

Bench and bigotry: On advocate Victoria Gowri's appointment as Madras High Court judge

A judge's appointment exposes the opaque Collegium system

The **questionable elevation** of advocate L. Victoria Gowri as a judge of the Madras High Court **epitomises** the **problematic** nature of the system of judicial appointment. It also **portends** a **government-driven project to take over** the Bench through its favourites. **Ms. Gowri**, whose **unabashed prejudice** against minorities became **evident** when her past speeches and interviews **came to light** after her name was approved by the Supreme Court, **was sworn in** at an **oath-taking** ceremony organised **with great dispatch**. Earlier, the Union Law Ministry had processed the recommendation **concerning** a set of candidates with extraordinary speed not **displayed** in other **cases**. It was clear that the government wanted to act **ahead of** any possible **interim** order from the Court, which had agreed to hear **petitions** from a group of lawyers against her appointment. In the process, the government ignored a specific recommendation that **R. John Sathyan**, an advocate whose **candidature** was earlier opposed by the Ministry, **be** appointed first. It is a clear message that the present **regime** would **pick and choose** among those approved by the collegium, in a manner informed by its political **preferences**. **That** the government repeatedly **has its way indicates** that the **conflict** over the appointment process **has** reached a stage in which the collegium is constantly under pressure to **yield to the executive's** position on individuals if any meaningful progress is to be made on the **perennial** process of filling up vacancies.

The **challenge** to Ms. Gowri's appointment **was** on the **ground** that **had** there been effective consultation and relevant information placed before the collegium, her appointment may not have **materialised**. Further, by her speeches **denouncing** Christians and Muslims she had **rendered** herself ineligible to act **without fear or favour**; and that she could not be expected to **dispense** justice without discrimination "on the ground of religion...". However, the Bench rightly rejected the petitions, observing that it cannot **revisit** the **suitability** of any **appointee** after the collegium had decided on it. **The Court** on the judicial side **could** not possibly have **gone into** a choice made by its top three judges. **Indeed**, it made no sense to refer the collegium's decision to a Bench for review. It is **apparent** that the State government too had not **flagged** her extreme views. While political **affiliation** should not disqualify anyone from judicial office, open bigotry **ought to**. It is also a signal failure of the collegium process that a **controversial** proposal could **get past** its **scrutiny**. What is needed is more than reform in the appointment system: perhaps, a process that combines an objective **evaluation** of the candidates' **credentials** with an independent **mechanism** that ensures public scrutiny of their suitability. What is **in place** at present is an opaque, **closed-door consensus-building** that could leave **room** for **unhealthy compromises**.

- **In place** (phrase) – established; in operation स्थापित
- Red/blue coloring of words in the sentence indicates subject verb relationship; where 'red' denotes 'subject' and 'blue' denotes 'verb'

Vocabulary

1. **Bench** (noun) –The judge or judges composing a court. न्यायपीठ
2. **Bigotry** (noun) –prejudice, racism, bias, sectarianism, discrimination, unfairness कट्टरता, पक्षपात
3. **Expose** (verb) –Uncover, bare, show, reveal, display, open up खुलासा करना, उजागर करना
4. **Opaque** (adjective) –obscure, unclear, dense, not clear अपारदर्शी/ अस्पष्ट
5. **Collegium system** (noun) –The collegium system is the one in which the Chief Justice of India and a forum of four senior most judges of the Supreme Court recommend appointments & transfers of judges. There is no mention of the collegium in the Constitution of India.
6. **Questionable** (adjective) – controversial, contentious, open to question संदेहयुक्त
7. **Elevation** (noun) – promotion, upgrading, advancement, advance पदोन्नति
8. **Epitomise** (verb) – to be a highly representative example of का प्रतीक होना
9. **Problematic** (adjective) – difficult, hard, problematical, taxing, troublesome समस्याग्रस्त
10. **Portend** (verb) –Foretell, herald, indicate, presage, threaten पूर्वाभास/संकेत देना
11. **Government-driven** (adjective) – run or powered by Government सरकार द्वारा संचालित
12. **Project** (noun) – scheme, plan, task, mission, परियोजना
13. **Take over** (phrasal verb) – Assume control of something सँभालना
14. **Unabashed** (adjective) – Brazen, shameless, bold, blatant, brash, बेरोकटोक
15. **Prejudice** (noun) – preconceived idea, preconception; bigotry, bias, partisanship पक्षपात; पूर्वधारणा
16. **Evident** (adjective) – obvious, apparent, noticeable, conspicuous, perceptible स्पष्ट
17. **Come to light** (phrase) – become widely known or evident. सामने आना
18. **Swear in** (phrasal verb) –to induct into office by administration of an oath शपथ दिलाना

