





THE HINDU EDITORIAL ANALYSIS





Vocabulary

1. STAVE OFF (Phrasal Verb)

Meaning: To prevent something bad or unpleasant from happening; to keep something away temporarily

Synonyms: Prevent, Avert, Ward off, Fend off, Forestall, Deflect, Repel

Antonyms: Invite, Allow, Welcome, Encourage, Attract, Permit, Facilitate

Example: The government introduced emergency relief measures to stave off a full-scale economic recession.

2. SWEEPING (Adjective)

Meaning: Wide in range or effect; covering a large area or affecting many things at once without making distinctions

Synonyms: Broad, Wide-ranging, Extensive, Comprehensive, Far-reaching, Blanket, Indiscriminate

Antonyms: Narrow, Limited, Specific, Targeted, Precise, Selective, Restricted

Example: The new CEO made sweeping changes to the company's structure dismissing entire departments without individual assessment.

3. CAST (Verb)

Meaning: To throw or direct something; here used figuratively as throwing a shadow of doubt or suspicion over something

Synonyms: Throw, Project, Spread, Direct, Shed, Place, Impose

Antonyms: Remove, Lift, Clear, Dispel, Withdraw, Erase, Eliminate

Example: The sudden resignation of the finance minister cast serious doubts over the stability of the coalition government.

4. INSISTING ON (Phrase)

Meaning: Demanding firmly that something must happen or be done in a particular way

Synonyms: Demanding, Requiring, Pressing for, Urging, Asserting, Maintaining, Emphasising

Antonyms: Conceding, Yielding, Accepting, Compromising, Relenting, Abandoning, Withdrawing

Example: The quality control team kept insisting on a complete re-inspection of all products before they were cleared for dispatch.

5. TINGED (Adjective/Verb)

Meaning: Slightly coloured or influenced by something; here used as having a slight trace of a quality mixed in

Synonyms: Coloured, Tainted, Flavoured, Touched, Influenced, Shaded, Suffused

Antonyms: Pure, Untainted, Unaffected, Clean, Neutral, Uncoloured, Uninfluenced

Example: His otherwise generous offer was tinged with an expectation of personal gain that made the recipient uncomfortable.

6. BIGOTRY (Noun)

Meaning: Intolerance and stubborn prejudice toward those who hold different beliefs, identities, or backgrounds

Synonyms: Prejudice, Intolerance, Narrow-mindedness, Fanaticism, Sectarianism, Chauvinism, Discrimination

Antonyms: Tolerance, Open-mindedness, Acceptance, Inclusivity, Broadmindedness, Fairness, Impartiality

Example: The school adopted a zero-tolerance policy against bigotry ensuring that students of all backgrounds felt equally respected.

7. PERVADING (Verb/Adjective)

Meaning: Spreading through and being present throughout something; permeating every part of something

Synonyms: Permeating, Spreading, Suffusing, Filling, Saturating, Penetrating, Infusing

Antonyms: Absent, Localised, Contained, Restricted, Limited, Concentrated, Confined

Example: A sense of quiet optimism was pervading the organisation after the successful launch of its flagship product.

8. YARDSTICKS (Noun)

Meaning: A standard or measure used for judging or comparing things

Synonyms: Standards, Benchmarks, Measures, Criteria, Indicators, Parameters, Guidelines

Antonyms: Inconsistency, Bias, Partiality, Subjectivity, Arbitrariness, Irregularity, Unfairness

Example: The same yardsticks must be applied to evaluate the performance of all employees regardless of their seniority or personal connections.

9. DESPOTIC (Adjective)

Meaning: Exercising power in a cruel and oppressive manner; characteristic of a tyrant

Synonyms: Tyrannical, Authoritarian, Oppressive, Dictatorial, Autocratic, Domineering, Brutal

Antonyms: Democratic, Liberal, Tolerant, Benevolent, Just, Fair, Compassionate

Example: The despotic ruler suppressed all forms of political opposition and imprisoned journalists who criticised his administration.

