadh, their first major diplomatic interaction since Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022, marks the beginning of a reset in ties between the two former Cold War adversaries. Led by U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, the two sides agreed to restore staffing at their respective embassies, explore closer economic cooperation, and set up a high-level team to start talks to end the Ukraine war. U.S. President Donald Trump has signalled that he might meet his Russian counterpart, Vladimir Putin, later this month and secure the deal, which is a decisive shift in America's policy towards Russia. Under the former Biden administration, the U.S. had emerged as Ukraine's biggest military and financial backer. The U.S. had also led global efforts to weaken Russia's economy through biting sanctions.

Mr. Trump has thrown away the Biden policy and adopted a new approach of rapprochement with Russia, something reminiscent of Henry Kissinger's historic outreach to Mao Tse Tung's China at the height of the Cold War and America's disastrous war in Vietnam. Mr. Trump's push for stability with Russia is rooted in a sense of realism. He does not see Russia, a pale shadow of what the Soviet Union used to be, as America's main challenger. It is unrealistic, as Pete Hegseth, U.S. Defence Secretary, put it, to expect Ukraine to turn around the war. Mr. Trump is also opposed to further American aid for Ukraine. He wants to focus America's resources on China, while building a better predictable relationship with Russia — a reverse Kissinger approach. While this is the broad strategic framework of Mr. Trump's Russia reset, the victim in the battlefield is Ukraine, which has already lost over 20% of its territories and thousands of its men.

The U.S., which offered Ukraine NATO membership in 2008, now says such an outcome is not practical. The Trump administration has also ruled out security guarantees to Ukraine, passing that responsibility to Europe, which stands divided. So, Ukraine today does not even have a seat at the table when Russia and America talk. When great powers quarrel and reset, smaller countries that get caught in proxy conflicts often suffer. But excluding Ukraine and Europe from any settlement that would determine both Ukraine's future and Europe's security architecture would be wrong, morally and practically. If Mr. Trump wants to build his reset on a strong foundation, he should strive towards a settlement that is acceptable to all parties — the U.S., Russia, Europe and Ukraine.

Summary

The U.S. and Russia have initiated diplomatic talks in Riyadh, signaling a reset in relations after Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine. U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov discussed restoring embassy staffing, economic cooperation, and peace talks on Ukraine. President Donald Trump is expected to meet President Vladimir Putin to finalize the agreement, marking a shift from the Biden administration's strong support for Ukraine and sanctions against Russia. Trump's strategy, reminiscent of Henry Kissinger's Cold War diplomacy, prioritizes stabilizing U.S.-Russia ties while focusing on China as America's main rival. This shift sidelines Ukraine, which has lost significant territory and is excluded from negotiations, leaving Europe to handle its security concerns. The article argues that excluding Ukraine and Europe from the settlement is both morally and strategically flawed. For a lasting resolution, Trump must ensure an agreement that involves all stakeholders.

Tone:

The tone is analytical and cautionary, examining the geopolitical shift critically while warning against the exclusion of Ukraine and Europe from crucial negotiations.

Reading Comprehension

Based on the above passage, answer the following questions:

Question 1:

What historical analogy does the passage use to describe Trump's Russia policy?

- A) The Marshall Plan's rebuilding of Europe after World War II.**
- B) The Cuban Missile Crisis negotiations between the U.S. and the USSR.**
- C) The Nixon administration's diplomatic outreach to China during the Cold War.**
- D) The Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan in 1979.**
- E) None of the above**

Question 2:

Which of the following is an implicit criticism of Trump's approach as presented in the passage?

- A) His policy completely disregards U.S. strategic interests in global affairs.**
- B) His policy could abandon Ukraine to an unfavorable settlement with Russia.**
- C) His policy is purely symbolic and has no real consequences.**
- D) His policy increases military aid to Ukraine, escalating tensions with Russia.**
- E) None of the above**

Question 3:

What is the primary reason behind Donald Trump's shift in U.S. policy towards Russia?

- A) He believes that Russia is no longer a significant threat to U.S. global dominance.**
- B) He wants to punish Ukraine for its reliance on American financial aid.**
- C) He is aiming to isolate China by forming a strategic alliance with Russia.**
- D) He wants to completely withdraw U.S. influence from European conflicts.**
- E) None of the above**

Article for Skimming

**Closer than ever: On
India-Qatar bilateral
bonhomie**

The visit of the Qatari Amir, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, a decade after his last visit to India, has led to a reaffirmation of the deep ties between two countries. While they do not always share the same worldview, both countries recognise each other's importance on the regional and global stage. For Qatar, India is a globally connected power, maintaining a balance with all players in the West Asian region including Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Iran and Israel. Indian expatriates are often seen as the backbone of Qatari economic activity. For India, Qatar is a Gulf power, a huge source of remittances and a partner with a major geo-strategic role. Qatar also provides 45% of India's LNG needs, which makes up about half of the bilateral trade of \$15 billion between the two countries. While Qatar is home to a U.S. military base, which houses the U.K. and Australian air forces, it has also hosted groups such as the Hamas and the Taliban, and maintains ties with regional militia groups.

