

## A brief respite: On Russia's Orthodox Christmas truce in Ukraine

Russia's temporary truce should be the basis for a **lasting** solution

Russian President Vladimir Putin's **decision** to **observe** a 36-hour **ceasefire** on the **front line** in Ukraine **comes** at a time when his **troops** are **struggling** to **cope with** a series of **battlefield setbacks** and **mounting casualties**. The **Kremlin's** version is that it ordered the ceasefire, from Friday noon till Saturday midnight, as **Orthodox Christians** in both countries **celebrate** Christmas on January 7. Ukraine has **questioned** Russia's **sincerity**, saying the Kremlin would use the pause in fighting to **replenish** and **rearm** its forces and move more soldiers to the **line of contact**. Yet, if observed by both sides, this would be the first ceasefire on the entire front line since the war began on February 24 last year. Mr. Putin's move appears more like a sign of weakness than any serious **push** for peace. On New Year's day, Russia lost at least 89 soldiers when Ukraine targeted the eastern city of Makiivka where hundreds of troops were temporarily **stationed**. In Bakhmut, the eastern city that has been under attack for six months, Ukraine says its troops **pushed back** the Russians.

**Russia**, which made some territorial gains in the early phase of the war, **has** been struggling to build battlefield **momentum** ever since Ukraine, **armed** and **bankrolled** by the **collective West**, started its **counter-offensive** in late August. Ukraine **recaptured swathes** of territories from Russia, including much of the Kharkiv **Oblast** in the north-east and Kherson city in the south. Faced with battlefield setbacks, **Gen. Sergey Surovikin**, the new commander for the war, **changed strategy** — he redirected the **offensive** focus towards **Donetsk**, started building stronger **defence** lines across the vast front line, and **launched** a heavy **bombardment campaign** targeting Ukraine's **critical energy infrastructure**. The **air strikes** have **partially** damaged Ukraine's **energy grid** and disrupted power and water supplies to millions, but they have not changed the **ground reality**. If Ukraine **survives** winter, fighting could **pick up pace**. The U.S. and Germany have already announced that they would send **Patriot missile systems** to Ukraine. The U.S., France and Germany would also be sending **armoured** vehicles, to better prepare **Kyiv** for the coming land war. **Cornered** in the **war theatre**, Mr. Putin might come under **enhanced** pressure to **escalate** the **conflict**. But continuing this war will be costly for all sides. If the ceasefire **holds** for 36 hours, Mr. Putin should extend it further and **seek dialogue**, without **preconditions**, with both Ukraine and its **backers** in the West. The temporary truce should be the beginning of a lasting one. **[Practice Exercise]**

- Red/blue coloring of words in the sentence indicates subject verb relationship; where 'red' denotes 'subject' and 'blue' denotes 'verb'.

## Vocabulary

1. **Brief** (adjective) – temporary; not lasting for long, short-lived अल्पकालिक
2. **Respite** (noun) – a short period of rest from something that is difficult or unpleasant; stoppage राहत, विराम, स्थगन
3. **Orthodox Christmas** (noun) – relating to the Orthodox Church. The Orthodox Church recognises January 7th as the day that Jesus was born.
4. **Truce** (noun) – an agreement to stop fighting for a period of time (अस्थायी) युद्धविराम
5. **Lasting** (adjective) – continuing to exist for a long time or forever स्थायी
6. **Observe** (adjective) – comply with, abide by, obey, follow, adhere to पालन करना
7. **Ceasefire** (noun) – an agreement between two groups to stop fighting each other युद्ध-विराम
8. **Front line** (noun) – a place where opposing armies face each other in war and where fighting happens
9. **Troops** (noun) – A group of soldiers; forces सेना, सैन्य दल
10. **Cope with** (verb) – deal with, handle, manage, tackle, contend with से निपटना
11. **Battlefield** (noun) – Battleground, arena, frontline, field, theater of war लड़ाई का मैदान
12. **Setback** (noun) – problem, difficulty, issue, hitch, complication, upset नाकामयाबी, झटका
13. **Mount** (adjective) – gradually increasing, rising बढ़ते
14. **Casualty** (noun) – A person hurt or killed in a war or other destructive event हताहत
15. **Kremlin** (noun) – a citadel within a Russian town; it is often also used metonymically to refer to the government of the Russian Federation.
16. **Question** (verb) – To raise question over or on something सवाल उठाना
17. **Sincerity** (noun) – honesty, genuineness, integrity, seriousness ईमानदारी
18. **Replenish** (verb) – refill, fill, restock, restore, top up भरना
19. **Rearm** (verb) – provide with a new supply of weapons; upgrade, reequip फिर से शस्त्रसज्जित होना
20. **Line of Contact** (noun) – "line of contact" refers to the demarcation between two or more given armies, whether they are allied or belligerent

