

## Neutral, not passive: On India's stand on the Russia-Ukraine conflict

India should **push** for a **pragmatic** solution to the Ukraine conflict

The **visit** by Ukraine's Deputy Foreign Minister Emine Dzhaparova to India, the first such by a senior government official from the East European country since its **invasion** by Russia, **demonstrates** Kyiv's desire to build tighter **ties** with New Delhi and **seek** its help in resolving the conflict. Earlier, Ukraine had publicly expressed its **displeasure** over India's position on the war. In August last year, Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba had attacked India's energy purchases from Russia, saying it involved "Ukrainian blood", and that Kyiv expected "more practical support" from New Delhi. But Ms. Dzhaparova **sounded** more pragmatic when she said Ukraine did not want to instruct India on its energy and economic ties with other countries, but that her nation was fighting an **existential** battle. The war has left India in a difficult position. Russia is a historical partner which India has deep defence ties with and there is no easy, immediate alternative here. And, Russia's **aggression** is a **naked violation** of Ukraine's **sovereignty, territorial integrity** and international laws. The war has also made India's ties with its **western** partners **complicated** as the **trans-Atlantic powers**, led by the United States, **have** launched an economic war against Russia, from which India and most of the Global South have **stayed away**.

What India has done is to try and **navigate** this **maze** of **geopolitics** through **realpolitik** — it has refused to **condemn** Russia, **maintained** defence and trade ties, as well as expressed its **uneasiness** with the war and **called for** respecting the territorial integrity of all nations. But as the war **drags on**, **this balancing act** could be **interpreted** as **inactiveness**. India is the **chair** of the G-20 and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation and will be **pressed** to do more to show global leadership and help end the war. The conflict has **hurt** not only Europe but also the entire world and there is growing **consensus** among the countries in the Global South that the **hostilities** should **cease at the earliest**. China and Brazil have **sensed** this **urgency** and have **hinted** at **playing a bigger role in brokering** peace. India should not **shy away**. New Delhi has good ties with Moscow, and Ms. Dzhaparova's visit suggests that Kyiv is also looking to India to play a bigger role in **peacemaking**. India's **policy** towards the conflict **is rooted in** its **strategic neutrality**. But neutrality does not mean that it should do nothing, waiting for the conflict to **run its course**. It should **empathise** more **vocally** with the victim, raise the voice and interests of the Global South, and call for **upholding** international laws and sovereignty of all states, while at the same time pushing for a pragmatic and permanent solution to the conflict. **[Practice Ex.]**

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

## Vocabulary

1. **Neutral** (adjective) – impartial, unbiased, nonpartisan, uninvolved, disinterested  
तटस्थ
2. **Passive** (adjective) – unresponsive, inert, submissive, complacent, inactive निष्क्रिय
3. **Stand** (noun) – position, stance, viewpoint, perspective, opinion दृष्टिकोण
4. **Conflict** (noun) – strife, confrontation, hostilities, clash, dispute संघर्ष
5. **Push** (verb) – try, attempt, endeavour, प्रयास करना
6. **Pragmatic** (adjective) – practical, sensible, realistic, down-to-earth, rational व्यावहारिक
7. **Invasion** (noun) – incursion, attack, onslaught, occupation, annexation आक्रमण
8. **Demonstrate** (verb) – show, exhibit, display, manifest, reveal प्रदर्शित करना
9. **Ties** (noun) – connections, relationships, links, associations, bonds संबंध
10. **Displeasure** (noun) – dissatisfaction, discontent, unhappiness, irritation, annoyance असंतोष
11. **Sound** (verb) – appear, seem, look, give the impression, convey लगना
12. **Existential** (adjective) – relating to existence. अस्तित्व संबंधी
13. **Aggression** (noun) – belligerence, hostility, forcefulness, militancy, combativeness  
आक्रामकता
14. **Naked** (adjective) – bare, undisguised, blatant, overt, flagrant खुल्लम-खुल्ला
15. **Violation** (noun) – breach, infringement, contravention, transgression, infraction  
उल्लंघन
16. **Sovereignty** (noun) – authority, autonomy, independence, self-rule, self-government  
संप्रभुता
17. **Territorial** (adjective) – geographical, regional, local, spatial, jurisdictional  
प्रादेशिक
18. **Integrity** (noun) – wholeness, unity, coherence, soundness, uprightness अखंडता
19. **Western** (adjective) – Of or relating to western countries पश्चिमी
20. **Complicated** (adjective) – complex, intricate, convoluted, involved, tangled जटिल
21. **Trans-Atlantic** (adjective) – cross-Atlantic, across the Atlantic, intercontinental पार-अटलांटिक
22. **Stay away** (phrasal verb) – keep away, avoid, shun, eschew, abstain from दूर रहना
23. **Navigate** (verb) – steer, pilot, maneuver, traverse, negotiate संचालन करना