10. BENIGN (Adjective)

Meaning: Gentle and kindly; not harmful or threatening; here used as portraying rulers as kind and non-oppressive

Synonyms: Gentle, Kind, Harmless, Favourable, Benevolent, Gracious, Mild

Antonyms: Malignant, Harmful, Cruel, Hostile, Dangerous, Oppressive, Malevolent

Example: Despite his stern appearance the professor was known for his benign attitude toward struggling students.

11. INSTIGATE (Verb)

Meaning: To bring about or initiate something especially something harmful or undesirable; to stir up

Synonyms: Provoke, Incite, Trigger, Stir up, Encourage, Foment, Kindle

Antonyms: Suppress, Prevent, Discourage, Deter, Quell, Restrain, Pacify

Example: The inflammatory speech was designed to instigate violence among already tense communities.

12. KINDLE (Verb)

Meaning: To arouse or inspire a feeling or interest; to light a fire; here used as sparking curiosity and love of learning

Synonyms: Ignite, Arouse, Inspire, Awaken, Stimulate, Spark, Stir

Antonyms: Extinguish, Suppress, Dampen, Quench, Discourage, Stifle, Smother

Example: A great teacher has the rare ability to kindle a lifelong passion for learning in even the most disinterested student.

13. PERCEPTION (Noun)

Meaning: The way something is understood, interpreted, or regarded by people; an impression or belief

Synonyms: Impression, Understanding, View, Interpretation, Awareness, Opinion, Belief

Antonyms: Reality, Fact, Truth, Misunderstanding, Ignorance, Blindness, Misconception

Example: The company's perception among consumers changed dramatically after the product recall was handled with complete transparency.

14. UNDERMINE (Verb)

Meaning: To weaken or damage something gradually and often in a subtle or hidden way

Synonyms: Weaken, Sabotage, Erode, Subvert, Destabilise, Impair, Damage

Antonyms: Strengthen, Support, Reinforce, Bolster, Uphold, Fortify, Enhance

Example: Repeated policy reversals began to undermine investor confidence in the country's economic management.

Tone:

The tone of the passage is ****sharply critical and morally indignant****. The author makes no attempt at neutrality — the opening line itself, describing the Supreme Court's response as being ****"in danger of resulting in a serious case of miscarriage of justice"**, sets the register immediately. There is a quiet but unmistakable contempt running through the passage — toward the Court's sweeping directive, toward the BJP's politicisation of textbooks, and toward the communal bias embedded in history chapters. What makes this tone particularly powerful is its restraint. The author does not shout — he builds his case methodically, letting the examples speak for themselves — a geography chapter invoking divine feminine presence, Muslim rulers portrayed as uniformly cruel, a disclaimer that changes nothing. The cumulative effect is devastating.

Theme:

The central theme is ****the need for consistent and impartial standards in India's educational content and the Supreme Court's failure to apply them.**** The author argues that the Court's intervention — protecting itself from criticism while ignoring far more serious communal bias in history chapters — is selective, self-serving, and ultimately corrosive to the very idea of justice.

A strong secondary theme is ****the politicisation of India's school curriculum.**** The author traces how BJP's ideological agenda has systematically introduced religious content and communally biased historical narratives into textbooks that are meant to shape the next generation's understanding of India. Running beneath both themes is a deeper concern — that textbooks are not just educational tools but instruments of nation-building, and when they are used to instigate bigotry rather than kindle inquiry, the damage is generational and profound.

Justice for all: On the NCERT textbook issue, the judiciary

The directives on NCERT show the Court as keen to stave off any criticism

The Supreme Court of India's sense of hurt at references to judicial corruption in a National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) textbook is in danger of resulting in a serious case of miscarriage of justice. According to the Court, the NCERT's textbook development team did not have "reasonable, informed knowledge about the Indian judiciary". The Court went on to direct that persons such as those in the team should not be associated in "any manner with preparation of school curriculum or finalisation of textbooks for the next generation of this country". This sweeping statement has cast a shadow over the entire exercise of textbook writing. While insisting on independent domain experts such as a senior judge to approve the chapters on judiciary before publication, the Court could have initiated a similar process for other chapters as well, especially for those dealing with history where the misrepresentation of facts is sometimes tinged with bigotry. In the past, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and its allied organisations had critiqued Indian textbooks saying that they were Macaulay-an and created "westernised" minds that did not hold India's past, its traditions, and the Hindu religion as sacred. When the BJP came to power, it sought to redraft the textbooks along these lines.

