

The Hindu EDITORIAL ANALYSIS

3rd April 2025

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

1. Standoff (गतिरोध)

- **Meaning:** A situation in which neither side can win or gain an advantage.
- **Synonyms:** Deadlock, impasse, stalemate
- **Antonyms:** Agreement, resolution, settlement
- **Example:** The diplomatic standoff between the two nations led to increased tensions.

2. Bluster (धमकी देना या शेखी बघारना)

- **Meaning:** Loud, aggressive, or boastful talk with little effect.
- **Synonyms:** Boasting, swaggering, intimidation
- **Antonyms:** Humility, quietness, modesty
- **Example:** His bluster about winning the negotiations failed to impress his colleagues.

3. Broadside (कटु आलोचना या प्रहार)

- **Meaning:** A strong verbal attack or criticism.
- **Synonyms:** Criticism, denunciation, rebuke
- **Antonyms:** Praise, compliment, endorsement
- **Example:** The opposition leader launched a broadside against the government's policies.

4. Escalating (बढ़ता हुआ)

- **Meaning:** Increasing rapidly in intensity, magnitude, or seriousness.
- **Synonyms:** Intensifying, heightening, aggravating
- **Antonyms:** Decreasing, diminishing, reducing
- **Example:** The escalating tensions between the two countries have raised concerns about a possible conflict.

5. Lucrative (लाभदायक)

- **Meaning:** Producing a great deal of profit or financial gain.
- **Synonyms:** Profitable, rewarding, beneficial
- **Antonyms:** Unprofitable, worthless, disadvantageous
- **Example:** The company secured a lucrative contract with the government.

6. Expropriation (कब्ज़ा / अधिग्रहण)

- **Meaning:** The act of taking property from its owner for public use or benefit.
- **Synonyms:** Confiscation, seizure, appropriation
- **Antonyms:** Return, compensation, restitution
- **Example:** The government's expropriation of private land led to widespread protests.

7. De facto (वास्तव में / वास्तविक रूप से)

- **Meaning:** In reality or fact, regardless of official recognition.
- **Synonyms:** Actual, real, existing
- **Example:** Though not legally appointed, he is the de facto leader of the party.

8. 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.

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. Obfuscate (धुंधला करना / अस्पष्ट बनाना)

- **Meaning:** To deliberately make something unclear or difficult to understand.
- **Synonyms:** Confuse, obscure, complicate
- **Antonyms:** Clarify, simplify, elucidate
- **Example:** The spokesperson obfuscated the facts to avoid answering tough questions.

VOCABULARY

One-word substitute:

1. The act of delaying or postponing tasks or decisions:

Procrastination

2. A person who eats excessively or has an insatiable appetite for something:

Glutton

3. An animal that hunts and eats other animals; a person who exploits or preys on others:

Predator

3. Easily noticeable or perceptible; capable of being touched or felt:

Palpable

VOCABULARY

Phrasal Verbs:

1. Pass on

Meaning: To decide not to choose or select something.

2. Land on

Meaning: To decide or settle on a specific choice after considering options.

3. Take to

Meaning: To quickly like or choose something or someone.

4. Gear up for

Meaning: To prepare or choose to focus on something.

VOCABULARY

Idioms & Phrases

1. Pie in the Sky

Meaning: an unrealistic or impossible goal or dream

2. Beside yourself with joy

Meaning: to be extremely happy

3. Having an Ace up the sleeve

Meaning: a plan or piece of information kept secret until it becomes necessary to use it

VOCABULARY

4. A black sheep

Meaning: a person who is different from the rest of their family or another group

5. By the skin of your teeth

Meaning: to just barely get by or make it

Article for Reading

**Season of bluster: on
Trump, Putin and
Ukraine**

After more than two months of caustic words for Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and approbation for Russian President Vladimir Putin, U.S. President Donald Trump appeared to strike a different note in his approach towards bringing the two leaders to the negotiating table. Following a call with Mr. Putin, Mr. Trump said that he was “very angry” with the former when, following weeks of attempted negotiations, Mr. Putin reportedly attacked Mr. Zelinsky's credibility instead of discussing steps towards finding peace. Further, Mr. Trump, apparently irate that his campaign promise to end the conflict was losing steam and in danger of remaining unfulfilled, threatened to slap nations purchasing Russian oil with a 50% tariff, unless Mr. Putin agreed to a ceasefire in the near term.