21. **Push** (noun) – Try, attempt, endeavour  
प्रयास
22. **Station** (verb) – put on duty, post, position,  
put in, assign to तैनात होना
23. **Push back** (phrasal verb) – To resist,  
oppose, or protest something. पीछे धकेलना
24. **Momentum** (noun) – impetus, energy,  
impulse, speed, velocity गति
25. **Arm** (verb) – carrying a gun or other  
weapon; involving weapons हथियारबंद  
होना
26. **Bankroll** (verb) – support (a person,  
organization, or project) financially. आर्थिक  
रूप से समर्थन करना
27. **Collective** (adjective) –relating to all  
people as a group; common, combined,  
joint सामूहिक
28. **The West** (noun) – it refers to U.S and  
other European Countries
29. **Counter-offensive** (noun) – an attack  
made in response to one from an enemy,  
typically on a large scale or for a prolonged  
period. जवाबी कार्रवाई
30. **Recapture** (verb) – recover (something  
taken or lost). पुनर्ग्रहण करना
31. **Swathe** (noun) – a broad strip or area of  
something विशाल क्षेत्र
32. **Oblast** (noun) – an administrative division  
or region in Russia and the former Soviet  
Union, and in some constituent republics  
of the former Soviet Union.
33. **Strategy** (noun) – plan of action, approach,  
tactic रणनीति
34. **Offensive** (noun) – attack, assault,  
invasion, onslaught, incursion आक्रामक
35. **Donetsk** (noun) – A city, the administrative  
centre of Donetsk Oblast, in the Donbas  
region, in eastern Ukraine.
36. **Defence** (noun) – something that protects  
somebody/something from something, or  
that is used to fight against attack बचाव
37. **Launch** (verb) – start, begin, commence,  
initiate, embark शुरू करना
38. **Bombardment** (noun) – bombing, attack  
बमबारी
39. **Campaign** (noun) – movement, operation,  
fight, drive अभियान
40. **Critical** (adjective) – crucial, vital, essential,  
of the essence, all-important महत्वपूर्ण
41. **Infrastructure** (noun) – The infrastructure  
of a country, society, or organization  
consists of the basic facilities such as  
transport, communications, power  
supplies, and buildings, which enable it to  
function. बुनियादी ढाँचा, अवसरचना
42. **Air strike** (noun) – air attack हवाई हमला

43. **Energy grid** (noun) – an interconnected network for electricity delivery from producers to consumers  
he/she/it cannot escape (किसी व्यक्ति या जानवर को) घेर लेना; फँसाना
44. **Ground reality** (noun) – practical situation; reality of the situation जमीनी हकीकत
45. **Survive** (verb) – live, endure, continue, continue to exist झेलना
46. **Pick up** (phrasal verb) – increase, become stronger, accelerate तेज होना
47. **Pace** (noun) – speed, rate, swiftness, quickness गति
48. **Patriot missile defence system or Patriot battery** (noun) – Patriot which stands for “Phased Array Tracking Radar to Intercept of Target” – is designed to counter and destroy incoming short-range ballistic missiles, advanced aircraft and cruise missiles.
49. **Armoured vehicle** (noun) – tanks, armoured cars, assault guns, self-propelled guns, infantry fighting vehicles (IFV), and armoured personnel carriers (APC).  
बख्तरबंद वाहन
50. **Kyiv** (noun) – Capital of Ukraine
51. **Corner** (verb) – To get a person or an animal into a position from which
52. **War theatre** (noun) – the area of air, sea and land that is directly involved in war युद्धक्षेत्र, रणक्षेत्र
53. **Enhanced** (adjective) – increased, augmented बढ़ा हुआ
54. **Escalate** (verb) – Intensify, worsen, heighten, deteriorate, increase, accelerate बढ़ाना
55. **Conflict** (noun) – Battle, fight, war, struggle, skirmish, clash, encounter संघर्ष
56. **Hold** (verb) – remain valid, remain in force, hold good, stand, apply बना रहना
57. **Seek** (verb) – Ask for, call on, solicit on मांग करना
58. **Dialogue** (noun) – conversation, talk, communication, interchange, discourse बातचीत, संवाद
59. **Precondition** (noun) – Condition, requirement, necessity पूर्व शर्त
60. **Backer** (noun) – Patron, supporter, upholder, defender समर्थक

## Practice Exercise

**Direction (Q1 – Q3):** Select the best express synonym of the given words

[Editorial page]

1. **SWATHE**

- A. Needless
- B. Unfortunate
- C. Palatable
- D. Area

2. **PRECONDITON**

- A. Memorandum
- B. Differences
- C. Reflection
- D. Necessity

3. **BACKER**

- A. Supporter
- B. Functioning
- C. Slam
- D. Contradict

4. **Idioms & Phrase**

She only ***took her eyes off*** the child for a moment.

