



# THE TIMES OF INDIA

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**TODAY'S EDITION**

➤ Did you know Shakespeare gave us 1,000 new English words? Learn more on 'Language Lab'

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➤ An educationist charts out how perseverance can help one to reach his/her goal despite obstacles

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➤ La Liga: Villarreal beat Getafe as Gerard scores before being injured

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**STUDENT EDITION**  
MONDAY, APRIL 18, 2022

Microblogging site Twitter is trying to thwart billionaire Elon Musk's takeover attempt with a 'poison pill' – a financial device that companies have been wielding against unwelcome suitors for decades...

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## One Board exam or split terms: CBSE may restore pre-pandemic format for Board exams



If reports are to go by, the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) is all set to return to only one phase of class X, XII Board exams, like it was in the pre-pandemic era. According to reports, the education ministry is in favour of conducting a single board exam for classes X and XII. Following instructions from the ministry, the CBSE may restore the pre-pandemic format of Board exams from next year. Once the CBSE restores the old pattern of Board exams, neither two phases nor flexible practical pattern will be available for students.

For the academic session 2021-22, the CBSE has bifurcated the board exams into two different phases

■ For the present academic session, the first phase of Board exams was completed in December last year. According to CBSE, the second phase of exams will start from April 26 in offline mode

■ In 2020 and 2021, the Board exams could not be conducted owing to the Covid-19 pandemic

## POLLUTION FROM COOKING EMISSIONS MAY STAY IN THE AIR FOR SEVERAL DAYS: STUDY



Organic aerosols, such as those released in cooking, may stay in the atmosphere for several days, because of nanostructures formed by fatty acids as they are released into the air, finds a study. Scientists say, these types of aerosols have long been associated with poor air quality in urban areas, but their impact on human-made climate change was hard to gauge. The latest study goes a step further and says, because of the diverse range of molecules found within aerosols, and their varying interactions with the environment, they increase pollution.

Previous research suggests that gas cooking produces about twice as much PM<sub>2.5</sub> as electric. It also produces nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>), including nitrogen oxide (NO) and nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), carbon monoxide (CO), and formaldehyde (CH<sub>2</sub>O or HCHO). All of these pollutants are health risks if not properly managed



**X-PLAINED**

# POISON PILL

## WHAT ARE POISON PILLS SUPPOSED TO DO?

The ingredients of each poison pill vary, but they're all designed to give corporate boards an option to flood the market with so-much newly-created stock that a takeover becomes prohibitively expensive. In other words, the intent of poison pills is to make the acquisition a costly affair for acquirers, thereby discouraging the takeover decision. The potential acquirer is compelled to negotiate with the target's board of directors, rather than proceed unilaterally. The strategy also gives a company more time to evaluate an offer and can give the board leverage in trying to force a direct negotiation with the potential acquirer.

## Points to note

## WHAT DOES A POISON PILL ACTUALLY LOOK LIKE?

A poison pill is officially known as a **shareholder rights plan**, and it can appear in a company's charter or bylaws or exist as a contract among shareholders.

## WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

According to experts, the poison pill has gained prominence in the recent months, courtesy Covid, though it has been used for over four decades in the stock markets. Experts say, as companies are reeling from market carnage due to wage cuts, furloughs, etc, their valuations have eroded. This has made otherwise sound companies vulnerable to hostile takeovers at beaten down valuations by cash-rich rivals or vulture funds. Plummeting stock prices explain the sudden resurgence in the adoption of poison pills

**1** The strategy was popularised back in the 1980s when publicly-held companies were being stalked by corporate raiders such as Carl Icahn, an American financier, now more frequently described as "activist investors"

**2** A takeover is a bid by a potential acquirer to obtain a block of shares in a company that can give it a controlling stake in the target company. A hostile takeover is a situation where such takeover bids are mounted without the consent of the incumbent management

## Can a poison pill be negotiating ploy?

Although they are supposed to help prevent an unsolicited takeover, poison pills also often open the door to further negotiations that can force a bidder to sweeten the deal. If a higher price makes sense to the board, a poison pill can simply be cast aside along with the acrimony it provoked, clearing the way for a sale to be completed.

## When else have poison pills been used?

- Netflix successfully fended off billionaire investor Carl Icahn in November 2012, using a poison pill that would have made it more expensive for Icahn, or any other person or group, to accumulate more shares of Netflix if they acquired 10% of the company without the approval of its board
- The pizza chain Papa John's adopted a poison pill in July 2018 in a rare instance of a company trying to block its founder from taking over
- In September 1985, in the wake of rumours that the consumer goods company Philip Morris was targeting it, the McDonald's Corporation said it had adopted a poison pill plan to prevent "abusive takeover tactics"

## HOW DID ELON MUSK REACT TO TWITTER'S ANNOUNCEMENT?

Musk, a prolific tweeter with 82 million followers on Twitter, had no immediate reaction to the company's poison pill.