The choke point was Mr. Putin's insistence that Mr. Zelenskiy lacks the legitimate authority to sign a robust peace deal that would not be challenged by any nation; and that in this context the introduction of "temporary governance in Ukraine," was required, perhaps achieved through "democratic elections, to bring to power a viable government that enjoys the trust of the people..." In terms of his popularity back home, Mr. Zelenskiy had earlier corrected a broadside from Mr. Trump, a false claim that he only had an approval rating of 4%, when in fact Kiev had noted that 65% of Ukrainians trusted their President and his approval rating hovered around 57% in early 2025. Mr. Putin's claims in this regard, which range from the unfounded statements about Mr. Zelenskiy lacking popular legitimacy to accusing him, a leader of Jewish descent, of enabling Nazi forces in Ukraine, can be understood in the backdrop of Moscow's reluctance to enter into a peace treaty at a time when its troops have continued to keep up the military pressure on Ukrainian forces and have made substantial territorial gains there.

The greater concern for Europe, and perhaps the U.S., might be that Mr. Putin could seek to undermine via influence operations any plan for free and fair elections in Ukraine and thus succeed in getting a pro-Russian candidate installed in Kiev. In turn, Mr. Trump, even if he is not particularly concerned with European security in a post-conflict scenario in Ukraine that might favour Russian interests, may worry that a lucrative U.S.-Ukraine mineral extraction deal might be in jeopardy if Mr. Putin is de facto calling the shots across the region. Regardless of the bluster on all sides, an early ceasefire would have the greatest impact on prospects for lasting peace after more than three years of bloodshed and dislocation.

Summary

The passage discusses former U.S. President Donald Trump's evolving stance on the Russia-Ukraine conflict. Initially supportive of Russian President Vladimir Putin and critical of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, Trump shifted his position after a call with Putin. Trump expressed frustration over Putin's refusal to engage in meaningful peace negotiations, instead questioning Zelenskyy's legitimacy. In response, Trump threatened heavy tariffs on countries purchasing Russian oil to pressure Putin into a ceasefire. The article highlights Putin's attempts to undermine Zelenskyy, including false claims about his popularity and legitimacy, as well as Moscow's continued military aggression. It also raises concerns about potential Russian interference in Ukrainian elections and the impact on U.S. economic interests. Ultimately, the passage underscores that an early ceasefire remains the most viable path to lasting peace.

Tone:

The tone of the passage is analytical and critical, with a focus on political maneuvering and international diplomacy. It presents a neutral but scrutinizing perspective on the actions of all involved leaders, particularly highlighting strategic interests, power struggles, and the geopolitical consequences of the conflict.

Reading Comprehension

Based on the above passage, answer the following questions:

Question 1:

Why did Trump threaten a 50% tariff on nations purchasing Russian oil?

- A) To punish Russia for alleged election interference in Ukraine.**
- B) To pressure Putin into recognizing Zelenskyy's government as legitimate.**
- C) To force Putin into agreeing to a ceasefire.**
- D) To weaken the Russian economy and limit its war funding.**
- E) None of the above**

Question 2:

What is Putin's main justification for delaying a peace agreement with Ukraine?

- A) He believes Russia still needs to make more territorial gains before negotiations.**
- B) He claims Zelenskyy lacks the legitimate authority to sign a lasting peace deal.**
- C) He wants NATO to withdraw its forces from Eastern Europe first.**
- D) He insists that Ukraine formally recognize Crimea as Russian territory.**
- E) None of the above**

Question 3:

What economic concern might be motivating Trump's stance on the Ukraine conflict?

- A) Fear that Russian dominance in Ukraine could threaten a U.S.-Ukraine mineral extraction deal.**
- B) Concern that the European Union will impose tariffs on U.S. trade.**
- C) Worry that U.S. arms manufacturers will lose defense contracts in the region.**
- D) Fear that oil prices will drop significantly due to peace in Ukraine.**
- E) None of the above**

Article for Skimming

**Tackling the
disinformation threat
in India**

The World Economic Forum's (WEF) Global Risks Report 2025 underscores misinformation and disinformation as the highest ranked short-term global threat. The WEF defines "global risk" as an event that can adversely affect a sizeable portion of the population, the global GDP, and natural resources. The rapid rise of AI-generated content, algorithmic biases, and deep societal divides are making it harder than ever to separate facts from deception. India, poised to surpass 900 million Internet users, would find itself vulnerable without proper policy implementation to combat disinformation, with its diverse political and social landscape creating fertile ground for manipulated narratives, voter influence, and economic disruption. The crisis isn't just political; it fuels consumer boycotts, economic conflicts, and international tensions. Adding to the chaos, public trust in legacy media is dwindling, and both political actors and non-state entities are exploiting this gap to push propaganda. With trust in mainstream media declining, citizens are relying more on social media for news.