In its recent decision to broaden its engagement with the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, the Narendra Modi government has leaned on the Qatari leadership. In addition, the Qatari Amir's decision to pardon eight former Indian naval personnel, reportedly accused of spying and handed the death sentence in 2023, has helped forge a closer understanding. It is fitting and long overdue, therefore, that after the talks in Delhi, India and Qatar decided to upgrade ties to a strategic partnership, given that India already has strategic partnerships signed with the Gulf Cooperation Council including the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Oman and Kuwait. They also signed a double taxation avoidance agreement and MoUs in areas including sports and youth affairs. They agreed to double bilateral trade by 2030, and Qatar is to invest \$10 billion in India in infrastructure and manufacturing sectors and other areas. While the joint statement and readouts dwelt on the bilateral bonhomie, the geopolitical undertones of their summit cannot be ignored.

The Qatari Amir's visit comes amidst turmoil in the Gulf region over the Israel-Gaza conflict and U.S. President Donald Trump's outrageous plan to clear two million Palestinians from their homeland in the name of regional peace. Every country in the Gulf region has voiced its opposition to the Trump announcement, and New Delhi's relative silence has been noted. While the joint statement said that both sides conveyed their respective positions on the "Israel-Hamas issue", it did not detail those positions. As Arab, GCC and OIC members meet this week to discuss the challenge from developments in Gaza, the India-Qatar talks may have delivered the opportunity for both sides to bridge that divide between them, even as Delhi and Doha committed to a much stronger, forward-looking bilateral partnership.

Question 4:

What geopolitical issue was subtly acknowledged but not explicitly detailed in the India-Qatar joint statement?

- A) The expansion of India's military presence in the Gulf region.**
- B) The Qatar-Saudi diplomatic conflict.**
- C) The Israel-Gaza conflict and Trump's plan for Palestinian displacement.**
- D) The Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan.**
- E) None of the above**

Question 5

What is one of the key economic agreements made between India and Qatar during the Amir's visit?

- A) Qatar agreed to sell oil to India at discounted rates.**
- B) Qatar committed to investing \$10 billion in India's infrastructure and manufacturing sectors.**
- C) India agreed to send more expatriate workers to Qatar under a new labor agreement.**
- D) India granted Qatar exclusive trading rights in the Indian steel industry.**
- E) None of the above**

Today's Descriptive Question

Precis:

Original Text:

Stagflation is a complex economic phenomenon characterized by the simultaneous occurrence of high inflation, slow economic growth, and rising unemployment. This situation is particularly challenging because the usual economic responses to inflation or stagnation often contradict each other. In a typical economic cycle, inflation is expected to rise when the economy grows and fall during a slowdown. However, stagflation presents a paradox where prices continue to rise despite sluggish growth and a weakening job market, making it difficult for policymakers to find effective solutions. The primary causes of stagflation include supply shocks, monetary policy failures, and structural weaknesses in the economy. One of the most well-known instances of stagflation occurred during the 1970s oil crisis,

when a sudden spike in oil prices increased production costs across industries, leading to inflation while simultaneously slowing economic growth. Poor monetary policies, such as excessive money supply without corresponding economic productivity, can also contribute to stagflation by fueling inflation without generating real growth. Additionally, structural inefficiencies, such as weak labor markets, declining productivity, or rigid government policies, can further deepen the crisis by preventing economic expansion while prices continue to rise. The effects of stagflation are severe, impacting both individuals and businesses. Consumers experience a decline in purchasing power as the cost of essential goods and services rises, while businesses struggle with high production costs and reduced demand. The job market also weakens, leading to increased unemployment and financial distress. Policymakers face a tough dilemma—raising interest rates to curb inflation may further slow economic growth, while stimulating the economy through lower rates or fiscal measures can worsen inflation.

Addressing stagflation requires a balanced and strategic approach. Governments and central banks often focus on supply-side policies, such as improving infrastructure, boosting productivity, and ensuring stable energy prices to counter supply shocks. Carefully crafted monetary policies aim to control inflation without excessively stifling economic growth. Since stagflation presents unique challenges, its resolution requires a combination of fiscal responsibility, long-term economic planning, and targeted reforms to restore stability and sustainable growth.

Precis:

Stagflation is an economic condition marked by high inflation, slow growth, and rising unemployment, making it difficult for policymakers to implement effective solutions. It can be caused by supply shocks, weak monetary policies, and structural inefficiencies. The 1970s oil crisis is a classic example where rising costs slowed economic activity while inflation persisted. Stagflation reduces purchasing power, weakens job markets, and increases financial distress. Policymakers struggle to control inflation without further harming growth. To address it, governments adopt supply-side measures, infrastructure improvements, and careful monetary policies to restore economic stability.