But on Thursday, he indicated that he was ready to wage a legal battle. Musk has publicly said that its \$43 billion bid is his best and final offer for Twitter, but other corporate suitors have made similar statements before ultimately

upping the ante. With an estimated fortune of \$265 billion, Musk would seem to have deep enough pockets to raise his offer, although he is still working out how to finance the proposed purchase

## Moscow bars PM Boris Johnson, top British ministers from visiting Russia

Russia has barred PM Boris Johnson and other senior British officials from entering the country over their support for Ukraine, the Russian foreign ministry said on Saturday. The full list of 13 British politicians on the so-called "stop list" issued from Moscow includes Indian-origin ministers – UK chancellor Rishi Sunak, home secretary Priti Patel and attorney general Suella Braverman – as well as deputy PM Dominic Raab, foreign secretary Liz Truss and defence secretary Ben Wallace. The Russian foreign ministry said the list will be expanded in the "near future" to include more British politicians and parliamentarians.



Britain has supplied Ukraine with new anti-ship missile systems, armoured vehicles and other military equipment. Besides, Johnson made a surprise visit last week to Kyiv, where he promised to send more military equipment and missiles

Last month, Russia said it had placed President Biden, PM Justin Trudeau of Canada and a dozen top US officials on a "stop list" that barred them from entering the country

## WhatsApp launches 'Communities' to help users organise group chats



In a bid to make chats safer, Meta-owned WhatsApp has announced a new feature called 'Communities' that will enable users to bring together separate groups under one umbrella and manage these busy conversations in a secure and private way. The company said that 'Communities' are protected with end-to-end encryption.

ing announcement messages that are sent to everyone and control over which groups can be included," said WhatsApp. For example, a school principal can bring all parents together to share must-read updates and set up

groups about specific classes, extra-curricular activities or volunteer needs  
➤ The company said, it is also making improvements to how groups work on WhatsApp, whether or not they are part of a Community

## World's coral reefs may disappear in 3 decades

Environmental scientists have warned that the world's coral reefs – the 'canaries in the coal mine' of climate change – may vanish in the coming 30 years. Forecasts show that coral reef eco-systems around the globe are likely to become functionally degraded by 2050, if the goals of the Paris Agreement are not met. Even with drastic emission reductions to ensure that global warming is kept within 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, up to 90 per cent of the world's corals could still vanish in the next three decades, leaving behind a reef structure that will lose many of its functions, they added.



Coral reefs are home to over a quarter of all ocean life. They are also a source of food, livelihoods, and cultural heritage for 500 million people, and protect coastlines and communities from storms and erosion

➤ With the new feature, people can receive updates sent to the entire 'Community' and easily organise smaller discussion groups on what matters to them  
➤ "Communities will also contain powerful new tools for admins, includ-

# HAPPINESS WORDS from around the world

We bring 10 untranslatable words spreading joy and well-being that the world could really do with right now...

Lecturer at the University of East London, Tim Lomas specialises in a field known as positive psychology, the study of what makes human beings happy. In 2015, Lomas started the Positive Lexicography Project, a crowdsourced treasury of global terms of well-being. With the help of far-flung strangers on the internet, he's since mined 140 languages to come up with a whopping 1,200 words. Each has its own unique shades of meaning not fully captured in English translation. He argues that engaging with these "untranslatable" terms can help us imagine, and

ultimately experience, more types of well-being.  
**1 Shinrin-Yoku (Japanese):** Forest bathing (or shinrin-yoku) broadly means taking in, in all of one's senses, the forest atmosphere. Not simply a walk in the woods, it is the conscious and contemplative practice of being immersed in the sights, sounds and smells of the forest.  
**2 Tarab (Arabic):** Musically induced ecstasy or enchantment. In Arabic, this sense of losing yourself in the music is called Tarab. Though the specific songs, emotional reactions, and reasons behind those reactions may vary from person to per-



son, being moved by music is a universal experience — even babies sometimes cry when they hear certain songs.

**4 Charmolypi (Greek):** It is a mixture of the words "happiness" and "sadness". Thus, charmolypi is a feeling that combines sorrow and joy. It does not simply mean having mixed feelings about something, however. The feelings are integrated, in that joy springs from right in the middle of sorrow.