19. **Oath** (noun) – vow, sworn statement, promise, pledge, avowal शपथ
20. **With dispatch** (phrase) – in a quick and efficient way शीघ्र तरीके से
21. **Concerning** (preposition) – about, regarding, on the subject of, relating to, से संबंधित
22. **Display** (verb) – show, exhibit, demonstrate, reveal दिखाना
23. **Case** (noun) – Circumstance, situation, event, instance, occasion मामला, स्थिति
24. **Ahead of** (phrase) – before, just before से पहले
25. **Interim** (adjective) – provisional, temporary, transitional अन्तरिम, अस्थायी
26. **Petition** (noun) – appeal, request, application, याचिका
27. **Candidature** (noun) – the fact or condition of standing for a position or status; candidacy. उम्मीदवारी
28. **Regime** (noun) – government, administration शासन
29. **Pick and choose** (phrase) – select only the best from a number of alternatives. सावधानी से छाँटना
30. **Preference** (noun) – Favourite, penchant, predilection, fondness, liking पसंद
31. **Have one's way** (phrase) – to do what one wishes to do
32. **Conflict** (noun) – Battle, fight, war, struggle, skirmish, clash, encounter संघर्ष
33. **Yield** (verb) – Surrender, capitulate, submit, relent, admit defeat दबना, मान लेना
34. **Executive** (noun) – The branch of a government responsible for putting decisions or laws into effect कार्यपालिका
35. **Perennial** (adjective) – Recurrent, constant, persistent, continuing बारहमासी, वर्ष-भर रहनेवाला
36. **Ground** (noun) – reason, cause, basis, base, foundation, justification, आधार
37. **Had** (conjunction) – If अगर/ यदि
38. **Materialise** (verb) – happen; to become real or true होना/ अमल में लाना
39. **Denounce** (verb) – condemn, censure, criticize, castigate, attack निंदा करना
40. **Render** (verb) – Cause to become बनाना

41. **Without fear or fervor** (phrase) – in an equal and fair way; impartially
निष्पक्षता से
42. **Dispense** (verb) –give, pass out, hand out, deal out, dole out देना (न्याय)
43. **Revisit** (verb) – reconsider, rethink, reassess फिर से विचार करना
44. **Suitability** (noun) – Appropriateness, aptness, correctness उपयुक्तता
45. **Appointee** (noun) – one who is appointed नियुक्त किया गया व्यक्ति.
46. **Go into** (phrasal verb) – start discussing a subject extensively.
47. **Indeed** (adverb) –actually, certainly, really, in fact, truly वास्तव में
48. **Apparent** (adjective) – obvious, evident, clear, manifest, plain स्पष्ट
49. **Flag** (verb) – Indicate, signal, highlight, mark, signal संकेत करना
50. **Affiliation** (noun) – Association, relationship, connection, attachment, link संबद्धता
51. **Ought to** (modal verb) – should, must करना चाहिए
52. **Controversial** (adjective) – contentious, disputed, contended, at issue, moot विवादित
53. **Get past** (phrase) – To be able to pass an obstacle. पार करना (बाधा, रोड़ा)
54. **Scrutiny** (noun) – Inspection, examination, enquiry जांच
55. **Evaluation** (noun) – Assessment, appraisal, estimation, calculation, estimate मूल्यांकन
56. **Credential** (noun) – A qualification, achievement, quality, or aspect of a person's background, especially when used to indicate their suitability for something
57. **Mechanism** (noun) – procedure, process, system, operation, method तंत्र, क्रियाविधि
58. **Closed-door** (adjective) – private and/or secret. गुप्त
59. **Consensus-building** (noun) – a process that a team can follow to reach agreement सर्वसम्मति बनाना
60. **Room** (noun) – scope, capacity, margin, leeway गुंजाइश
61. **Unhealthy** (adjective) – corrupt, morbid, ghoulish, insalubrious भ्रष्ट
62. **Compromise** (noun) – agreement, understanding, settlement, terms समझौता