This shift has resulted in a significant number of users forwarding unverified information, often believing it to be accurate simply because it comes from friends or family. With former U.S. President Joe Biden's warning of an emerging "tech oligarchy", the world's largest democracy shouldn't wait any further to come up with important policy changes such as the European Union's Digital Services Act to combat Disinformation and Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference (FIMI). With prominent politicians and national parties' social media accounts actively sharing deep fakes and unverified information, India is grappling with an escalating information disorder. As a rising global power, India has faced persistent Chinese disinformation threats since the 2017 Doklam standoff, prompting the ban of over 300 Chinese apps, including TikTok, to curb foreign interference. A study by the Indian School of Business and the CyberPeace Foundation reveals that political disinformation accounts for 46%, followed by general issues (33.6%) and religious content (16.8%).

Platforms such as Weibo, operating within China, have been actively trying to propagate a distorted image of India. The risks could escalate if Meta ends fact-checking partnerships, as seen in the U.S. The youth dividend of India is facing a growing threat from false information, as a survey report revealed. The Global Risks Report 2025 perceives that people in high-income countries are more concerned about disinformation risks in the coming years than those in lower-income nations with some exceptions. If Indian citizens fail to recognise how disinformation deepens political and societal divides, the consequences could be severe for the democratic and social fabric. The Global Risks Report 2025 recommends measures such as upskilling developers working with algorithms, improving public awareness and digital literacy, and ensuring accountability through supervisory boards and AI councils to oversee Generative AI practices. Initiatives like Shakti – India Election Fact-Checking Collective, and the Deepfake Analysis Unit, played a role in tackling disinformation during the 2024 general elections.

Question 4:

Which of the following actions has India taken in response to disinformation threats?

A) Implemented an AI council to oversee generative AI in news media.

B) Created fact-checking initiatives like Shakti – India Election Fact-Checking Collective.

C) Mandated compulsory digital literacy training for all Internet users.

D) Established a government-controlled social media platform for verified news.

E) None of the above

Question 5:

How does the passage describe the impact of misinformation beyond politics?

- A) It primarily affects political campaigns but has limited influence on economic matters.**
- B) It is mostly spread by foreign entities and does not involve domestic actors.**
- C) It leads to consumer boycotts, economic conflicts, and international tensions.**
- D) It affects only lower-income countries due to their lack of media literacy.**
- E) None of the above**

Today's Descriptive Question

Precis Writing:

Original Text:

Despite India's booming startup ecosystem, a significant number of startups fail due to multiple challenges ranging from financial mismanagement to market saturation. While the country has witnessed a surge in entrepreneurial ventures, survival remains difficult due to intense competition, lack of innovation, and operational inefficiencies.

One of the primary reasons for startup failure is poor financial planning and cash flow mismanagement. Many startups rely heavily on external funding but fail to establish a sustainable revenue model, leading to financial instability when investors withdraw or funding dries up. Moreover, high burn rates—spending excessively on marketing, hiring, and expansion—often lead to premature collapses.

Another critical factor is the lack of market demand. Many startups introduce products or services without proper market research, resulting in offerings that do not align with consumer needs. Without a unique value proposition, they struggle to differentiate themselves in a highly competitive landscape. Additionally, scalability issues arise when businesses fail to adapt to changing market dynamics, customer preferences, and technological advancements.

The regulatory environment in India, though improving, still presents hurdles in terms of complex compliance procedures, taxation policies, and bureaucratic delays. Startups often struggle to navigate these regulatory challenges, leading to operational slowdowns and increased costs. Furthermore, talent acquisition and retention remain a challenge, as startups compete with established firms for skilled professionals, often facing high employee turnover.

Lastly, external factors such as economic downturns, funding slowdowns, and global market disruptions further contribute to startup failures. The post-pandemic funding crunch and the bursting of the edtech and fintech bubbles have significantly impacted the startup ecosystem, leading to mass layoffs and shutdowns.

For Indian startups to thrive, they need to focus on sustainable growth, customer-centric innovation, and financial discipline while navigating regulatory challenges and market fluctuations effectively.

Precis:

Many Indian startups fail due to poor financial planning, unsustainable business models, and lack of market demand. Issues such as high burn rates, weak scalability, regulatory hurdles, and talent retention challenges further contribute to their struggles. External factors like economic downturns and funding slowdowns also play a role. To succeed, startups must prioritize financial discipline, market research, and innovation while adapting to market dynamics and regulatory frameworks.

- You need to book a conference room for an important meeting. Write an email to the office administrator requesting a reservation.

To:@gmail.com

Subject: Request for Conference Room Reservation

Dear [Office Administrator's Name],

I hope you are doing well.

I would like to request the reservation of a conference room for an important meeting. Below are the details:

Date: [Meeting Date]

Time: [Start Time] to [End Time]

Number of Attendees: [Approximate Number]

Preferred Room: [If you have a preference]

Please confirm the availability of a suitable room or let me know if any adjustments are needed. Your assistance in arranging this would be greatly appreciated.

