

Debatable indictment: On the Donald Trump case

Donald Trump's **indictment** will politically **polarise** Americans further

In a dramatic, but not unexpected, **turn of events**, former U.S. President Donald Trump has been **indicted** by a **grand jury** in New York in the case of **hush-money** paid to adult film actor Stormy Daniels in 2016, before the presidential election of that year. While **the indictment**, the first one ever against a former U.S. President, **remains under seal** and the specific charges and the **extent** of evidence remain unclear still, media reports and comments by Mr. Trump's lawyers indicate that the charges could include the fact that Mr. Trump's **erstwhile** attorney Michael Cohen paid \$1,30,000 to Ms. Daniels on the 45th President's behalf, **apparently** to stop her from going public with the story of their **consensual** (and earlier) **extramarital encounter**. Mr. Trump is said to have **reimbursed** the amount to Mr. Cohen after he won the election, which was then **passed off** as legal expenses. **In this regard** the charge in the indictment is expected to be a **falsification** of business records, but that is only a **misdemeanour offence** in New York, not a **felony**. To **prosecute** Mr. Trump for a felony, the **onus** is on Manhattan District Attorney (DA) Alvin Bragg to not only link the **falsified bookkeeping** to Mr. Trump directly but also to show that **the business records** in question **were** falsified to **cover up** an **entirely** different crime. **Speculation** is **rife** that **the crime** that will be **cited** for this charge **will** be a **potential violation** of campaign finance laws — yet, this is where the **prosecution** case appears less **firm**. **Following** Mr. Cohen's **claim** that he had paid Ms. Daniels at Mr. Trump's **behest**, there was a question of whether Mr. Trump would be liable under federal campaign finance laws, which require monies received as campaign donations to be disclosed **transparently** and be subject to specified legal limits. However, a federal investigation into this matter was closed in 2019, which suggests that the **weight** of evidence here **may** not have been **compelling** at the time.

The broader question underlying the indictment **is** whether Democrats are **scoring a self-goal**. While more serious issues that could be potential charges against Mr. Trump are **on the scanner** of the Justice Department, including certain dealings of the Trump Organization, his role in **inciting** the January 6, 2021 **insurrection** and **withholding classified** information after **demitting** office, the Manhattan DA's **reliance** on the hush-money case could **end up** as **blowback** for the Democrats, especially **given** the dangers that it will polarise Americans further and be seen as pure political **partisanship**. Mr. Trump will **of course extract** every **ounce** of **political capital** that he can from what he has described as "political **persecution**" and a "**witch hunt**", and that too will likely not favour Democrats in the 2024 election.

[Practice Exercise]

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

Vocabulary

1. **Debatable** (adjective) – Arguable, dubious, controversial, doubtful, contentious
विवादास्पद
2. **Indictment** (noun) – Accusation, charge, imputation, arraignment, allegation
अभियोग
3. **Polarise** (verb) – Divide, split, segregate, separate, estrange विभाजित करना
4. **Turns of event** (phrase) – Unexpected or surprising developments in a situation or a series of events.
5. **Indict** (verb) – Charge, accuse, impeach, prosecute, arraign अभियोग करना
6. **Grand jury** (noun) – a jury, typically of twenty-three people, selected to examine the validity of an accusation prior to trial
7. **Hush-money** (noun) – Bribe, payoff, extortion money, payola, graft; A sum of money paid to someone to ensure their silence or to prevent the disclosure of sensitive or embarrassing information.
8. **Under seal** (phrase) – Confidential, secret, classified, restricted, protected गुप्त रखना
9. **Extent** (noun) – Degree, scope, magnitude, measure, level परिमाण
10. **Erstwhile** (adjective) – Former, previous, prior, bygone, one-time पूर्व
11. **Apparently** (adverb) – Seemingly, evidently, ostensibly, outwardly, superficially प्रत्यक्षतया
12. **Consensual** (adjective) – Agreeable, accepted, voluntary, mutual, unanimous सहमति-आधारित
13. **Extramarital** (adjective) – Adulterous, illicit, unfaithful, cheating, outside of marriage वैवाहिक बन्धन के बाहर
14. **Encounter** (noun) – Meeting, confrontation, engagement, clash, face-off सामना
15. **Reimburse** (verb) – Refund, repay, recompense, compensate, indemnify प्रतिपूर्ति करना
16. **Pass off** (phrasal verb) – Misrepresent, disguise, pretend, fake, feign बहाना बना कर चलना
17. **In this regard** (phrase) – In this respect, concerning this, on this matter, relating to this इस संदर्भ में
18. **Falsification** (noun) – Fabrication, forgery, misrepresentation, deception, dishonesty जालीकरण
19. **Misdemeanour offense** (noun) – A lesser criminal act, considered less severe than a felony, typically punishable by a fine, probation, or a short term of imprisonment.

