

Puncturing ties

The **row** over balloon shows China **is** a **hot-button** issue in U.S. politics

The **shooting down** of a Chinese **surveillance** balloon by the U.S. military **has** served as a **stark** reminder of the **deep distrust** that **characterises** relations between the world's two biggest powers. The **detection** of the balloon last week over Montana **sparked** a **diplomatic** crisis, **leading to** U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken **calling off** a highly **anticipated** visit to China from February 6. **The visit**, which would have been the first by a top U.S. **diplomat** since 2018, **was** the result of a months-long effort to **halt** the **downward spiral** in ties, coming out of the Biden-Xi meet in November at the G-20 Bali **summit**. The **fragility** of that effort **has** been **laid bare** by the **controversy** over the balloon, which has punctured the process of **restoring stability** in relations that have been **marred** by growing **discord**. Beijing has **maintained** that the balloon was "civilian" (**meteorology**), but had **drifted off-course**. It also **slammed** the move to shoot it down as an overreaction. The U.S. has seen the **deployment** of what it called a surveillance balloon, **on the eve of** the Blinken visit, deep into its **airspace** as a **grave provocation** — one, it **pointed out**, that Beijing too would not have tolerated.

U.S. officials have **acknowledged** this was **by no means** the first such surveillance balloon **spotted** over American skies; there was a similar incident under the Trump administration. Balloons were also spotted over Japan in 2020 and 2021, and over India's Andaman Islands last year. All three governments did not take steps to shoot down the balloons, **presumably coming to the conclusion** that the **balloons**, in the age of **intelligence** powered by advanced satellites, **were** not important enough to **warrant** being shot down. New Delhi and Tokyo may now be **prompted** to **reassess** how they handle such **intrusions** in the future. **Beijing**, for its part, **would** do well to **reconsider** the benefits and costs of what appears to be a new, and **provocative**, tool for intelligence-gathering. It is **conceivable** that the Biden administration may have allowed the balloon to quietly drift away **had** it not been spotted in Montana. The Biden administration faced intense **criticism at home** for not shooting down the balloon earlier. **Its response**, including cancelling the Blinken visit, **reflects** how China has become a hot-button issue in U.S. politics. This **development** has **constrained** how a **key** relationship is managed. In 2001, the U.S. and China were able to **dial down** tensions after a **collision** between a U.S. **spy plane** and a Chinese fighter jet over Hainan island in China. Should a similar crisis now arise, particularly **against the charged backdrop** of an **intensifying rivalry**, **muscle-flexing** over Taiwan, and a **heated** domestic **discourse**, **finding** an **off-ramp will** be far more difficult.

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

Vocabulary

1. **Puncture** (verb) – Put an end to, reverse, prick, deflate, को अंत/खत्म कर देना
2. **Ties** (noun) – connection, link, liaison, attachment, association संबंध
3. **Row** (noun) – disagreement, dispute, quarrel, controversy, argument झगड़ा,
4. **Hot-button** (noun) –a subject that is important to people and about which they have strong opinions गर्म (मुद्दा)
5. **Shoot down** (phrasal verb) – bring down an aircraft or missile by shooting at it. गिराना
6. **Surveillance** (noun) –observation, scrutiny, watch, view, inspection निगरानी
7. **Stark** (adjective) – completely clear पुष्ट
8. **Deep** (adjective) –very intense or extreme. गहरा
9. **Distrust** (noun) –Disbelief, suspicion, doubt, mistrust अविश्वास
10. **Characterise** (verb) – describe, distinguish, portray, illustrate चिह्नित करना, वर्णन करना
11. **Detection** (noun) – Discovery, uncovering, exposure खोज
12. **Spark** (verb) – Generate, produce, create, incite, trigger, set off पैदा करना
13. **Diplomatic** (adjective) – involving the management of relationships between countries कूटनीतिक
14. **Lead** (to) (verb) – cause, give rise to, bring about, result in वजह बनना
15. **Call off** (phrasal verb) – cancel, abandon, stop, suspend बंद/ रद्द करना
16. **Anticipated** (adjective) – Awaited, estimated, expected अपेक्षित
17. **Diplomat** (noun) – ambassador, envoy, emissary, consul राजनयिक
18. **Halt** (verb) – stop, come to a halt, come to a stop, come to a standstill रोकना
19. **Downward spiral** (noun) – a situation that is getting worse very quickly, and which is difficult to control
20. **Summit** (noun) – conference, meeting शिखर सम्मेलन
21. **Fragility** (noun) – delicacy, weakness, frailty, infirmity, debility कमजोरी/ नाजुकता
22. **Lay bare** (phrase) – Reveal, explain, show, expose, display, uncover उजागर करना, भेद खोलना

