

# Deciphering the Art of Reading Comprehension

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## GENERAL THEORY ABOUT READING COMPREHENSION

- ❑ A crucial gatekeeper for the UPSC Preliminary Exam, which recruits Indian civil servants, is the Civil Services Aptitude Test, or CSAT. Foundational knowledge of General Studies Paper I; critical thinking and analysis abilities are crucial prerequisites for General Studies Paper II which has grown increasingly difficult in recent years.
- ❑ Securing a minimum score of 33% on CSAT is a prerequisite to qualify the paper and advance to the next stage, irrespective of a candidate's performance in General Studies Paper I. This ensures not just possessing mastery over factual knowledge, but also ensures necessary aptitude and skills beyond mere memorisation.
- ❑ In a way, CSAT is a sophisticated complement to Paper I, emphasising the assessment of a candidate's analytical and problem-solving skills. Through a comprehensive and rigorous selection procedure, civil servants are guaranteed to possess not only a broad range of knowledge but also the cognitive ability to successfully process this information in order to pursue a successful career in public service.

## WHAT SKILLS ARE REQUIRED?

CSAT goes beyond mere gauging of factual knowledge and dives deeper into the cognitive and brainpower competencies that are crucial for effective public service delivery. Let us break down what is under the radar:

- ❑ **Problem Solving and Decision Making Ability:** Honing your aptitude and ability to strategise and analyse complex problems and coming up with innovative solutions under stress is the hallmark of an effective civil servant. Often in service, in lieu of public emergency, a civil servant is expected to provide sound judgement and make good decisions that ensure welfare for all.
- ❑ **Emotional Intelligence and Interpersonal Skills:** Mastering the art of building relations, fostering collaborations and managing diverse stakeholders with empathy is important to navigate the crucial waters of public service. Managing different relationships requires emotional intelligence to deal with situations with empathy and compassion and development of various Interpersonal skill sets.

- ❑ **Logical Reasoning and Analytical Capabilities:** Sharpening of one's ability to dissect crucial information, identifying the underlying pattern and drawing valid conclusions is required to make sound judgements and decisions that is a crucial aspect of public policy making.
- ❑ **Reading Comprehension and Information Processing:** Ability to grasp written communication from official documents and ensuring clear understanding of the information in the document is important to secure clear communication and informed action. This ability requires skills of Reading Comprehension and processing large chunks of information to identify crucial aspects. Reading Comprehension assesses your ability to efficiently and accurately extract relevant information, a skill that will save you invaluable time and ensure you're always up-to-date on critical matters.

## READING COMPREHENSION AND ITS IMPORTANCE

- ❑ When assessing a candidate's aptitude, the UPSC CSAT exam's Reading Comprehension (RC) part is crucial. This segment evaluates a candidate's comprehension of intricate matters, information analysis skills, and capacity to discern important elements from superfluous ones. The Reading Comprehension part usually contains passages that are fifty to three hundred words long.
- ❑ Candidates must respond to multiple-choice objective questions that gauge their understanding of the material. These are not your information oriented comprehension questions; rather, they are designed to assess an applicant's ability to use critical thinking, fully understand the topics being presented, and make decisions given the context.
- ❑ For a long time, reading comprehension (RC) has been the main component of the CSAT and it is heavily weighted (30–35%). The days of asking simple, fact-finding questions are long gone. The UPSC Reading Comprehension section in recent years presents a complex challenge. As a result, mastery of this subject necessitates not only linguistic comprehension but also the capacity for focused thought and in-depth understanding of complicated concepts.

## WHY IS READING COMPREHENSION TESTED IN UPSC?

- ❑ Reading Comprehension assesses your ability to examine written material, pin-point important details, develop conclusions, and deduce logical conclusions. This skill is essential for managing the intricate world of reports, policy documents, and citizen communications—daily tasks for a civil servant. Having strong Reading Comprehension abilities guarantees that you can comprehend a variety of viewpoints, grasp complex arguments, and base decisions on proper comprehension.
- ❑ Additionally, Reading Comprehension evaluates your reasoning and critical thinking skills. Are you able to discern between opinions and facts, recognise underlying presumptions, and spot logical fallacies? These abilities are essential for analysing evidence, assessing policy recommendations, and developing sensible solutions to challenging issues.
- ❑ Furthermore, reading comprehension is a critical component in determining how quickly you process information and how well you read. You will be confronted with vast volumes of textual material in your role as a public servant. Reading comprehension tests your capacity to quickly and correctly extract pertinent information, which will ensure that you're always informed on important issues and save you a great deal of time.

## DEMYSTIFYING THE ELUSIVE: LATEST TRENDS IN UPSC CSAT READING COMPREHENSION

- ❑ **Shifting Trends:** A noteworthy trend that emerged during the 2018–2023 period is the increase in “micro-comprehension” passages. These short texts, usually between 80 and 100 words, are challenging because they typically contain a single complex question that requires careful consideration and a nuanced interpretation. Although longer passages (180-200 words) are still included, their proportion seems to be declining, which suggests a shift in emphasis towards evaluating the ability to deduce meaning from brief but information-rich passages.
- ❑ **Beyond Explicit:** Forget easily understood solutions tucked away in stated facts. Uncertainty is what the current UPSC RC section thrives on. Solutions are frequently woven into the text, necessitating keen observation and the capacity to make connections between seemingly unrelated ideas. This calls for intense focus, an acute sense of detail, and a perceptive mind that can decipher complex meanings.

- ❑ **No Shortcut:** Aspirants are challenged by the modern UPSC RC to actively “understand” the issues at hand rather than simply finding answers from information. This extends beyond understanding the facts to include understanding the author’s purpose, identifying implicit arguments, and even spotting possible biases, which involves assembling hints and interpreting the writer’s intent to determine the most convincing response.

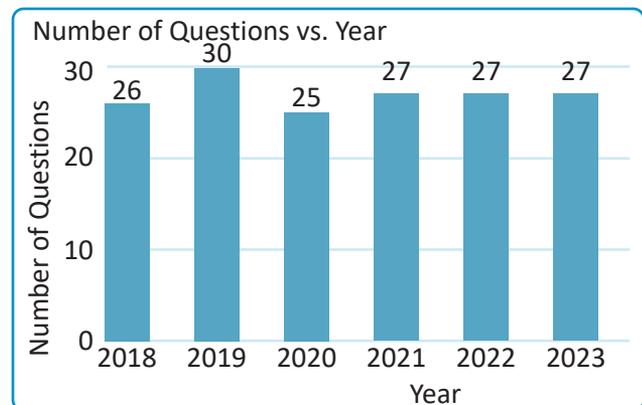


Fig. 1.1: Number of Questions vs. Year

## MICRO COMPREHENSION

In 2015, the UPSC Civil Services Examination’s General Studies Paper 2 (CSAT) saw a major change in the type of questions. Short comprehension passages were combined with complex, one-question tests. These “micro comprehensions,” in contrast to their more expansive counterparts, offer the candidates a novel and thought-provoking challenge. These short passages have become a mainstay of the GS Paper 2.

### Distinctive Features

- ❑ **Conciseness:** These passages usually consist of 30 to 110 words, while the traditional comprehensions are between 200 and 500 words long. They function as compacted informational capsules.
- ❑ **Singular Focus:** Each mini passage has one carefully constructed question accompanying it. Unlike the multi-pronged questions associated with conventional passages, this targeted approach necessitates a focused and challenging response.
- ❑ **Emphasis on Logical Inference:** These sections require more than just comprehension; critical thinking abilities must be used. In addition to understanding the text’s obvious meaning, candidates must probe further to uncover its underlying logic, form well-reasoned conclusions, and draw perceptive connections.

## Question Types

- ❑ **Reducing the Whole:** Questions like “What is the most logical inference?” and “What best summarises the passage?” ask candidates to distil the main idea of the passage into a succinct but precise statement.
- ❑ **Disclosing the Author’s Perspective:** Inquiries such as “Which statement supports the author’s viewpoint?” and “What argument/comment can best sum up the author’s view?” promote a deductive methodology by asking candidates to determine the author’s position by getting into the author’s shoe.
- ❑ **Identifying Implicit Insights:** “Which is the most reasonable assumption?” or “What is the most logical and critical inference of the passage?” demand that applicants think beyond the explicit text, apply critical thinking, and make sense of the information presented.
- ❑ **Finding Vital Information:** “Which is the most essential part of the argument?” and “Which statement is least essential?” are examples of questions that demand a careful analysis of the passage, weeding out any unnecessary details and identifying the key components that contribute to the message at large.

## Strategies for Mastery

- ❑ **Careful Reading, Not Hasty Speed:** These passages are brief, but they merit thoughtful consideration. It is important to carefully read each sentence, each word focusing on any nuances or hidden meanings.
- ❑ **Thinking Outside the Text:** Let go of the need for precise responses. Develop your critical thinking abilities to connect seemingly unrelated parts of the passage, deduce implications, and ability to read between the lines.
- ❑ **Accepting Practice:** It is very beneficial to regularly practise with small comprehension tasks from past years’ exam papers and other study resources. This promotes confidence and skill development when answering these particular kinds of questions.

## HOW IS RC IN UPSC – CSAT DIFFERENT FROM OTHER EXAMS?

In contrast to many exams that emphasise comprehension at the surface level, the UPSC RC requires in-depth analysis and critical thinking.

**Consider this:** Reading a passage is not the same as engaging in an intellectual conversation with the author, during which you will analyse points of contention, recognise presumptions, and even speculate on possible outcomes. It’s about exploring the “why” and “how” in addition to the “what.”

## Consider it as Follows

- ❑ **Exams at the surface level:** To get the main points of a newspaper article, you skim it usually.
- ❑ **UPSC Reading Comprehension:** Examining a research paper means breaking down the methodology, assessing the results, and thinking about how these might affect further research.

## Here’s What Makes the UPSC RC Unique

- ❑ **Content Depth:** Questions go beyond simply understanding the meaning of the text. They require you to think critically about the author’s message and implications.
  - For example, a passage might discuss a new government policy. A UPSC RC question might ask you to analyse the potential impact of the policy on different groups of people, or to identify any ethical concerns.
- ❑ **Interdisciplinary Approach:** Passages can cover a wide range of topics, from polity and history to science and social issues. This means that you need to have a broad knowledge base and be able to think about how different disciplines are connected.
  - For example, a passage might discuss the relationship between climate change and poverty. A UPSC RC question might ask you to explain how climate change might affect the livelihoods of poor people in different parts of the world.
- ❑ **Application of Knowledge:** It is not just about understanding the text; it is also about applying your knowledge to real-world situations. Questions might ask you to draw connections between different concepts, analyse the impact of a policy decision, or propose solutions to complex challenges.
  - For example, a passage might discuss problems related to waste management. A UPSC RC question might ask you to select the best possible policy to solve the problem discussed in the passage.
- ❑ **Language Complexity:** Passages are often written in complex and nuanced language. This means that you need to have strong reading comprehension skills and be able to understand sophisticated vocabulary and sentence structures.
  - For example, a passage might use literary devices such as metaphors or synonyms. A UPSC RC question might ask you to explain the meaning of these devices and how they are to affect the central idea of the passage.
- ❑ **Reading between the Lines:** Questions assess your ability to think critically about the text. This means that you need to be able to go beyond the surface level of the text and to identify assumptions, biases, and logical fallacies.

- For example, a passage might present a biased argument. A UPSC RC question might ask you to identify the bias and to explain how it affects the author’s argument.
- **Current Affairs Integration:** Passages may be related to contemporary issues and recent events. This means that you need to stay up-to-date on current affairs and be able to understand their implications.
  - For example, a passage might discuss a recent protest movement. A UPSC RC question might ask you to explain the causes of the protest and its potential impact on society.

## LENGTH OF THE PASSAGE

### Mainstays

The “usual mainstays” consist of 100–250 word paragraphs. Depending on the depth and complexity of the content, these standard-length readings typically cover a range of topics in modest detail. The number of questions based on these passages can range from one to six.

For instance, a 250-word short essay outlining the most recent developments in the field of renewable energy technology. It might discuss various technological kinds, their benefits and drawbacks, and their possible effects on the environment. Factual memory (identifying a particular technology), analysis (contrasting the advantages of two technologies), and inference (projecting future trends) are a few examples of possible question types.

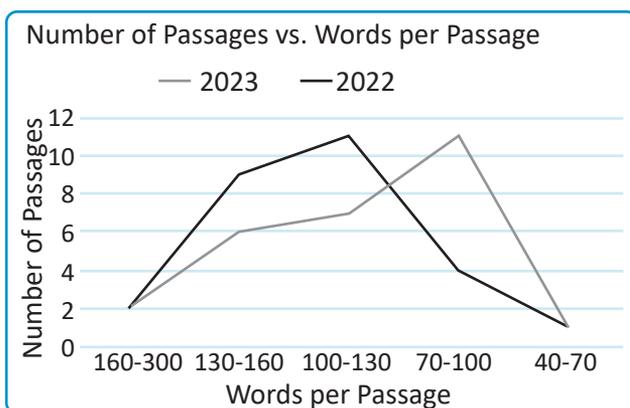


Fig. 1.2: Number of Passages vs. Words per Passage

### Micro Comprehension

Short passages of with 50-100 word range have been included in the paper as a new question type since 2015. These short passages though look easy at first, are challenging because they contain single questions that need quick thinking. It resembles a little exam that gauges your comprehension of the main ideas covered in the subject. A 50 word passage could include a historical narrative emphasising the value of diplomacy. You can be asked to determine the story’s lesson or how it relates to current diplomatic circumstances in the single question.

Although there has been a steady blending of the two types over the last few years (from 2015 to 2022), the precise quantity of mini-passages may differ. The micro comprehensions were 20 in 2015 whereas just 5 in 2022. It is crucial to be ready for both formats because of the uncertainty.

## TOPICS COVERED IN READING COMPREHENSION

Numerous topics are covered in the reading comprehension section of CSAT. The UPSC seeks to evaluate applicants on a wide range of topics, including social issues, science, polity, economics, history, and current affairs. The purpose of the passages is to assess applicants’ logical reasoning, understanding, and ability to extract pertinent information from textual material.