24. **Maze** (noun) – labyrinth, tangle, network, complex, web भूलभुलैया
25. **Geopolitics** (noun) – international politics, foreign affairs, global relations, diplomatic relations भूराजनीति
26. **Realpolitik** (noun) – pragmatism, practical politics, diplomacy, statecraft यथार्थवाद
27. **Condemn** (verb) – denounce, criticize, censure, rebuke, reprimand निंदा करना
28. **Maintain** (verb) – uphold, preserve, sustain, continue, support बनाए रखना
29. **Uneasiness** (noun) – disquiet, anxiety, discomfort, apprehension, concern बेचैनी
30. **Call for** (phrasal verb) – demand, require, necessitate, entail, मांग करना
31. **Drag on** (phrasal verb) – prolong, continue, extend, protract, draw out लंबा चलना
32. **Balancing act** (noun) –
33. **Interpret** (verb) – understand, construe, decipher, explain, make sense of समझना
34. **Inactiveness** (noun) – passivity, idleness, inactivity, inertia, stagnation निष्क्रियता
35. **Chair** (noun) – head, leader, presiding officer, moderator, facilitator अध्यक्ष
36. **Pressed** (adjective) – urged, pressured, pushed, compelled, obligated दबाव डालना
37. **Hurt** (verb) – harm, damage, injure, wound, impair चोट पहुंचाना
38. **Consensus** (noun) – agreement, concurrence, harmony, unanimity, accord सहमति
39. **Hostility** (noun) – animosity, antagonism, aggression, enmity, conflict शत्रुता
40. **Cease** (verb) – stop, end, terminate, halt, discontinue बंद करना
41. **At the earliest** (phrase) – as soon as possible, promptly, without delay, immediately जल्द से जल्द
42. **Sense** (verb) – detect, perceive, discern, notice, recognize महसूस करना
43. **Urgency** (noun) – pressing need, exigency, criticalness, importance, priority अत्यावश्यकता
44. **Hint** (at) (verb) – suggest, imply, indicate, allude to, insinuate संकेत करना
45. **Play a role in** (phrase) – contribute to, participate in, be involved in, have a hand in, be a factor in भूमिका निभाना
46. **Broker** (verb) – negotiate, arrange, mediate, facilitate, orchestrate मध्यस्थता करना
47. **Shy away** (phrasal verb) – avoid, evade, eschew, dodge, elude टाल मटोल करना

48. **Peacemaking** (noun) – reconciliation, peacekeeping, mediation, negotiation, diplomacy शान्ति स्थापना
49. (be) **Rooted** (in) (adjective) – based, grounded, established, founded, originating जमा हुआ
50. **Strategic** (adjective) – planned, calculated, deliberate, tactical, methodical सामरिक
51. **Neutrality** (noun) – impartiality, nonalignment, nonpartisanship, objectivity, even-handedness निष्पक्षता
52. **Run its course** (phrase) – take its natural course, proceed, unfold, develop, evolve अपने प्राकृतिक प्रक्रम का अनुसरण करना
53. **Empathise** (verb) – sympathize, understand, identify with, relate to, feel for सहानुभूति प्रकट करना
54. **Vocally** (adverb) – audibly, loudly, outspokenly, expressively, articulately स्पष्टता से
55. **Uphold** (verb) – support, maintain, defend, sustain, endorse समर्थन करना

## Summary of the Editorial

1. Ukraine seeks to build tighter ties with India and requests its help in resolving the Russia-Ukraine conflict.
2. India faces a difficult position due to its deep defense ties with Russia and concerns over the violation of Ukraine's sovereignty.
3. India has navigated the situation through realpolitik, maintaining defense and trade ties with Russia while expressing uneasiness with the war.
4. As the war continues, India's balancing act could be seen as inaction, leading to pressure on India to show global leadership and help end the war.
5. India holds chair positions in the G-20 and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, giving it a platform to influence the situation.
6. China and Brazil have shown interest in playing a larger role in brokering peace, and India should not shy away from doing the same.
7. India's strategic neutrality should involve empathizing with the victim, representing the interests of the Global South, and upholding international laws and sovereignty.
8. India must push for a pragmatic and permanent solution to the conflict while maintaining its relationships with both Russia and Ukraine.