Practice Exercise

Direction (Q1 – Q3): Select the best express synonym of the given words [\[Editorial page\]](#)

1. **Bigotry**

- A. Narcissism
- B. Noxious
- C. Intrinsic
- D. Prejudice

2. **Unabashed**

- A. Astute
- B. Brazen
- C. Incongruous
- D. Stoic

3. **Perennial**

- A. Deduce
- B. Axiom
- C. Recurrent
- D. Garrulous

4. **Idioms & Phrase**

The exorbitant prices are explainable *in light of* the facts.

- A. Imminent or likely to happen very soon
- B. Meet the requirements or expectations of
- C. Consider something and deal with it.
- D. Taking (something) into consideration.

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) Dhara Mustard Hybrid-11, (A)/ After years of being in limbo, there is a surge of optimism around DMH-11, or (B)/ a variety developed using genetic engineering techniques by Indian scientists and public funds.(C)/
 - (ii) the apex regulator and an arm of the Environment Ministry(D)/, last week cleared the variety for (E)/ The Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC), (F)/ environmental release.(G)/
- 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. Poverty and unemployment (A)/ is the two (B)/ sides of the (C)/ same coin. (D)/No Error. (E)

7. Children in orphanages (A)/ receive neither (B)/ proper care (C)/ nor protection. (D)/ No Error. (E)
8. Academic system leads (A)/ us to believe that (B)/ we can learn out (C)/ from listening to authorities. (D) / No Error (E).
9. Certain old customs has (A)/ to be completely (B)/ abolished to build (C)/ a healthy society. (D)/ No Error. (E)
10. **Find out the misspelt word**
 - A. Imminent
 - B. Demonstration
 - C. Extrapolate
 - D. Revitalize

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

(The Hindu Editorial: On the edge – Nov 21, 2022)

The missile incident in Poland, in which two people were killed, should serve as a warning: (1)/ the Ukraine conflict could potentially spill over into a wider war between nuclear-armed Russia and NATO. (2)/ The Russian invasion of its neighbouring country and NATO's decision to back Ukraine with military supplies have brought the two sides to an eyeball-to-eyeball situation, with only a spark needed for a conflagration. (3)/ Immediately after the missile exploded inside Polish territory, which is a part of NATO, Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy blamed Russia, calling it an attack on the West's collective security and a significant escalation. (4)/ Russia quickly distanced itself from the incident, but at least for a few hours, the world was on edge amid fears of this incident _____(a)_____ an open war between Russia and NATO. But NATO leaders, including U.S. President Joe Biden, responded firmly and responsibly. Mr. Biden, who was in Bali to attend the G20 meeting, publicly refuted Mr. Zelenskyy's claim, saying it was unlikely that the missile came from Russia, which Polish and NATO authorities confirmed later. What hit Poland was a Russian-made S300 defence missile, most likely fired by Ukraine against a Russian missile, they said. While their _____(b)_____ response avoided a **showdown**, the incident has highlighted the risks of this hair-trigger situation.