20. **Felony** (noun) – Serious crime, major crime, grave offence, criminal act घोर अपराध
21. **Prosecute** (verb) – Bring charges against, indict, arraign, charge, try अभियोग करना
22. **Onus** (noun) – Responsibility, burden, obligation, duty, liability दायित्व
23. **Falsified** (adjective) – Forged, counterfeit, fraudulent, fake, inauthentic नकली
24. **Bookkeeping** (noun) – Accounting, record-keeping, financial recording, ledger maintenance, account management बहीखाता
25. **Cover up** (phrasal verb) – Conceal, hide, mask, obscure, camouflage छुपाना
26. **Entirely** (adverb) – Completely, fully, wholly, totally, utterly बिलकुल
27. **Speculation** (noun) – Conjecture, supposition, guesswork, theorizing, surmise अनुमान
28. **Rife** (adjective) – Widespread, abundant, prevalent, rampant, pervasive व्यापक
29. **Cite** (verb) – Mention, refer to, allude to, quote, point out हवाला देना
30. **Potential** (adjective) – Possible, probable, likely, prospective, latent संभावित
31. **Violation** (noun) – Infringement, breach, transgression, infraction, contravention उल्लंघन
32. **Prosecution** (noun) – Legal proceedings, litigation, lawsuit, legal action अभियोजन
33. **Firm** (adjective) – Resolute, steadfast, unwavering, determined, strong दृढ
34. **Following** (preposition) – After, subsequent to, succeeding, in the wake of के बाद
35. **Claim** (noun) – Assertion, declaration, allegation, statement, contention दावा
36. **Behest** (noun) – Command, order, instruction, directive, demand आदेश
37. **Transparently** (adverb) – Clearly, openly, candidly, honestly, unambiguously पारदर्शी
38. **Weight** (noun) – Importance, significance, influence, substance, gravity वजन
39. **Compelling** (adjective) – Persuasive, convincing, cogent, forceful, powerful ठोस
40. **Underlie** (verb) – Form the basis, be the foundation, be at the root, be the cause बुनियाद रखना
41. **Score a Self-goal** (phrase) – To inadvertently harm one's own interests or objectives, especially while attempting to advance them; similar to scoring an own goal in sports.

42. **On the scanner** (phrase) – Under investigation, under scrutiny, being examined जांच के दायरे में
43. **Incite** (verb) – Provoke, encourage, stimulate, instigate, prompt उत्तेजित करना
44. **Insurrection** (noun) – Rebellion, revolt, uprising, mutiny, riot विद्रोह
45. **Withhold** (verb) – Retain, hold back, keep, reserve, suppress रोक रखना
46. **Classified** (adjective) – Confidential, secret, restricted, privileged, protected गोपनीय
47. **Demit** (verb) – Resign, leave, step down, relinquish, give up त्याग देना
48. **Reliance** (noun) – Dependence, trust, confidence, assurance, faith भरोसा, आसरा
49. **End up** (phrasal verb) – Finish, result, conclude, wind up, terminate अंत में
50. **Blowback** (noun) – Repercussion, backlash, adverse reaction, negative response झटका
51. **Given** (preposition) – Considering, taking into account, in view of, bearing in mind देखते हुए
52. **Partisanship** (noun) – Bias, prejudice, favoritism, partiality, one-sidedness पक्षपात
53. **Of course** (phrase) – Certainly, definitely, unquestionably, assuredly बेशक
54. **Extract** (verb) – Obtain, draw out, derive, elicit, procure निकालना
55. **Ounce** (noun) – Bit, small amount, smidgen, trace, fragment अंश
56. **Political capital** (noun) – The goodwill, influence, or trust that a political figure or party has built up with the public, which they can use to achieve their goals, gain support, or push forward their agenda.
57. **Persecution** (noun) – Oppression, harassment, maltreatment, victimization उत्पीड़न
58. **Witch hunt** (noun) – A campaign or investigation directed against a person or group holding unorthodox or unpopular views, often based on false accusations or irrational fears, and typically characterized by political or personal motivations.

