

Exam failures run deeper than Telegram

The government's **decision** to temporarily block Telegram ahead of the re-conducted National Eligibility Cum Entrance Test (NEET) to medical institutions **is** an **ill-thought-out** move. Investigators **probing** the May 3 exam **fiasco** believe that the messaging app was used to circulate leaked papers. The **National Testing Agency (NTA)** — which conducts NEET and other important examinations — **has** argued that fraudsters were **exploiting** the platform to spread **misinformation**. Acting on its recommendation, the government has **directed** Telegram to disable message-editing features **allegedly** used to create fake evidence of paper leaks. The NTA's argument may well be valid. **Identifying** where the **illicit** papers appeared **is** important. But the more **crucial** question is how this **subterfuge escaped scrutiny** in the first place. As investigations into last month's leak have indicated, the **roots** of the illegal activity **lie** in the chain of custody which **governs** the setting, printing, transportation and distribution of the NEET papers. **Proscribing** one platform **will** not **eliminate** these **underlying vulnerabilities**.

In the aftermath of last month's exam cancellation, the government has taken some meaningful steps. It has **strengthened** coordination between the NTA, cybercrime units, and law **enforcement** agencies. Investigative agencies have **widened** inquiries into the paper mafia, and law **enforcers** have **clamped down on** networks allegedly involved in circulating leaked materials. These targeted actions need to be expanded and **given** institutional **heft**. **In contrast**, the **ban** on Telegram **is** a **blunt** measure that could **inconvenience** a large section of people. With an estimated 150 million users, the platform is second only to Meta's WhatsApp in reach. The **stringent measures** against the messaging app, therefore, **speak** of executive **overreach** and **go** against the principles of **proportionality**.

In the past two **decades**, repeated **instances** of **malpractice** **have** raised questions over the examination system's **integrity**. Last month's failure was the second controversy over the medical entrance test in two years. The Radhakrishnan Committee, appointed by the government on the SC's nudge — after the 2024 examinations were **roiled** by allegations of irregularities — recommended **strengthening** the NTA's **accountability mechanism**. The agency's **use** of private vendors **has drawn criticism** from parliamentary panels. Experts are **unanimous** about the importance of **sustained vigilance** in making the system **foolproof**. As the Radhakrishnan Committee **underlined**, **safeguarding** the **sanctity** of examinations should be a continuous process. The government's **imperative**, in other words, should not just **be** to secure the NEET examination on June 21, but all entrance and job application tests. By picking on Telegram, it appears to be **lapsing** into a familiar failing — treating the NEET cancellation as an **isolated** case, and not a symptom of a broken system. **[Practice Exercise]**