Now, references to Hindu rituals and beliefs are found across textbooks and subjects. For instance, a discussion on solar energy refers to the ritual of “arghyam”, a Vedic salutation to the sun by pouring water. Geography is strictly science, but a geography chapter in a class seven textbook talks about a divine feminine presence pervading the Indian landmass, thereby making it sacred. The Court must apply the same yardsticks it used for the judiciary chapters to history chapters in the textbooks too. Part 1 of the same social science textbook for class eight describes Muslim rulers as uniformly and singularly cruel, despotic and repressive whereas Hindu kingdoms are portrayed as benign and as resisting Muslim rule. Objectivity is given short shrift, leading to genuine fears that the narrative is to instigate bigotry even though the class eight textbook includes a disclaimer that today’s generation is not to be blamed for the ‘sins’ of the past. Textbook writing requires not just subject matter expertise but also skill that would genuinely kindle knowledge and inquiry as well as train minds towards valuing fairness, equality, peace and harmony. The language is important, so is the intent. Any selective targeting of chapters will only reinforce the perception that the judiciary is merely protecting itself. That, ultimately, would undermine any conception of justice.

Writer's point of view

The writer is a deeply concerned democratic observer who sees both the Supreme Court's selective intervention and the BJP's politicisation of textbooks as twin threats to India's educational integrity.

On the Supreme Court

The Court's disproportionate response — banning the textbook team from future work over hurt feelings about judicial corruption references — while staying completely silent on far more damaging communal bias in history chapters is not judicial oversight. It is judicial self-protection.

On BJP's Revisions

Religious content in science and geography, Muslim rulers portrayed as uniformly cruel, Hindu kingdoms as uniformly benign — these are not corrections of Macaulay-an bias. They are the substitution of one distortion with a more dangerous one.

On Textbooks

Textbooks carry a profound democratic responsibility — to kindle curiosity, promote fairness, and build minds capable of independent inquiry. Language and intent both matter equally.

Mcq's

Q1. Which of the following best summarises the central argument of the passage?

- a) The Supreme Court was right to direct the removal of references to judicial corruption from NCERT textbooks as such content undermines public confidence in the judiciary**
- b) The Supreme Court's selective intervention in the NCERT textbook issue while ignoring communal bias in history chapters raises serious concerns about judicial consistency and the perception of self-protection**
- c) NCERT textbooks must be completely rewritten by independent domain experts under Supreme Court supervision to ensure accuracy and objectivity across all subjects**
- d) The BJP's redrafting of NCERT textbooks has successfully corrected the Macaulay-an bias that dominated Indian education for decades**
- e) The Supreme Court's directive on textbook writing is a welcome step toward ensuring that the next generation receives accurate knowledge about India's judicial system**

Answer: b

Q2. According to the passage which example of religious content in NCERT textbooks is specifically mentioned?

- a) A chapter on water conservation referring to the ritual of bathing in the Ganga**
- b) A geography chapter in a class seven textbook talking about a divine feminine presence pervading the Indian landmass**
- c) A history chapter describing the construction of Hindu temples as acts of national resistance**
- d) A science chapter on astronomy referring to ancient Vedic astronomical texts**
- e) A class eight textbook chapter on mathematics referring to ancient Indian numerical systems**

Answer: b

Q3. What can be inferred from the author's observation that the class eight textbook includes a disclaimer that today's generation is not to be blamed for the sins of the past?