Mr. Zelenskyy's comment was irresponsible. His anger towards Russia is justifiable given that his country(A)/ is being bombarded on a daily basis(B)/, but as the President of Ukraine, what he says will have consequences, and he should await for the facts (C) and respond cautiously when it comes to NATO-Russia tensions.(D) Russia should understand that Ukraine is now a _____(c)_____. To overcome its battlefield failures, Russia is now deliberately targeting Ukrainian infrastructure with repeated missile attacks. A _____(d)_____ could turn the nightmare into reality. All stakeholders, primarily Russia which started the war, have the responsibility to put in place the guardrails against escalation. They should turn the diffusion of the Polish crisis into an opportunity for open dialogue. As the U.S. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Mark A. Milley, pointed out, the conflict could enter a frozen stage during winter. Despite Ukraine's territorial gains, it is unlikely its forces will be able to **hold(A)** Russians from all **captured(B)** territories through force, he said, making his case for talks. Mr. Zelenskyy, reportedly under U.S. pressure, changed his earlier **position(C)** that he would not **expel(D)** talks with Mr. Putin. So, there is a small window for de-escalation. Russia must respond with concrete proposals and create conditions for a constructive dialogue.

Fill in the blanks with the most appropriate combinations of words

11. Russia quickly distanced itself from the incident, but at least for a few hours, the world was on edge amid fears of this incident _____(a)_____ an open war between Russia and NATO.

Fill the most appropriate option in (a)

- (i) Bear
- (ii) Triggering
- (iii) Throttle
- (iv) Pose

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

12. While their _____(b)_____ response avoided a showdown, the incident has highlighted the risks of this hair-trigger situation

Fill the most appropriate option in (b)

- (i) Enormous
- (ii) Sober
- (iii) Brutal
- (iv) Abundant

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

13. Russia should understand that Ukraine is now a _____(c)_____.

Fill the most appropriate option in (c)

- (i) Plenty
- (ii) Reckoning
- (iii) Tinderbox
- (iv) Whirlwind

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

14. A _____(d)_____ could turn the nightmare into reality.

Fill the most appropriate option in (d)

- (i) Sucker
- (ii) Handouts
- (iii) Vigour
- (iv) Misfire

- 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.**

His anger towards Russia is justifiable given that his country(A)/ is being bombarded on a daily basis(B)/, but as the President of Ukraine, what he says will have consequences, and he should await for the facts (C) and respond cautiously when it comes to NATO-Russia tensions.(D)

- A. (A)
- B. (B)

- C. (C)
- D. (D)
- E. No Error

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

The missile incident in Poland, in which two people were killed, should serve as a warning: **(1)/** the Ukraine conflict could potentially spill over into a wider war between nuclear-armed Russia and NATO. **(2)/** The Russian invasion of its neighbouring country and NATO's decision to back Ukraine with military supplies have brought the two sides to an eyeball-to-eyeball situation, with only a spark needed for a conflagration. **(3)/** Immediately after the missile exploded inside Polish territory, which is a part of NATO, Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy blamed Russia, calling it an attack on the West's collective security and a significant escalation. **(4)/**

- A. 2341
- B. 1234
- C. 2134
- 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

SHOWDOWN

- (i) In the 1950s, this led to increased pressures for change and an eventual **showdown** between the king and his opposition.
- (ii) For someone who is old and weak, the **showdown** of a broken hip can be serious.
- (iii) Some people think that a **showdown** with the unions is inevitable, even if it brings us near to the brink of civil war.

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

Despite Ukraine's territorial gains, it is unlikely its forces will be able to **hold(A)** Russians from all **captured(B)** territories through force, he said, making his case for talks. Mr. Zelenskyy, reportedly under U.S. pressure, changed his earlier **position(C)** that he would not **expel(D)** talks with Mr. Putin. So, there is a small window for de-escalation.