23. **Controversy** (noun) – public discussion and disagreement about something
विवाद
24. **Restore** (verb) – reinstate, put back, replace, bring back, reinstitute बहाल/पुनर्स्थापित करना
25. **Stability** (noun) – permanence, constancy, balance, solidity, firmness
स्थिरता
26. **Mar** (verb) – spoil, ruin, impair, upset, damage बिगाडना/ खराब होना
27. **Discord** (noun) – Conflict, disagreement, dispute, argument कलह
28. **Maintain** (verb) – claim, insist, assert, hold, declare, Argue कहना
29. **Meteorology** (noun) – a science that deals with the atmosphere and its phenomena and especially with weather and weather forecasting.
30. **Drift** (verb) – Float, flow, glide, wander, भटकना
31. **Off-course** (adjective) – in the wrong direction or away from the intended course गलत दिशा में
32. **Slam** (verb) – criticize severely; censure, denounce, condemn कड़ी आलोचना करना।
33. **Deployment** (noun) –placement, deploy, stationing, distribution, disposition तैनाती
34. **On the eve of** (phrase) – the period or day before an important event के ठीक पहले
35. **Airspace** (noun) – the air or sky above a country that is considered to belong to that country: हवाई क्षेत्र
36. **Grave** (adjective) – serious, important, all-important गंभीर
37. **Provocation** (noun) – incitement, irritation, aggravation, stimulus, incentive उकसावा
38. **Point out** (phrasal verb) – indicate, specify, detail, mention, refer to इशारा करना
39. **Acknowledge** (verb) – admit, accept, recognize, concede, confess स्वीकार करना
40. **By no means** (phrase) – not at all; certainly not किसी भी तरह से
41. **Spot** (verb) – notice, see, observe, detect देखना
42. **Presumably** (adverb) – probably, supposedly, likely, presumptively, doubtless संभावित रूप से

43. **Come to the conclusion** (phrase) – to decide (something) after consideration. निष्कर्ष पर आना
44. **Intelligence** (noun) – a government department or other group that gathers information about other countries or enemies, or the information that is gathered. खुफिया जानकारी
45. **Warrant** (verb) – Justify or necessitate (a certain course of action) ज़रूरी बनाना
46. **Prompt** (verb) – induce, provoke, motivate, inspire, stimulate प्रेरित करना
47. **Reassess** (verb) – review, re-evaluate, reconsider, reappraise पुनर्मूल्यांकन करना
48. **Intrusion** (noun) – the action of intruding ; interference, incursion घुसपैठ
49. **Reconsider** (verb) – review, revision, rethink, afterthought, re-examination पुनर्विचार करना
50. **Provocative** (adjective) – annoying, irritating, exasperating, infuriating, provoking उत्तेजक
51. **Conceivable** (adjective) – imaginable, believable, possible बोधगम्य/संभाव्य
52. **Had** (conjunction) – If अगर/ यदि
53. **Criticism** (noun) – censure, condemnation, critique, disapproval आलोचना
54. **At home** (phrase) – In one's own country अपने देश में
55. **Reflect** (verb) – indicate, show, display, demonstrate, disclose, signify दर्शाना
56. **Development** (noun) – event, turn of events, occurrence, happening, circumstance घटनाक्रम
57. **Constrain** (verb) – limit, restrain, confine, restrict, check सीमित करना
58. **Key** (adjective) – main, crucial, essential, prime, major, important, significant महत्वपूर्ण
59. **Dial down** (phrasal verb) – to reduce कम करना
60. **Collision** (noun) – crash, accident, strike, clash टक्कर
61. **Spy plane** (noun) – an aircraft used to carry out surveillance of an enemy country or military formations from a high altitude. जासूसी विमान
62. **Against the backdrop of** (phrase) – in the context of के संदर्भ में
63. **Charged** (adjective) – filled with excitement, tension, or emotion.