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

Vocabulary

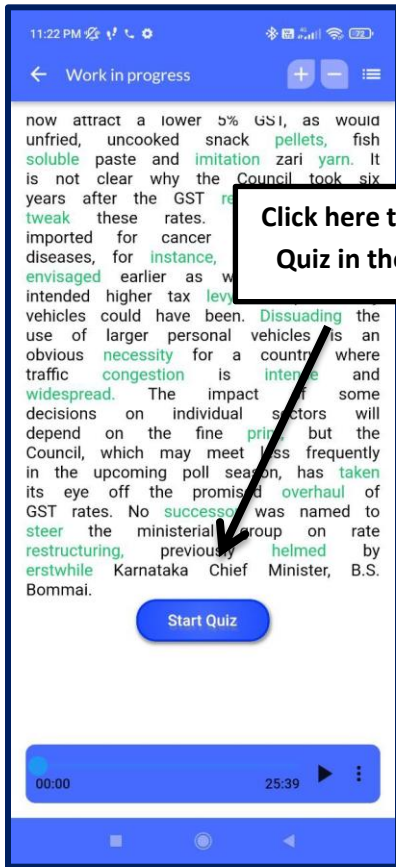
1. **Ill-thought-out** (adjective) - unwise, poorly planned, injudicious, rash, hasty. बिना सोचे-समझे किया गया
2. **Probe** (verb) - investigate, examine, inquire, scrutinize, explore. जांच करना
3. **Fiasco** (noun) - disaster, catastrophe, failure, debacle, mess. विफलता (असफलता)
4. **Exploit** (verb) - misuse, abuse, manipulate, take advantage of, utilize. शोषण करना (लाभ उठाना)
5. **Misinformation** (noun) - disinformation, falsehoods, deception, propaganda, rumors. गलत जानकारी
6. **Direct** (verb) - order, command, instruct, mandate, dictate. निर्देशित करना
7. **Allegedly** (adverb) - supposedly, reportedly, ostensibly, purportedly, claimed. कथित तौर पर
8. **Illicit** (adjective) - illegal, unlawful, banned, prohibited, forbidden. अवैध
9. **Crucial** (adjective) - critical, vital, essential, pivotal, decisive. महत्वपूर्ण
10. **Subterfuge** (noun) - deception, trickery, deceit, artifice, ploy. छल-कपट
11. **Escape** (verb) - evade, avoid, elude, dodge, bypass. बच निकलना
12. **Scrutiny** (noun) - inspection, examination, analysis, survey, investigation. सूक्ष्म जांच
13. **Root** (noun) - origin, source, cause, basis, foundation. जड़ (मूल कारण)
14. **Lie** (verb) - exist, reside, be found, dwell, remain. निहित होना
15. **Govern** (verb) - regulate, control, manage, oversee, direct. नियंत्रित करना
16. **Proscribe** (verb) - forbid, ban, prohibit, outlaw, restrict. प्रतिबंधित करना
17. **Eliminate** (verb) - remove, eradicate, abolish, terminate, discard. हटाना (समाप्त करना)
18. **Underlying** (adjective) - fundamental, basic, hidden, latent, intrinsic. अंतर्निहित
19. **Vulnerability** (noun) - weakness, susceptibility, fragility, risk, exposure. कमजोरी
20. **In the aftermath of** (phrase) - as a consequence of or following an event. के परिणाम स्वरूप
21. **Strengthen** (verb) - reinforce, bolster, fortify, toughen, intensify. मजबूत करना
22. **Enforcement** (noun) - implementation, execution, application, imposition, carrying out. प्रवर्तन
23. **Widen** (verb) - expand, broaden, extend, increase, enlarge. विस्तार करना
24. **Enforcer** (noun) - officer, guard, policeman, official, monitor. प्रवर्तक (कानून लागू करने वाला)
25. **Clamp down on** (phrasal verb) - to act strictly to prevent or suppress something. सख्ती से रोकना

26. **Give** (verb) - provide, offer, grant, bestow, yield. प्रदान करना
27. **Heft** (noun) - weight, influence, substance, gravity, power. प्रभाव (वजन)
28. **In contrast** (phrase) - when compared to. इसके विपरीत
29. **Blunt** (adjective) - direct, insensitive, plain, frank, harsh. कुंद (अस्पष्ट/सीधा)
30. **Inconvenience** (verb) - bother, trouble, disturb, annoy, irritate. असुविधा पहुँचाना
31. **Stringent** (adjective) - strict, severe, rigorous, tough, demanding. कठोर
32. **Overreach** (noun) - excess, overstepping, intrusion, transgression, limit-crossing. अधिकार क्षेत्र से बाहर जाना
33. **Proportionality** (noun) - balance, equilibrium, commensurability, harmony, symmetry. आनुपातिकता
34. **Decade** (noun) - a period of ten years. दशक
35. **Instance** (noun) - example, case, occasion, illustration, occurrence. उदाहरण
36. **Malpractice** (noun) - wrongdoing, misconduct, corruption, impropriety, negligence. कदाचार
37. **Integrity** (noun) - honesty, probity, ethics, righteousness, virtue. सत्यनिष्ठा
38. **Roil** (verb) - disturb, agitate, unsettle, disrupt, stir up. हलचल मचाना
39. **Strengthening** (noun) - reinforcement, fortification, enhancement, buildup. मजबूती
40. **Accountability mechanism** (noun) - a system to ensure responsibility. जवाबदेही तंत्र
41. **Draw** (verb) - attract, elicit, invite, pull, provoke. आकर्षित करना (प्राप्त करना)
42. **Criticism** (noun) - censure, condemnation, disapproval, disparagement, critique. आलोचना
43. **Unanimous** (adjective) - united, agreed, concerted, harmonious, collective. सर्वसम्मत
44. **Sustained** (adjective) - continuous, consistent, constant, steady, prolonged. निरंतर
45. **Vigilance** (noun) - alertness, watchfulness, caution, attentiveness. सतर्कता
46. **Foolproof** (adjective) - infallible, flawless, guaranteed, bulletproof, perfect. अभेद्य (त्रुटिहीन)
47. **Underline** (verb) - emphasize, highlight, stress, underscore, accent. रेखांकित करना
48. **Safeguarding** (noun) - protection, defense, security, preservation, shielding. सुरक्षा
49. **Sanctity** (noun) - holiness, sacredness, inviolability, purity, holiness. पवित्रता
50. **Imperative** (noun) - necessity, requirement, duty, essential, obligation. अनिवार्यता
51. **Lapse** (verb) - slip, decline, backslide, regress, fall. फिसलना (पीछे गिरना)
52. **Isolated** (adjective) - solitary, separate, single, detached, unconnected. अलग-थलग