Summary

1. Trump indicted by a grand jury in New York for hush-money case involving Stormy Daniels
2. First indictment ever against a former U.S. President
3. Charges and extent of evidence remain unclear
4. Charges could include falsification of business records, a misdemeanor offense
5. To prosecute for a felony, DA Alvin Bragg must link falsified records to Trump and another crime
6. Potential violation of campaign finance laws may be cited, but prosecution case appears less firm
7. Broader question: Are Democrats scoring a self-goal with this indictment?
8. More serious potential charges against Trump being investigated by the Justice Department
9. Indictment risks further polarization of Americans and perception of political partisanship
10. Trump likely to use the indictment as political capital, possibly hurting Democrats in 2024 election

Practice Exercise

1. **What is the primary charge against former U.S. President Donald Trump in the New York indictment related to Stormy Daniels?** [Editorial Page]
 - A. Inciting insurrection
 - B. Withholding classified information
 - C. Violation of campaign finance laws
 - D. Falsification of business records
2. **Which of the following statements is NOT correct based on the passage?**
 - A. Donald Trump has been indicted by a grand jury in New York in the case of hush-money paid to Stormy Daniels in 2016.
 - B. The indictment is expected to be a felony charge for falsification of business records in New York.
 - C. A potential violation of campaign finance laws might be cited for the charges against Mr. Trump.
 - D. The Manhattan DA's reliance on the hush-money case could potentially result in blowback for the Democrats.
3. **What potential negative outcome for the Democrats is associated with the Manhattan DA's reliance on the hush-money case against Donald Trump?**
 - A. Strengthening Trump's legal defense
 - B. Polarizing Americans further and being perceived as political partisanship
 - C. Undermining the legitimacy of the Justice Department
 - D. Weakening the Democrats' position in the 2024 election
4. **How can the tone of the passage be described?**
 - A. Neutral
 - B. Biased against Donald Trump
 - C. In favor of Donald Trump
 - D. Sensationalist
5. **Which of the following best summarizes the main theme of the passage?**
 - A. The passage is primarily about Donald Trump's extramarital affair with Stormy Daniels.
 - B. The passage focuses on the political consequences for the Democrats in prosecuting Donald Trump.
 - C. The passage discusses the indictment of Donald Trump and the potential implications for the Democrats and American politics.
 - D. The passage exclusively deals with the legal aspects of the Donald Trump case.
6. **What is a synonym for the word "indictment" in the given passage?**
 - A. Accusation
 - B. Praise
 - C. Relief

- D. Agreement
7. **What is a synonym for the word "polarise" in the given passage?**
- A. Unify
B. Divide
C. Compliment
D. Ignore
8. **What is an antonym for the word "dramatic" in the given passage?**
- A. Ordinary
B. Intense
C. Spectacular
D. Gripping
9. **What is an antonym for the word "prosecute" in the given passage?**
- A. Defend
B. Pursue
C. Condemn
D. Charge
10. **Choose the idiom that best describes the situation when the Democrats' reliance on the hush-money case could end up backfiring on them.**
- A. Biting the bullet
B. Out of the frying pan and into the fire
C. Hitting the nail on the head
D. A blessing in disguise
11. **Select the option that can be used as a one-word substitute for the given group of words/phrase**
Persons chosen or elected by other to express their views
- A. Philology
B. Venial
C. Amateur
D. Delegate
12. **Select the option that can be used as a one-word substitute for the given group of words/phrase**
Fit of bad temper or anger
- A. Epigram
B. Tantrum
C. Euphoria
D. Gynecologist
13. **Select the option that can be used as a one-word substitute for the given group of words/phrase**
A person, an animal or a plant that lives, grows or is often found in a particular place