64. **Intensifying** (adjective) – Increasing, escalating तीव्र
65. **Rivalry** (noun) – contention, competition, conflict, contest, struggle प्रतिद्वंद्विता
66. **Muscle-flexing** (noun) – a public show of military or political power that is intended to worry an opponent
67. **Heated** (adjective) – Vehement, passionate, angry, furious, fierce गरम
68. **Discourse** (noun) – Speech, Talk, Dialogue, Conversation संभाषण, भाषण
69. **Off-ramp** (noun) – a way out of a situation स्थिति से बाहर जाने का रास्ता

Practice Exercise

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

[Editorial page]

1. **FRAGILITY**

- A. Delicacy
- B. Assassination
- C. Allegation
- D. Contempt

2. **MAR**

- A. Beleaguered
- B. Spoil
- C. Burgeoning
- D. Considerable

3. **INTRUSION**

- A. Incursion
- B. Brazen
- C. Ruling
- D. Unlaundered

4. **Idioms & Phrase**

Their appeals to release the hostages *fell on deaf ears*.

- A. To speak about a particular topic
- B. Appear to be valid
- C. To manage to reach some stage or point of progress.
- D. To be ignored.

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 MEA summoned the Singapore High Commissioner,(D)/ where he had said there has been a decline in political probity in India after Prime Minister Nehru’s tenure.(E)/ Close on the heels of the Government’s sharp summons to the South Korean Ambassador over social media posts by private companies,(F)/ following a speech earlier this week by the Singapore Prime Minister, Lee Hsien Loong, (G)/

(ii) if it is to not “go down that road”.(A)/ must stem any political corruption (B)/ He warned that Singapore (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. They were very (A)/ disciplined and quiet (B)/ when the new teacher (C)/ entered the classroom. (D)/ No Error. (E)
7. The door was (A)/ open but no one (B)/ were there at (C)/ home last night. (D)/ No Error. (E)
8. All those whom (A)/ were at the concert (B)/ could not stop (C)/ praising her performance. (D)/ No Error. (E)
9. Anemia occurs due (A)/ to the deficiency of (B)/ hemoglobin in (C)/ a person's blood. (D)/ No Error. (E)
10. **Find out the misspelt word**
 - A. Wholeheartedly
 - B. Intelligence
 - C. Disconcerting
 - D. Conversation

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

(The Hindu Editorial: A delayed end – Dec 17, 2022)