- A. Make an accusation against someone
- B. To rush or flow through something
- C. To stop looking at someone or something
- D. To become more strong or powerful

5. **Direction: Two statements are given below, which are jumbled in any random order. These statements will form a coherent and meaningful paragraph, when arranged in the correct sequence. Arrange the sentences in the right order and answer the questions that follow.**

(i) the volume of trade (D)/ has gone up significantly in recent years. (E)/ THANKS to improved regional connectivity and growing bilateral interest, (F)/ between India's North-Eastern States and Bangladesh (G)/

(ii) imports and exports, has finally been laid.(A)/ they feel that the foundation of a new trade/business hub dominated by (B)/ Present trends are positive enough to generate optimism among analysts about medium term prospects of North East India-Bangladesh bilateral trade (C)/

- A. ABC, EFDG
- B. DGFE, BAC
- C. BAC, FDEG
- D. FDGE, CBA
- E. None of the above

**Direction (Q6 – Q9):** Read the given sentences to find out whether there is any grammatical error in them

6. Every scientific invention (A)/ has proved (B)/ much harmful to society than beneficial. (C)/ No Error (D)
7. She is preparing (A)/ for this examination (B)/ since 2004 (C)/ No Error (D)
8. I can depend upon (A)/ your help, (B)/ Can' I? (C)/ No Error(D)
9. If her grandfather (A)/ would have lived three more days (B)/ he would have been 100 years old. (C)/ No Error(D)
10. **Find out the misspelt word**
  - A. Vunlerability
  - B. Tremendous
  - C. Terrific
  - D. Renegade

**Direction: Read the passage given below and answer the following questions.**

**(The Hindu Editorial: A new era – Nov 29, 2022)**

The story of Anwar Ibrahim is that of power, revolt, incarceration and comeback. **(1)/** And then a rebel reformer thrown into prison by his former boss. **(2)/** Once a rising star within the ruling United Malays National Organisation (UMNO). **(3)/** In the ups and downs of his long career, Mr. Anwar never gave up on his political activism or faith in his movement, Reformasi (Reform), which has finally taken him to the office that evaded him for over two decades. **(4)/** In last week's elections, his **coalition(A)** Pakatan Harapan (PH, Alliance of Hope), **emerged(B)** as the largest **bloc(C)** in Parliament following which Malaysia's King appointed the 75-year-old **leader(D)** as the Prime Minister. In the 1990s, Mr. Anwar, then the Deputy Prime Minister, was seen as the **\_\_\_\_\_ (a) \_\_\_\_\_** successor of the all-powerful Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad. But their differences and his calls for reform within UMNO and the government led to his **\_\_\_\_\_ (b) \_\_\_\_\_**. He was jailed over sodomy charges, which he denies. Two jail terms later, Mr. Anwar, in 2018, joined hands with Dr. Mahathir, and managed to oust from power the UMNO, which was grappling **\_\_\_\_\_ (c) \_\_\_\_\_** corruption scandals. Dr. Mahathir, who became the Prime Minister again, gave Mr. Anwar a pardon but refused to share power with him, pushing the country into political instability. But this time, Mr. Anwar is free of legal **\_\_\_\_\_ (d) \_\_\_\_\_** and does not face any immediate challenge to his claim to power.

The election results, however, also showed Malaysia's polarising polity. This is the first time Malaysians voted in a hung Parliament. Mr. Anwar's bloc (PH), who promised corruption-free governance **(A)/** and protection of minority rights, **(B)/** win 82 seats **(C)/** of the 222-member Assembly. **(D)/** Former Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin's Perikatan Nasional (PN) got 73 seats, while Prime Minister Ismail Sabri Yaakob's Barisan Nasional (BN) — dominated by UMNO — was defeated with its 30 seats. While the result clearly underscored growing **resentment** towards UMNO, it also showed the rise of the Malaysian Islamic Party (PAS), which is part of the Perikatan coalition.