- a) The disclaimer proves that the textbook authors were fully aware of their responsibility to promote communal harmony**
- b) The disclaimer is legally sufficient to protect the textbook from any charges of promoting communal bias or bigotry**
- c) The presence of a disclaimer does not neutralise the communal bias embedded in the narrative itself making the disclaimer largely cosmetic**
- d) The disclaimer was inserted at the Supreme Court's direction to balance the one-sided portrayal of Muslim rulers**
- e) The disclaimer proves that the textbook development team had reasonable and informed knowledge about India's history**

Answer: c

Q4. Read the following sentence from the passage:

"Objectivity is given short shrift, leading to genuine fears that the narrative is to instigate bigotry."

Which of the following gives the correct meaning, one synonym, and one antonym of the word "bigotry"?

**a) Meaning — a strong and reasoned belief in the superiority of one's own culture;
Synonym — patriotism; Antonym — treason**

b) Meaning — intolerance and prejudice toward those of different beliefs or backgrounds; Synonym — prejudice; Antonym — tolerance

**c) Meaning — a deliberate distortion of historical facts for political purposes;
Synonym — propaganda; Antonym — accuracy**

**d) Meaning — extreme religious devotion that excludes all other perspectives;
Synonym — fanaticism; Antonym — secularism**

**e) Meaning — a narrow academic approach that ignores diverse perspectives;
Synonym — parochialism; Antonym — inclusivity**

Answer: b

Q5. The author states that "any selective targeting of chapters will only reinforce the perception that the judiciary is merely protecting itself." Which of the following is the underlying assumption?

- a) The Supreme Court has already been proven to be corrupt and its intervention in the textbook issue is an attempt to cover this up**
- b) A judiciary that applies different standards to different chapters based on its own interests will be seen as self-serving rather than impartial undermining its credibility as an institution of justice**
- c) NCERT textbook development teams are inherently biased against the judiciary and must be replaced entirely**
- d) The Supreme Court has no constitutional authority to intervene in the content of educational textbooks**
- e) Selective intervention in textbook content is only problematic when it involves chapters on the judiciary**

Answer: b

Q6. The author argues that the Supreme Court must apply the same yardsticks it used for judiciary chapters to history chapters as well. Which of the following if true would most strengthen this argument?

- a) The Supreme Court has already directed independent domain experts to review all NCERT history chapters for factual accuracy**
- b) Independent educational experts have found that the history chapters in question contain factually inaccurate and communally biased portrayals that could promote prejudice among students**
- c) The BJP has publicly defended the history chapters arguing that they correct decades of Macaulay-an bias in Indian education**
- d) The Supreme Court's directive on judiciary chapters has already been successfully implemented with a senior judge approving the revised content**
- e) NCERT has voluntarily agreed to revise the history chapters following public criticism from historians and educationists**

Answer: b

Q7. The author argues that the Supreme Court's intervention in the NCERT textbook issue amounts to selective self-protection. Which of the following if true would most weaken this argument?

- a) The Supreme Court has also issued notices to NCERT regarding communally biased content in history chapters in the same proceedings**
- b) The references to judicial corruption in the NCERT textbook were factually inaccurate and based on unverified claims**
- c) Several former judges have publicly supported the Supreme Court's directive on the judiciary chapters**
- d) The BJP introduced religious content into NCERT textbooks following its election victory in 2014**
- e) Textbook writing requires both subject matter expertise and the skill to promote fairness equality and harmony**

Answer: a

Q8. Which of the following best describes the tone of the passage?

- a) Celebratory about the Supreme Court's intervention in ensuring textbook accuracy**
- b) Sharply critical and deeply concerned about judicial inconsistency and communal bias in textbooks**
- c) Neutral and balanced presenting both the Supreme Court's position and NCERT's defence equally**
- d) Alarmist about the complete collapse of objectivity in India's educational system**
- e) Sympathetic toward the BJP's effort to correct Macaulay-an bias in Indian textbooks**

Answer: b

Q9. The phrase "given short shriff" as used in the passage means:

- a) Given excessive and unwarranted importance**
- b) Dismissed or dealt with too quickly without adequate attention**
- c) Carefully examined and verified by independent experts**
- d) Deliberately distorted to serve a political agenda**
- e) Replaced entirely by a more subjective narrative**

Answer: b

Q10. According to the passage which subject's textbook refers to the ritual of "arghyam" — a Vedic salutation to the sun?