- 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) Flagship programs for girl’s education are making their mark.
(ii) Literacy rate among the rural girls is low.
- A. Unlike
B. Not only
C. Yet
D. When
E. None of these
20. Fill the appropriate preposition in the given blanks
He glanced _____ the letter in a hurry and handed it back to me.
- A. By
B. Through
C. With
D. Above

Answers

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

Explanations

- Bigotry** (noun) –prejudice, racism, bias, sectarianism, discrimination, unfairness कट्टरता, पक्षपात
 - Narcissism** (noun) - Excessive love of one's body or oneself अहंकार
 - Noxious** (adjective) - Harmful; offensive हानिकारक
 - Intrinsic** (adjective) - Part of the essential nature of something; inherent स्वाभाविक
- Unabashed** (adjective) – Brazen, shameless, bold, blatant, brash, बेरोकटोक
 - Incongruous** (adjective) - Not harmonious; not consistent; not appropriate; not fitting in बेमेल
 - Stoic** (adjective) - Indifferent to pleasure or pain, to joy or grief, to fortune or misfortune उदासीन
 - Astute** (adjective) - Shrewd; keen in judgment चतुर
- Perennial** (adjective) – Recurrent, constant, persistent, continuing बारहमासी, वर्ष-भर रहनेवाला
 - Deduce** (verb) - To conclude from the evidence; to infer परिणाम निकालना
 - Axiom** (noun) - A self-evident rule or truth; a widely accepted saying सिद्धांत, सिद्ध प्रमाण
 - Garrulous** (adjective) - Talkative; chatty बातूनी, वाचाल
- In this light** (Phrase) –In view of, taking into consideration, considering, taking into account को ध्यान में रखते हुए
- BAC, FDEG**
 After years of being in limbo, there is a surge of optimism around DMH-11, or Dhara Mustard Hybrid-11, a variety developed using genetic engineering techniques by Indian scientists and public funds. The Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC), the apex regulator and an arm of the Environment Ministry, last week cleared the variety for environmental release.
- (B) 'is' के बदले 'are' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि वाक्य का Subject 'Poverty and unemployment' Plural है जिसके लिए Plural Verb का प्रयोग होगा।
 - 'are' will be used instead of 'is' because the subject of the sentence is 'Poverty and unemployment' Plural for which Plural Verb will be used.
- (E) No error.

8. (C) 'out' का प्रयोग अनावश्यक है। 'Learn (something) from somebody/ something' का प्रयोग होता है; जैसे-
- i. I have learnt music from Mr. Sinha.
 - Use of 'out' is unnecessary. 'Learn (something) from somebody/ something' is used; like-
 - i. I have learned music from Mr. Sinha.
9. (A) 'has' के बदले 'have' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि वाक्य का Subject 'customs' Plural है जिसके लिए Plural Verb का प्रयोग होगा।
- 'have' will be used instead of 'has' because the subject of the sentence is 'customs' plural for which Plural Verb will be used.
10. **Extrapolate** (verb) – Infer, induce, generalize, reason, deduce, conclude अनुमान करना, निष्कर्ष निकालना
11. **Trigger** (verb) – Initiate, start, prompt, activate, cause, spark off, set off शुरू करना
- **Bear** (verb) – sustain, carry, support, shoulder, uphold, absorb (लागत) वहन करना, सहना
 - **Throttle** (verb) – Suppress, inhibit, hold back, curb, subdue, stifle कम करना, दबाना
 - **Pose** (verb) – constitute, present, create, cause, produce, give rise to, खड़ा करना (चुनौती)
12. **Sober** (adjective) – Serious, sensible, and solemn. शांत, संयमी
- **Enormous** (adjective) – huge, immense, gigantic, tremendous, colossal बहुत बड़ा
 - **Brutal** (adjective) – cruel, savage, vicious, ruthless, barbaric क्रूर
 - **Abundant** (adjective) – plentiful, copious, ample, profuse प्रचुर, विपुल
13. **Tinderbox** (noun) – a situation or place where sudden violence is likely
- **Plenty** (noun) – Abundance, copiousness, bounty, profusion, prosperity बहुत
 - **Reckoning** (noun) – the action or process of calculating or estimating something गणना
 - **Whirlwind** (noun) – Tornado, hurricane, cyclone, twister बवंडर
14. **Misfire** (noun) – a failure of a gun or missile to fire correctly.
- **Sucker** (noun) – a gullible or easily deceived person. भोला, सीधा-सादा, आसानी से धोखा खानेवाला
 - **Handouts** (noun) – Aid, assistance, contribution, help, donation वित्तीय सहायता
 - **Vigour** (noun) – energy, activity, liveliness, life, spryness जोश, बल
15. 'await' का प्रयोग नहीं होगा क्योंकि wait के साथ for आयेगा ना की await क्योंकि 'await' = 'wait for' (के लिए प्रतीक्षा करना) ।
16. (B) 1234