**Fill in the blanks with the most appropriate combinations of words**

11. In the 1990s, Mr. Anwar, then the Deputy Prime Minister, was seen as the **\_\_\_\_\_ (a) \_\_\_\_\_** successor of the all-powerful Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad.

**Fill the most appropriate option in (a)**

- (i) Obvious

(ii) Imagination

(iii) Rival

(iv) Margin

A. Only (i)    B. Only (ii)    C. Only (iii)    D. Both (ii) and (iv)    E. None of the above

12. But their differences and his calls for reform within UMNO and the government led to his \_\_\_\_\_(b)\_\_\_\_\_.

**Fill the most appropriate option in (b)**

(i) Edge

(ii) Downfall

(iii) Strand

(iv) Resolve

A. Only (i)    B. Only (ii)    C. Only (iv)    D. Both (ii) and (iv)    E. None of the above

13. Two jail terms later, Mr. Anwar, in 2018, joined hands with Dr. Mahathir, and managed to oust from power the UMNO, which was grappling \_\_\_\_\_(c)\_\_\_\_\_ corruption scandals.

**Fill the most appropriate option in (c)**

(i) With

(ii) On

(iii) To

(iv) Against

A. Only (i)    B. Only (ii)    C. Only (iii)    D. Both (i) and (ii)    E. None of the above

14. But this time, Mr. Anwar is free of legal \_\_\_\_\_(d)\_\_\_\_\_ and does not face any immediate challenge to his claim to power.

**Fill the most appropriate option in (d)**

(i) Hurdles

(ii) Willingness

(iii) Brazen

(iv) Ambition

A. Only (i)    B. Only (iv)    C. Only (iii)    D. Both (iii) and (ii)    E. None of the above

15. **The following sentence may or may not contain an error in one of its parts. Identify the part containing the error. If the sentence is correct, select 'No error' as your answers.**

Mr. Anwar's bloc (PH), who promised corruption-free governance (A)/ and protection of minority rights, (B)/ won 82 seats (C)/ of the 222-member Assembly. (D)/

A. (A)

B. (B)

C. (C)

D. (D)

E. No Error

16. **Rearrange the sentence to form a meaningful sentence.**

The story of Anwar Ibrahim is that of power, revolt, incarceration and comeback. **(1)**/ And then a rebel reformer thrown into prison by his former boss. **(2)**/ Once a rising star within the ruling United Malays National Organisation (UMNO). **(3)**/ In the ups and downs of his long career, Mr. Anwar never gave up on his political activism or faith in his movement, Reformasi (Reform), which has finally taken him to the office that evaded him for over two decades. **(4)**/

- A. 2341
- B. 1234
- C. 3214
- D. 2143
- E. 4321

17. Given below is a word, followed by three sentence that consist of that word. Identify the sentence (S) that best express (es) the meaning of the word. Choose option 5 'None of the above' if the word is not suitable in any of the sentence

**RESENTMENT**

- (i) This situation is **resentment** in 21st-century life.
- (ii) She took the **resentment** step of revealing the truth about the situation.
- (iii) The **resentment** caused is compounded by branding those concerned about this as bigots.

- A. Only (i)
- B. Only (ii)
- C. Only (iii)
- D. (i), (ii)
- E. (ii), (iii)

18. In the following question, a sentence is given with four words marked as (A), (B), (C), and (D). These words may or may not be placed in the correct order. Four options with different arrangements of these have been provided. Mark the option with the correct arrangement as the answer. If no rearrangement is required, mark option (5) as your answer.

In last week's elections, his **coalition(A)** Pakatan Harapan (PH, Alliance of Hope), **emerged(B)** as the largest **bloc(C)** in Parliament following which Malaysia's King appointed the 75-year-old **leader(D)** as the Prime Minister.

- A. A – D
- B. B – A
- C. D – B
- D. A – C
- E. No arrangement

19. In the following question, two statements and five connectors are given. Only one of the connectors from those given can be used to combine the given two statements into one sentence without changing the meaning. Choose that connector as your answer.

- (i) You will have to start talking better care of your body and stop smoking.
  - (ii) You will die early.
- A. Unlike
  - B. Though



- C. Even if
- D. Otherwise
- E. None of these

**20. Fill the appropriate preposition in the given blanks**

They amused themselves \_\_\_\_\_ Playing video games.