- a) History**
- b) Geography**
- c) Science — specifically a discussion on solar energy**
- d) Social science**
- e) Environmental studies**

Answer: c

Q11. Read the following conclusions and choose the correct option:

- 1. The Supreme Court's directive banning the NCERT textbook team from future curriculum work is a proportionate and judiciously measured response**
 - 2. The portrayal of Muslim rulers as uniformly cruel while Hindu kingdoms are shown as benign reflects a communally biased historical narrative**
 - 3. The Supreme Court's failure to apply the same standards to history chapters as it did to judiciary chapters creates a perception of selective and self-serving intervention**
 - 4. Textbook writing requires both subject matter expertise and the genuine intent to promote fairness equality and harmony among students**
-
- a) Only statements 1 and 2 are correct**
 - b) Only statements 2 and 3 are correct**
 - c) Only statements 2, 3 and 4 are correct**
 - d) Only statement 4 is correct**
 - e) All statements are correct**

Q12. Read the following statements and choose the correct option:

- 1. The inclusion of religious content across subjects like geography and science suggests a deliberate blurring of the boundary between secular education and religious promotion**
- 2. The Supreme Court's sweeping directive barring the textbook team from future work was a carefully calibrated and proportionate judicial response**
- 3. The BJP's redrafting of textbooks was driven by a desire to correct what it perceived as Macaulay-an and westernised bias in Indian education**
- 4. The disclaimer in the class eight textbook about not blaming today's generation effectively neutralises the communal bias in its historical narrative**

- a) Only statements 1 and 3 are correct**
- b) Only statements 2 and 4 are correct**
- c) Only statements 1, 2 and 3 are correct**
- d) Only statements 2 and 3 are correct**
- e) All statements are correct**

Q13. Which of the following best captures the central theme of the passage?

a) The need for the Supreme Court to take a more active role in supervising the content of NCERT textbooks

b) The dangers of communal bias in NCERT history textbooks and the BJP's politicisation of Indian education

c) The Supreme Court's selective intervention in the NCERT textbook issue and the broader need for consistent and impartial standards in textbook writing

d) The conflict between secular and religious approaches to education in India's school curriculum

e) The importance of domain expertise in ensuring the accuracy and objectivity of NCERT textbooks

Q14. Which of the following best reflects the writer's overall point of view?

- a) The Supreme Court was fully justified in its directive as references to judicial corruption in school textbooks are deeply inappropriate and damaging**
- b) The BJP's revisions to NCERT textbooks represent a necessary and long-overdue correction of decades of Macaulay-an bias in Indian education**
- c) The Supreme Court's selective intervention — protecting itself while ignoring communal bias in history chapters — is inconsistent, potentially self-serving, and ultimately undermines the very conception of justice it is meant to uphold**
- d) NCERT should be given complete independence from both judicial and political interference in the development of school textbooks**
- e) The solution to biased textbooks lies in appointing independent domain experts for every subject rather than relying on government appointed committees**

Q15. Which of the following sentences if inserted after *"that, ultimately, would undermine any conception of justice"* would most logically complete the author's argument?

- a) Therefore the Supreme Court must immediately withdraw its directive on the NCERT textbook team and apologise for overstepping its constitutional authority**
- b) A judiciary that holds others to standards it does not apply to itself cannot credibly claim to be the guardian of fairness equality and the rule of law**
- c) The NCERT must therefore immediately revise all history chapters to remove communal bias before the Supreme Court intervenes further**
- d) India's students deserve textbooks that are free from both judicial interference and political manipulation regardless of which party is in power**
- e) The BJP must therefore reverse its revisions to NCERT textbooks and restore the original secular content that was removed after 2014**

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