While the specific topics may vary from year to year, some common themes that UPSC has included in recent years for the reading comprehension passages are:

- **Current Affairs:** Think of the idea of going into the exam room having just read the morning news. Some of the passages may discuss current government programmes like the National Education Policy or important rulings made by the Supreme Court on data privacy. International events such as the G20 meeting or the crisis in Ukraine might potentially be included in these analyses.
  - **Example:** A Passage outlining the possible effects on the home car industry of the recently formed trade agreement between Japan and India.
- **Social Issues:** These sections address issues like caste discrimination, rural-urban migration, and the digital divide, serving as a mirror to India’s social fabric. You might come across conversations about the problems the LGBTQ+ community faces or the effectiveness of initiatives aimed at reducing poverty.
  - **Example:** A section that offers a critical analysis of how indigenous populations living in coastal regions are affected by climate change.
- **Economics:** These sections delve into complex subjects including monetary policy, inflation, and the effects of foreign direct investment. Be ready to weigh the benefits and downsides of governmental initiatives such as the Goods and Services Tax (GST) or demonetization.
  - An example might be a piece that contrasts the economic models that China and India have chosen and describes how each country has developed.

- ❑ **Science and Technology:** These sections update you on the latest developments in science and technology, from the thrilling field of space exploration to the moral conundrums presented by the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Talks about gene editing, renewable energy, or cybersecurity issues might come up.
  - **Example:** A section examining the possible advantages and disadvantages of self-driving automobiles as well as how they might affect city transit networks.
- ❑ **Environment:** These chapters highlight urgent environmental issues like pollution, deforestation, and climate change. You might come across talks about the effects of natural disasters, measures to save wildlife, or sustainable development initiatives.
  - **Example:** A section outlining the effectiveness of different policies put in place to reduce air pollution in significant Indian cities.
- ❑ **Politics and Governance:** These sections address issues including election changes, federalism, and the function of bureaucracy in carrying out legislative measures. It may require you to evaluate the benefits and drawbacks of various political structures as well as the difficulties brought on by corruption.
  - **Example:** A section outlining the parallels and discrepancies between the ways in which parliamentary democracies such as the United States and India operate.
- ❑ **Philosophy and Ethics:** Passages on this topic force you to apply critical thinking to moral problems, philosophical ideas, and ethical conundrums. You might come across conversations about the idea of justice, human rights, or how technology affects people's lives.
  - **Example:** A section discussing the moral ramifications of using facial recognition software for widespread surveillance.
- ❑ **Political Science:** You are forced to consider ideas like liberty, equality, and the fundamentals of government in such passages. Political science is the study of concepts such as power, justice, and Rights. Passages based on this topic are more academic in nature.
  - An example would be a critical examination of how well affirmative action laws work to achieve social justice using a variety of theoretical frameworks related to equality and discrimination.

## NATURE/TYPES OF QUESTIONS

1. Assumption Based
2. Implication Based
3. Content Based

4. Based on the Crux of the Passage
5. Central Message Based
6. Inference Based

In the book's later chapters, each kind of question has been covered in great detail.

## NUMBER OF QUESTIONS PER PASSAGE

Number of questions per passage: In the CSAT Paper 2 Reading Comprehension section, there are typically three to four questions per passage. But there might be small differences. Given in the chart is the analysis of selected passages from the last three years. Recent trends indicate that UPSC has shifted its emphasis from longer passages to more content-dense Micro Comprehensions with a single question, as opposed to the more traditional approach.

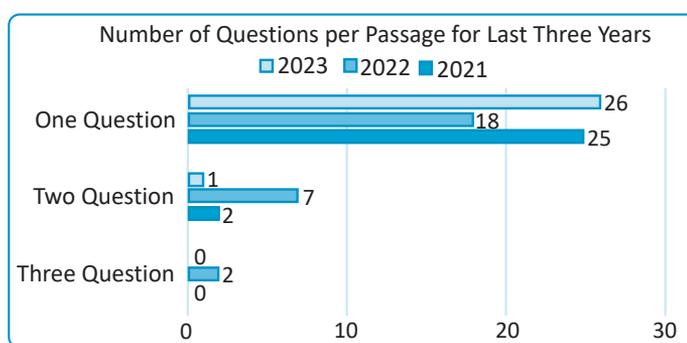


Fig. 1.3: Number of Questions per Passage for Last Three Years

## HOW TO PREPARE FOR THIS SECTION?

- ❑ Navigating the Reading Comprehension section in the paper is a challenging journey. Success here goes beyond a strong vocabulary and reading speed—it demands a strategic approach to dissecting passages and deciphering questions. In the following sections, we will delve into key areas that pave the way for effective preparation, offering insights and techniques to conquer the Reading Comprehension challenge.
- ❑ A good understanding of vocabulary and the ability to read fast are essential, but equally important is having a clear method for breaking down passages and figuring out what the questions are asking. By addressing these key areas, you can better prepare for this section.
- ❑ Instead of just memorising words, with the right mindset and techniques, you can navigate this part of the exam successfully. It is about adopting a smart approach to enhance your readiness and increase your chances of getting the required accuracy in the exam. Let's explore some effective ways to be well-prepared for the Reading Comprehension section.

## RATE YOUR CURRENT READING SKILLS

The comprehension passages will have topics from various subjects which you will cover in GS and Optional Subject (if it is a Humanities Subject) syllabus. However the question of the passage will be directly based on the passage only. Infact, you are advised to not go beyond the passage and infer meanings on the basis of your personal knowledge.

Hence candidates are primarily required to have the ability to comprehend the passage, decipher the message of the question and select the most appropriate option. All three within a limited time frame along with the pressure of the examination hall is hard to withstand and thus requires rigorous and regular practice to overcome this hurdle.

The following points will help you to analyse your current level of solving in reading comprehensions based on your current language skills:

### Apt Reading Speed

- Apt Reading speed, which is the ability to read with simultaneous comprehension with least number of readings of passage; stands as a pivotal skill in mastering the Reading Comprehension section. The importance lies in the limited time available to comprehend lengthy passages and answer associated questions.
- An adept reader can effectively grasp the content in one single reading, allowing for a more thorough understanding within the time constraints. To evaluate your reading ability, practice timed readings, noting comprehension levels. Monitor how quickly you absorb information without sacrificing understanding. This skill not only aids in efficient information absorption but also ensures effective utilisation of the allocated time during the examination.

### Vocabulary

- A robust vocabulary emerges as a crucial skill in navigating Reading Comprehensions. Proficiency in vocabulary enhances the ability to grasp nuanced meanings within passages. A good vocabulary not only facilitates an accurate interpretation of passage and associated question but also gives you an edge in your reading time and time required by you to solve a RC question.
- To evaluate your vocabulary, you can go through some of the complex passages related to topics you are unfamiliar with. For example if you haven't studied Artificial Intelligence yet you can go through a passage on this topic and check if you are able to comprehend the meanings of unfamiliar words in context of the passage.

- Please note that it is almost impossible to know the meaning of each and every word but our purpose here is to develop vocabulary to the extent that we can comprehend what the author of the passage is trying to convey. Noting unfamiliar words and understanding their context will enhance your vocabulary over time.

### Focus and Concentration

- Amidst the exam environment and pressure of the situation it might be overwhelming to sit with high focus and full concentration. However, even a lapse of concentration can force you to lose grasp of the meaning of the passage you would be reading and will force you to start reading the entire passage over again, losing valuable time you could have devoted to other difficult questions.
- Lack of concentration not only disturbs your rhythm for the question in hand but also takes away your valuable time from the easy questions in other sections.
- To evaluate your focus you can sit for a full length mock test of CSAT and a rough page. Whenever you come across a RC question, after solving the question you can note down how many readings you took before marking an option and whether your understanding of the passage is complete in the last reading. This will make you aware how focused you are while solving RC questions and how it decreases over the course of exam time.

### Ability to Comprehend the Meaning

- Though a few RC questions can be done by skimming the passage, generally a comprehensive understanding of the passage is required in majority of the questions. Such questions like assumptions, inferences, implications, crux of the passage and others require you to grasp the import of the passage and the central theme behind the author's message.
- To evaluate your comprehension skills, you can take the results from your concentration test and check the number of readings you took to understand the passage. You will have to have a clear understanding of the underlying tone of the author to correctly answer most of the questions.

### Question Interpretation

- The question interpretation is an important ability to master before choosing the most appropriate answer. It is often the case in RC questions, that after elimination of two options you will be left with a choice among two options.
- Both of the options would suitably go with the passage but understanding of the question and associated keywords will help you mark the most appropriate choice.

- ❑ You should note down such questions and their explanation while solving previous years questions to have a better understanding of the mind behind the UPSC question framers. This is of utmost importance to deal with RC in CSAT when you have acquired all other skills of comprehension and interpretation.

After having a glance over the major skills required to get the hold of RC questions, let's dive into the strategy to incorporate these skills.

## HOW TO DEVELOP THESE SKILLS?

Based on your self-assessment, identify areas requiring focused improvement. You should focus on your weak areas first and then strengthen your strong areas of comprehension. Following strategies can be adopted to hone the skills required for increased accuracy in reading comprehension:

### Reading Speed and Accuracy

- ❑ Reading speed is an important skill due to the time bound nature of the examination. However, one should take care that the understanding and comprehension is not compromised in an attempt to increase the reading speed. It is always better to read a passage for once and comprehend it fully than to read it many times over in haste and still unsure of the central theme or message.
- ❑ The nature and complexity of the passage along with your basic hold of the topic matter might affect the reading speed of your passage during examination. For example a student with a political science background will read a passage related to his subject matter fast in comparison to others.
- ❑ However, a decent reading speed should be developed so that you are able to understand a 130 word passage in a minute and half. To develop this engage in timed reading exercises with diverse materials like academic articles, editorials, and diverse newspaper sections. And while reading these try to summarise the central idea in mind after completing reading an article/topic. This practice will aid you in your GS/Optional Note-Making too.
- ❑ Utilise online tools and apps to track your progress and optimise your reading method. Always give timed mock tests/practice tests to keep a record of your attempts vs time taken. With regular practice for a month or two you can reach at a good level of speed.

### Vocabulary Expansion

- ❑ Proficiency and Vocabulary in comprehension is of utmost importance to get a grasp of the underlying

tone of the author's message in the passage. The vocabulary skill is not only important to solve the Reading Comprehension questions with high accuracy but also helpful in your GS answer writing skills.

- ❑ Using subject specific keywords gives an edge to your answers. Students with science background are usually not well versed with the vocabulary of the humanities stream. This opportunity will help you give some focus on this skill to get a holistic development from the exam point of view.
- ❑ To enhance your vocabulary skills you can read GS/ Optional subject matter books which are of academic nature; magazines and websites relevant to UPSC; and newspaper editorials. You should focus on the keywords used by authors on specific issues and understand the context of usage in the passage. You can note down difficult words and their meanings.

### Comprehension

- ❑ Comprehension is the most undermined and overlooked skill when it comes to Reading comprehension passages. To understand the central theme and the underlying tone of the author's message it is a must.
- ❑ The choice of most appropriate answer often is derived from a well comprehended message of the passage and hence it is necessary to actively develop your comprehension ability.
- ❑ To do so you need to actively engage with the passage, questioning its meaning, the author's intent, and potential underlying assumptions. Practice summarising passages in your own words and identifying main points and arguments.
- ❑ The technique often used for comprehension is visualising the passage. In simple words, you have to create a mental visual of the text you read to form a picture in your mind. This helps you to actively engage with the passage. Whenever you read a message of the passage you will try to fit it in your mental image and this will help you in actively recalling them while going through the option. However this tactic requires practice and you need to read a comprehension, an article or an editorial daily with the same strategy to do it effectively and efficiently in the exam in a limited time.
- ❑ In fact, whatever subject you read in GS, you can adopt a strategy to create a mental image in your mind to understand the gist of the concept. This single effort will have doubled benefits as your comprehension skills will sharpen and the retention of GS topics will increase.

### Carefully Analysing a Question

- ❑ The type of the questions along with the options provided may often confuse you even if you have read the passage. Solving the types of questions which are asked along with their associated keywords (Assumptions, inference etc) to develop the ability to dissect questions, is the required practice one needs to do.
- ❑ You should practise a RC question in a day or two that has relevant questions based on previous year patterns will help you get hold of the major keywords and associated questions. Identify keywords that signal specific types of information (e.g., main idea, author's tone, supporting evidence) and tailor your reading approach accordingly.

### Time Management Efficiency

- ❑ There are 27 RC on an average during the exam that are spread throughout the paper. One should aim to solve all the RC questions first or later at one go. However your strength is, you should practise solving mock tests under timed conditions to refine your ability to prioritise questions and allocate time effectively. Develop strategies for tackling challenging passages or questions without compromising overall exam performance.
- ❑ Do not try to overspeed and haste over the questions unnecessarily and compromise with your accuracy, rather you should focus on decent and reasonable speed, comprehensive understanding of the passage and question and effective elimination strategy to reach to the right answer.

## RESOURCES/MATERIALS

Choosing the right resources is paramount for efficient and targeted preparation. Dedicated hard work in the right direction is needed to prepare for this examination in time with maximum efficiency. You should keep your sources limited with a major focus on practice and solving questions. You can consider utilising the a few of the following resources:

### Previous Year's UPSC CSAT Papers

- ❑ Whether it is GS, Optional or CSAT paper, the first thing one should always start with is the previous year questions. They not only make you ready for the type of question thrown at you on your D-Day but also will help you delve deep into the patterns and analysis of the questions put forward by the examiner.
- ❑ You should aim for doing last 5 years paper to get a holistic understanding of the pattern, types of questions, keywords and subject matter of the passages that are put forward by UPSC.

- ❑ After solving you must also analyse the explanation of the options so that you get to know what mistakes you did and whether your thought flow was correct or not. In depth Analysis of previous year questions will probably do half of the work towards your goal.

### Quality Mock Tests and Practice Papers

- ❑ One should not look down on the effects of the exam environment when one gets confident on the knowledge and skill. It is often observed that once you sit in an examination hall, the pressure in the hall tends to reduce your efficiency and concentration.
- ❑ Hence you should give mocks in the simulated environment, (you can go for mock tests of premier institutes or create an environment at home with a stopwatch). Practise at least 5 CSAT papers in a simulated environment to get hold of the time and examination pressure.