- A. Of
- B. In
- C. With
- D. To

## Answers

1. D    2.D    3.A    4. C    5.D    6.C    7. A    8.C    9.B    10.A    11.A  
 12. B    13.A    14. A    15. A    16. C    17.C    18. E    19.D    20.C    **[Practice Exercise]**

## Explanations

- Swathe** (noun) – a broad strip or area of something विशाल क्षेत्र
  - Needless** (adjective) –Unnecessary, pointless, uncalled-for अनावश्यक
  - Unfortunate** (adjective) – unlucky, hapless, out of luck, down on one's luck दुर्भाग्यपूर्ण
  - Palatable** (adjective) – pleasant, acceptable, satisfactory सुखद, रुचिकर
- Precondition** (noun) – Condition, requirement, necessity पूर्व शर्त
  - Memorandum** (noun) – a written record, message, or reminder ज्ञापन
  - Differences** (noun) – a disagreement, quarrel, or dispute. मतभेद
  - Reflection** (noun) – indication, display, demonstration, manifestation संकेत
- Backer** (noun) – Patron, supporter, upholder, defender समर्थक
  - Functioning** (noun) – Performance, execution, performing, working कामकाज
  - Slam** (verb) – criticize severely; censure, denounce, condemn कड़ी आलोचना करना।
  - Contradict** (verb) – deny, oppose, negate, controvert, challenge खंडन/ इनकार करना
- Take one's eye off** (Phrase) – to stop looking at someone or something से नज़र हटाना
- FDGE, CBA**

THANKS to improved regional connectivity and growing bilateral interest, the volume of trade between India's North-Eastern States and Bangladesh has gone up significantly in recent years. Present trends are positive enough to generate optimism among analysts about medium term prospects of North East India-Bangladesh bilateral trade: they feel that the foundation of a new trade/business hub dominated by imports and exports, has finally been laid

- (C) 'much' के बदले 'more' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि तुलना दो Adjectives 'harmful' तथा 'beneficial' के बीच है और 'beneficial' के पहले 'than' का प्रयोग है जिससे पता चलता है कि दो Adjectives की तुलना Comparative Degree में है, और यदि दो Adjectives की तुलना 'Comparative Degree' में करनी हो तो उनके लिए 'more.....than' का प्रयोग किया जाता है; जैसे-

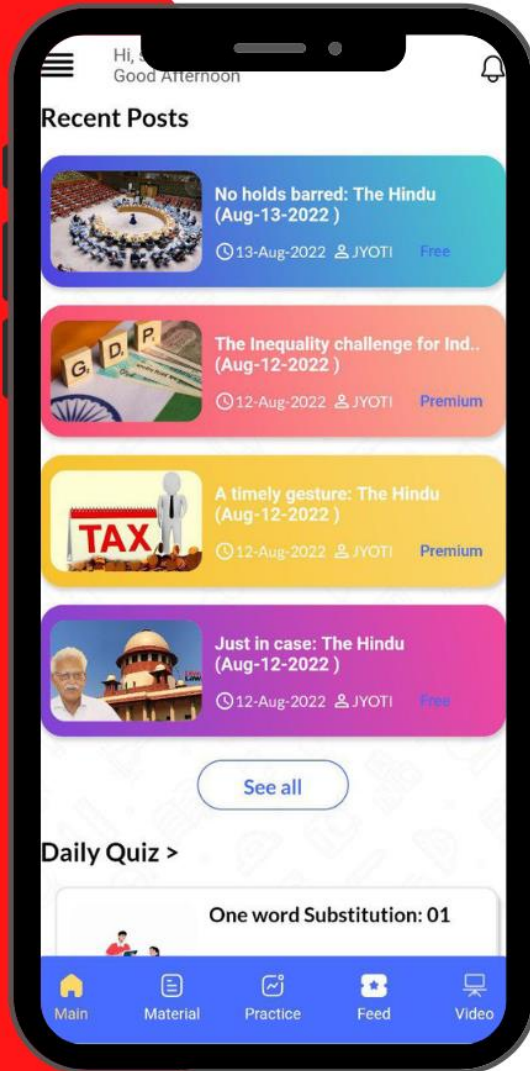
i. She is more good than wise.

- 'more' will be used instead of 'much' because the comparison is between two adjectives 'harmful' and 'beneficial' and 'than' is used before 'beneficial' which shows that the two adjectives The comparison is in comparative degree, and if two adjectives are to be compared in 'comparative degree' then 'more.....than' is used for them; As-

i. She is more good than wise.