- A. Denizen
- B. Siren
- C. Acrobat
- D. Intrigue

Fill in the blanks with the most appropriate combinations of words

Tweaking guidelines for television channels operating in India, the Union Cabinet has laid down some norms on content as well. In the time of polarising opinions, heated debates and narrow targeting of ideas on television, it said wherever applicable, the channels would have to broadcast content on themes of national importance and socially relevant issues for at least 30 minutes every day. The 'Guidelines for Uplinking and Downlinking of Satellite Television Channels in India, 2022' point out that as airwaves and frequencies are public property and need to be used in the best interest of society, a company with permission to operate in India, _____1_____ foreign channels, will have to air content in the service of the public. The themes that have been picked out include education and spread of literacy, agriculture and rural development, health and family welfare, science and technology, welfare of women and weaker sections of society, protection of environment and of cultural heritage and national integration. These are subjects on which a lot more awareness is necessary. According to a FICCI-EY report, with television subscriptions estimated to add another 42 million by 2025 from 178 million in 2021, on the face of it, the public service broadcast is not a bad idea in a diverse country with myriad issues. The good _____2_____, however, comes with a _____3_____. The guidelines say "the Central Government may, from time to time, issue a general _____4_____ to the channels for telecast of content in national interest, and the channel shall comply with the same". Though the Government has left it to the channels to "appropriately modulate their content to fulfil the obligation", its stated intention to step _____5_____ as and when required may be another way to signal that it will keep a watchful eye on the media.

14. Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank 1.

- A. Hearing
- B. Bearing
- C. Barring
- D. Bargaining

15. Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank 2.

- A. Extent
- B. Maintain
- C. Innocent
- D. Intent

16. Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank 3.

- A. Stipulation
B. Caveat
C. Proviso
D. Summon
17. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank 4.**
A. Advisory
B. Consultative
C. Informative
D. Cautionary
18. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank 5.**
A. Out
B. Over
C. Up
D. In
19. Since the beginning (A)/ of the term, we are spending (B)/ a lot of time on poetry. (C)/ no error (D)
20. Your (A)/ sister cooks well (B), isn't she? (C)/ no error(D)
21. Most of the Indian populations still lives (A)/ in its villages and thus the contribution (B)/ of agriculture to Indian economy (C)/ becomes very important. (D)
22. Catherine's grandfather always (A)/ lost his balance while walking (B)/ and would be found fallen (C)/on the road (D)

Directions (Q23-Q25): In the following questions, the passage/sentence is split into five parts and named P, Q, R, S and T. These five parts are not given in their proper order. Read the sentence/passage and find out which of the five combinations is correct. Then find the correct answer.

23.

- P.** The RBI had, in September, allowed the public sector UCO Bank to open a special rupee "Vostro" account for Russia's Gazprombank.
- Q.** This was to enable payments for imports from Russia to be made in rupees and credited to the said account.
- R.** India's foreign exchange reserves, at \$531.08 billion as on October 28, have dipped from a peak of \$642.02 billion a year ago.
- S.** It isn't surprising, therefore, that the government and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) are seeking to conserve reserves by facilitating international trade in domestic currency, as opposed to the dollar.
- T.** The monies deposited in the same Vostro account could, in turn, be debited for paying Indian exporters to Russia in rupees.

- A. TRSPQ B.RSPQT C.RPSQT D.PQRST
- 24.

