

The Hindu EDITORIAL ANALYSIS

23rd May 2025

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

1. Slash (घटाना / कम करना)

- **Meaning:** To significantly reduce or cut something.
- **Synonyms:** Cut, reduce, trim
- **Antonyms:** Increase, raise, expand
- **Example:** Many companies are using AI to slash their managerial workforce.

2. Forbearance (सहनशीलता)

- **Meaning:** Patient self-control; restraint and tolerance.
- **Synonyms:** Patience, endurance, tolerance
- **Antonyms:** Impatience, agitation, frustration
- **Example:** The landlord showed forbearance by giving the tenant extra time to pay the rent.

3. Apportion (विभाजन करना)

- **Meaning:** To divide and allocate responsibility or blame.
- **Synonyms:** Assign, distribute, allocate
- **Antonyms:** Combine, unify, withhold
- **Example:** The profits were apportioned among the partners according to their investments.

4. Ruinous (विनाशकारी)

- **Meaning:** Involving or causing sudden great damage or suffering.
- **Synonyms:** Disastrous, calamitous
- **Antonyms:** Fortunate, favorable, harmless
- **Example:** The company's ruinous decision to expand too quickly led to bankruptcy.

5. Inextricable (अविभाज्य)

- **Meaning:** Impossible to separate or disentangle
- **Synonyms:** Interwoven, inseparable, indivisible
- **Antonyms:** Detachable, unrelated, separable
- **Example:** The scientist explained that the relationship between climate change and rising sea levels is inextricable.

6. Entice (लुभाना)

- **Meaning:** To attract or tempt by offering pleasure or advantage.
- **Synonyms:** Attract, lure, tempt
- **Antonyms:** Repel, discourage, dissuade
- **Example:** Companies entice workers with flexible hours but rarely mention the challenges involved.

7. Perfunctory (ऊपरी-ऊपरी)

- **Meaning:** Done without enthusiasm or effort; merely routine
- **Synonyms:** Mechanical, superficial, indifferent
- **Antonyms:** Thorough, enthusiastic, diligent
- **Example:** She gave a perfunctory nod during the meeting, clearly uninterested in the discussion.

8. Intrinsic (मूलभूत)

- **Meaning:** Belonging naturally; essential
- **Synonyms:** Inherent, innate, fundamental
- **Antonyms:** Extrinsic, external, acquired
- **Example:** Scientific curiosity is an intrinsic part of human nature.

9. Languished (कमज़ोर होना / उपेक्षित होना)

- **Meaning:** To lose strength or vitality; to be neglected or forgotten
- **Synonyms:** Deteriorated, declined, weakened
- **Antonyms:** Flourished, thrived, progressed
- **Example:** The regional grouping languished for years without any significant progress.

10. Frivolous (तुच्छ / महत्वहीन)

- **Meaning:** Not having any serious purpose or value; carefree and superficial.
- **Synonyms:** Trivial, silly, superficial, flippant
- **Antonyms:** Serious, important, meaningful, thoughtful
- **Example:** The committee rejected his proposal, calling it a frivolous suggestion with no practical merit.

VOCABULARY

One-word substitute:

1. Present everywhere at the same time:

Omnipresent

2. Having complete or unlimited knowledge:

Omniscient

3. Having unlimited power; all-powerful:

Omnipotent

4. Familiar with and at ease in many different cultures and places:

Cosmopolitan

VOCABULARY

Phrasal Verbs:

1. Chew out

Meaning: reprimand someone severely

2. Cling to

Meaning: to hold on tightly to somebody/something

3. Count on

Meaning: rely on someone or something

4. Gin up

Meaning: generate or increase something, especially by dubious or dishonest means

VOCABULARY

Idioms & Phrases

1. Haste makes waste

Meaning: rushing through something can lead to mistakes or poor results

2. Get wind of something

Meaning: hear news of something secret

3. Shape up or ship out

Meaning: work better or leave

VOCABULARY

4. Dog days of summer

Meaning: the hottest day of the summer season

5. Bits and Pieces

Meaning: small things of different types

Article for Reading

**From pyramids to
hourglasses: how AI
can change Indian
workplaces**

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has outgrown its role as a mere task automator — it's now reshaping how Indian companies are built and run. The old pyramid model, with its top tier of bosses, a thick layer of middle managers, and broad base of workers, is giving way to something new — an hourglass. In this setup, AI shrinks the middle by taking over coordination and decision-making, letting leaders at the top focus on strategy while the bottom diversifies into a mix of people and smart tools. For India, this shift is a double-edged sword, brimming with potential yet fraught with hurdles. Getting it right could propel Indian businesses onto the global stage while getting it wrong could leave them trailing. Imagine a company where top executives plan for the future without worrying about the nitty-gritties of the everyday workspace because AI now handles schedules, tracks performance, and crunches data for decisions. The middle level, once crowded with managers, thins out as AI steps in, cutting the need for human oversight.