### English Newspapers, Magazines and Websites

- ❑ Regular reading of The Hindu, Indian Express, Down To Earth etc. will expose you to a variety of writing styles, current affairs, and complex vocabulary. It is not only necessary for your GS paper but also to prepare you for tough and complex comprehension that might cross your way during examination.
- ❑ Noting on difficult words, comprehending complex sentences in the passage and understanding the central theme of editorials will build your comprehension skills for greater good. Be regular with your newspapers and keep doing it in a timed manner.
- ❑ While reading an editorial try to match the summary which you create in mind with what is given in the concluding remarks of an editorial. It will help you build your comprehension skills to a great extent.
- ❑ You can also refer to websites such as The Diplomat and ORF (Observer Research Foundation) magazines to read and comprehend pressing issues worldwide. This not only helps you to keep in touch with the current worldly issues for your GS preparation but also boosts your comprehension solving skills. Utilise these tools to supplement your preparation.

### Subject-Specific Books and Articles

- ❑ There are some books that are directly based on GS/Optional Subjects. Eg- 'Why Bharat Matters' - by S. Jaishankar, 'Pax Indica' by Shashi Tharoor. Such books not only develop your holistic understanding in GS subjects but also builds up your comprehension skills for RC questions.

- ❑ Only if you have sufficient time in hand, prominent books on the subject matter of polity, society, economy, environment and society can be read to aid you in comprehension and basic understanding.
- ❑ Apart from that if your optional subject belongs to the humanities stream, try to read academic books for that rather than just relying on coaching notes!

## TIME AND EFFORT DEDICATION

It can be inferred that dedicated and consistent efforts are necessary to develop your comprehension skills. Hence no matter at what comprehension level you are, you should in one way or another invest some time to be in touch with comprehension and associated skills. You can probably practise them while covering the syllabus of your optional or studying for core GS subjects. However, if you are a complete beginner you should have a dedicated time slot of not less than an hour to hone this skill. Here's a guide for efficient time allocation from beginner to advanced level. Choose according to your initial assessment that will best suit you-

### Initial Skill Building

- ❑ In the preliminary stage, allocate 30-60 minutes daily over a span of 2 months to concentrate on refining reading speed, enhancing vocabulary, and honing critical thinking skills. Dedicate this time to perusing daily news editorials or excerpts from magazines to establish a solid foundation.
- ❑ It is crucial to integrate visualisation techniques into your study routine, drawing insights from diverse sources. This approach not only cultivates a swift reading pace and an enriched vocabulary but also fosters the development of critical thinking abilities. Consistent, focused efforts during this phase lay the groundwork for a comprehensive skill set, equipping you for success in the actual examination.

### Targeted Practice

- ❑ After laying a strong foundation, allocate 1 hour each day to engage in activities such as solving mock tests, scrutinising previous year's papers, and practising with a variety of comprehension materials.
- ❑ This phase of your preparation is essential for honing your application of acquired skills, gauging your progress, and familiarising yourself with the exam pattern. By consistently exposing yourself to diverse question formats and time constraints, you enhance your ability to handle the challenges posed by the Reading Comprehension section.

## Maintenance and Refinement

- ❑ Approaching the exam date, streamline your daily practice to 30-60 minutes while prioritising sharpness. Focus on regular engagement with short passages and question sets to sustain your proficiency. This strategic adjustment allows you to maintain a high level of readiness without overwhelming yourself as the exam draws near.
- ❑ Consistent practice with concise materials ensures that your comprehension skills remain sharp and adaptable to the varied question types. Strike a balance between regular reinforcement and preserving mental acuity, aiming to enter the exam hall with a well-maintained level of preparedness.

## HOW TO APPROACH READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS IN EXAM?

Distinguished from various other examinations, the Reading Comprehension segment within the CSAT paper is uniquely intertwined among Math and General Ability questions. Mastering this section extends beyond possessing a robust vocabulary and a reasonable reading speed. It necessitates adopting a strategic approach, maintaining composure, and possessing the adeptness to navigate through the maze of complex passages and intricate questions within the constraints of a limited time frame.

This particular section is designed to equip you with indispensable tools and tactical insights essential for conquering comprehension challenges in the examination hall. These valuable resources and strategies aim not only to facilitate your understanding of the passages but also to empower you to tackle questions effectively.

## TIME PER QUESTION/SPEED

- ❑ Efficiently managing time is pivotal in conquering the Reading Comprehension section. Dedicate approximately 2-3 minutes to each passage, adapting based on its length and complexity. Start with shorter passages, reserving more time for the lengthier ones.
- ❑ It is vital to emphasise that, while speed is important, comprehension takes precedence. You can read the question once before reading the passage but ensure a thorough understanding of the passage before delving into the associated options of the question.
- ❑ This strategic approach optimises time usage and augments comprehension skills, fostering a more precise response to the questions.
- ❑ Maintaining a delicate balance between speed and comprehension is crucial. Focus on grasping the content thoroughly to adeptly navigate varying passage intricacies, ensuring a strategic and effective approach.

## CAREFUL READING

- ❑ Avoid the temptation to quickly skim through the passage. Even though it might seem like a time-saver, critical questions require a careful and thorough reading. Go through the passage word by word, paying close attention to important details, transitions, and the author's tone. Mark important points and names with underlines to help identify them later with ease.
- ❑ Also, make notes in the margins next to questions that relate to specific parts of the passage for easy reference. This detailed approach will improve your understanding, making it easier to answer questions accurately.

## VISUALISE

- ❑ Boost your comprehension by visualising the information. Picture the scenes, characters, or processes described in the passage. This technique proves especially beneficial for passages involving historical events or scientific concepts.
- ❑ Immerse yourself in the content mentally, creating a vivid mental picture of what's being conveyed. This imaginative approach not only aids in understanding complex subjects but also contributes to a more engaging and memorable reading experience.

## COMPREHENSION GRASPING ESSENCE

- ❑ Avoid getting overwhelmed by every detail. Concentrate on understanding the main idea, the author's central argument, and the overall tone of the passage. Identify supporting evidence and counterpoints, and ask yourself, "What is the author trying to convey?"
- ❑ Delving too deeply into intricate details may lead to information overload and confusion, increasing the likelihood of selecting incorrect options. Stay focused on the main idea and theme to navigate through the passage effectively.

## TRY TO GET INTO AUTHOR'S MIND

- ❑ Examine the author's purpose, perspective, and possible biases in the passage. Take into account the context, including the genre, publication, and intended audience. This thorough analysis will empower you to respond effectively to questions that necessitate inferring meaning or interpreting the author's intent.
- ❑ By delving into these aspects, you gain a deeper comprehension of the passage's underlying motivations and nuances, aiding you in providing accurate and insightful answers. Understanding the broader context allows for a more nuanced interpretation of the text, contributing to your success in choosing the correct option.

## PRE-JUDGE OR PRE-PHRASE

- ❑ Upon grasping the passage and reviewing the question, endeavour to formulate an initial answer based on your comprehension before examining the provided choices. Opt for the option that aligns most closely with your preconceived response, as it is likely the most fitting answer.
- ❑ Employ this method when your comprehension proficiency has reached a commendable level, thereby elevating the precision of your selected option. This strategic approach proves advantageous, fostering effective decision-making and contributing to increased accuracy in answering a RC question.

## ESSENTIAL TIPS AND TRICKS

- ❑ **First, read the questions:** Prior to delving into the passage, take a moment to scan the questions. This preliminary step aids in understanding the specific information you need to look for during your reading. It allows you to focus on the relevant details and navigate through the passage more efficiently. By aligning your attention with the questions you can effectively locate pertinent information, facilitating a more effective approach.
- ❑ **Beware of Tempting Options:** Initiate the process by eliminating options that are clearly incorrect. Subsequently, scrutinise the remaining choices, conducting a meticulous comparison with the information present in the passage. Opt for the option that aligns most closely with the textual evidence, rather than selecting the one that may sound the most persuasive.
- ❑ **Don't get Bugged Down in one Question:** If you encounter a particularly challenging question, it's advisable to move on and attempt another passage. If you've successfully eliminated two options, proceed with attempting the question and then move forward, since if you come back to the same question at the end, you will have to read the whole passage again, not a very efficient way! Prolonged focus on a single question can jeopardise your overall performance, and efficient time management is crucial.
- ❑ **Focus on Keywords:** Frequently, UPSC presents options that are directly mentioned in the passage but may not align with the criteria specified in the question. Therefore, it is crucial to ensure a clear understanding of the question and to mark an answer only after thoroughly analysing all the options. This discerning approach prevents falling into the trap of selecting seemingly relevant information from the passage that does not precisely address the question's requirements.

- ❑ **Stay calm and focused:** In times of anxiety, it is important to recognize its potential to cloud judgement. Take deep breaths, foster a positive attitude, and trust in the preparation you've undertaken. Remind yourself that you possess the necessary tools to succeed. Maintaining composure is crucial during the paper. By staying calm and confident, you can approach questions with clarity and make sound decisions. Embrace the mindset that you are well-equipped for the challenge.

## EXAMINATION TRAPS OF UPSC

UPSC tends to follow a consistent pattern in the passages for several years leading up to the examination. The challenge in Reading Comprehension arises from a deliberate pattern that includes specific elements, and aspirants often make errors related to these elements. This series of lessons aims to highlight key considerations before attempting a comprehension question. Being conscious of these lessons significantly decreases the likelihood of falling into common traps set by UPSC.

### Implicit vs Explicit Options in the Passage

- ❑ UPSC intentionally presents options closely linked to the passage but beyond its scope. Due to our familiarity with General Studies subjects, there's a tendency to let our pre-existing knowledge cloud our understanding of UPSC passages.
- ❑ It is crucial to avoid this and recognize that the most suitable answer is the one directly mentioned or related to the passage. By refraining from letting external knowledge influence our interpretation, we increase the accuracy of our responses in the Reading Comprehension section of the UPSC exam, aligning our choices with the specific information provided in the given passages.

### Options Containing Extreme Words

- ❑ like ONLY, NECESSARILY, PERMANENT, TOTALLY, COMPLETELY ETC are true only if directly mentioned in the passage. - UPSC frequently employs a deceptive tactic by including an extreme version of a claim in the options, making it appear incorrect.
- ❑ However, there are instances when the extreme option itself is directly mentioned in the passage. Therefore, it is essential to carefully evaluate extreme options and eliminate them if they are not explicitly supported by the passage. This discerning approach helps in avoiding the trap of dismissing correct answers due to their seemingly extreme nature.

## The Keywords Asked in the Question Gives you the Clue

- ❑ In certain instances, all options for a question may appear correct as they are directly extracted from the passage. However, in such cases, it is crucial to focus on keywords that provide clarity about the question's requirements.
- ❑ For example, if the question pertains to the assumption of the passage and the options consist of statements directly mentioned in the passage, these options are incorrect. This is because they represent information or implications from the passage, rather than the underlying assumptions shaping the passage's message.

### Read all the options

- ❑ Often, a statement for a particular question may be correct and directly derived from the passage, but it might only capture the message of a specific part and not the entirety of the passage. In such cases, a more suitable option is often placed just below the incorrect one, reflecting the complete message of the passage.
- ❑ Therefore, it is essential to read all the options thoroughly and select the most appropriate one. By considering the entirety of the passage's message, you enhance your ability to make accurate choices in the Exam.

### Don't go Beyond the Scope of the Passage

- In CSAT comprehension, you may encounter options that appear correct based on your general studies knowledge. However, these options are intentionally crafted to lure you into extrapolating the passage's message.
- The risk is particularly high in questions where you need to determine how many options are correct. Therefore, it's crucial to adhere strictly to the passage, reading it carefully and objectively. Avoid extrapolating information beyond the passage's scope. By maintaining this focused approach, you can minimise the risk of falling into traps and ensure a more accurate response to questions.

### Generalised Statements in the Options are often not True

- ❑ The passage may discuss a specific event, process, or characteristics, and the options may attempt to generalise this particular instance to larger groups. Be vigilant for such generalisations and consider eliminating them. Even if a characteristic holds true for the majority, it doesn't necessarily imply that it is universally true for all members of the group.

- Therefore, generalised and vague statements, even if applicable to most, are often incorrect. By being discerning about the scope and extent of statements, you enhance your ability to identify accurate responses that align with the passage's intended meaning.

## ADDITIONAL TIPS BEFORE EXAM

### Analyse your Mistakes

Following each mock test, carefully analyse the questions you answered incorrectly to pinpoint where you went wrong. Learn from these mistakes and refine your approach for subsequent attempts. Identifying the areas of misunderstanding or oversight is crucial for enhancing your overall performance in the paper.

### Develop a Mental Checklist

Formulate a mental checklist of steps to adhere to when approaching each question. This systematic approach

guarantees coverage of all essential aspects, minimising the likelihood of errors in the exam. Include key elements such as understanding the question, identifying keywords, referring to the passage, and critically assessing options. This checklist acts as a strategic guide, enhancing your consistency and efficiency in addressing questions.

In conclusion, mastering the Reading Comprehension section paper requires a strategic and disciplined approach. By incorporating essential lessons incorporated in this section, candidates can navigate this segment with greater precision. Embracing a methodical mindset, cultivating effective time management skills, and continually refining one's approach through practice are key components of successful preparation. Remember to stay calm during the exam, prioritise accuracy over speed, and leverage a mental checklist to ensure comprehensive coverage of each question. By diligently following these guidelines, candidates can ensure that CSAT exam does not become a hurdle in their UPSC aspiration.

## Types/Different Ways of Asking RC with Solved PYQs

### ASSUMPTION BASED QUESTION

- There are two main types of assumption-based questions. The first type involves identifying assumptions made by the passage's author to communicate the central message or theme. In these questions, candidates analyse the passage to recognize the underlying beliefs or ideas shaping the author's perspective.
- The second type of assumption-based questions provide statements and asks candidates to determine which ones can be assumed based on the message conveyed in the passage. Here, candidates need to carefully consider the information presented in the passage and infer implicit assumptions that support or relate to the statements given.
- In essence, assumption-based questions go beyond surface-level comprehension and demand a deeper examination of the thought process behind the passage. Candidates must showcase their aptitude for logical reasoning by identifying the implicit assumptions that underpin the ideas presented in the passage, demonstrating a comprehensive grasp of the content.

### ASSOCIATED KEYWORDS

- The associated keywords present in this type of questions are "most logical **assumption**" "most valid **assumption**", "**assumption** underlying the message of passage", "**assumption** if true negates the central message".