7. (A) 'is' के बदले 'has been' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि Part (C) में 'since 2004' का प्रयोग है जिससे पता चलता है कि काम '2004' से शुरू होकर अबतक जारी है, और कोई कार्य यदि past में शुरू होकर अबतक जारी हो तो उसके लिए Present Perfect Continuous का प्रयोग होता है; जैसे-
- She has been working here since 2004.
- 'has been' will be used instead of 'is' because 'since 2004' is used in Part (C) which shows that the work is continuing from '2004' till now, and if any work Starting in the past and continuing till now, then Present Perfect Continuous is used for that; As-
    - She has been working here since 2004.
8. (C) 'can I?' के बदले 'can't I' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि यदि वाक्य 'Affirmative' हो तो Question Tag 'Negative' होता है, और यदि वाक्य 'Negative' हो तो Question Tag 'Affirmative' होता है; जैसे-
- He can do it, can't he?
  - She can't do it, can she?
- 'can't I' will be used instead of 'can I?' because if the sentence is 'Affirmative' then the Question Tag is 'Negative', and if the sentence is 'Negative' then the Question Tag is 'Affirmative'; As-
    - He can do it, can't he?
    - She can't do it, can she?
9. (B) 'would have lived' के बदले 'had lived' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि past के unreal situation को व्यक्त करने के लिए 'If Clause' (Conditional Clause) में 'If + Subject had + V3' का प्रयोग होता है तथा Main Clause में 'Subject + would / could/might/ should + have + V3' का; जैसे-
- If you had worked hard, you would have succeeded
- 'Had lived' will be used instead of 'would have lived' because 'If + Subject had + V3' is used in 'If Clause' (Conditional Clause) to express unreal situation of past and Main in the clause of 'Subject + would / could/might/ should + have + V3'; As-
    - If you had worked hard, you would have succeeded.
10. **Vulnerability** (noun) – weakness, susceptibility, liability, fragility कमजोरी
11. **Obvious** (adjective) – evident, apparent, manifest, patent, conspicuous प्रत्यक्ष
- Imagination** (noun) – vision, inspiration, creativity, ingenuity कल्पना
  - Rival** (noun) – competitor, opponent, contestant, contender प्रतिद्वंद्वी
  - Margin** (noun) – gap, majority, amount, difference अंतर
12. **Downfall** (noun) – Failure that results in a loss of position; collapse, breakdown, defeat पतन
- Edge** (noun) – Advantage, superiority; an advantage over other people बढ़त
  - Strand** (noun) – one part of a situation or idea किसी स्थिति या विचार का एक अंश
  - Resolve** (noun) – Determination, resolution, purpose दृढ़ निश्चय, संकल्प

13. **Grapple** (with) (verb) – cope with, contend with, confront, fight से जूझना
14. **Hurdle** (noun) – obstacle, hindrance, barrier, obstruction, impediment बाधा
- **Willingness** (noun) – Readiness, will, inclination, desire इच्छा
  - **Brazen** (adjective) – bold and without shame. बेशर्म
  - **Ambition** (noun) – aspiration, intention, goal, aim, objective, object, महत्वाकांक्षा
15. 'Who' के बदले 'which' या 'that' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि 'who' का प्रयोग सामान्यतः 'human beings, God, angel, fairy' के लिए होता है और अन्य प्राणियों या निर्जीव पदार्थ के लिए 'which' या 'that' का।
- 'who' or 'that' shall be used instead of 'who' as 'who' is commonly used for 'humans, God, angel, fairy' and 'what' or 'that' is used for other beings or inanimate terms.
16. (C) **3214**
- Once a rising star within the ruling United Malays National Organisation (UMNO). And then a rebel reformer thrown into prison by his former boss. The story of Anwar Ibrahim is that of power, revolt, incarceration and comeback. In the ups and downs of his long career, Mr. Anwar never gave up on his political activism or faith in his movement, Reformasi (Reform), which has finally taken him to the office that evaded him for over two decades
17. **Resentment** (noun) – Anger, bitterness, animosity, pique, indignation, rancor नाराजगी
- According to the given options only (iii) is contextually correct.
- Because the (i) and (ii) sentences are not giving any meaning and correct sentences should be like
- She took the **unprecedented** step of revealing the truth about the situation.
- This situation is **unprecedented** in 21st-century life.
18. In last week's elections, his coalition Pakatan Harapan (PH, Alliance of Hope), emerged as the largest bloc in Parliament following which Malaysia's King appointed the 75-year-old leader as the Prime Minister.
19. You will have to start taking better care of your body and stop smoking **otherwise** you will die early



# Learn Vocabulary Through Reading Articles

English Madhyam