- P. A Special Court dealing with cases under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) in Mumbai has made some extraordinarily scathing observations about the way the Enforcement Directorate (ED) functions.
- Q. While granting bail to Sanjay Raut, Shiv Sena (Uddhav Thackeray) MP, the court has termed his arrest not only illegal but also one recorded for “no reason” at all.
- R. The grant of bail and the observations made by Special Judge M.G. Deshpande have galvanised the ED to file an immediate appeal before the Bombay High Court, but the lengthy order contains enough material to substantiate the charge by Opposition parties that central agencies are being utilised to hound political opponents.
- S. The judge has found that the underlying criminal case of cheating concerned another set of people who had committed misdeeds, but they were not arrested.
- T. As far as Mr. Raut and his associate, Pravin Raut, who has also been given bail, were concerned, it was essentially a civil dispute, and there was nothing to show that money involved in their transactions were “proceeds of crime”.
- A. TRSPQ B.RSPQT C.RPSQT D.PQRST
- 25.
- P. PhD thesis is a bid to stem the unhealthy practice of many scholars paying substandard, predatory journals to publish their papers without sufficient review, which has weakened the quality of India’s doctoral education.
- Q. Studies have shown that a majority of doctoral students publish in such journals, rather than go through
- R. The University Grants Commission’s decision to remove the mandatory requirement of getting research papers published in peer-reviewed journals before submitting a
- S. Seen from this angle, the UGC’s move is indeed the right one.
- T. the more time-consuming process of submitting their drafts to reputed journals, awaiting review and revising.
- A. TRSPQ B.RSPQT C.RPSQT D.PQRST

Answers

1. D 2. B 3. B 4. A 5. C 6. A 7. B 8. A 9. A 10. B 11. D 12. B
13. A 14. C 15. D 16. B 17. A 18. D 19. B 20. C 21. A 22. C 23. B 24. D
25. C

[\[Practice Exercise\]](#)

Explanations

1. D. Falsification of business records
Explanation: The primary charge in the indictment is expected to be falsification of business records, relating to hush-money paid to Stormy Daniels in 2016, which was later reimbursed and passed off as legal expenses.
2. The passage states that the charge in the indictment is expected to be a falsification of business records, but that is only a misdemeanor offense in New York, not a felony. To prosecute Mr. Trump for a felony, the Manhattan District Attorney would need to link the falsified bookkeeping to Mr. Trump directly and show that the business records in question were falsified to cover up an entirely different crime.
3. B. Polarizing Americans further and being perceived as political partisanship
Explanation: The Manhattan DA's reliance on the hush-money case could end up as blowback for the Democrats, as it could polarize Americans further and be seen as pure political partisanship. This could potentially harm the Democrats in the 2024 election.
4. The passage discusses the events surrounding the indictment of former U.S. President Donald Trump in a factual manner, providing information about the charges, evidence, and legal aspects of the case. It also explores the potential implications for the Democrats and the possible polarization of Americans without taking a stance in favor or against any of the parties involved.
5. c) The passage discusses the indictment of Donald Trump and the potential implications for the Democrats and American politics.
Explanation: The passage provides an overview of the indictment of former U.S. President Donald Trump, including the charges, legal aspects, and evidence. Additionally, it explores the potential consequences for the Democrats and how the case might polarize American politics further.
6. In the context of the passage, "indictment" refers to the formal charges brought against Donald Trump by a grand jury. The synonym for "indictment" in this context is "accusation" (Option A).
7. In the passage, "polarise" refers to the act of causing people to adopt opposing positions or views. The synonym for "polarise" in this context is "divide" (Option B).
8. In the passage, "dramatic" is used to describe the turn of events in Donald Trump's case. An antonym for "dramatic" would be "ordinary" (Option A), which means something that is not unusual or exceptional.

9. In the passage, "prosecute" refers to the act of bringing legal proceedings against someone. The antonym for "prosecute" in this context is "defend" (Option A), which means to protect or support someone in legal proceedings.
10. The idiom that best describes the situation is "out of the frying pan and into the fire" (Option B). This idiom is used to describe a situation where someone escapes a problem or a difficult situation only to find themselves in an even worse situation. In the passage, it is suggested that the Democrats' focus on the hush-money case could potentially worsen their position, instead of improving it.
- **Biting the bullet** – To face a difficult or unpleasant situation with courage or determination. मज़बूरी को स्वीकार करना
 - **Out of the frying pan and into the fire** – To move from a bad or difficult situation to one that is worse. आसमान से गिरा खजूर पर अटका
 - **Hitting the nail on the head** – To describe exactly what is causing a situation or problem. ऐसी बात कहना जो बिलकुल सही हो
 - **A blessing in disguise** – A situation that seems bad or unlucky at first, but results in something good happening later. दुःख के भेस में सुख
11. **Delegate** – Persons chosen or elected by other to express their views प्रतिनिधि
- **Philology** – Science of study of language भाषाशास्त्र
 - **Venial** – One who can be excused, excusable अमर
 - **Amateur** – Lacking professional skill or expertise शौकिया
12. **Tantrum** – Fit of bad temper or anger नखरे
- **Epigram** – Short poem or saying expressing idea in clever and amusing way विनोदिका
 - **Euphoria** – A strong feeling of happiness उत्साह
 - **Gynecologist** – One who treats female problems प्रसूतिशास्त्री
13. **Denizen** – A person, an animal or a plant that lives, grows or is often found in a particular place निवासी
- **Siren** – A woman who is considered to be alluring or fascinating but also dangerous in some way भौंपू
 - **Acrobat** – One who performs daring gymnastic feat कलाबाज़
 - **Intrigue** – Making of secret plans to do something bad कुचक्र
14. **Barring** (preposition) – except for, with the exception of, excepting को छोड़कर
- **Hearing** (noun) - listening, audition, aural perception सुनना, कान देना