This beguiling assortment took on another jewel — the Atlas Lions's soaring march in the FIFA World Cup at Doha. **(1)**/ The mixed layers of its African-Arab culture and language besides French colonial history add further gloss to Morocco's charm. **(2)**/ The very mention of Morocco brings to mind a tapestry of images ranging from a shade of the alluring blue of Chefchaouen to the iconic 1940s film Casablanca.**(3)**/ Morocco's dream run, that ended with a 0-2 defeat against France in the semifinal, had all the elements that elevate sport especially the trope of an underdog shredding established hierarchies. **(4)**/Achraf Hakimi's men topped Group F and made it to the knockouts, a **(a)** previously achieved by his countrymen in the 1986 Mexico edition that was coated with Diego Maradona's halo. In the current World Cup, Morocco's giant-killing act deflated Belgium, Spain and Portugal. There were celebrations back home and in Africa, while host Qatar and West Asia saw a **(b)** Arab spirit coursing through the squad. This duality was **(c)** when midfielder Azzedine Ounahi said: "We have entered into history for Africa and even for the Arabs." A tight, at times ugly, defence that refused to be breached except for a **(d)** self-goal lit up Morocco's path and made opponents wary until the French found a way to stay ahead. In a championship that is an **ode(A)** to the genius of Lionel Messi, Morocco's **fairytale(B)** performance has **proved(C)** to be an **exemplary(D)**. The first African nation to qualify for a World Cup semifinal, Morocco along with Senegal, Japan and South Korea showed that the Afro-Asian combine can offer an alternate narrative to football's **rousing** tales centred on South America and Europe. There is also hope nestling within the Moroccan ranks. Hakimi's mother used to be a **(A)**/ help in Spain and his embrace **(B)**/ of her after a game**(C)**/ was high on gratitude **(D)**/.

Fill in the blanks with the most appropriate combinations of words

11. Achraf Hakimi's men topped Group F and made it to the knockouts, a **(a)** previously achieved by his countrymen in the 1986 Mexico edition that was coated with Diego Maradona's halo.

Fill the most appropriate option in (a)

- (i) Deposition
- (ii) Feat

(iii) Calumny

(iv) Malfeasance

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

12. There were celebrations back home and in Africa, while host Qatar and West Asia saw a _____(b)_____ Arab spirit coursing through the squad.

Fill the most appropriate option in (b)

(i) Circumspect

(ii) Mighty

(iii) Kindred

(iv) Stunning

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

13. This duality was _____(c)_____ when midfielder Azzedine Ounahi said: “We have entered into history for Africa and even for the Arabs.”

Fill the most appropriate option in (c)

(i) Nestle

(ii) Recognized

(iii) Acknowledged

(iv) Beckoned

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

14. A tight, at times ugly, defence that refused to be breached except for a _____(d)_____ self-goal lit up Morocco’s path and made opponents wary until the French found a way to stay ahead.

Fill the most appropriate option in (d)

(i) Evident

(ii) Fortress

(iii) Bruising

(iv) Tussle

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.**

There is also hope nestling within the Moroccan ranks. Hakimi’s mother used to be a **(A)**/ help in Spain and his embrace **(B)**/ of her after a game**(C)**/ was high on gratitude **(D)**/.

A. (A)

B. (B)

C. (C)

D. (D)

E. No Error

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

This beguiling assortment took on another jewel — the Atlas Lions’s soaring march in the FIFA World Cup at Doha. **(1)**/ The mixed layers of its African-Arab culture and language besides French colonial history add further gloss to Morocco’s charm. **(2)**/ The very mention of Morocco brings to mind a tapestry of images ranging from a shade of the alluring blue of Chefchaouen to the iconic 1940s film Casablanca.**(3)**/ Morocco’s dream run, that ended with a 0-2 defeat against France in the semifinal, had all the elements that elevate sport especially the trope of an underdog shredding established hierarchies. **(4)**/

- A. 3412
- B. 1243
- 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

ROUSING

- (i) They gave him a **rousing** welcome.
- (ii) He gave a **rousing** speech to the convention.
- (iii) The fire at the bank is being treated as **rousing**.

- 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 a championship that is an **ode(A)** to the genius of Lionel Messi, Morocco’s **fairytale(B)** performance has **proved(C)** to be a **exemplary(D)**.

- A. A – D
- B. B – A
- C. B – D
- 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) Ritika is studying engineering,
- (ii) Her friend is in the United States studying Management.

- A. Likely

- B. Meanwhile
- C. Now that
- D. So that
- E. None of these

20. Fill the appropriate preposition in the given blanks

He is suffering _____ Cancer and is not likely to survive long.