At the base, frontline workers, specialists, and AI systems team up using real-time insights to get the job done more efficiently. It's a sleeker and quicker way to work, and is powered by AI's ability to sync operations, adapt on the fly, and pair human ingenuity with machine precision. McKinsey estimates that AI could pump trillions into the global economy, with firms seeing productivity rise by up to 25% when they embrace it. Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs), India's economic spine, stand to gain big from that 25% productivity lift. That's the lure that AI promises — efficiency and flexibility. In European countries as well as the U.S., the hourglass model is taking hold fast. A Gartner report forecasts that by 2026, one in five companies there will use AI to slash over half their middle managers, saving costs while boosting output. High wages — around \$35 an hour in the U.S. versus \$1-\$2 in India, according to the International Labour Organization — make automation a smart bet. Big players use AI to monitor workers or streamline onboarding, pushing for flatter, tech-savvy setups.

India's path is its own. Cities like Bengaluru and Hyderabad pulse with AI innovation, yet India ranks 72nd on the International Monetary Fund's AI Preparedness Index with a score of 0.49, far behind the U.S. (0.77) or Singapore (0.80). The lag stems from uneven infrastructure — rural areas lack the connectivity urban hubs enjoy — and a cultural lean towards hierarchy that's hard to shake. Indian firms aren't diving fully into the hourglass; they're testing it with a hybrid spin. E-commerce leaders like Flipkart and Reliance Jio use AI to predict buying trends or iron out delivery kinks, but they keep layers of managers to tackle India's diverse, multilingual markets. Lower labour costs ease the pressure to cut middle roles, and our respect for authority slows the shift to flatter organisational structures. A report by World Business Culture highlights how Indian businesses echo our society's top-down ways, making big change a tough sell. This hybrid tack isn't a retreat — it's a strategic play, blending AI's perks with what already works. The perks of such blending are real and enticing.

Summary

The passage explores how Artificial Intelligence (AI) is transforming organizational structures in Indian companies, moving from a traditional pyramid model (with many middle managers) to an hourglass model, where AI automates coordination and decision-making. This change streamlines operations by reducing the middle layer of management, allowing top leaders to focus on strategy and frontline workers to collaborate with AI tools. While countries like the U.S. and those in Europe are rapidly adopting this model due to high wages and the need for efficiency, India's approach is more hybrid. Lower labor costs and cultural preferences for hierarchical structures slow down full adoption. Nevertheless, Indian companies—especially in urban tech hubs like Bengaluru and Hyderabad—are selectively integrating AI, particularly in sectors like e-commerce.

Tone:

The tone is analytical and balanced, with a forward-looking and cautiously optimistic outlook. It highlights both the opportunities and challenges of AI adoption in India while maintaining a realistic assessment of current capabilities and cultural dynamics.

Reading Comprehension

Based on the above passage, answer the following questions:

Question 1:

Why is the AI-induced hourglass model more rapidly adopted in Western countries compared to India, according to the passage?

- A. Western firms operate primarily in homogeneous markets**
- B. Indian companies lack interest in AI innovation**
- C. High labor costs in Western countries incentivize automation**
- D. Western regulatory bodies mandate AI implementation**
- E. None of the above**

Question 2:

Which of the following statements is most accurate regarding the impact of AI on Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) in India as mentioned in the passage?

- A. SMEs are unaffected by AI-driven organizational models**
- B. SMEs face immediate risk of job losses due to AI adoption**
- C. SMEs are completely resistant to AI implementation due to traditional practices**
- D. SMEs stand to benefit significantly from productivity increases enabled by AI**
- E. None of the above**

Question 3:

According to the passage, what factor contributes to India's hybrid approach towards the hourglass model rather than full adoption?

- A. India's dominant position in the global AI Preparedness Index**
- B. The uniformity in infrastructure across rural and urban areas**
- C. High hourly wages of Indian middle managers**
- D. Cultural tendencies favoring hierarchical structures**
- E. None of the above**

Article for Skimming

IMF imposes 11 new conditions on Pakistan, warns it against risks to bailout programme

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has slapped 11 new conditions on Pakistan for the release of the next tranche of its bailout programme and warned that tensions with India could heighten risks to the scheme's fiscal, external, and reform goals, according to a media report. The new conditions imposed on Pakistan include the parliamentary approval of a new ₹17.6 trillion budget, an increase in the debt servicing surcharge on electricity bills and lifting restrictions on import of more than three-year-old used cars. The Express Tribune newspaper said the Staff Level report, which the IMF released on Saturday, also said that "rising tensions between India and Pakistan, if sustained or deteriorate further, could heighten risks to the fiscal, external and reform goals of the programme". The report further stated that tensions between Pakistan and India have risen significantly over the past two weeks, but so far, the market reaction has been modest, with the stock market retaining most of its recent gains and spreads widening moderately.

