

## Fair Play

JUMMAN Shaikh and Algu Chowdhry were good friends. So strong was their bond of friendship that when either of them went away from the village, the other **looked after** his family. Both were greatly respected in the village.

Jumman had an old aunt who had some property. This she transferred to him on the understanding that she would stay with him and he would look after her. The arrangement worked well for a couple of years. Then the situation changed. Jumman and his family were **tired of** the old relative. Jumman became as **indifferent** to her as his wife, who **grudged** even the little food that the old lady wanted every day. She **swallowed** these insults along with her food for a few months. But patience has its limits.



One day she spoke to Jumman, “My son, it is now **obvious** that I am not wanted in your house. Kindly give me a monthly allowance so that I can **set up** a separate kitchen.”

“My wife knows best how to run the house. Be patient,” said Jumman **shamelessly**. This made his aunt very angry and she decided to take her case to the village panchayat.

For many days, the old lady was seen talking to the villagers explaining her case and **seeking** their support. Some **sympathised** with her, others laughed at her and a few others advised her to **make it up** with her nephew and his wife. At last she came to Algu Chowdhry and spoke to him. “You know, Chachi, Jumman is my best friend. How can I go against him?” Algu said. “But is it right, my son, to keep **mum** and not say what you **consider just** and fair?” **pleaded** the old lady. “Come to the panchayat and speak the truth,” she said. Algu didn’t reply, but her words kept **ringing in his ears**.

The panchayat was held the same evening under an old banyan tree. Jumman stood up and said, “The voice of the Panch is the voice of God. Let my aunt **nominate** the head Panch. I will **abide** by her decision.”



“The Panch knows neither friend nor enemy. What do you say to Algu Chowdhry?” the old lady announced.

“Fine,” replied Jumman hiding his joy over this unexpected piece of luck.

“Chachi, you are aware of my friendship with Jumman,” said Algu.

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“I know that,” replied the aunt, “but I also know that you will not kill your **conscience** for the **sake** of friendship. God lives in the heart of the Panch, and his voice is the voice of God.” And the old lady explained her case.

“Jumman,” said Algu, “you and I are old friends. Your aunt is as dear to me as you. Now I am a Panch. You and your aunt are equal before me. What have you to say in your **defence**?”

“Three years ago,” began Jumman, “my aunt transferred her property to me. I promised to support her as long as she lived. I have done all I could. There have been a couple of **quarrels** between my wife and her but I can’t stop it. Now my aunt is claiming a monthly allowance from me. This is not possible. That’s all I have to say.”

Jumman was **cross-examined** by Algu and others. Then Algu announced, “We have gone into the matter carefully. In our opinion, Jumman must pay his aunt a monthly allowance, or else the property goes back to her.”

Now, the two friends were **seldom** seen together. The bond of friendship between them was broken. In fact, Jumman was Algu's enemy and wanted his **revenge**.

Days passed and, as **ill luck** would have it, Algu Chowdhry found himself **in a tight spot**. One of his fine pair of bullocks died, and he sold the other to Samjhu Sahu, a cart driver of the village. The understanding was that Sahu would pay the price of the bullock in a month's time. It so happened that the bullock died within a month.



Several months after the bullock's death, Algu reminded Sahu of the money he hadn't yet paid. Sahu got very annoyed. “I can't pay you a **penny** for the **wretched beast** you sold me. He brought us nothing but **ruin**. I have a **bullock**. Use it for a month and then return it to me. No money for the dead bullock,” he said angrily.

Algu decided to refer the case to the panchayat. For a second time in a few months, preparations for holding the panchayat were made, and both the parties started meeting people seeking their support.

The panchayat was held under the old banyan tree. Algu stood up and said, “The voice of the Panch is the voice of God. Let Sahu nominate the head Panch. I will abide by his decision.”

Sahu saw his chance and proposed the name of Jumman. **Algu's heart sank** and he turned **pale**. But what could he do?

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The moment Jumman became head Panch, he realised his responsibility as judge and the **dignity** of his office. Could he, seated in that high place, have his revenge now? He thought and thought. No, he must not allow his personal feelings to come in the way of speaking the truth and doing justice.

Both Algu and Sahu stated their cases. They were cross-examined and the case was considered deeply. Then Jumman stood up and announced, “It is our opinion that Sahu should pay Algu the price of the bullock. When Sahu bought the bullock, it suffered from no disability or disease. The death of the bullock was **unfortunate**, but Algu cannot be blamed for it.” Algu could not **contain** his feelings. He stood up and said loudly over and over again, “Victory to the panchayat. This is justice. God lives in the voice of the Panch.”

Soon after, Jumman came to Algu, **embraced** him and said, “Since the last panchayat, I had become your enemy. Today I realised what it meant to be a Panch. A Panch has no friend nor enemy. He knows only justice. Let no one **deviate** from the path of justice and truth for friendship or **enmity**.”

Algu embraced his friend and **wept**. And his tears washed away all the dirt of misunderstanding between them.