## Practice Exercise

1. **Based on the passage, what challenge does the Russia-Ukraine conflict pose for India's international relations?** Editorial Page
  - A. It jeopardizes India's relationship with its historical partner, Russia.
  - B. It causes tension between India and Ukraine due to their differing stances on the war.
  - C. It complicates India's ties with western partners, such as the United States.
  - D. It forces India to choose between its energy and economic ties with other countries.
  - E. All of the above
2. **What should India do to show global leadership and help end the war, according to the passage?**
  - A. Condemn Russia and break all trade ties
  - B. Maintain strategic neutrality and do nothing
  - C. Empathise more vocally with the victim, raise the voice and interests of the Global South, and call for upholding international laws and sovereignty of all states
  - D. Support China and Brazil's efforts to broker peace
  - E. Focus on chairing the G-20 and Shanghai Cooperation Organisation without taking any action
3. Which of the following statements about India's stance on a particular conflict is **Correct**?
  - A. India has refused to condemn Russia and maintained defence and trade ties.
  - B. India's balancing act is being interpreted as inactiveness by some.
  - C. India has actively pushed for an immediate end to the conflict.
  - D. China and Brazil have hinted at playing a bigger role in brokering peace.
4. **What is the tone of the passage regarding India's stand on the Russia-Ukraine conflict?**
  - A. Approving
  - B. Disapproving
  - C. Critical
  - D. Neutral
5. **What does the passage mainly suggest for India's role in the Russia-Ukraine conflict?**
  - A. India should sever ties with Russia to support Ukraine.
  - B. India should maintain its current stance without taking any further action.
  - C. India should play a more active role in finding a pragmatic solution to the conflict.
  - D. India should prioritize its own interests and avoid getting involved in the conflict.
6. Which of the following best describes the idiom "**run its course**" in the context of the editorial?
  - A. Allow events to unfold without interference
  - B. To complete a process quickly
  - C. To take immediate action
  - D. To actively participate in a conflict
7. What is a synonym for "**pragmatic**" in the context of the passage?
  - A. Theoretical
  - B. Impractical
  - C. Realistic

- D. Idealistic
8. What is a synonym for "realpolitik" as used in the passage?
- A. Utopianism
  - B. Practical politics
  - C. Escapism
  - D. Dogmatism
9. What is an antonym for "uneasiness" in the context of the passage?
- A. Discomfort
  - B. Distress
  - C. Anxiety
  - D. Comfort
10. What is an antonym for the word "aggression" as used in the context of the passage?
- A. Passivity
  - B. Violence
  - C. Cooperation
  - D. Hostility
11. **Arrange the following sentences to form a coherent paragraph**
- P. A range of inane controversies could have easily distracted someone less mentally tough.
  - Q. But Sania kept tennis front and centre.
  - R. That she would back up that promise with sustained performance over 18 long years on the Tour, winning a bunch of doubles Slams, and keep India in the elite tennis picture, as in her final Grand Slam outing at the Australian Open, has been a revelation
  - S. That Sania Mirza was going to be a phenomenon wasn't in doubt since the time she emerged as a talented teen star from Hyderabad
- A. QSRP                  B.PQRS                  C.SRPQ                  D. RPSQ
12. **Arrange the following sentences to form a coherent paragraph**
- P. The Kishenganga was constructed after the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague ruled in India's favour.
  - Q. India's January 25 notice to Islamabad seeking modification of the 1960 Indus Waters Treaty is the fallout of a longstanding dispute over two hydroelectric power projects on the western rivers — the fully operational Kishenganga on the Jhelum, and Ratle on the Chenab.
  - R. Under the treaty, along with the Indus, these two western rivers were allotted to Pakistan for its unrestricted use.
  - S. India could use the waters of these rivers for "non-consumptive use", including run-of-the river hydel projects.
- A. PQSR                  B.QRSP                  C.RPQS                  D. QRPS
13. **Arrange the following sentences to form a coherent paragraph**
- P. Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi's India visit is his third since he took over the reins of his country in 2013 in the chaotic aftermath of the Arab Spring revolution in his country