The IMF report has shown the defence budget for the next fiscal year at ₹2.414 trillion, which is higher by ₹252 billion or 12%. Compared to the IMF's projection, the government has indicated allocating over ₹2.5 trillion or an 18% higher budget, after confrontation with India early this month. India carried out precision strikes under 'Operation Sindoor' on terror infrastructure early on May 7 in response to the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack that killed 26 people. India and Pakistan reached an understanding on May 10 to end the conflict after four days of intense cross-border drone and missile strikes. The Express Tribune report said that the IMF slapped 11 more conditions on Pakistan, taking the total conditions to 50. It has imposed the new condition of securing "parliamentary approval of the fiscal year 2026 budget in line with the IMF staff agreement to meet programme targets by end-June 2025". The IMF report has shown the total size of the federal budget at ₹17.6 trillion, including ₹1.07 trillion for development spending.

A new condition has also been imposed on the provinces where the four federating units will implement the new Agriculture Income Tax laws through a comprehensive plan, including the establishment of an operational platform for processing returns, taxpayer identification and registration, a communication campaign, and a compliance improvement plan. The deadline for the provinces is June this year. According to the third new condition, the government will publish a governance action plan based on the recommendations of the Governance Diagnostic Assessment by the IMF. The purpose of the report is to publicly identify reform measures to address critical governance vulnerabilities. Another new condition states that the government will prepare and publish a plan outlining the government's post-2027 financial sector strategy, outlining the institutional and regulatory environment from 2028 onwards. In the energy sector, four new conditions have been introduced. The government will issue notifications of the annual electricity tariff rebasing by July 1st of this year to maintain energy tariffs at cost recovery levels.

Question 4:

Which of the following reflects the IMF's concern about geopolitical instability impacting Pakistan's bailout programme as per the report?

- A. Pakistan's delayed submission of the financial sector strategy post-2027**
- B. The unsustainable reliance on imported energy products**
- C. Rising tensions with India that may heighten risks to the programme's fiscal, external, and reform goals**
- D. Failure of provinces to establish an operational tax platform by June**
- E. None of the above**

Question 5:

What condition does the IMF place on provincial governments regarding agriculture taxation?

- A. Reduce agriculture tax rates to stimulate investment**
- B. Establish infrastructure for return processing, taxpayer ID, and compliance**
- C. Allocate 30% of collections to rural development**
- D. Merge agriculture tax into federal tax codes**
- E. None of the above**

Today's Descriptive Question

Precis Writing:

Original Text:

A carbon tax is an environmental policy that imposes a fee on the burning of fossil fuels based on their carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions. It is designed to discourage the use of carbon-intensive energy sources such as coal, oil, and natural gas while promoting clean energy alternatives. By making carbon emissions more expensive, businesses and individuals are incentivized to adopt sustainable practices, invest in renewable energy, and improve energy efficiency. One of the key benefits of a carbon tax is its effectiveness in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and mitigating climate change. The revenue generated from this tax can be used for green initiatives, infrastructure development, or as rebates to offset energy costs for low-income households. Several countries, including Sweden, Canada, and the UK, have successfully implemented carbon taxes, resulting in lower emissions and increased clean energy investments.

However, challenges exist, such as economic burdens on industries, potential rise in energy costs, and opposition from fossil fuel-dependent sectors. To make carbon taxation effective, governments must ensure a balanced approach by providing incentives for green technology, supporting businesses in transitioning to clean energy, and protecting consumers from excessive financial strain.

Precis:

A carbon tax charges fees on fossil fuel use to reduce CO₂ emissions and encourage clean energy adoption. It helps combat climate change, funds green initiatives, and promotes energy efficiency. While countries like Sweden and Canada have benefited, challenges include higher energy costs and industrial opposition. A balanced approach with incentives and support is key to ensuring its effectiveness.

- **Your company is shifting to a new work schedule due to operational reasons. Write an email to employees explaining the new schedule.**

To:@gmail.com

Subject: Implementation of New Work Schedule

Dear Team,

To enhance operational efficiency and align our work structure with business needs, we are implementing a new work schedule, effective [Start Date]. The revised schedule aims to improve productivity while ensuring a balanced and structured workflow for all employees.

Under the new schedule, working days will be [Specify Days], and the working hours will be from [Specify Time], with a designated [Specify Duration] break. This adjustment is intended to streamline operations and create a more efficient work environment.