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PRACTICE LEADS TO PERFECTION



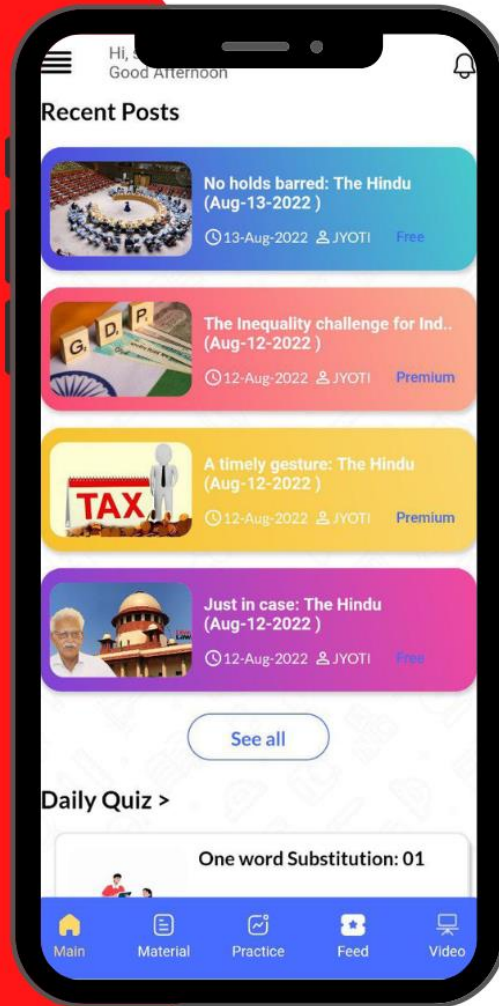
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### Vocabulary

1. **Fair play** (phrase) – justice, justness, fair-mindedness, equity, equitableness  
न्यायपूर्ण व्यवहार
2. **Look after** (phrase) – take care of, care for, attend to देखभाल करना
3. **Tire of** (phrase) – Lose interest in; become bored with. से थक जाना
4. **Indifferent** (to) (adjective) – unconcerned about, apathetic about, apathetic towards, uncaring about के प्रति उदासीन
5. **Grudge** (verb) – be annoyed about, be angry about, be displeased about ईर्ष्या करना, नाराज होना
6. **Swallow** (verb) – tolerate, endure, stand, put up with, bear, सहन करना
7. **Obvious** (adjective) – evident, apparent, manifest, patent, conspicuous स्पष्ट
8. **Allowance** (noun) – payment, pocket money, sum of money, remittance भत्ता
9. **Set up** (phrasal verb) – establish स्थापित करना
10. **Patient** (adjective) – forbearing, uncomplaining, tolerant धैर्यवान
11. **Shamelessly** (adverb) – In a blatant or brazen manner; without shame. बेशर्मी से
12. **Seek** (verb) – ask for, request, solicit, call on, invite मांगना
13. **Sympathise** (verb) – pity, be sorry for, feel sorry for, show sympathy for सहानुभूति रखना
14. **Make up** (phrasal verb) – stop quarreling; come to an agreement with सुलह करना
15. **Mum** (adjective) – quiet/silent शांत
16. **Consider** (verb) – think about, contemplate, examine, appraise, review विचार करना
17. **Just** (adjective) – equitable, even-handed, impartial, unbiased, न्यायोचित
18. **Plead** (verb) – beg, entreat, beseech, implore, appeal to निवेदन करना
19. **Ring in one's ear** (phrase) – to remain in someone's mind/memory (किसी के शब्द) कानों में बजना
20. **Nominate** (verb) – appoint, designate, make, assign, name मनोनीत करना
21. **Abide** (by) (verb) – comply with, obey, observe, follow, keep to, hold to का पालन करना
22. **Conscience** (noun) – sense of right and wrong अन्तश्चेतना

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23. **Sake** (noun) – for purposes of, for, in the interests of खातिर, लिए
24. **Defence** (noun) – in support of (someone) that is being verbally attacked or criticized बचाव
25. **Quarrel** (noun) – argument, disagreement, fight, wrangle झगड़ा
26. **Cross-examine** (verb) – Question, interrogate, investigate, double-check जिरह करना
27. **Seldom** (adverb) – rarely, hardly ever, not often शायद ही
28. **Revenge** (noun) – Retaliation, vengeance, reprisal, tit for tat बदला
29. **Ill luck** (phrase) – bad luck; misfortune. दुर्भाग्य
30. **In a tight spot** (phrase) – in a difficult situation कठिन परिस्थिति में
31. **Penny** (noun) – used for emphasis to denote no money at all; Money, currency पैसे
32. **Wretched** (adjective) – of poor quality; very bad. मनहूस
33. **Beast** (noun)- Animal जानवर
34. **Ruin** (noun) – loss of value or usefulness; destruction, decay, devastation बर्बाद
35. **Bullock** (noun) – a young bull. बैल
36. **Someone's heart sink** (phrase) – to feel disappointed or to lose hope निराश महसूस करना
37. **Pale** (adjective) – If a person's face pales, it loses its usual colour पीला, फीका
38. **Dignity** (noun) – self-esteem, self-worth, self-respect, pride, morale गरिमा
39. **Unfortunate** (adjective) – unlucky, hapless, out of luck, down on one's luck दुर्भाग्य
40. **Contain** (verb) – restrain, curb, rein in, suppress, repress रोकना
41. **Embrace** (verb) – take/hold in one's arms; hold, cuddle, hug गले लगाना
42. **Deviate** (verb) – to go in a different direction: Diverge विचलित होना/ भटकना
43. **Enmity** (noun) – hostility, hate, antagonism, animosity, antipathy दुश्मनी
44. **Weep** (verb) – cry, shed tears, moan, wail रोना



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