The missile incident in Poland, in which two people were killed, should serve as a warning: the Ukraine conflict could potentially spill over into a wider war between nuclear-armed Russia and NATO. The Russian invasion of its neighbouring country and NATO's decision to back Ukraine with military supplies have brought the two sides to an eyeball-to-eyeball situation, with only a spark needed for a conflagration. Immediately after the missile exploded inside Polish territory, which is a part of NATO, Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy blamed Russia, calling it an attack on the West's collective security and a significant escalation.

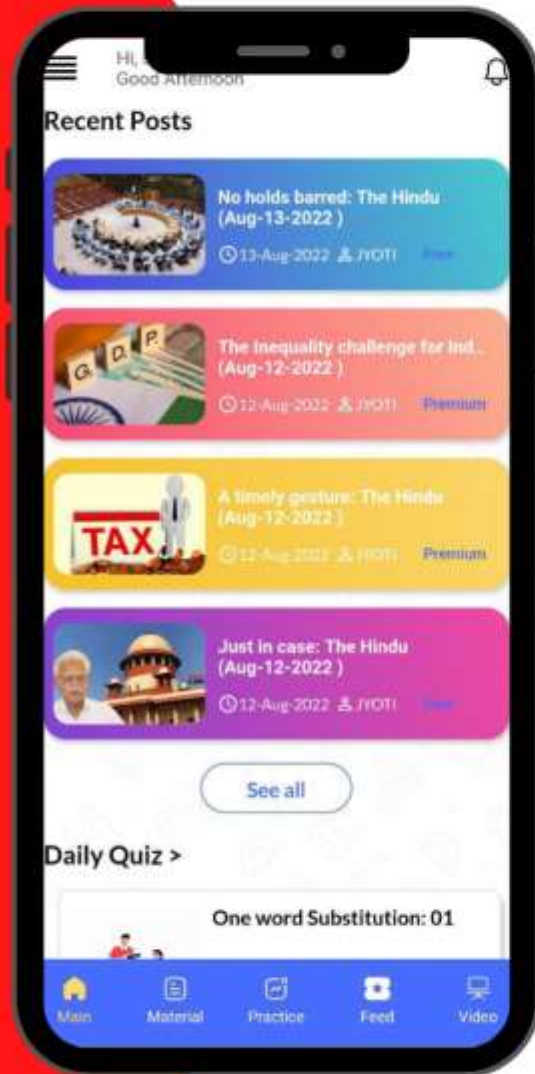
17. **Showdown** (noun) – Fight, confrontation, head-to-head, quarrel, row, conflict आमना-सामना, लड़ाई

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

Because the (ii) sentence is not giving any meaning and correct sentences should be like

For someone who is old and weak, the **consequences** of a broken hip can be serious.

18. Despite Ukraine's territorial gains, it is unlikely its forces will be able to expel Russians from all captured territories through force, he said, making his case for talks. Mr. Zelenskyy, reportedly under U.S. pressure, changed his earlier position that he would not hold talks with Mr. Putin. So, there is a small window for de-escalation.
19. Flagship programs for girl's education are making their mark **yet** literacy rate among the rural girls is low.



Learn Vocabulary Through Reading Articles

English Madhyam