- Q. He participated in the India-Africa summit in Delhi in 2015, and the next year, came on a state visit during which,
- R. in keeping with the long and historic friendship between the two countries, there was a joint statement outlining the elements of a “new partnership for a new era”
- S. This time, Sisi, who was chief guest at the Republic Day parade, and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, elevated the pillars of the bilateral relationship to a “strategic partnership”
- A. PQRS                      B.PQSR                      C.RPQS                      D. RPSQ

**14. Arrange the following sentences to form a coherent paragraph**

- P. Realisations of creditors have been lower than expectations, and the strict timelines prescribed in the Code for resolving cases have not been adhered to
- Q. According to the most recent data, the total realisable value in cases resolved till September 2022 stood at only 30.8 per cent of the admitted claims.
- R. However, despite its promise, the IBC, in its functioning, has fallen short of expectations.
- S. The introduction of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) in 2016 brought about a structural change in the resolution architecture in the country.
- A. RQSP                      B.PQRS                      C.SRPQ                      D. PSQR

**15. Arrange the following sentences to form a coherent paragraph**

- P. After the handshakes and greetings, all eyes turn to the table where a sunshine-yellow lemon cake awaits
- Q. It’s the middle of the week.
- R. At the office of a firm that prides itself on keeping up with market trends, workers are gulping down their lunch, their eyes fixed on computer terminals.
- S. One of them springs up from her chair and announces that it’s a teammate’s birthday, there is cake in the common room.
- A. QSRP                      B.QRSP                      C.SRPQ                      D. RPSQ

**Comprehension**

The Reserve Bank of India’s decision to raise its benchmark policy rate yet again, albeit by a smaller quarter percentage point, reflects a welcome \_\_\_\_\_1\_\_\_\_\_ in staying committed to ensuring durable price stability. Given that the Monetary Policy Committee’s primary mandate is to steer retail inflation towards a 4% target, and that core price gains have stayed stuck above or almost at 6% for 20 months, the rate setting panel voted by a 4-2 majority to continue tightening policy. Governor Shaktikanta Das emphasised the significance of the MPC’s \_\_\_\_\_2\_\_\_\_\_ focus on inflation when he noted that medium-term growth \_\_\_\_\_3\_\_\_\_\_ would be best strengthened by ‘keeping inflation expectations \_\_\_\_\_4\_\_\_\_\_ and breaking the persistence of core inflation’. That inflation remains the key risk to the growth outlook, notwithstanding the easing in the headline print for retail price gains over November and December, was stressed by the MPC. The panel pointed to the deflation in vegetable prices in end 2022 and cautioned that this trend could likely \_\_\_\_\_5\_\_\_\_\_ as summer approaches and prices harden.

**16. Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank 1.**



- A. Debate
  - B. Practice
  - C. Resolve
  - D. Grievance
17. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank 2.**
- A. Intensifying
  - B. Unwavering
  - C. Glaring
  - D. Tottering
18. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank 3.**
- A. Conduct
  - B. Prospects
  - C. Conflict
  - D. Clamour
19. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank 4.**
- A. Anchored
  - B. Staggered
  - C. Accumulated
  - D. Prescribed
20. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank 5.**
- A. Violate
  - B. Terminate
  - C. Perpetrate
  - D. Dissipate

**Answers**

1. E    2.C    3.C    4. D    5. C    6.A    7. C    8.B    9.D    10.C    11. C

12. B    13.A    14.C    15. B    16.C    17.B    18.B    19.A    20.C

[\[Practice Exercise\]](#)**Explanations**

1. E. All of the above.

Explanation: The passage highlights the various challenges that the Russia-Ukraine conflict poses for India's international relations. It mentions that the war puts India in a difficult position regarding its deep defense ties with Russia, a historical partner. It also describes the tension between India and Ukraine due to their differing stances on the war and India's energy purchases from Russia. Additionally, the conflict complicates India's ties with its western partners, such as the United States, as these countries have launched an economic war against Russia, which India and most of the Global South have stayed away from.

2. C) Empathise more vocally with the victim, raise the voice and interests of the Global South, and call for upholding international laws and sovereignty of all states

Explanation: The passage emphasizes that India should not shy away from playing a bigger role in resolving the conflict. It suggests that India should empathize more vocally with the victim, raise the voice and interests of the Global South, and call for upholding international laws and sovereignty of all states, while also pushing for a pragmatic and permanent solution to the conflict. This course of action would demonstrate India's global leadership and help end the war, as opposed to the other options, which do not align with the recommendations in the passage.