- All the assumption based questions will have this word and this mentioned word allows you to go a little outside the related central theme of the passage. Because an assumption will not be directly mentioned in the passage and hence the options that are explicitly mentioned in the passage are incorrect.

### NATURE OF ASSUMPTION BASED QUESTION

- These questions are a bit tough, unlike other questions that check you on implicit messages in the passage, as these questions need you to think more deeply. They want you to figure out ideas that the writer doesn't directly talk about in the passage. So, these questions have moderate to hard difficulty level.
- Answering them well means going beyond just knowing the main points of the passage. You need to notice the hidden assumptions, the things the writer believes without saying them out loud. So, these questions are like a puzzle that tests how well you can really understand and think about what you're reading.

#### Tips and Tricks

- Avoid quickly scanning through the passage. Take your time to read the passage carefully and fully understand it.

- Identify and underline keywords in the passage, particularly phrases that capture the central theme. Assumptions are often related to this central theme.
- Focus on the concluding remarks of the passage. Authors might make assumptions while wrapping up, so pay close attention to these statements.
- While assumption questions encourage creative thinking, ensure that your assumptions stay within the passage's scope. They should be directly based on or challenge something explicitly mentioned in the passage.

## SOLVED PYQs

**Directions:** Read the following passages and answer the items that follow the passages. Your answers to these items should be based on the passages only.

### Passage

In India, the segregation of municipal waste at source is rare. Recycling is mostly with the informal sector. More than three-fourths of the municipal budget goes into collection and transportation, which leaves very little for processing/resource recovery and disposal. Where does waste-to-energy fit into all this? Ideally it fits in the chain after segregation (between wet waste and rest), collection, recycling, and before getting to the landfill. Which technology is most appropriate in converting waste to energy depends on what is in the waste (that is biodegradable versus non-biodegradable component) and its calorific value. The biodegradable component of India's municipal solid waste is a little over 50 per cent, and biomethanation offers a major solution for processing this. **(UPSC CSAT 2023)**

**Q1.** Based on the above passage, the following assumptions have been made:

1. Collection, processing and segregation of municipal waste should be with government agencies.
2. Resource recovery and recycling require technological inputs that can be best handled by private sector enterprises.

Which of the assumptions given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only                      (b) 2 only  
(c) Both 1 and 2              (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**Ans:** (d)

**Explanation:**

**Statement 1 is Incorrect:** The passage mentions that 'More than three-fourths of the municipal budget

goes into collection and transportation, which leaves very little for processing/resource recovery and disposal. Thus, this statement seems to assume the opposite of what the passage actually infers.

**Statement 2 is Incorrect:** Though the statement talks about technological intervention, it does not comment upon the efficiency of the private or public sector.

### Passage

Pharmaceutical patents grant protection to the patentee for the duration of the patent term. The patentees enjoy the liberty to determine the price of medicines, which is time-limited to the period of monopoly, but could be unaffordable to the public. Such patent protection offered to the patentees is believed to benefit the public over the longer term through innovations and research and development (R&D), although it comes at a cost, in the nature of higher prices for patented medicine. The patent—provides the patentee with a legitimate mechanism to get returns on the costs incurred in innovation and research.

**(UPSC CSAT 2023)**

**Q2.** Based on the above passage, the following assumptions have been made:

1. Patent protection given to patentees puts a huge burden on the public's purchasing power in accessing patented medicines.
2. Dependence on other countries for pharmaceutical products is a huge burden for developing and poor countries.
3. Providing medicines to the public at affordable prices is a key goal during the public health policy design in many countries.
4. Governments need to find an appropriate balance between the rights of patentees and the requirements of the patients.

Which of the above assumptions are valid?

- (a) 1 and 2                      (b) 1 and 4  
(c) 3 and 4                      (d) 2 and 3

**Ans:** (b)

**Explanation:**

**Statement 1 is correct:** as it can be assumed by cautious reading of the second sentence of the passage - 'The patentees enjoy the liberty to determine the price of medicines, which is time-limited to the period of monopoly, but could be unaffordable to the public.' If something important is unaffordable then it can be assumed that it stresses the pocket of the public.

**Statement 2 is Incorrect:** as the passage nowhere touches upon the option statement and thus the statement is beyond the scope of the passage. The options must be marked correct or incorrect based on the information provided in the passage. Use of common knowledge, outside the scope of passage, must be avoided.

**Statement 3 is Incorrect:** as the option statement, though true in general, lies outside the scope of discussion in the passage.

**Statement 4 is Correct:** The passage talks about 'unaffordability' of the patented medicines, as well as the 'Such patent protection offered to the patentees is believed to benefit the public over the longer term..'. Thus, the need to balance the rights of the patentees and the requirements of the patients is clearly reflected in the passage.

**Directions:** Read the following passage and answer the two items that follow. Your answers to these items should be based on the passage only.

#### Passage

In some places in the world, the productivity of staples such as rice and wheat has reached a plateau. Neither new strains nor fancy agrochemicals are raising the yields. Nor is there much unfarmed land left that is suitable to be brought under the plough. If global temperature continues to rise, some places will become unsuitable for farming. Application of technology can help overcome these problems. Agricultural technology is changing fast. Much of this change is brought about by affluent farmers in the West/Americas. Techniques developed in the West are being adapted in some places to make tropical crops more productive. Technology is of little use if it is not adapted. In the developing world, that applies as much to existing farming techniques as it does to the latest advances in genetic modification. Extending to the smallholders and subsistence farmers of Africa and Asia the best of today's agricultural practices, in such simple matters as how much fertilisers to apply and when, would lead to a greatly increased availability of food for humanity. So would things like better roads and storage facilities, to allow for the carriage of surpluses to markets and reduce wastage. (UPSC CSAT 2022)

**Q3. Based on the above passage, the following assumptions have been made:**

1. Development of agricultural technology is confined to developed countries.
2. Agricultural technology is not adapted in developing countries.

**Which of the above assumptions is/are valid?**

- (a) 1 only                      (b) 2 only  
(c) Both 1 and 2              (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**Ans:** (d)

**Explanation:**

**Statement 1 is not Correct:** Firstly, the use of word 'developed countries' in the statement can be read as synonymous to the use of 'west' or 'Americas' in the passage. Further, the passage says, 'Agricultural technology is changing fast. Much of this change is brought about by affluent farmers in the West/Americas.' Thus, though most of technological development emerges from the west, the use of 'much' and not 'all' indicates that it is not confined to the west.

**Statement 2 is not Correct:** The passage clearly states that 'Techniques developed in the West are being adapted in some places to make tropical crops more productive.' Thus, it negates the assumption that technological changes are not adapted in developing countries

**Q4. Based on the above passage, the following assumptions have been made:**

1. Poor countries need to bring about change in their existing farming techniques.
2. Developed countries have better infrastructure and they waste less food.

**Which of the above assumptions is/are valid?**

- (a) 1 only                      (b) 2 only  
(c) Both 1 and 2              (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**Ans:** (a)

**Explanation:**

**Statement 1 is Correct:** The passage states that 'Technology is of little use if it is not adapted. In the developing world, that applies as much to existing farming techniques as it does to the latest advances in genetic.' Further, it also says that 'So would things like better roads and storage facilities, to allow for the carriage of surpluses to markets and reduce wastage.' Thus, poor countries must adapt newer farming techniques to reduce wastage and carry surpluses to the market.

**Statement 2 is Incorrect:** The passage provides no comparison in terms of the scale of infrastructural development. Further, it does not make it clear if the developed countries waste less food or not. Technology or infrastructure are just two of the many factors that determine the wastage of food, thus, it would be wrong to assume that developed countries waste less food based on the limited information provided in the passage.

### Passage

With respect to what are called denominations of religion, if everyone is left to be a judge of his own religion, there is no such thing as religion that is wrong; but if they are to be a judge of each other's religion, there is no such thing as a religion that is right, and therefore all the world is right or all the world is wrong in the matter of religion.

(UPSC CSAT 2021)

**Q5. What is the most logical assumption that can be made from the passage given above?**

- (a) No man can live without adhering to some religious denomination.
- (b) It is the duty of everyone to propagate one's religious denomination.
- (c) Religious denominations tend to ignore the unity of man.
- (d) Men do not understand their own religious denomination.

**Ans:** (c)

#### Explanation:

**Option (a) is Incorrect:** as the passage is confined to the discussion regarding the meaning of religion based on the perspective of the observer. It does not indicate, either explicitly or implicitly, whether a man can live without religion or not.

**Option (b) is Incorrect:** as propagation of religion is outside the limited scope of discussion in the passage regarding interpretations of religion.

**Option (c) is Correct:** As per the passage, people often see their own religion as right and others' religion as wrong. Thus, religious denominations bring out the factions present within the society.

**Option (d) is Incorrect:** The passage talks about interpretations of one's own religion and the religions of others'. Thus, lack of understanding cannot be a valid assumption, as understanding stems from interpretations.

## INFERENCE BASED QUESTION

- ❑ These questions necessitate candidates to extend their understanding beyond what is explicitly mentioned in the text and to delve into the realm of implicit meanings and potential consequences.
- ❑ The essence of inference-based questions lies in the capacity to make informed interpretations and extrapolations based on the presented information. Rather than relying solely on explicitly stated facts, candidates must engage in a deeper exploration of the passage to identify subtle cues, implicit relationships, and nuanced connections.

- ❑ Candidates are tasked with making educated guesses and drawing reasonable inferences, showcasing their ability to derive meaningful insights.

## ASSOCIATED KEYWORDS

- ❑ The associated keywords with these types of questions are "most logical and rational inference", "most critical inference". The "inference" etymologically means "carry forward". It is related to the steps in reasoning that allows one to move from premises to logical consequences.
- ❑ The most appropriate option would be directly related to the information given explicitly in the passage through logical reasoning. Understanding of this logical link between the messages in the passage and the options will guide you to reach the right answer.

## NATURE OF INFERENCE BASED QUESTIONS

- ❑ You can recognize these questions by looking for the word "inference". The options you get are like logical next steps based on what's said in the passage. To answer them correctly, it's crucial to pick the choice that you can directly figure out from the passage and that stays within what the passage talks about.
- ❑ When dealing with inference questions, you need to go a bit beyond just the obvious details. You have to think about what makes sense from the information given in the passage. Don't choose options that talk about things not mentioned in the passage. Stick to what's in the passage.
- ❑ The main rule for all kinds of questions is to stay within what the passage talks about. So, when you're choosing your answer, make sure it fits with what's written in the passage. This way, you show that you understand the information well and can make logical conclusions based on what you read.

### Tips and Tricks

- ❑ When you spot the inference related keyword, avoid quickly scanning through the passage. Take your time to read the passage carefully and fully understand it.
- ❑ Identify and underline keywords in the passage, particularly phrases that capture the central theme. Inferences are based on the 'step forward' of this central theme.
- ❑ Focus on the concluding remarks of the passage. When confused between 2 options related to inference mark the one that aligns with the concluding remarks.

- The most suitable option is the one that reflects the content of the whole passage whereas other confusing options will conclude a part of the passage leaving other parts unaddressed. Look for such options

## SOLVED PYQs

**Directions:** Read the following passages and answer the items that follow the passages. Your answers to these items should be based on the passages only.

### Passage

Good corporate governance structures encourage companies to provide accountability and control. A fundamental reason why corporate governance has moved onto the economic and political agenda worldwide has been the rapid growth in international capital markets. Effective corporate governance enhance access to external financing by firms, leading to greater investment, higher growth and employment. Investors look to place their funds where the standards of disclosure, of timely and accurate financial reporting, and of equal treatment to all stakeholders are met.

(UPSC CSAT 2023)

**Q6. Which of the following statements best reflects the logical inference from the passage given above?**

- It is an important agenda of the countries around the world to ensure access to good external financing.
- Good corporate governance improves the credibility of the firms.
- International capital markets ensure that the firms maintain good corporate governance.
- Good corporate governance paves the way for robust supply chains.

**Ans:** (b)

#### Explanation:

**Option (a) is Incorrect:** The statement may appear to be the answer if the passage is not cautiously read. It refers to an idea that is present in the passage. However, it is not the core idea of the passage. Countries look to ensure access to external financing by firms but they do it for greater investment, higher growth and employment.

**Option (c) is Incorrect:** The passage mentions how international capital market dynamics has brought the idea of corporate governance at the forefront. However, it is just one fundamental reason due to which the idea of corporate governance has gained importance. To infer that it would 'ensure' corporate governance would be a stretch. Further, the central

idea of the passage is rather opposite of this i.e. how effective corporate governance enhances access to the international capital market.

**Option (d) is Incorrect:** as the passage does not, explicitly or implicitly, talk about supply chain.

**Option (b) is Correct:** as the passage mentions that 'Good corporate governance structures encourage companies to provide accountability and control' and 'Investors look to place their funds where the standards of disclosure, of timely and accurate financial reporting, and of equal treatment to all stakeholders are met.' These two statements together infer that good corporate governance enhances investors' trust in the firms.

Hence, option (b) is correct.

### Passage

Elephants are landscape architects, creating clearings in the forest, preventing overgrowth of certain plant species and allowing space for the regeneration of others, which in turn provide sustenance to others herbivorous animals. Elephants eat plants, fruits and seeds, propagating the seeds when they defecate in other places as they travel. Elephant dung provides nourishment to plants and animals and acts as a breeding ground for insects. In times of drought, they access water by digging holes which benefits other wildlife.

(UPSC CSAT 2023)

**Q7. Which one of the following statements best reflects the most logical and rational inference that can be drawn from the passage?**

- The home range of elephants needs to be a vast area of rich biodiversity.
- Elephants are the keystone species and they benefit the biodiversity.
- Rich biodiversity cannot be maintained in the forests without the presence of elephants.
- Elephants are capable of regenerating forests with species as per their requirement.

**Ans:** (b)

#### Explanation:

**Option (a) is Incorrect:** as the passage talks about the benefits of elephants for the forest ecosystem. It does not mention anything about the required scale of habitats of the elephants.

**Option (c) is Incorrect:** It might appear tempting, however, the passage mentions elephants as important for forest ecosystems, it does not tend to indicate that elephants are inevitable for rich biodiversity. There can be multiple environmental factors and species that can together work to sustain rich biodiversity even in the absence of elephants.