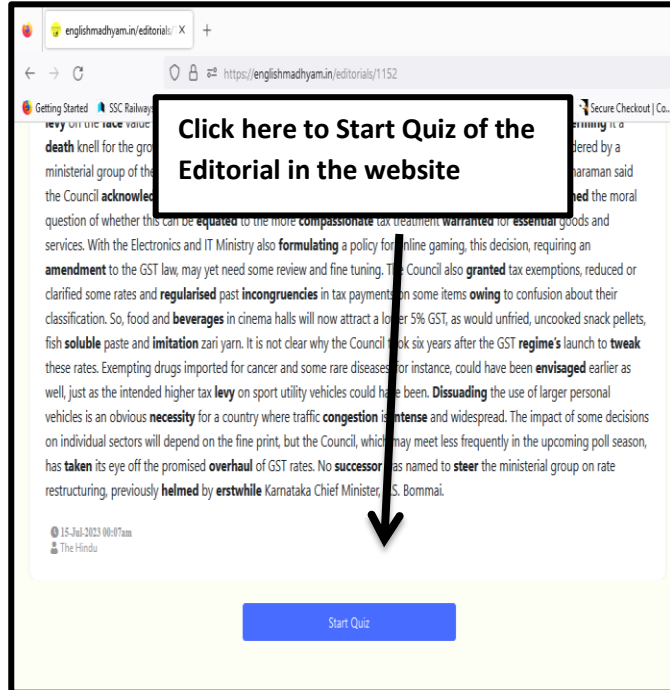
Summary of the Editorial

1. The editorial criticises the government's decision to **temporarily block Telegram** before the re-conducted NEET exam.
2. Authorities suspected that **leaked NEET question papers were circulated through Telegram channels**.
3. The **National Testing Agency (NTA)** claimed that the platform was being used to spread misinformation.
4. Based on the NTA's recommendation, the government directed Telegram to **disable message-editing features** to prevent manipulation of evidence.
5. The editorial accepts that tracing the source of leaks is important but argues that **the larger problem lies elsewhere**.
6. According to investigations, the main weakness exists in the **chain of custody** involving question paper setting, printing, transportation, and distribution.
7. Blocking one communication platform **cannot solve structural failures** in the examination system.
8. After the controversy, the government took some positive steps by improving coordination among **NTA, cybercrime units, and law enforcement agencies**.
9. Investigative agencies also expanded their probe into the **paper leak networks and examination mafia**.
10. The editorial argues that these targeted reforms should be **institutionalised and strengthened**.
11. Since Telegram reportedly has around **150 million users in India**, restrictions may inconvenience a large number of ordinary users.
12. The editorial views the action as **executive overreach** and inconsistent with the principle of **proportionality**.
13. Repeated examination scandals over the past two decades indicate **deeper problems in maintaining exam integrity**.
14. The **Radhakrishnan Committee** recommended stronger accountability mechanisms for the NTA and raised concerns about reliance on private vendors.
15. The editorial concludes that the government should treat the NEET controversy **not as an isolated incident but as evidence of a broken examination system requiring continuous reform and vigilance**.

Practice Exercise: Banking Pattern Based



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