We understand that adapting to changes can take time, and we appreciate your cooperation during this transition. If you have any questions or require further clarification, please feel free to reach out to your manager or the HR team.

Your support and commitment are invaluable, and we look forward to working together under this improved schedule.

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

Match the column

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| 1. Haste makes waste | A. hear news of something secret |
| 2. Get wind of something | B. small things of different types |
| 3. Shape up or ship out | C. the hottest day of the summer season |
| 4. Dog days of summer | D. work better or leave |
| 5. Bits and Pieces | E. rushing through something can lead to mistakes |

Answer:

1-e

2-a

3-d

4-c

5-b

Vocabulary

1. Slash:
2. Forbearance:
3. Apportion:
4. Ruinous:
5. Inextricable:
6. Entice:
7. Perfunctory:
8. Intrinsic:
9. Languished:
10. Frivolous:

ENGLISH

EXCLUSIVE SUBSCRIPTION



BASIC TO ADVANCE

➞ PERFECTION 2025 (1.0 – 12.0)

➞ PERFECTION 2024 (1.0–10.0)

➞ GRAMMAR GRANTH

➞ RECORDED + LIVE

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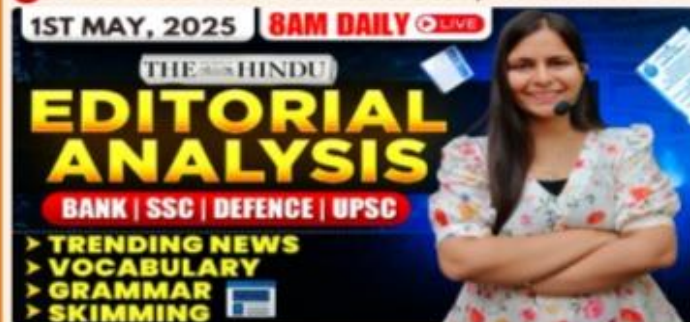


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Rc ans

1.

Ans: C

Explanation:

The passage clearly states:

"High wages — around \$35 an hour in the U.S. versus \$1-\$2 in India... make automation a smart bet."

This cost-saving benefit motivates Western companies to adopt the hourglass model faster.

Incorrect options:

A. Homogeneous markets – Not mentioned. The diversity of markets is mentioned for India, not Western countries.

B. Lack of interest in AI innovation – Contradicted by:

"Cities like Bengaluru and Hyderabad pulse with AI innovation."

D. Regulatory mandates – No mention of regulatory pressure; the shift is driven by economic incentives, not policy.

2.

Ans: D

Explanation:

From the passage:

"SMEs, India's economic spine, stand to gain big from that 25% productivity lift."

This clearly indicates potential benefits, particularly in productivity, from AI adoption.

Incorrect options:

A. Unaffected by AI... – Incorrect, as they can gain big from AI.

B. Immediate risk of job losses... – Not stated. The passage doesn't mention job losses in SMEs due to AI.

C. Completely resistant... – The passage calls the hybrid approach a strategic play, not resistance.

3.

Ans: D

Explanation:

The passage mentions:

"Our respect for authority slows the shift to flatter organisational structures."

"A report by World Business Culture highlights how Indian businesses echo our society's top-down ways..."

These lines directly support the idea that cultural leanings toward hierarchy are slowing AI-induced structural shifts.

Incorrect options:

A. India's dominant position... – Incorrect. India ranks 72nd with a low score of 0.49 on AI preparedness.

B. Uniformity in infrastructure... – The passage says the opposite:

"The lag stems from uneven infrastructure — rural areas lack the connectivity urban hubs enjoy..."

C. High hourly wages... – This is true for the U.S., not India:

"\$35 an hour in the U.S. versus \$1-\$2 in India..."

4.

Ans: C

Explanation:

The passage clearly states:

“...‘rising tensions between India and Pakistan, if sustained or deteriorate further, could heighten risks to the fiscal, external and reform goals of the programme.’”

Thus, Option C directly reflects IMF’s geopolitical concern and its potential impact on the programme.

Incorrect options:

A. Mentioned as a new condition (“...prepare and publish a plan outlining the government's post-2027 financial sector strategy...”) but not linked to geopolitical risks.

B. Not mentioned at all.

D. It's a separate condition on agriculture income tax, not linked to geopolitical tensions.

5.

Ans: B

Explanation:

The passage says:

“...a comprehensive plan, including the establishment of an operational platform for processing returns, taxpayer identification and registration, a communication campaign, and a compliance improvement plan.”

Incorrect options:

- A. No mention of reducing rates—the focus is on implementation.
- C. No allocation guideline like this appears.
- D. Provinces are responsible; merging with federal tax codes is not mentioned.