Further, as the option statement is an extreme statement not directly mentioned in the passage, thus it can be safely marked as incorrect.

**Option (d) is Incorrect:** The passage emphasises the role of elephants in regenerating forests - they help in propagation of seeds, provide nourishment to plants and animals, and act as breeding ground for insects. However, the passage does not specify that they do it 'as per their requirement'. How elephants help in regeneration of forest is an 'involuntary and a non-conscious act.' They do not control which species to nourish and which not to.

**Option (b) is Correct:** as the option statement reflects the key idea and central theme of the passage. The passage talks about the importance of elephants for the forest ecosystem at length.

### Passage

It is certain, that seditions, wars, and contempt or breach of the laws are not so much to be imputed to the wickedness of the subjects, as to the bad state of a dominion. For men are not born fit for citizenship but must be made so. Besides, men's natural passions are everywhere the same; and if wickedness more prevails, and more offences are committed in one commonwealth than in another, it is certain that the former has neither enough pursued the end of unity, nor framed its laws with sufficient forethought; and that, therefore, it has failed in making quite good its right as a commonwealth.

(UPSC CSAT 2021)

**Q8. Which among the following is the most logical and rational inference that can be made from the passage given above?**

- (a) Seditions, wars, and breach of the laws are inevitable in every dominion.
- (b) It is not the people, but the sovereign who is responsible for all the problems of any dominion.
- (c) That dominion is the best which pursues the aim of unity and has laws for good citizenship.
- (d) It is impossible for men to establish a good dominion.

**Ans:** (c)

**Explanation:**

**Option (a) is Incorrect:** as the passage tends to argue about the underlying cause of seditions, wars and breach of laws. It does not imply, in any of its sentences, towards the inevitability of seditions, wars or breach of laws. The option statement represents an assumption rather than an inference.

**Option (b) is Incorrect:** This is an extreme statement that places all the blame upon the sovereign while

ignoring the wickedness and natural passion of men also mentioned in the passage.

**Option (d) is Incorrect:** as the passage does not look to explore the possibility of whether or not men can establish a good dominion. This is outside the scope of the subject matter of the passage.

**Option (c) is Correct:** as the passage mentions that 'and if wickedness more prevails, and more offences are committed in one commonwealth than in another, it is certain that the former has neither enough pursued the end of unity, nor framed its laws with sufficient forethought'. This implies that if a state pursues the goal of unity and frames laws with sufficient forethought then it can be said to be the best dominion.

### Passage

Computers increasingly deal not just with abstract data like credit card details and databases, but also with the real world of physical objects and vulnerable human bodies. A modern car is a computer on wheels; an aeroplane is a computer on wings. The arrival of the "Internet of Things" will see computers baked into everything from road signs and MRI scanners to prosthetics and insulin pumps. There is little evidence that these gadgets will be any more trustworthy than their desktop counterparts. Hackers have already proved that they can take remote control of internet connected cars and pacemakers. (UPSC CSAT 2021)

**Q9. Which one of the following statements best reflects the most critical inference that can be made from the passage given above?**

- (a) Computers are not completely safe.
- (b) Companies producing the software do not take cyber security seriously.
- (c) Stringent data security laws are needed.
- (d) The present trend of communication technologies will affect our lives in future.

**Ans:** (d)

**Explanation:**

**Option (a) is Incorrect:** The passage mentions that computers are susceptible to risks and potential intrusions, but it fails to conclusively demonstrate that they are entirely unsafe. The statement made is quite extreme and lacks sufficient support in the passage.

**Option (b) is Incorrect:** While the passage does discuss security breaches caused by hackers, it does not adequately provide enough evidence to support the claim that companies which develop software are not prioritising cyber security.

**Option (c) is Incorrect:** While the option statement can be indirectly inferred from the passage keeping in mind the risks and potential hackings of computer-based machines. However, it is not a direct idea hinted at in the passage. It narrows down the critical inference of the passage to just one dimension i.e. legal.

**Option (d) is Correct:** The passage talks about how the present trend of communication technology has brought computers into various aspects of human lives - from modern cars to aeroplanes. Further, with the arrival of the 'internet of things', computers will further be integrated into human lives and thus will affect our lives in future in multiple ways.

### Passage

Our cities are extremely vulnerable to climate change because of large concentrations of populations and poor infrastructure. Moreover, population densities are increasing in them but we have not yet developed the systems to address climate change impacts. Our cities contribute to 65 percent of the GDP, but there are not enough facilities to cater to the needs of the people. It is important to address the issues of air quality, transport, etc., that are vital to identifying sustainable solutions. We need to involve citizens in city planning and create an ecosystem that meets the needs of people. (UPSC CSAT 2021)

**Q10. Which among the following is the most logical and rational inference that can be made from the passage given above ?**

- (a) Our cities need to have well-defined administrative set-up with sufficient autonomy.
- (b) Ever increasing population densities is a hindrance in our efforts to achieve sustainable development.
- (c) To maintain and develop our cities we need to adopt sustainability related interventions.
- (d) Public-Private Partnership mode of development is the viable long-term solution for the infrastructure and sustainability problems of India.

**Ans:** (c)

#### Explanation:

**Option (a) is Incorrect:** as the passage mainly emphasises issues related to climate change which is exacerbated by large concentration of population and poor infrastructure. It does not talk about any administrative problem which has arisen out of the lack of autonomy.

**Option (b) is Incorrect:** as it reflects only the partial idea discussed in the passage. The passage talks about the increasing population density but it is just a secondary issue discussed in the passage. The main idea of the passage revolves around climate change and finding sustainable solutions to it.

**Option (d) is Incorrect:** The passage argues for involving citizens in city planning. However, it does not mention the role of the private sector and thus inference that 'public private partnership' will be the viable long term solution can't be drawn.

**Option (c) is Correct:** The passage says that 'It is important to address the issues of air quality, transport, etc that are vital to identifying sustainable solutions.' Thus this line represents the essence of the passage and is comprehensive.

## IMPLICATION BASED QUESTIONS

- ❑ Questions that focus on implications assess candidates' skills in comprehending the broader consequences, expected outcomes, impacts on stakeholders, unintended ramifications, and suggested results arising from the information provided in a passage. These inquiries delve deeper than the surface-level understanding and demand candidates to decipher the possible effects or implications embedded in the ideas presented.
- ❑ Implication-based questions necessitate candidates to move beyond the apparent meaning of the text, encouraging them to draw conclusions and make connections between the information provided and its potential repercussions.
- ❑ Candidates are not only required to grasp the explicit details but also to discern implicit suggestions and consequences seamlessly woven into the passage that demonstrate the candidate's proficiency in thinking critically and foreseeing the broader implications of the information at hand.

## ASSOCIATED KEYWORDS

- ❑ The crucial keywords in these questions include 'rational/practical/plausible implication,' 'implied from the passage,' and 'what does the author imply.'
- ❑ While inference and implication share similar meanings, inference is derived through logical reasoning by the message receiver. In contrast, implication refers to the author's intended future conclusion in their message.

## NATURE OF IMPLICATION BASED QUESTIONS

- ❑ You can recognize these questions by looking for the word "implication" or "implied". The question generally talks about a central message and would tend to ask the future consequences around the central theme.

- It is important to identify the prospective message the author aims to convey. The ideal answer should relate to an expected future development, outcome, effect, or ramification within the passage's boundaries.

### Tips and Tricks

- When you spot the implication related keyword, avoid quickly scanning through the passage. Take your time to read the passage carefully and fully understand it.
- Identify and underline keywords in the passage, particularly phrases that capture the central theme. Implications are based on the concluding remarks of the passage. When confused between 2 options related to implication mark the one that aligns with the concluding remarks.
- The most suitable option is the one that talks about the future consequences or upcoming ramifications, confusing options may just paraphrase the information given explicitly in the passage. The information of the passage directly can not be an implication. Focus on the future consequences of this central theme.

### SOLVED PYQs

**Directions:** Read the following passages and answer the items that follow the passages. Your answers to these items should be based on the passages only.

#### Passage

To tackle the problem of pollution in cities, policy makers think that drastic actions like temporary use of odd-even number scheme for vehicles, closing schools, factories, construction activities, and banning the use of certain type of vehicles are a way forward. Even then the air is not clean. Vehicles more than 15 years old comprise one percent of the total; and taking them off the road will not make any difference. Banning certain fuels and car types arbitrarily is not proper. Diesel engines produce more PM 2.5 and less CO<sub>2</sub> than petrol or CNG engines. On the other hand, both diesel and CNG engines produce more NO<sub>x</sub> than petrol engines. No one has measured the amount of NO<sub>x</sub> that CNG engines are emitting. Arbitrary bans on vehicles that have passed mandated fitness tests and periodic pollution tests are unfair. What is needed is the scientific and reliable information about the source of pollutants on a continuing basis and the technologies that will work to reduce pollution from them.

(UPSC CSAT 2023)

**Q11. Which one of the following statements best reflects the most logical and rational implication conveyed by the passage?**

- Arbitrary curbs on vehicles to reduce pollution are difficult to implement.
- Knee-jerk reactions cannot but an evidence-based approach will be more effective.
- A heavy penalty should be enforced on those driving without periodic pollution tests.
- In the absence of laws to deal with the problem of pollution, the administration tends to make arbitrary decisions.

**Ans:** (b)

#### Explanation:

**Option (a) is Incorrect:** The central idea of the passage revolves around presenting arguments for creating technologies backed by scientific and reliable information to curb pollution. It criticizes arbitrary bans on certain types of vehicles to curb pollution as 'unfair' rather than talking about the difficulty in implementation.

**Option (c) is Incorrect:** as the passage does not talk about imposition of penalties, and other such arbitrary measures. Rather, it talks about developing technologies based on scientifically gathered data.

**Option (d) is Incorrect:** The option statement may seem tempting as the passage briefly talks about arbitrary administrative decisions. However, it does not form the core idea of the passage which must be identified to reach the most appropriate implications from the passage. Further, the passage does not imply the lack of laws to deal with pollution.

**Option (b) is Correct:** as the passage says 'Arbitrary bans on vehicles that have passed mandated fitness tests and periodic pollution tests are unfair. What is needed is the scientific and reliable information about the source of pollutants on a continuing basis and the technologies that will work to reduce pollution from them.' Thus, the passage argues against short-term reactionary policies to deal with pollution and argues for developing technologies based on scientific data.

### Tips and Tricks

- Identify the central idea of the passage: In this instance, It is about negating the conventional approach to curb pollution in favour of scientifically-informed technologies. This can help in eliminating options that are not in line with the central idea.

- ❑ Stay close to the information provided in the passage to arrive at any implication. It should not be based on common knowledge or personal opinions.
- ❑ Pay special attention when the implication is too narrow and specific. Such options may not cater to the central idea of the passage comprehensively, such as option d.

### Passage

The majority of people who fail to accumulate money sufficient for their needs, are generally, easily influenced by the opinions of others. They permit the newspapers and the gossiping neighbours to do their thinking for them. Opinions are the cheapest commodities on the earth. Everyone has a flock of opinions ready to be wished upon by anyone who will accept them. If you are influenced by opinions when you reach decisions, you will not succeed in any undertaking. **(UPSC CSAT 2022)**

**Q12. Which one of the following is implied by the passage?**

- Most of the people do not accumulate money for their needs.
- Most of the people never fail to accumulate money for their needs.
- There are people who fail to accumulate money for their needs.
- There is no need to accumulate money.

**Ans:** (c)

#### Explanation:

**Option (a) is Incorrect:** as the passage suggests that the people who are influenced by the opinions of others fail to accumulate money. It nowhere tends to imply that most of the people fail to accumulate money.

**Option (b) is Incorrect:** as the passage again does not speak about whether the majority does or does not accumulate money. Rather, the passage talks about an underlying cause of why people may fail to make money. Further, the option statement is of extreme nature and thus can be avoided when not mentioned clearly in the passage.

**Option (d) is Incorrect:** as the author of the passage presents no opinion about whether or not the accumulation of money is needed.

**Option (c) is Correct:** as the passage in its opening line itself, explicitly talks about why some people fail to accumulate money. This clearly implies that there exist some people who are not able to accumulate sufficient money.

### Tips and Tricks

- ❑ Pay special attention to words like 'most', 'majority', 'none', etc.
- ❑ Extreme statements have lower chances of being correct.

### Passage

In the immediate future, we will see the increasing commodification of many new technologies – artificial intelligence and robotics, 3D manufacturing, custom made biological and pharmaceutical products, lethal autonomous weapons and driverless cars. This will pose conundrums. The moral question of how a driverless car will decide between hitting a jaywalker and swerving and damaging the car has often been debated. The answer is both simple- save the human life- and complex. At which angle should the car swerve- just enough to save the jaywalker or more than enough? If the driverless car is in Dublin, who would take the decision ? The Irish Government, or the car's original code writer in California, or a software programmer in Hyderabad to whom maintenance is outsourced ? If different national jurisdictions have different fine print on prioritising a human life, how will it affect insurance and investment decisions, including transnational ones?

**(UPSC CSAT 2021)**

**Q13. Which of the following statements best reflect the rational, plausible, and practical implications that can be derived from the passage given above?**

- Too much globalisation is not in the best interests of any country.
- Modern technologies are increasingly blurring the economic borders.
- Innovation and capital have impinged on the domain of the state.
- Public policy of every country should focus on developing its own supply chains.
- Geopolitics will have to reconcile to many ambiguities and uncertainties.

**Select the correct answer using the code given below:**

- (a) 1, 4 and 5 only      (b) 1, 2, 3 and 4 only  
(c) 2, 3 and 5 only      (d) 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5

**Ans:** (c)

#### Explanation:

**Statement 1 is Incorrect:** as the passage explicitly talks about the conundrums posed by the modern emerging technologies only. The argument about the impact of globalisation goes beyond the scope of this passage. Furthermore, it is a vague and extreme

statement. 'Too much globalisation' is subjective in nature and thus it is a vague statement that can be rejected.

**Statement 2 is Correct:** as it is clearly implied by the passage. The passage talks about driverless cars in dublin, the original code writer in california, the software developer in Hyderabad and also talks about transnational investment and insurance decisions.

**Statement 3 is Correct:** as the passage talks about how an innovation in the form of a 'driverless car' can create a question or conundrum over the sovereign right of the country to take important decisions. Thus, capital and innovation impact the decisions that were traditionally regarded to be in the domain of state.