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

Answers

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

Explanations

- Fragility** (noun) – delicacy, weakness, frailty, infirmity, debility कमजोरी/ नाजुकता
 - Assassination** (noun) – murder, killing, homicide, slaughter, execution हत्या
 - Allegation** (noun) – charge, accusation, claim, assertion, declaration आरोप
 - Contempt** (noun) – scorn, disdain, disrespect, shame, disregard अवमानना
- Mar** (verb) – spoil, ruin, impair, upset, damage बिगाडना/ खराब होना
 - Beleaguered** (adjective) – in a very difficult situation. से जूझना
 - Burgeoning** (adjective) – Beginning to grow or increase rapidly; increasing. तेजी से बढ़ते
 - Considerable** (adjective) – Substantial, significant, large, extensive, sizeable काफी
- Intrusion** (noun) –the action of intruding ; interference, incursion घुसपैठ
 - Brazen** (adjective) – bold and without shame. बेशर्म
 - Ruling** (adjective) – governing, in charge, leading, dominant, controlling, सत्तारूढ़
 - Unlaundered** (adjective) – expressed in very direct way साफ़, स्पष्टवक्त
- Fall on deaf ears** (phrase) – to fail to be heard : to be ignored नजरअंदाज किया जाना
- FDGE, CBA**
 Close on the heels of the Government’s sharp summons to the South Korean Ambassador over social media posts by private companies, the MEA summoned the Singapore High Commissioner, following a speech earlier this week by the Singapore Prime Minister, Lee Hsien Loong, where he had said there has been a decline in political probity in India after Prime Minister Nehru’s tenure. He warned that Singapore must stem any political corruption if it is to not “go down that road”.
- (A) ‘Them’ के बदले ‘They’ का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि ‘Them’ का प्रयोग Object के रूप में होता है जबकि ‘They’ का प्रयोग Subject के रूप में, और Part (A) में Verb ‘were’ के लिए Subject चाहिए और Subject का काम ‘They’ करेगा।
 - ‘Them’ will be used instead of ‘They’ because ‘Them’ is used as Object while ‘They’ is used as Subject, and in Part (A) as Verb ‘were’ The subject is needed and ‘they’ will do the work of the subject.
- (C) ‘were’ के बदले ‘was’ का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि No one, Everyone, Someone, Anyone, Nobody, Everybody, Somebody, Anybody ,Nothing, Everything, Something, Anything का प्रयोग यदि वाक्य के Subject के रूप में हो तो Verb हमेशा Singular होता है।

- 'was' will be used instead of 'were' because No one, Everyone, Someone, Anyone, Nobody, Everybody, Somebody, Anybody, Nothing, Everything, Something, Anything is used as Subject of a sentence If yes, then Verb is always Singular
8. (A) 'whom' के बदले 'who' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि 'whom' का प्रयोग Object के रूप में होता है जबकि 'who' का Subject के रूप में, और Part (B) में प्रयुक्त Verb 'were' के लिए Subject का काम 'who' करेगा, न कि 'whom'.
- 'who' will be used instead of 'whom' because 'whom' is used as Object while 'who' is used as Subject, and in Part (B) the Verb 'were' is used For the subject, 'who' will do the work, not 'whom'.
9. (E) No error.
10. **Disconcerting** (adjective) – disturbing, upsetting, confusing, unsettling, discomfiting
चिंताजनक
11. **Feat** (noun) – A notable achievement उपलब्धि
- **Deposition** (noun) – statement, evidence, confession बयान
 - **Calumny** (noun) – defamation, slander, denigration, libel, misrepresentation कलंक, झूठा अभियोग
 - **Malfeasance** (noun) – wrongdoing, crime, misconduct, malefaction भ्रष्टाचार
12. **Kindred** (adjective) – Associated, close, alike, corresponding, akin, similar संबंधी
- **Circumspect** (adjective) – Wary and unwilling to take risks. चौकस, सतर्क
 - **Mighty** (adjective) – Powerful, strong, forceful, potent, great प्रबल
 - **Stunning** (adjective) – remarkable, extraordinary, staggering, incredible शानदार
13. **Acknowledge** (verb) – recognize, admit, accept, concede, confess स्वीकार करना
- **Nestle** (verb) – lie, be situated, be located बसना, रहना
 - **Beckon** (verb) – Signal, sign, indicate संकेत करना
14. **Bruising** (adjective) – Hurting, damaging, injuring, discolouring आहत करने वाला
- **Evident** (adjective) – obvious, apparent, noticeable, conspicuous, perceptible प्रत्यक्ष
 - **Fortress** (noun) – Stronghold, fold, citadel, fortification; defence गढ़
 - **Tussle** (noun) – struggle, fight, scuffle, brawl, battle खींचतान
15. No Error
16. (C) **3214**
- The very mention of Morocco brings to mind a tapestry of images ranging from a shade of the alluring blue of Chefchaouen to the iconic 1940s film Casablanca. The mixed layers of its African-Arab culture and language besides French colonial history add further gloss to