**5 Sprezzatura (Italian):** It's "studied carelessness," a character of effortless grace. Whether it pertains to fashion, leadership style, or charm, it's an inherent grace that makes the complex or difficult look — appear to be — simple. Sprezzatura is an Italian word that first appears in Baldassare Castiglione's 1528 "The Book of the Courtier", where it is defined by the author as "a certain nonchalance, so as to conceal all art and make whatever one does or says appear to be without effort and almost without any thought about it".

**6 Orka (Swedish):** Completing a task isn't always just about having enough physical energy for it — you also have to care enough to actually expend that energy. You might have orka to throw a surprise birthday party for your best friend, but you might not have orka to study for a quiz that probably won't affect your final grade.

**7 Flâneur (French):** Perhaps one of the most Parisian of all French words, the verb "flâner" was defined in the 19th century by the

Paris literary crowd. It refers to the art of leisurely strolling the streets of Paris without any goal or destination simply for the pleasure of soaking up the city's beauty. These aimless pedestrians are known as "flâneurs."

**8 Merak (Serbian):** The Serbian word merak is a wonderful little word that refers to a feeling of bliss and the sense of oneness with the universe that comes from the simplest of pleasures. It is the pursuit of small,



daily pleasures that all add up to a great sense of happiness and fulfillment.

**9 Mir (Russian):** Mir is a short and beautiful word that holds two very different, yet equally important meanings in modern Russian: "World" and "Peace."

**10 Fika (Swedish):** Fika means 'a sociable coffee break', but it's no coffee break as we know it. Fika is an opportunity to 'pause and reconnect each day'.

## 5 Fun facts about the ENGLISH LANGUAGE

### 1. 'E' IS EVERYWHERE!

The most common letter in English is "e". According to 'Readers Digest', "In an analysis of all 240,000 entries in the Concise Oxford English Dictionary, editors found that the letter E appears in approximately 11 per cent of all words in the common English vocabulary, about 6,000 more words than the runner-up letter, A. What's more: E is the second most popular key after the space bar. It's one-third of the single most-used word in English — "the" — and appears in the most common English noun ("time"), the most common verb ("be"), in ubiquitous pronouns like he, she, me, and we, not to mention tens of thousands of words ending in -ed and -es.

### 4. A WORD FORMED BY JOINING TOGETHER PARTS OF EXISTING WORDS IS CALLED A 'BLEND' (OR, LESS COMMONLY, A 'PORTMANTEAU WORD')

Many new words enter the English language in this way. Examples are "brunch" (breakfast + lunch); "motel" (motorcar + hotel); and "guesstimate" (guess + estimate). Note that blends are not the same as compounds or compound nouns, which form when two whole words join together, for example: website, blackboard, darkroom.



### 5. SHAKESPEARE GAVE US 1,000 NEW ENGLISH WORDS

English language wouldn't be the same without William Shakespeare. The Bard invented over 1,000 words, which he incorporated into his writing. Just some of the fantastic words and phrases invented by this famous poet include: ■ **Addiction:** Being psychologically or physically dependent on something, usually a drug. ■ **Bedazzled:** Blinded by something incredibly wonderful. ■ **Cold-blooded:** Either an animal with cold blood (like a reptile) or a way to describe someone who's cruel and indifferent to emotion. ■ **Swagger:** To walk in a way that shows you're boasting or disrespectful. ■ **Break the ice:** To relieve the tension or silence in a conversation by talking.

### 2. THE LONGEST WORD YOU CAN MAKE USING ONLY FOUR LETTERS IS 'SENSELESS'

The letters B, A, and N can spell BANANA, which is six letters long, and the letters S, E, and D can spell SEEDED, which is six letters long. The longest words with no repeated letters are "dermatoglyphics," "misconjugately," and "uncopyrightables" (but we're probably not going to use any of those words in a sentence anytime soon!).

### 3. THERE ARE NINE DIFFERENT WAYS TO PRONOUNCE 'OUGH' IN ENGLISH

This sentence contains all of them: "A rough-coated, dough-faced, thoughtful ploughman strode through the streets of Scarborough; after falling into a slough, he coughed and hiccoughed."



## WHAT IS AN OXYMORON?

An oxymoron is a figure of speech, usually one or two words, in which seemingly contradictory terms appear side by side. This contradiction is also known as a paradox. In speech, oxymorons can lend a sense of humour, irony, or sarcasm. The word is derived from two ancient Greek words: oxy, which means "sharp," and moronos, which means "dull" or "stupid."