**Statement 4 is Incorrect:** It might seem tempting as the statement tries to offer a solution to the problems discussed in the passage. However, any extrapolation of such nature should be avoided. The passage remains confined to the conundrums created by innovative technologies and does not go any further than that to talk about any possible solution.

**Statement 5 is Correct:** as the central idea of the passage itself is the uncertainties and ambiguities accompanying the development of modern technologies. It talks about the 'moral question of how a driverless car will decide between hitting jaywalker and swerving and damaging the car,' 'If the driverless car is in Dublin, who would take the decision?,' 'If different national jurisdictions have different fine print on prioritising a human life, how will it affect insurance and investment decisions, including transnational ones?'. All of these are some ambiguities that will have to be reconciled with.

### Tips and Tricks

- ❑ Carefully read the statements so that words are not overlooked. For e.g. 'Globalisation' must not be overlooked as 'technologies.'

### Passage

The resolution of bankruptcy cases of Indian banks under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code should help bring non-performing assets (NPA) situations under some control. Despite the slow pace of resolution by the National Company Law Tribunal, the Code can be helpful in cleaning up bank books in future credit cycles. The recapitalization of public sector banks too can help increase the capital cushion of banks and induce them to lend more and

boost economic activity. But bad debt resolution and recapitalization are only a part of the solution as they, by themselves, can do very little to rein in reckless lending that has pushed the Indian banking system to its current sorry state. Unless there are systemic reforms that address the problem of unsustainable lending, future credit cycles will continue to stress the banking system.

(UPSC CSAT 2021)

**Q14. Which one of the following statements best reflects the most logical, rational and practical suggestion implied by the passage given above?**

- (a) Lending by the banks should be closely monitored and regulated by the central Government.
- (b) Interest rates should be kept low so as to induce banks to lend more, promote credit growth and thereby boost economic activity.
- (c) Merger of many banks into a few large banks alone in the long-term solution to make them viable and prevent their bad performance.
- (d) Indian banking system requires structural reforms as a long-term solution for bad loans Problem

**Ans:** (d)

**Explanation:**

**Option (a) is Incorrect:** as it is very specific and narrow in nature. Whereas the passage argues for systemic reforms to address unsustainable lending, the option statement only talks about monitoring and regulation by the central government.

**Option (b) is Incorrect:** as the passage argues for systemic reforms in the banking sector which is much wider in scope than the statement given as the option. Moreover, the option statement does not form a part of structural reform, it represents a temporary and short term measure. Additionally, the passage mentions only two specific solutions i.e. use of IBC and recapitalization of public sector banks. Thus, the option statement cannot be implied from the passage.

**Option (c) is Incorrect:** This option statement talks about a systemic reform measure and thus may seem tempting to mark as correct. However, it again narrows down the scope of the term 'systemic reform' to the merger of banks. Moreover, the use of the term 'alone' in the option statement makes it an extreme option which is otherwise not directly mentioned in the question.

**Option (d) is the Correct:** choice as it captures the implied idea of the passage in its entirety. It talks about structural reforms as the long-term solutions and hence is in line with the idea of the passage.

### Tips and Tricks

- Identifying the concluding remarks of the passage can help in identifying the accurate implication.
- Read the passage carefully and select the option that caters to the ideas mentioned in the passage comprehensively.

### Passage

Many opportunities to harness the highly skewed, seasonal and spatial distribution of monsoon floes, which occur in a four-month period from June to September annually, have been lost. Since these few months account for most of the rainfall and consequent freshwater availability, the need for holding rainwater in reservoirs, for subsequently releasing it for use over the year, is a necessity nobody can afford to overlook. Climate change will continue to affect weather conditions and create water shortages and excesses. While millions suffer from droughts and floods, waters in the country's many rivers flow unutilized, and are discharged into the sea every year.

**Q15. With reference to the above passage, which of the following could be the most rational and practical implications for India?**

1. Inter-linking of rivers should be undertaken.
2. A network of dams and canals should be built across the country for proper distribution of water.
3. Farmers should be provided easy loans for digging borewells.
4. Usage of water for agriculture should be regulated by law.
5. Distribution of river water among regions should be regulated by the Union Government.

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

- (a) 1 and 2                      (b) 2, 4 and 5  
(c) 1, 3 and 4                (d) 2, 3 and 5

Ans: (a)

#### Explanation:

**Statement 1:** is correct as the passage talks about the unutilized water flowing in many rivers that drain into the seas, while millions suffer from droughts and floods. Thus, interlinking of rivers can promote optimum and efficient use of the water resources.

**Statement 2 is Correct:** as the network of dams and canals can help in proper distribution of water across the country which is necessary to end sufferings of millions facing droughts and floods.

**Statement 3 is Incorrect:** as the passage emphasises redistribution of water flowing in the rivers of the country, rather than digging borewells to bring out ground water. Further, the passage indicates no dearth of credit and thus this is an incorrect implication.

**Statement 4 is Incorrect:** Lack of laws or creation of new laws lie beyond the scope of this passage. There is no such mention of legal actions in the passage,

**Statement 5 is Incorrect:** The passage does not touch upon the topic of whether the distribution of river water should be governed by the union government or the state governments or otherwise. This statement may seem true in general, but information not found within the passage must not be used to judge the correctness of an option.

## BASED ON THE MESSAGE OF THE PASSAGE

### ASSOCIATED KEYWORDS

- "Most logical, rational & critical message/best reflects the passage" is a common keyword used in these kinds of questions.
- **The Most Critical, Rational, and Logical Message:** This engages your capacity for analysis. You are evaluating the author's position and choosing the one that, when supported by logic and evidence, offers the most sensible, objective conclusion.
- **Best Reflect Tone:** This focuses on how the author feels about the topic. You are choosing the response that most accurately expresses their emotional state, whether it be objective, subjective, formal, informal, serious, or lighthearted.

### NATURE OF THIS TYPE OF QUESTIONS

- The "most logical message," "best reflects tone," "crux," and "central idea" questions are all fundamentally searches for the passage's synopsis. They pose the question, "Which option best captures the essence of the entire passage?" to put it simply.
- Consider the passage as a complex fabric which is made up of different threads representing arguments, details, and opinions the author wants to discuss in the passage. The goal of these questions is for you to pinpoint the one central thread that unites the entire fabric. The main idea and overall message of the author are summed up in this central thread.
- The right answer isn't about picking a side, despite the fact that options may entice you with their implications or solutions. It's about realising the overarching idea that runs through the whole chapter.

### Tips and Tricks

Eliminate options with extreme language, factual inaccuracies, or emotional appeals. Pay close attention to transitions and how the author moves from evidence to conclusions. Look for words that convey emotion or opinion. Consider the title and introductory/concluding statements. Don't get bogged down by specific details or supporting arguments.

### SOLVED PYQs

**Directions:** Read the following passages and answer the items that follow the passages. Your answers to these items should be based on the passages only.

#### Passage

The emissions humans put into the atmosphere now will affect the climate in the middle of the century and onwards. Technological change, meanwhile, could make a future transition away from fossil fuels cheap or it might not, leaving the world with a terrible choice between sharply reducing emissions at huge cost or suffering through the effects of unabated warming. Businesses that do not hedge against the threat of uncertain outcomes fail. The world cannot afford such recklessness on climate change. (UPSC CSAT 2023)

**Q16.** Which one of the following statements best reflects the crucial message conveyed by the author of the passage?

- (a) Businesses that cause emissions may need to close down or pay for pollution in future.
- (b) The only solution is technological development related to the issues of climate change.
- (c) Waiting to deal with carbon emissions until technology improves is not a wise strategy.
- (d) Since future technological change is uncertain, new industries should be based on renewable energy sources.

**Ans:** (c)

#### Explanation:

**Option (a) is Incorrect:** because only the sentence "Businesses that do not hedge against the threat of uncertain outcomes fail" is relevant to this claim in the passage. Nothing in the passage indicates that companies would eventually have to pay for pollution or close their doors. Because there is no clear or adequate basis for the safe, we are unable to assume the same. It ignores the larger message about urgency and possible consequences in favour of focusing only on businesses.

**Option (b) is Incorrect:** There are no recommendations for addressing climate change in this passage. Furthermore, the claim that technology is the "only solution" is too specific and too extreme to be true, as it ignores the possibility of other solutions.

**Option (d) is Incorrect:** because the passage offers no solutions to address the problem of climate change. Furthermore, the passage does not address the same topic as the statement, which is overly specific. Promoting renewable energy is a good strategy, but rather than arguing for particular alternatives, the passage emphasises the dangers of waiting for technological advancements to provide a solution.

**Option (c) is Correct:** "Technological change, meanwhile, could make a future transition away from fossil fuels cheap or it might not, leaving the world with a terrible choice between suffering through the effects of unabated warming or sharply reducing emissions at huge cost," the passage states. Companies that don't take precautions against the possibility of unpredictable results fail. The globe cannot support such carelessness with regard to climate change.

Therefore, it is reasonable to say that it will not be a prudent strategy to deal with carbon emissions later on when technology advances. This is the author's primary takeaway. This statement effectively conveys the main idea of the author by underlining the necessity of taking immediate action and stressing the peril of procrastination.

### Tips and Tricks

- ❑ Determine the passage's central idea or point of contention. In this instance, the focus is on acting now to combat climate change, regardless of potential technological setbacks in the future.
- ❑ Search for terms and expressions that reaffirm the main idea of the passage. The terms "waiting" and "technology" are crucial in this context.
- ❑ Answer options that appear to provide "safe" answers should not be taken seriously. Make it a challenge to determine the main point of the essay and the author's position on it. The UPSC Civil Services exam frequently looks for depth in understanding and critical thinking.

## Passage

Science by itself is not enough, there must be a force and discipline outside the sciences to coordinate them and point to a goal. It is not possible to run a course aright when the goal itself has not been rightly placed. What science needs is philosophy – the analysis of scientific method and the coordination of scientific purposes and results; without this, any science must be superficial. Government suffers, precisely like science, for lack of philosophy. Philosophy bears to science the same relationship which statesmanship bears to politics: movement guided by total knowledge and perspective, as against aimless and individual seeking. Just as the pursuit of knowledge becomes scholasticism when divorced from the actual needs of men and life, so the pursuit of politics becomes a destructive bedlam when divorced from science and philosophy. (UPSC CSAT 2023)

**Q17. Which one of the following statements best reflects the most rational, logical and practical message conveyed by the passage?**

- (a) Modern statesmen need to be well trained in scientific methods and philosophical thinking to enable them to have a better perspective of their roles, responsibilities and goals.
- (b) It is not desirable to have Governments managed by empirical statesmen unless well mixed with others who are grounded in learning and reflect wisdom.
- (c) As the statesmen/bureaucrats are the products of a society, it is desirable to have a system of education in a society that focuses on training its citizens in scientific method and philosophical thinking from a very early age.
- (d) It is desirable that all scientists need to be philosophers as well to make their work goaloriented and thus purposeful and useful to the society.

**Ans:** (b)

**Explanation:**

**Option (a) is Incorrect:** emphasises a mix within government rather than individual training for all statesmen, even though the passage recognises the value of statesmanship. It is ideal but impractical to suggest that contemporary statesmen be trained in scientific methods and philosophical thought. The paragraph emphasises that government shouldn't be limited to an empirical apparatus devoid of moral principles. Philosophy and scientific aptitude are essential components of

government. But it doesn't say anywhere how to accomplish this. There has been no mention, either overtly or covertly, of the necessity of training statesmen.

Other methods for achieving this include external consulting, guidance, etc.

**Option (c) is Incorrect:** as it offers an excessively general solution. The passage makes the case for particular roles played by the government rather than a total reform of social education to encourage philosophical thinking in all. The passage highlights the value of philosophy in science and statesmanship, but it makes no mention of how education plays a crucial role in developing these abilities from a young age.

**Option (d) is Incorrect:** misreads the role of a scientist. The passage emphasises the role of philosophy in guiding science, not turning all scientists into philosophers. This somewhat captures the spirit of the passage, highlighting the role philosophy plays in guiding and motivating scientific endeavours. Still, it may be a stretch to claim that philosophers are a prerequisite for all scientists. This seems like an extreme and unrealistic statement.

**Option (b) is Correct:** offers a mix and balance. The author's support for a balance in government between real-world experience ("empirical statesmen") and intellectual wisdom ("grounded in learning and reflect wisdom") is accurately reflected in this option. The idea that the lack of wisdom needs to be addressed is reinforced by the tone and emphasis of the negative statement "not desirable" and the negative effect of lacking philosophy ("suffers"), suggesting that a combination is required.

The analogy with science reinforces this further, implying that a similar combination of methods is required for the government to operate at its best.

### Tips and Tricks

- ❑ Determine the main point of debate: In this instance, it's the significance of both practical experience and philosophical guidance for efficient governance.
- ❑ Examine every choice to ensure alignment: Select the option that most faithfully conveys the author's viewpoint without embellishing or misrepresenting it.
- ❑ Focus on the emphasis and keywords: To comprehend the disparate leadership philosophies, pay particular attention to words like "mixed," "wisdom," and "empirical".

### Passage

The paradox of choice is illustrated by the story of Buridan's ass. Jean Buridan, the 14th century philosopher, wrote about free will and the inability to choose due to numerous choices and uncertainties. In the story, a donkey stands between two equally appealing stacks of hay. Unable to decide which to eat, it starves to death. Changes in technology and innovations such as smart phones and tablets only exacerbate our glut of choices. Constant connectivity and overconsumption of realtime data and social media can leave little room for selfreflection and rest, making decisions more difficult. Life is about choices. Many people are overwhelmed with attractive life choices, yet find themselves unhappy and anxious.

(UPSC CSAT 2023)

**Q18. Which one of the following statements best reflects the most logical message implied by the above passage?**

- (a) Modern technology enfeebles societal structure and makes life difficult.
- (b) Modern life is full of uncertainties and endless difficult choices.
- (c) We are influenced by the opinion of others and have no courage to follow our own convictions.
- (d) In our lives, having too few choices may not be a good thing, but having too many can be equally as difficult.

**Ans:** (d)

**Explanation:**

**Option (a) is Incorrect:** because, although the passage acknowledges that technology adds to the multitude of options available, it does not hold technology responsible for undermining societal norms or making life more difficult. The paradox of choice itself is the main subject, not any particular criticism of technology.