- **Bearing** (noun) - demeanor, comportsment, attitude, manner व्यवहार, रवैया
 - **Bargaining** (noun) - negotiation, haggling, deal-making, trading मोलभाव, सौदा करना
15. **Intent** (noun) – aim, purpose, intention, objective इरादा
- **Extent** - range, scope, stretch, span, reach विस्तार
 - **Maintain** - preserve, uphold, sustain, continue, support बनाए रखना
 - **Innocent** - guiltless, blameless, unblemished, untainted, pure निर्दोष
16. **Caveat** (noun) – warning, caution, admonition, forewarning, stipulation चेतावनी
- **Stipulation** - condition, requirement, prerequisite, शर्त के रूप में
 - **Proviso** - condition, stipulation, qualification, नियम या शर्त
 - **Summon** - call, send for, request, किसी को बुलाना
17. **Advisory** (noun) – a type of advice that is specific and usually important परामर्श
- **Consultative** (adjective) - advisory, counseling, deliberative, collaborative सलाहकार
 - **Informative** (adjective) - enlightening, educational, instructive, illuminating सूचनात्मक
 - **Cautionary** (adjective) - warning, admonitory, deterrent, premonitory सतर्ककारी
18. **Step in** (phrasal verb) – interfere, intervene, get involved, take action हस्तक्षेप करना
19. (B) 'are spending' के बदले 'have spent' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि वाक्य के प्रारंभ में 'Since the beginning' अर्थात् 'Since + Point of Time' का प्रयोग है और since+ Point of Time का प्रयोग होने पर वाक्य सामान्यतः Present Perfect Continuous या Present Perfect में होता है; जैसे-
- a. Since his engagement, he has spent a lot of money on his would be wife.
- 'have spent' will be used instead of 'are spending' because 'Since the beginning' i.e. 'Since + Point of Time' is used and when since + Point of Time is used, the sentence is usually in Present Perfect Continuous or Present Perfect; As-
 - i. Since his engagement, he has spent a lot of money on his would be wife.
20. (C) 'isn't she' के बदले 'doesn't she ?' का प्रयोग होगा, क्योंकि Question Tag के Verb का Tense और इसके पहले प्रयुक्त वाक्य के Verb का Tense समान होता है; जैसे-
- a. She is late, isn't she ?
 - b. She comes late, doesn't she ?
 - c. She came late, didn't she ?
- 'isn't she' will be used instead of 'doesn't she?', because Tense of Verb of Question Tag and Tense of Verb of sentence used before it is same; As-
 - i. She is late, isn't she ?
 - ii. She comes late, doesn't she ?
 - iii. She came late, didn't she ?

21. (A) 'populations' के बदले 'population' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि 'population' जिसका अर्थ है 'आबादी' का Plural नहीं बनाया जाता है।

- 'population' will be used instead of 'populations' because 'population' which means 'all the inhabitants of a particular place.' is not made plural.

22. (C) 'would be found' के बदले 'was found' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि जब past की दो ऐसी घटनाओं का जिक्र हो जिनमें 'कारण' और 'परिणाम' का सम्बन्ध हो तो दोनों घटनाओं के लिए Simple Past का प्रयोग होता है; जैसे-

- He lost his balance and fell down.
- He was guilty, so he was punished.