3. C)

Explanation: The passage does not suggest that India has actively pushed for an immediate end to the conflict. Instead, it has maintained a strategic neutrality and has not explicitly condemned any party involved in the conflict. The passage implies that India should be more proactive in empathizing with the victim, raising the voice and interests of the Global South, and pushing for a pragmatic and permanent solution to the conflict.

4. d) Neutral

Explanation: The tone of the passage is neutral, as it discusses India's stand on the Russia-Ukraine conflict without taking sides or expressing a strong approval or disapproval. The passage presents the complexities and challenges that India faces in navigating the situation, while urging it to take a more proactive role

5. c) India should play a more active role in finding a pragmatic solution to the conflict.

Explanation: The main theme of the passage is that India should push for a pragmatic solution to the Ukraine conflict, using its strategic neutrality and good ties with Moscow. The passage suggests that India should empathize with the victim, raise the voice and interests of the Global South, and call for upholding international laws and sovereignty of all states, while pushing for a pragmatic and permanent solution to the conflict.

6. A) Allow events to unfold without interference

**Run its course** (phrase) – take its natural course, proceed, unfold, develop, evolve अपने प्राकृतिक प्रक्रम का अनुसरण करना

Explanation: In the context of the editorial, the phrase "run its course" means to allow the conflict between Russia and Ukraine to continue without intervention. The author argues that while India maintains strategic neutrality, it should not simply wait for the conflict to run its course, but instead take a more proactive approach in supporting the victim, upholding international laws and sovereignty, and pushing for a pragmatic and permanent solution to the conflict.

7. Realistic

**Pragmatic** (adjective) – practical, sensible, realistic, down-to-earth, rational व्यावहारिक

Explanation: In the context of the passage, "**pragmatic**" refers to a practical and realistic approach to solving the Ukraine conflict. The passage mentions that India should push for a pragmatic solution to the conflict, emphasizing the need for a practical and real-world solution.

8. B. Practical politics

**Realpolitik** (noun) – pragmatism, practical politics, diplomacy, statecraft यथार्थवाद

Explanation: "**Realpolitik**" refers to a pragmatic, practical, and often unsentimental approach to politics, prioritizing national interests and power. In the passage, India is trying to navigate the maze of geopolitics through realpolitik, meaning they are using practical politics to deal with the situation.

9. D. Comfort

**Uneasiness** (noun) – disquiet, anxiety, discomfort, apprehension, concern बेचैनी

Explanation: In the context of the passage, "uneasiness" refers to India's discomfort or concern with the war in Ukraine. An antonym for "uneasiness" would be "comfort," which means a state of being free from worry or discomfort.

10. C) Cooperation

**Aggression** (noun) – belligerence, hostility, forcefulness, militancy, combativeness आक्रामकता

Explanation: In the context of the passage, "**aggression**" refers to Russia's violation of Ukraine's sovereignty, territorial integrity, and international laws. The antonym for "aggression" in this context would be "cooperation", which implies working together peacefully and respecting each other's rights and boundaries.

11. SRPQ

That Sania Mirza was going to be a phenomenon wasn't in doubt since the time she emerged as a talented teen star from Hyderabad. That she would back up that promise with sustained performance over 18 long years on the Tour, winning a bunch of doubles Slams, and keep India in the elite tennis picture, as in her final Grand Slam outing at the Australian Open, has

been a revelation. A range of inane controversies could have easily distracted someone less mentally tough. But Sania kept tennis front and centre.

#### 12. QRSP

India's January 25 notice to Islamabad seeking modification of the 1960 Indus Waters Treaty is the fallout of a longstanding dispute over two hydroelectric power projects on the western rivers — the fully operational Kishenganga on the Jhelum, and Ratle on the Chenab. Under the treaty, along with the Indus, these two western rivers were allotted to Pakistan for its unrestricted use. India could use the waters of these rivers for “non-consumptive use”, including run-of-the river hydel projects. The Kishenganga was constructed after the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague ruled in India's favour.

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Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi's India visit is his third since he took over the reins of his country in 2013 in the chaotic aftermath of the Arab Spring revolution in his country. He participated in the India-Africa summit in Delhi in 2015, and the next year, came on a state visit during which, in keeping with the long and historic friendship between the two countries, there was a joint statement outlining the elements of a “new partnership for a new era”. This time, Sisi, who was chief guest at the Republic Day parade, and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, elevated the pillars of the bilateral relationship to a “strategic partnership”

#### 14. SRPQ

The introduction of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) in 2016 brought about a structural change in the resolution architecture in the country. However, despite its promise, the IBC, in its functioning, has fallen short of expectations. Realisations of creditors have been lower than expectations, and the strict timelines prescribed in the Code for resolving cases have not been adhered to. According to the most recent data, the total realisable value in cases resolved till September 2022 stood at only 30.8 per cent of the admitted claims.