### SOME EXAMPLES OF OXYMORON IN LITERATURE:

"I do here make humbly bold to present them with a short account of themselves..."  
Jonathan Swift

"The bookful blockhead, ignorantly read, / With loads of learned lumber in his head..."  
Alexander Pope

"He was now sufficiently composed to order a funeral of modest magnificence..."  
Samuel Johnson

"O anything of nothing first create! / O heavy lightness, serious vanity! / Misshapen chaos of well-seeming forms! / Feather of lead, bright smoke, cold fire, sick health!"  
William Shakespeare, Romeo and Juliet, Act 1, scene 1

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times."  
Charles Dickens, A Tale of Two Cities

### SOME COMMON EXAMPLES:

- Same difference
- Friendly fire
- Virtual reality
- Controlled chaos
- Freezer burn
- Silent scream
- Terribly good
- Wise fool
- Close distance
- Stiff drink
- Black light
- Clearly confused
- Genuine fake



### Queries relating to language skills

Do you find grammar confusing? Do you get stuck with words when writing a letter, an essay or a blog? Do you have a fear of public speaking? Or do you simply want to improve your communication skills? Times NIE is here to help you to master the intricacies of the English language. Just shoot us your queries on [toime175@gmail.com](mailto:toime175@gmail.com)



## LANGUAGE QUIZ

1. What do you call a native of Kenya?
2. What is the official language in Kosovo?

3. Which weekday is domingo in Spanish and dimanche in French?
4. What is another word for wall painting or mural?

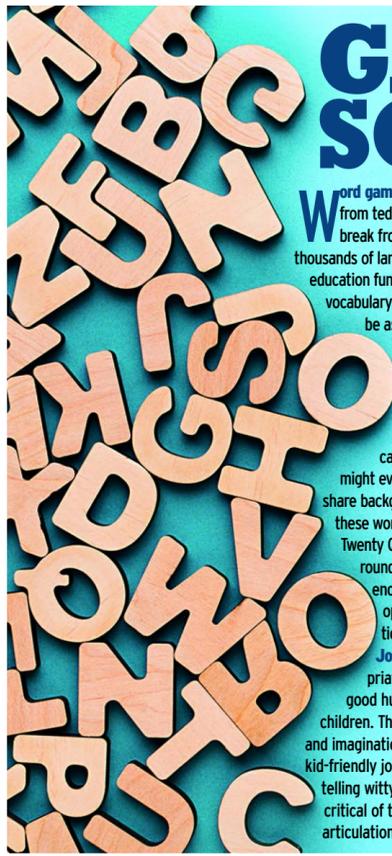
5. What does the Latin proverb - Errare Humanum est - mean?
6. What word is used in Hawaii both to greet and to say goodbye?

7. Which is the world's second largest French-speaking city?
8. What is the meaning of the Arab word Habibi?

Answer: 1. Kenyan 2. Albanian 3. Sunday 4. Fresco 5. Err is human 6. Aloha 7. Montreal Canada 8. Sweetheart

## GAME FOR SOME FUN?

Fun activities that help develop language learning in children



**Word games:** Games offer a break from tedious work, but not a break from learning. There are thousands of language games to make education fun. Expand your children's vocabulary with word games. It can be as simple as pointing out items at home or during a road trip e.g. "I am now mixing the butter into the batter" or "Tall buildings are also called skyscrapers". You might even give the definition or share background information about these words. Games like Scrabble, Twenty Questions, Pictionary or a round of Charades also encourage vocabulary development and communication skills.

**Jokes:** Telling age-appropriate puns also help foster good humour and creativity in children. This encourages wordplay and imagination. You can read through kid-friendly joke books and take turns telling witty stories. Avoid being too critical of their gags, speech, or articulation.



**Riddles:** Riddles are fun ways to use words and paint pictures of scenes or situations. Read or say riddles aloud to each other and explain to your children the different definitions of a single word e.g. school as in a place of learning or school as in a group of fish to help them understand the riddle better.

**Rhymes:** The repetitive chanting, reading, writing, or hearing of rhymes promotes good listening skills and memory retention, aside from developing speech. You can also let your children tell you about their favourite toys using rhyming words.

**Storytelling:** Sharing stories - whether real or make-believe - can provide a good bonding time with your children while

helping develop their communication skills. Exchange stories about daily events. Broaden their imagination with fantastical stories and let their creativity grow as you make up stories about anything and everything around them.

**Songs:** Aside from harnessing their musical abilities, songs also help children learn new words. Lyrics have a sense of rhyme and rhythm so it will be easy and entertaining for them to sing along.

**Tongue twisters:** Tongue twisters are an excellent and fun way to teach children correct pronunciation and enunciation of words. It is a fun way to train their tongue to pronounce words. Start with simple ones and work your way up.