Morocco's charm. This beguiling assortment took on another jewel — the Atlas Lions's soaring march in the FIFA World Cup at Doha. Morocco's dream run, that ended with a 0-2 defeat against France in the semifinal, had all the elements that elevate sport especially the trope of an underdog shredding established hierarchies.

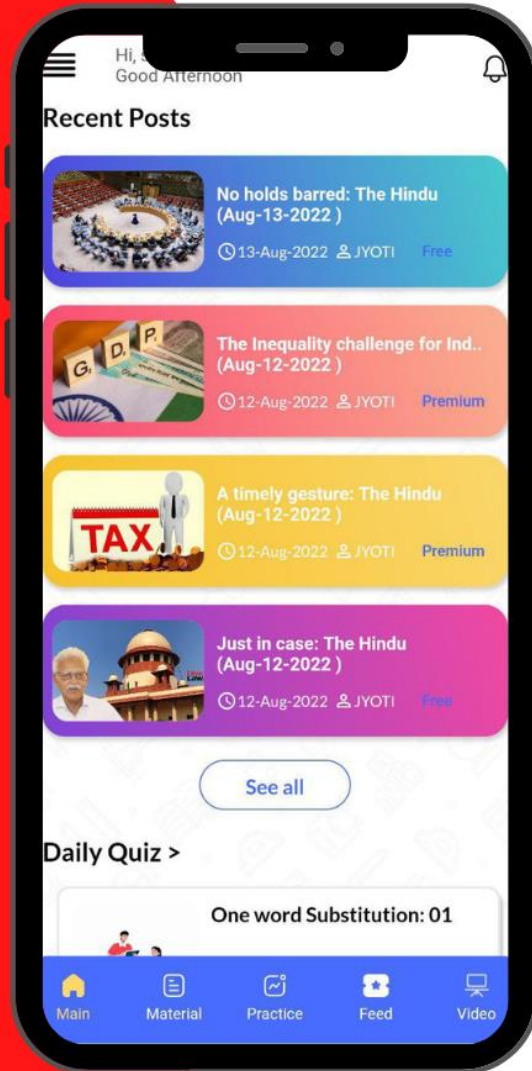
17. **Rousing** (adjective) – Inducing enthusiasm or excitement; stirring: उत्साही

According to the given options only (i) AND (ii) are contextually correct.

Because the (iii) sentence is not giving any meaning and correct sentences should be like
The fire at the bank is being treated as suspicious.

18. In a championship that is an ode to the genius of Lionel Messi, Morocco's exemplary performance has proved to be a fairytale.

19. Ritika is studying engineering, **meanwhile**, her friend is in the United States studying Management.



Learn Vocabulary Through Reading Articles

English Madhyam