Looking forward to your confirmation.

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

Match the column

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| 1. Pie in the Sky | A. to be extremely happy |
| 2. Beside yourself with joy | B. to just barely get by or make it |
| 3. Having an Ace up the sleeve | C. a person who is different |
| 4. A black sheep | D. an unrealistic or impossible goal |
| 5. By the skin of your teeth | E. a piece of information kept secret until it becomes necessary to use it |

Answer:

1-d

2-a

3-e

4-c

5-b

Vocabulary

1. Standoff:
2. Bluster:
3. Broadside:
4. Escalating:
5. Lucrative:
6. Expropriation:
7. De facto:
8. Leash:
9. Capitulation:
10. Obfuscate:

Rc ans

1.

Ans: C

Explanation:

The passage states, "Trump, apparently irate that his campaign promise to end the conflict was losing steam, threatened to slap nations purchasing Russian oil with a 50% tariff, unless Mr. Putin agreed to a ceasefire in the near term." This indicates that Trump's primary goal was forcing Putin into a ceasefire to fulfill his campaign promise.

Why the other options are incorrect?

A) Election interference in Ukraine – The tariff threat is linked to a ceasefire, not election interference.

B) Recognizing Zelenskyy's government – The passage does not indicate that Trump is trying to change Putin's stance on Zelenskyy.

D) Weakening Russia's economy – While tariffs could impact Russia's economy, the passage suggests the main reason is to push for a ceasefire.

2.

Ans: B

Explanation:

The passage states, "Mr. Putin's insistence that Mr. Zelenskyy lacks the legitimate authority to sign a robust peace deal that would not be challenged by any nation; and that in this context the introduction of 'temporary governance in Ukraine' was required." This means Putin is delaying negotiations by questioning Zelenskyy's legitimacy.

Why the other options are incorrect?

- A) Waiting for more territorial gains – While Russian forces are making gains, the passage emphasizes Zelenskyy's legitimacy as the key issue.
- C) NATO withdrawal – NATO is not mentioned as a condition for peace.
- D) Recognition of Crimea – The passage does not mention this as a specific demand.

3.

Ans: A

Explanation:

The passage states, "Trump, even if he is not particularly concerned with European security... may worry that a lucrative U.S.-Ukraine mineral extraction deal might be in jeopardy if Mr. Putin is de facto calling the shots across the region." This clearly suggests Trump is concerned about U.S. economic interests in Ukraine.

Why the other options are incorrect?

B) EU tariffs on U.S. trade – No mention of EU tariffs is made.

C) Loss of defense contracts – While defense spending is a factor in U.S. foreign policy, the passage does not state this as a concern for Trump.

D) Oil prices dropping – The focus is on minerals, not oil prices.

4.

Ans: B

Explanation:

The passage highlights two key initiatives in India to combat disinformation during elections:

Shakti – India Election Fact-Checking Collective

Deepfake Analysis Unit

Why the other options are incorrect?

A) AI council to oversee generative AI – The passage mentions WEF's recommendation for AI councils but does not say India has implemented one.

C) Digital literacy training for all – While digital literacy is mentioned as a recommendation, India has not made it compulsory for all users.

D) Government-controlled social media – No mention is made of India creating its own social media for verified news.

5.

Ans: C

Explanation:

The passage states, "The crisis isn't just political; it fuels consumer boycotts, economic conflicts, and international tensions." This means misinformation has widespread effects beyond just elections.

Why the other options are incorrect?

A) Limited economic influence – The passage directly contradicts this, stating that disinformation impacts economies and international relations.

B) Spread only by foreign entities – Both domestic and foreign actors are involved in spreading misinformation.

D) Only lower-income countries affected – The WEF report suggests high-income countries are also deeply concerned.

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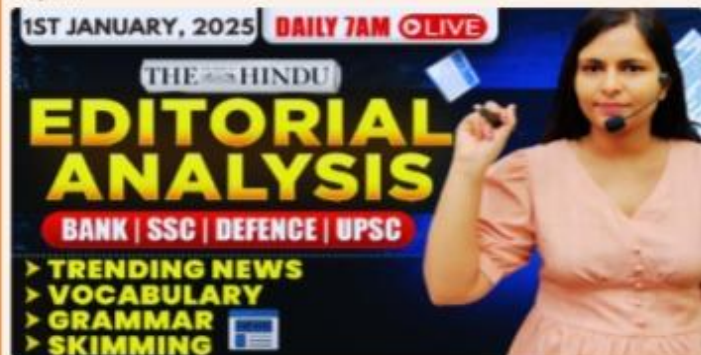
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