- 'was found' will be used instead of 'would be found' because when two such events of past are mentioned in which 'cause' and 'result' are related then Simple Past is used for both the events; As-

- He lost his balance and fell down.
- He was guilty, so he was punished.

23. **RSPQT**

India's foreign exchange reserves, at \$531.08 billion as on October 28, have dipped from a peak of \$642.02 billion a year ago. It isn't surprising, therefore, that the government and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) are seeking to conserve reserves by facilitating international trade in domestic currency, as opposed to the dollar. The RBI had, in September, allowed the public sector UCO Bank to open a special rupee "Vostro" account for Russia's Gazprombank. This was to enable payments for imports from Russia to be made in rupees and credited to the said account. The monies deposited in the same Vostro account could, in turn, be debited for paying Indian exporters to Russia in rupees.

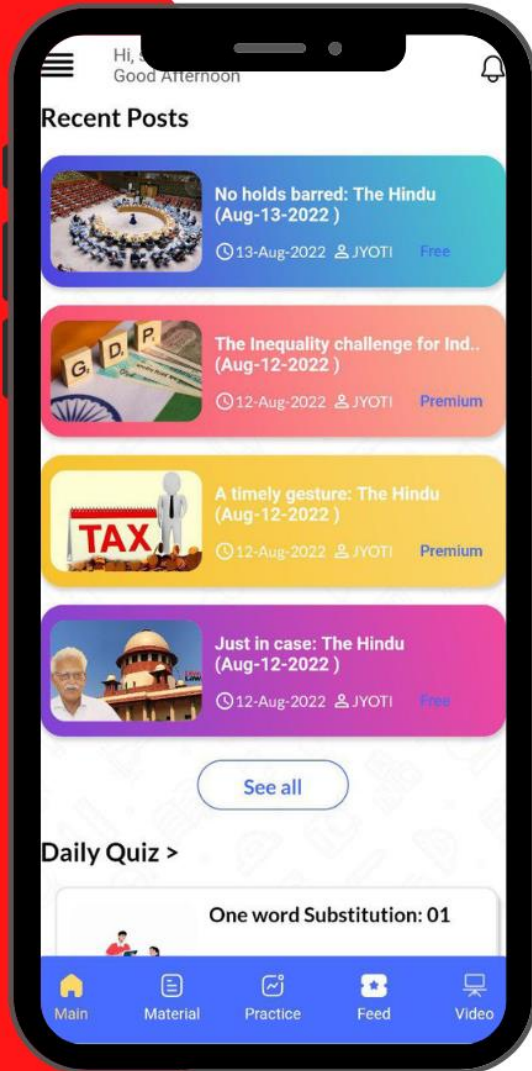
24. **PQRST**

A Special Court dealing with cases under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) in Mumbai has made some extraordinarily scathing observations about the way the Enforcement Directorate (ED) functions. While granting bail to Sanjay Raut, Shiv Sena (Uddhav Thackeray) MP, the court has termed his arrest not only illegal but also one recorded for "no reason" at all. The grant of bail and the observations made by Special Judge M.G. Deshpande have galvanised the ED to file an immediate appeal before the Bombay High Court, but the lengthy order contains enough material to substantiate the charge by Opposition parties that central agencies are being utilised to hound political opponents. The judge has found that the underlying criminal case of cheating concerned another set of people who had committed misdeeds, but they were not arrested. As far as Mr. Raut and his associate, Pravin Raut, who has also been given bail, were concerned, it was essentially a civil dispute, and there was nothing to show that money involved in their transactions were "proceeds of crime".

25. **RPSQT**

The University Grants Commission's decision to remove the mandatory requirement of getting

research papers published in peer-reviewed journals before submitting a PhD thesis is a bid to stem the unhealthy practice of many scholars paying substandard, predatory journals to publish their papers without sufficient review, which has weakened the quality of India's doctoral education. Seen from this angle, the UGC's move is indeed the right one. Studies have shown that a majority of doctoral students publish in such journals, rather than go through the more time-consuming process of submitting their drafts to reputed journals, awaiting review and revising



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