**Option (b) is Incorrect:** The passage does acknowledge that uncertainty and hard decisions are a part of modern life. But it highlights that having too many options can be just as problematic as not knowing enough. If you only consider the challenges, you will miss the main point.

**Option (c) is Incorrect:** The passage contains no evidence that people lack conviction or are readily influenced by the opinions of others. Not outside influence, but being overtaken by one's own decisions is the problem.

**Option (d) Correct:** The main paradox in the passage is effectively conveyed by this choice. It draws attention to the drawbacks of both extremes: while having too few options may be restrictive, having too many can cause uncertainty and anxiety. Furthermore, bringing up both technological and life decisions fits with the passage's overall theme.

### Tips and Tricks

- ❑ Determine the central idea or contention: It is a two-edged sword of choice in this situation, where there can be difficulties with both scarcity and abundance.
- ❑ Consider each option for an answer carefully: Remove choices that are too specific, erroneous, or fail to address the core idea.
- ❑ Search for these terms and phrases: Words like "choices," "overwhelmed," "paradox," and "uncertainties" are important hints here.

### Passage

In simple matters like shoe-making, we think only a specially trained person will serve our purpose, but in politics, we presume that everyone who knows how to get votes knows how to administer a State. When we are ill, is a guarantee of specific preparation and technical competence—we do not ask for the handsomest physician, or the most eloquent one: well then, when the whole State is ill should we not look for the service and guidance of the wisest and the best?"

(UPSC CSAT 2022)

**Q19. Which one of the following statements best reflects the message of the author of the passage?**

- (a) We assume that in a democracy, any politician is qualified to administer a State.
- (b) Politicians should be selected from those trained in administration.
- (c) We need to devise a method of barring incompetence from public office.
- (d) As voters select their administrators, the eligibility of politicians to administer a State cannot be questioned.

**Ans:** (b)

**Explanation:**

**Option (a) Incorrect:** because the passage criticises this very assumption, highlighting the absurdity of entrusting someone with limited skills like shoemaking with specialised training, while readily accepting anyone who wins votes for the complex task of state administration.

**Option (c) is Incorrect:** because while the passage identifies incompetence as a concern, its main focus is not on barring everyone from office, but on emphasising the importance of selecting qualified individuals in the first place.

**Option (d) is Incorrect:** as the passage challenges this notion by questioning the logic of blindly accepting politicians based solely on their electoral success. It argues that administrative ability should be a crucial factor in selecting leadership, even in a democracy.

**Option (b) is Correct:** as this option directly aligns with the author's message. They call for prioritisation of administrative competence by emphasising the need for specific training and technical expertise among politicians, similar to how we seek qualified professionals for other specialised tasks.

### Tips and Tricks

- ❑ Determine the central idea or contention: In this instance, it's about contrasting the misplaced faith in politicians based only on their ability to win votes with the necessity of qualified and competent leadership in managing a state.
- ❑ Search for these terms and phrases: Words like "trained," "administration," "State," "illness," and "wisest" emphasise competence and expertise in this context.

### Passage

There are reports that some of the antibiotics sold in the market are fed to poultry and other livestock as growth promoters. Overusing these substances can create superbugs, pathogens that are resistant to multiple drugs and could be passed along humans. Mindful of that, some farming companies have stopped using the drugs to make chickens gain weight faster. Since Denmark banned antibiotic growth promoters in the 1990s, the major pork exporters says it is producing more pigs – and the animals get fewer diseases. (UPSC CSAT 2021)

**Q20. Which one of the following statements best reflects the critical message conveyed by the passage given above ?**

- (a) People should avoid consuming the products of animal farming.
- (b) Foods of animal origin should be replaced with foods of plant origin.
- (c) Using antibiotics on animals should be banned.
- (d) Antibiotics should only be used to treat diseases.

**Ans:** (d)

### Explanation:

**Option (a) is Incorrect:** because the passage does not recommend avoiding all animal products, even though it does alert readers to potential risks associated with the use of antibiotics in animal farming. Not total abstinence, but responsible antibiotic use is the main focus.

**Option (b) is Incorrect:** because the passage does not advocate using plant-based substitutes in place of animal products. It critiques the particular act of mishandling antibiotics, not the entirety of animal husbandry.

**Option (c) is not Correct:** Although the passage explicitly calls attention to the misuse and overuse of antibiotics as problematic, it also suggests that responsible, diseasespecific use of antibiotics could be acceptable, even though outlawing their use entirely in animal farming might reduce the risk of superbugs.

**Option (d) is Correct:** This choice accurately captures the passage's main idea. It highlights how crucial it is to limit the use of antibiotics to their prescribed use—treating animal diseases that are already present, as opposed to encouraging growth or averting possible problems.

This message is further reinforced by the instances of businesses quitting growth-promoting use and Denmark's achievements with responsible use.

### Tips and Tricks

- ❑ Determine the primary issue or worry raised in the passage. Here, it's the possibly detrimental effects of improper use of antibiotics in animal husbandry.
- ❑ Pay attention to specific details and keywords. Words like "superbugs," "growth promoters," "diseases," and "Denmark's example" all suggest using antibiotics for medical treatment in a responsible manner.

## BASED ON THE INFORMATION IN THE PASSAGE

### ASSOCIATED KEYWORDS

These appear to be simple reading comprehension questions with keywords like "which of the following statements is correct/what author is trying to say/which policy or solution can be adopted based on the content of the passage" that ask about the main idea, the author's position, or practical solutions based on the text.

## NATURE OF THIS TYPE OF QUESTIONS

- ❑ **Pay close attention to comprehension:** Although it may seem clear, complete understanding is crucial. As often as necessary, reread the passage and actively engage with its content. As you read, make note of possible responses, underline important passages, and highlight transitions.
- ❑ **Be wary of options with tight wording:** Avoid choosing solutions that mimic the passage but fall short of the mark. Accurate comprehension of the author's meaning is essential. Don't omit the sentence that contains the solution. Examine it in light of the passage's overall structure as well as the surrounding paragraph.

### Tips and Tricks

Spot the keyword: Look for keywords and phrases that signal the author's intent, such as "therefore," "consequently," or "in conclusion." These often point towards the main idea or solution.

### SOLVED PYQs

**Directions:** Read the following passages and answer the items that follow the passages. Your answers to these items should be based on the passages only.

#### Passage

We often hear about conflicts among different States in India over river waters. Of the 20 major river systems, 14 are already water-stressed; 75% of the population lives in water-stressed regions, a third of whom live in water-scarce areas. Climate change, the demands of rising population and the need for agriculture to keep pace, and increased rate of urbanisation and industrialization will exacerbate water stress. According to the Constitution of India, water is a State subject and not that of the Union, except for regulation of inter-State rivers. Key to ensuring balance between competing demands of various stakeholders is a basin-based approach to allocate water amongst constituent regions and States. Allocating a fair share of water to them requires assessments based on objective criteria, such as specificities of the river basin, size of dependent population, existing water use and demand, efficiency of use, projected future use, etc. while ensuring the environmental needs of the river and aquifers.

(UPSC CSAT 2023)

**Q21.** Which one of the following statements best reflects the most rational, practical and immediate action required to ensure fair and equitable allocation of water to different stakeholders?

- (a) A national, pragmatic, legal and policy framework for water allocation should be made.

- (b) All river systems of the country should be linked and huge aquifers created.
- (c) Water channels between regions of water surplus and regions of water deficit should be created.
- (d) To mitigate water crisis, water demand of sectors such as agriculture and industry should be reduced.

**Ans:** (a)

#### Explanation:

**Option (b) is Incorrect:** Connecting all river systems and establishing sizable aquifers is an enormous, intricate, and protracted undertaking. It wouldn't take care of the pressing need for equitable distribution among the available resources.

**Option (c) is Incorrect:** Narrow focus and possible environmental problems: Creating water channels wouldn't solve the problem of equitable or general water availability. Significant water diversion may potentially have detrimental effects on the environment.

**Option (d) is Incorrect:** Indirect and incomplete solution: Reducing water demand in some industries is crucial, but it is insufficient to guarantee just and equitable distribution among all parties involved. It is essential to have a national framework that establishes a distribution system and takes into account multiple factors.

**Option (a) is Correct:** because this choice is in line with the main point of the passage. It suggests the most doable and quick fix: establishing a federal framework for just and equitable water distribution. The terms "pragmatic," "legal," and "policy" are included to highlight the importance of a thorough and practical strategy.

### Tips and Tricks

- ❑ Determine the primary issue or challenge: In this instance, it's the absence of a framework for the just and equitable distribution of water among various states and interested parties.
- ❑ Focus on the details and keywords: Words like "national framework," "fair and equitable," "allocation," "pragmatic," and "immediate action" here indicate that a thorough and workable solution is required within the confines of the current situation.

### Passage

The last end of the state is not to dominate men, nor to restrain them by fear; rather it is so to free each man from fear that he may live and act with full security and without injury to himself or his neighbour. The end of the state, I repeat, is not to make rational beings into brute beasts and machines. It is to enable their bodies and their minds to function safely. It is to lead men to live by, and to exercise, a free reason; that they may not waste their strength in hatred, anger and guile, nor act unfairly toward one another.”

(UPSC CSAT 2023)

**Q22. Based on the above passage, which one of the following terms expresses the ultimate goal of the state?**

- (a) Personal safety
- (b) Health of body and mind
- (c) Communal harmony
- (d) Liberty

**Ans:** (d)

#### Explanation:

**Option (a) is Incorrect:** because the passage discusses safeguarding people from harm and fear, which enhances liberty but goes beyond simple personal safety. It highlights the unrestricted ability to live and act.

**Option (b) is Incorrect:** because the passage acknowledges the importance of physical and mental well-being, but its primary focus is not healthcare itself. It emphasises enabling individuals to use their faculties freely, not just ensuring their physical and mental health.

**Option (c) is Incorrect:** because while peaceful coexistence is desirable, the passage focuses on individual liberty, not specifically on interpersonal relationships. It emphasises freedom from fear and the ability to exercise reason, which benefits everyone but is not synonymous with communal harmony.

**Option (d) is Correct:** because the passage emphasises freedom from fear, restraint, and irrationality multiple times. It favours people living and acting in complete security, devoid of fear, and in line with their own logic. This is in perfect accordance with the fundamental idea of liberty.

### Tips and Tricks

- ❑ Determine the central idea or contention: Here, it is about the value of personal autonomy and self-expression.
- ❑ Search for recurring phrases and keywords: Here, words like “live and act,” “free,” “dominate,” “restrain,” “fear,” and “exercise a free reason” all allude to the idea of liberty.
- ❑ Carefully evaluate your options: Discard options that are somewhat related to the main theme but not essential. In this instance, community harmony, personal safety, and health are all crucial components of a healthy society, but they are not the ultimate objective as stated in the passage.

### Passage

The main threat to maintaining progress in human development comes from the increasingly evident unsustainability of production and consumption patterns. Current production models rely heavily on fossil fuels. We now know that this is unsustainable because the resources are finite. The close link between economic growth and greenhouse gas emissions needs to be served for human development to become truly sustainable. Some developed countries have begun to alleviate the worst effects by expanding recycling and investing in public transport and infrastructure. But most developing countries are hampered by the high costs and low availability of clean energy sources. Developed countries need to support developing countries’ transition to sustainable human development.

(UPSC CSAT 2022)

**Q23. Unsustainability in production patterns is due to which of the following?**

1. Heavy dependence on fossil fuels
2. Limited availability of resources
3. Expansion of recycling

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

**Ans:** (a)

#### Explanation:

**Option (b) is Incorrect:** Although resource scarcity is acknowledged in the passage, the primary cause of unsustainable production patterns is highlighted as being reliance on fossil fuels. It is therefore incorrect to concentrate only on resource scarcity.

**Options (c) is Incorrect:** The paragraph challenges the way that production is currently done, rather

than increasing recycling, which is thought to be a step in the right direction towards sustainability. Recycling is not a factor in unsustainability, thus this assertion is false.

**Option (d) is Incorrect:** The passage mentions how developed countries have started to alleviate the threat by expanding recycling. Based on this 'Expansion of recycling' is not the reason for unsustainability.

**Option (a) is Correct:** The argument in the passage is accurately reflected in this option. The passage makes it clear that a high reliance on fossil fuels is unsustainable because of their limited supply. Though not the main factor, the limited availability of resources is also mentioned as a contributing factor.

### Tips and Tricks

- ❑ Take special note of the passage's wording and emphasis. In this instance, either the other options are not mentioned at all or they are offered as alternatives, and the passage repeatedly and clearly identifies fossil fuel dependence as the primary cause of unsustainability.
- ❑ Seek out words and phrases that bolster your arguments. In this case, the words "fossil fuels," "finite resources," and "unsustainable production models" indicate the main problem.

### Passage

The poverty line is quite unsatisfactory when it comes to grasping the extent of poverty in India. It is not only because of its extremely narrow definition of 'who is poor' and the debatable methodology used to count the poor, but also because of a more fundamental assumption underlying it. It exclusively relies on the notion of poverty as insufficient income or insufficient purchasing power. One can better categorise it by calling it income poverty. If poverty is ultimately about deprivations affecting human well-being, then income poverty is only one aspect of it. Poverty of a life, in our view, lies not merely in the impoverished state in which the person actually lives, but also in the lack of real opportunity given by social constraints as well as personal circumstances—to choose other types of living. Even the relevance of low incomes, meagre possessions, and other aspects of what are standardly seen as economic poverty relate ultimately to their role in curtailing capabilities, i.e., their role in severely restricting the choices people have to lead variable and valued lives. **(UPSC CSAT 2022)**

**Q24. Why is the methodology adopted in India to count the 'poor' debatable?**

- (a) There is some confusion regarding what should constitute the 'poverty line'.

- (b) There are wide diversities in the condition of the rural and urban poor.
- (c) There is no uniform global standard for measuring income poverty.
- (d) It is based on the proposition of poverty as meagre income or buying capacity.

**Ans:** (d)

### Explanation:

**Option (a) is Incorrect:** The passage criticises the narrow definition of poverty, not confusion about what should constitute it. It argues that focusing only on income overlooks other aspects of deprivation.

**Option (b) is Incorrect:** Despite recognising the different realities of poverty in rural and urban areas, the passage does not specifically criticise the methodology due to this distinction. It focuses on the drawbacks of the income-based strategy in isolation.