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Subject: Revised Bulk Purchase Pricing and Terms

Dear [Client's Name],

I appreciate your continued interest in our products and the opportunity to collaborate on this bulk purchase. Based on our discussions, I have reviewed our pricing and terms to ensure a mutually beneficial agreement.

Revised Pricing & Terms:

Discounted Price: [New Price per Unit] (reduced from [Previous Price])

Minimum Order Quantity: [Updated MOQ]

Payment Terms: [e.g., 30% advance, balance on delivery]

Delivery Timeline: [Revised delivery schedule]

Additional Benefits: [e.g., free shipping, extended warranty, priority support]

This special pricing is valid until [Expiration Date], and I'd be happy to discuss any adjustments to align with your requirements. Please let me know a convenient time to connect and finalize the details.

Looking forward to your response.

**Best regards,
[Your Name]
[Your Position]**

Match the column

- 1. Get with the program**
- 2. Give one's right arm**
- 3. Give someone a hand**
- 4. Go against the grain**
- 5. Go bananas**

- A. To become extremely excited**
- B. To act in a way that is contrary to what is usual**
- C. To be willing to make a great sacrifice for something**
- D. To help or assist someone**
- E. To accept and adapt to a new way of doing things**

Answer:

1-e

2-c

3-d

4-b

5-a

Vocabulary

1. **Rapprochement:**
2. **Dispute:**
3. **Turmoil:**
4. **Outrageous:**
5. **Expatriates:**
6. **Decisive:**
7. **Resumption:**
8. **Unrestrained:**
9. **Condemnation:**
10. **Ruinous:**

Rc ans

1.

Ans: E

Explanation:

None of the options describe Trump's Russia policy.

Why the other options are incorrect:

- A) The passage does not discuss economic reconstruction efforts like the Marshall Plan.
- B) There is no reference to a high-stakes nuclear standoff like the Cuban Missile Crisis.
- C) There is no mention of Nixon administration.
- D) The passage does not mention military invasions.

2.

Ans: B

Explanation:

The passage states that Ukraine does not even have a seat at the table when the U.S. and Russia discuss the conflict. It also highlights that Ukraine has lost 20% of its territory, and the U.S. has ruled out security guarantees, suggesting that Trump's policy could leave Ukraine vulnerable.

Why the other options are incorrect:

- A) The passage does not argue that Trump is ignoring global affairs; instead, it suggests he is realigning U.S. priorities.
- C) The passage implies real consequences for Ukraine and Europe, contradicting the idea that the policy is merely symbolic.
- D) Trump's policy reduces military aid, rather than increasing it.

3.

Ans: A

Explanation:

The passage states that Trump's approach is rooted in a sense of realism and that he does not see Russia as America's main challenger. Instead, he is shifting U.S. focus toward China, which implies that he perceives Russia as a lesser threat.

Why the other options are incorrect:

B) The passage does not indicate that Trump's policy change is meant to punish Ukraine; rather, it reflects strategic realignment.

C) While Trump is shifting focus to China, there is no evidence in the passage that he is trying to form a strategic alliance with Russia against China.

D) Trump's policy shift does not indicate a complete withdrawal from European conflicts but rather a delegation of security responsibilities to Europe.

4.

Ans: C

Explanation:

The passage states that the joint statement mentioned the “Israel-Hamas issue” but did not detail the respective positions of India and Qatar. It also highlights that Gulf nations have voiced opposition to Trump’s plan for relocating two million Palestinians, while India’s silence has been noted.

Why the other options are incorrect:

A) There is no mention of India’s military.

B) The passage does not discuss Qatar-Saudi diplomatic tensions as a focus of the talks.

D) While Qatar has ties with the Taliban, the primary geopolitical issue in question was the Israel-Gaza conflict.

5.

Ans: B

Explanation:

The passage states that Qatar will invest \$10 billion in India, focusing on infrastructure, manufacturing, and other sectors as part of their strategic partnership.

Why the other options are incorrect:

A) The passage mentions LNG trade, but not discounted oil sales.

C) Although Indian expatriates are vital to Qatar's economy, there is no mention of a new labor agreement.

D) The passage does not mention exclusive trading rights for Qatar in the Indian steel industry.

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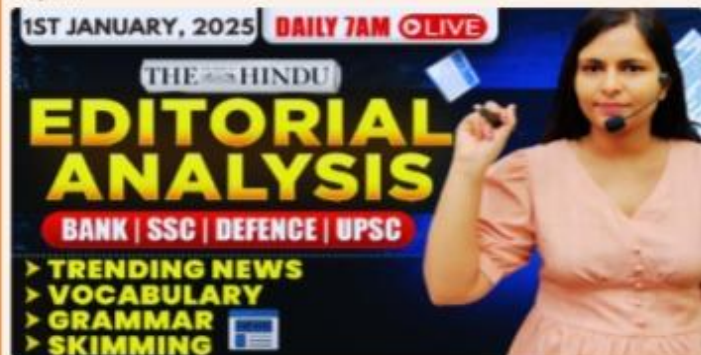
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