#### 15. QRSP

It's the middle of the week. At the office of a firm that prides itself on keeping up with market trends, workers are gulping down their lunch, their eyes fixed on computer terminals. One of them springs up from her chair and announces that it's a teammate's birthday, there is cake in the common room. After the handshakes and greetings, all eyes turn to the table where a sunshine-yellow lemon cake awaits.

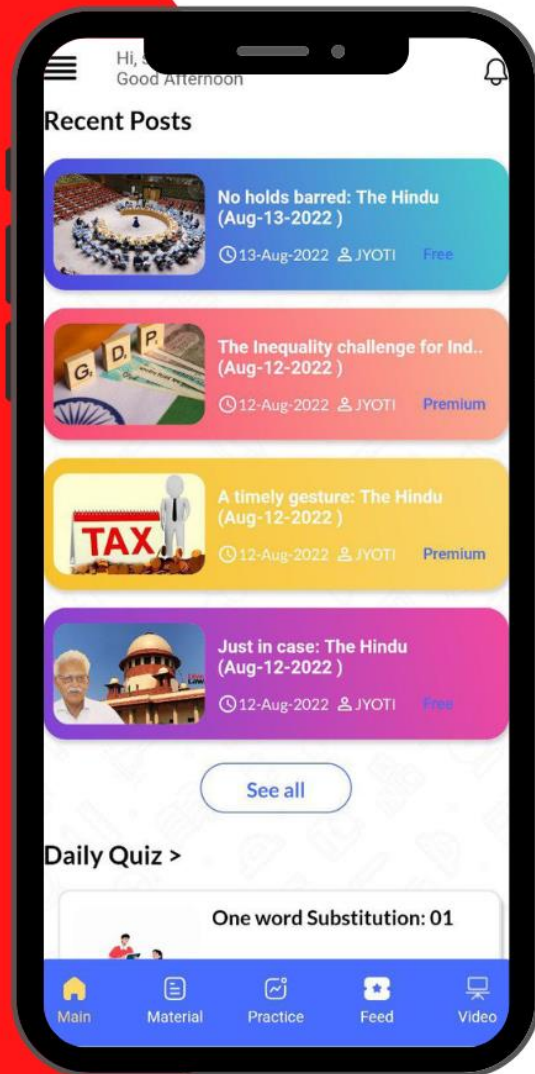
#### 16. Resolve (noun) – Determination, resolution, purpose दृढ़ निश्चय, संकल्प

- **Practice** (noun) – Habit, custom, tradition प्रथा, कार्य
- **Debate** (noun) – Discussion, argument, dispute, deliberation बहस
- **Grievance** (noun) – complaint, criticism, objection, protestation शिकायत

#### 17. Unwavering (adjective) – Firm, staunch, steady or resolute. अटूट

- **Intensifying** (adjective) – Increasing, escalating तीव्र/ तेजी

- **Glaring** (adjective) – obvious, evident, clear, blatant सुस्पष्ट
  - **Tottering** (adjective) – unstable, unsteady, wobbly, shaky अस्थिर
18. **Prospect** (noun) – outlook, expectation, view, perspective, possibility संभावना
- **Conduct** (noun) – Behaviour, demeanour, manner व्यवहार
  - **Conflict** (noun) – dispute, disagreement, discord, friction संघर्ष/टकराव
  - **Clamour** (noun) – demand, request, appeal मांग
19. **Anchored** (adjective) – fastened, fixed, secured, affixed, स्थिर
- **Staggered** (adjective) – gradual, phased, intermittent चरणबद्ध
  - **Accumulated** (adjective) – Accrued, amassed, gathered, added, build up संचित
  - **Prescribed** (adjective) –stipulated, mandated, recommended, ordered निर्धारित
20. **Dissipate** (verb) – Disappear, vanish, dissolve, गायब हो जाना
- **Violate** (verb) – breach, infringe, rape, break, transgress उल्लंघन करना
  - **Terminate** (verb) – end, finish, conclude, stop, cease समाप्त करना
  - **Perpetrate** (verb) – commit, carry out, perform, execute, do (अपराध) अंजाम देना



# Learn Vocabulary Through Reading Articles

English Madhyam