**Option (c) is Incorrect:** The passage focuses more on the shortcomings of the existing Indian methodology than it does on global standards. Instead of adhering to a particular international definition, it argues for a broader understanding of poverty.

**Option (d) is Correct:** This choice is in line with the objections made in the text. It draws attention to the fundamental flaw in the current methodology, which is its excessive dependence on income as the only measure of poverty. The paragraph makes the case that this restricted viewpoint leaves out other significant aspects of deprivation that restrict people's options and quality of life.

### Tips and Tricks

- ❑ Determine the primary objection or point made in the passage. In this instance, it is the shortcomings of the approach currently used to gauge poverty in India.
- ❑ Look for precise words and details that bolster the criticism that has been pointed out. Words like "debatable methodology," "insufficient income/purchasing power," "one aspect of poverty," and "limitations of income-based approach" suggest that income is the primary concern in this case.

**Q25. Why is income poverty only one measure of counting the 'poor'?**

- (a) It talks of only one kind of deprivation ignoring all others.
- (b) Other deprivations in a human life have nothing to do with lack of purchasing power.
- (c) Income poverty is not a permanent condition, it changes from time to time.
- (d) Income poverty restricts human choices only at a point of time.

Ans: (a)

**Explanation:**

**Option (b) is Incorrect:** because the passage does not say that deprivations have nothing to do with purchasing power; rather, it acknowledges that deprivations extend beyond income. Reduced income can directly affect one's ability to access resources such as healthcare, education, and other services, which can lead to a variety of deprivations.

**Option (c) is Incorrect:** because, while income is a variable, the passage emphasises the limitations of using income as the only metric. It contends that people experience limited choices and well-being because of their circumstances, not just transient changes in income, even when they are living in income poverty.

The passage criticises income poverty for limiting choices not only at a particular point in a person's life, but also throughout. For this reason, **option (d) is Incorrect.** Their potential and opportunities are restricted by their lack of money, which leaves them in a perpetual state of less options and lower well-being. Since **option (a)** accurately captures the argument made in the passage, it is the correct choice. It criticises income poverty as a stand-alone indicator because it leaves out other significant aspects of deprivation that are also important in contributing to a life in poverty. Other than income, the passage also mentions social constraints, lack of opportunity, and limited choices.

**Tips and Tricks**

- ❑ Determine the primary objection or point made in the passage. It's the inadequacy of using income poverty as the only indicator of poverty in this instance.
- ❑ Look for precise words and details that bolster the criticism that has been pointed out. Words like "other deprivations," "limited choices," "social constraints," and "inadequate purchasing power" suggest that other important aspects of a life in poverty are overlooked in favour of income.

**BASED ON THE CRUX OF THE PASSAGE**

**ASSOCIATED KEYWORDS**

"Crux of the passage/central idea/Underlying tone of the passage" is a common keyword used in these kinds of questions. These questions go deeper in the very heart of the text. And demands a deeper insight into the author's argument than a surface level understanding.

**NATURE OF THIS TYPE OF QUESTIONS**

- ❑ See the passage as an intricate machinery. The one thing that all of its functioning depends on is the crux. It is the central claim, the central idea around which all other arguments are centred. This tests your ability to pinpoint the single most important point the author wants to convey. It could be mentioned clearly or subtly.
- ❑ Think of the passage as a map. The destination, or overarching theme that directs the reader's journey through the text's various points, is the central idea. Like the crux, this concentrates on the central idea or primary theme of the passage. All the components come together to form the overall message.

**Tips and Tricks**

Before delving into specifics, quickly scan the text to acquire a basic understanding of its organisation and key ideas. This first paragraph usually offers a useful foundation for understanding details. Instead of making assumptions, base your responses on specific examples from the text.

**SOLVED PYQs**

**Directions:** Read the following passage and answer the two items that follow. Your answers to these items should be based on the passage only.

**Passage**

Many people are not eating the right food. For some, it is simply a decision to stick with food they enjoy but which is not too healthy. This is leading to an increase in non-communicable diseases. This in turn leads to a major burden on our health-care systems that have the potential to derail the economic progress which is essential for the poor to improve their lives. For others, it is about limited access to nutritious food or a lack of affordability, leading to monotonous diets that do not provide the daily nutrients for them to develop fully. Part of the reason nutrition is under threat worldwide is that our food systems are not properly responding to nutritional needs. Somewhere along that long road from farm to fork, there are serious detours taking place. (UPSC CSAT 2023)

**Q26. Which one of the following statements best reflects the crux of the passage?**

- (a) The scheme of Universal Basic Income should be implemented worldwide as a way of poverty alleviation.
- (b) We must place food-based nutrition at the centre of our policy debate.

- (c) Nutritional status of food should be improved by creating appropriate genetically modified crops.
- (d) Using modern food processing technologies, we must fortify food items with required nutrient elements.

**Ans:** (b)

**Explanation:**

**Option (a) is Incorrect:** because the passage concentrates on more general nutritional issues rather than just poverty alleviation, even though poverty can restrict access to nourishing food. It highlights poor dietary choices, barriers to access, and weaknesses in food systems, pointing to the necessity for all-encompassing policy solutions that go beyond UBI.

**Option (c) is Incorrect:** because the passage doesn't expressly support genetic modification, even though it might be able to improve some nutritional aspects of food. It critiques not just the kinds of crops grown but the entire food chain. It is recommended that policy concentrate more on nutrition.

**Option (d) is Incorrect:** Although the passage points out shortcomings and diversion in the entire food system from farm to fork, fortification can be a beneficial intervention. It implies that systemic changes are required throughout the food chain and goes beyond simply adding nutrients to processed foods.

Since **option (b)** directly supports the main argument of the passage, it is correct. It highlights how crucial it is to give nutrition top priority and make it a major talking point when it comes to policy. The passage outlines various obstacles that impact nutrition and suggests that systemic solutions are necessary.

**Tips and Tricks**

- ❑ Determine the primary issue or theme that the passage addresses. This time, it's about the different risks to a healthy diet and how those risks must be addressed.
- ❑ Look for recurring words and phrases that show the author's point of emphasis. The words "nutrition," "food systems," "detours," and "policy debate" here emphasise how crucial it is to give nutrition top priority when talking about policies.

**Passage**

Benefits of good quality school education accrue only when students complete and leave school after having acquired the gateway skills. Like one learns to walk before running, similarly one picks up advanced skills only after

picking the basic foundational skills. The advent of the knowledge economy poses new challenges, and one of the severe consequences of having an uneducated workforce will be our inability to keep pace with the global economy. Without a strong learning foundation at the primary level, there can be no improvement in higher education or skill development. (UPSC CSAT 2023)

**Q27. Which one of the following statements best reflects the crux of the passage?**

- (a) To become a global power, India needs to invest in universal quality education.
- (b) India is unable to become a global power because it is not focusing or promoting knowledge economy.
- (c) Our education system should focus more on imparting skills during higher education.
- (d) Parents of many school children are illiterate and are unaware of the benefits of quality education.

**Ans:** (a)

**Explanation:**

**Option (b) is Incorrect:** because the passage does not attribute the knowledge economy's lack of focus as the reason for not being a global power, even though it does acknowledge the potential problems of an illiterate workforce in the sector. It makes clear that gateway skills and a strong foundational education are essential.

**Option (c) is Incorrect:** because the passage emphasises the foundational role of a strong primary education while also acknowledging the significance of skills. It contends that even higher education and skill development are ineffective without this foundation. Thus, putting primary education first is more important than concentrating on skills explicitly in higher education.

**Option (d) is Incorrect:** The paragraph makes a stronger case for the value of a top-notch education for the advancement of the country, even though parental illiteracy may play a role. It does not attribute the lack of educational advancement to parental awareness alone.

**Option (a) is Correct:** This choice reflects the passage's major point of contention. It highlights the vital connection between India's aspirations to become a global power and high-quality education and gateway skills. The passage emphasises the need of a solid foundation at the primary level as well as the negative effects of an uneducated workforce.

### Tips and Tricks

- ❑ Determine the passage's primary idea or point of contention. This time, it's the relationship between advancement of the country, skill development, and high-quality education.
- ❑ Look out terms and expressions that convey the author's emphasis. Words like "global economy," "quality education," "gateway skills," "workforce," and "primary level" highlight the significance of education in determining a country's power.

### Passage

In an economic organisation, allowing mankind to benefit by the productivity of machines should lead to a very good life of leisure, and much leisure is apt to be tedious except to those who have intelligent activities and interests. If a leisured population is to be happy, it must be an educated population, and must be educated with a view to enjoyment as well as to the direct usefulness of technical knowledge. (UPSC CSAT 2022)

**Q28. Which of the following statements best reflects the underlying tone of the passage?**

- (a) Only an educated population can best make use of the benefits of economic progress.
- (b) All economic development should be aimed at the creation of leisure.
- (c) An increase in the educated population of a country leads to an increase in the happiness of its people.
- (d) Use of machines should be encouraged in order to create a large leisured population.

**Ans:** (a)

#### Explanation:

**Option (b) is Incorrect:** Although the passage admits that automation may lead to more leisure time, it does not support making leisure the primary objective of economic growth. It emphasises how crucial it is to make the most of advancement rather than merely making the most of leisure time.

**Option (c) is Incorrect:** The passage focuses on education's role in making efficient use of leisure time, not on establishing a direct causal relationship between education and happiness in general, even though education may contribute to happiness. It implies that people with more education can find more rewarding hobbies in their free time.

**Option (d) is Incorrect:** because the passage primarily discusses the consequences of leisure and how education enables people to enjoy it, not the use of machines for increased productivity. Rather than promoting increased leisure as the main objective of

machine use, it views this as a possible consequence that needs to be adequately prepared for through education.

**Option (a) is Correct:** The main idea of the passage is accurately reflected in this option. It highlights how important education is in allowing people to take advantage of the leisure time and advantages that come with higher productivity due to machines. According to the passage, leisure time can become boring and unfulfilling in the absence of adequate education.

### Tips and Tricks

- ❑ Take note of the message being conveyed as well as the author's overall point of view. In this instance, the passage makes the case that in order for people to fully benefit from increased productivity and potential leisure, education must also be provided.
- ❑ Keep an eye out for important terms and qualifiers that express the author's position. Words like "educated population," "intelligent activities," "enjoyment," and "technical knowledge" highlight the importance of education in making the most of the benefits of economic advancement.

### Passage

Aristocratic government ruins itself by limiting too narrowly the circle within which power is confined; oligarchic government ruins itself by the incautious scramble for immediate wealth. But even democracy ruins itself by excess democracy. Its basic principle is the equal right of all to hold office and determine public policy. This is, at first glance, a delightful arrangement; it becomes disastrous because the people are not properly equipped by education to select the best rulers and the wisest courses. The people have no understanding and only repeat what their rulers are pleased to tell them. Such a democracy is tyranny or autocracy. – Plato

(UPSC CSAT 2021)

**Q29. Which one of the following statements best reflects the crux of the passage given above?**

- (a) Human societies experiment with different forms of governments.
- (b) Any form of government tends to deteriorate by excess of its basic principle.
- (c) Education of all citizens ensures a perfect, functional and sustainable democracy.
- (d) Having a government is a necessary evil because tyranny is inherent in any form of government.

Ans: (b)

**Explanation:**

**Option (a) is Incorrect:** because the passage discusses various forms of government but focuses more on how adhering too strictly to a government's basic principles can lead to its downfall than it does on the diversity of these forms.

**Option (c) Incorrect:** The passage criticises a democracy's lack of education, pointing out that it can lead to poor decisions, but it makes no claims about education guaranteeing a flawless or long-lasting democracy. It's not a perfect answer; rather, it draws attention to the possible problems.

**Option (d) Incorrect:** The passage makes no mention of tyranny being inevitable or government as a necessary evil. Although some excesses are criticised, a general negative outlook on all forms of government is not presented.

**Option (b) is Correct:** because it captures the essence of the passage's main argument. In his critique of all forms of government, Plato demonstrates how over-execution of their central tenets—a tight circle of power in the case of the aristocracy, wealth accumulation in the case of the oligarchy, and equal participation in the case of democracy—can have unfavourable effects, including tyranny.

**Tips and Tricks**

- ❑ Determine the passage's central idea or point of contention. Here, it refers to the possible shortcomings of various political structures brought about by an overzealous adherence to their fundamental ideals.
- ❑ Search for terms and expressions that convey the author's concern. Words like "excess," "deteriorate," "ruins itself," and "disastrous" highlight the issue of how placing too much emphasis on fundamental values can backfire.

**Passage**

In our schools, we teach our children all that is there to know about Physics, maths and history and what-have you. But do we teach them about the bitter caste divide that plagues the country, about the spectre of famine that stalks large part of our land, about gender sensitivity, about the possibility of atheism as a choice, etc.? Equally important, do we teach them to ask question, or do we teach them only to passively receive our wisdom? From the cocooned world of school, suddenly, the adolescent finds himself/herself in the unfettered world of university. Here he/she is swept up in a turmoil of ideas and influences and ideologies. For someone who has been discouraged from asking questions and forming an opinion, this transition

can be painful.

(UPSC CSAT 2021)

**Q30. Which one of the following best reflects the central idea of the passage given above ?**

- (a) School curriculum is not compatible with the expectations of children and parents.
- (b) Emphasis on academic achievements does give time for development of personality and skills.
- (c) Preparing the children to be better citizens should be the responsibility of the education system.
- (d) To be a better citizen, the present world order demands societal and life-coping skills in addition to academic content.

Ans: (d)

**Explanation:**

**Option (a) Incorrect:** because it emphasises how expectations and curriculum don't match, whereas the passage stresses more general life skills that aren't covered in school.

**Option (b) is Incorrect:** because it emphasises how academic success negatively affects personality and abilities, but the passage also criticises the complete lack of instruction in those areas.

**Option (c) is Incorrect:** because the passage does make the case for education's ability to help create more moral citizens. It does, however, draw attention to the deficiency of certain abilities required for responsible citizenship.

**Option (d) is in complete:** harmony with the main idea. It highlights how the current educational system falls short of meeting the demands of the modern world, which include critical societal and life-coping skills in addition to academic content.

**Tips and Tricks**

- ❑ Determine the primary conflict or issue that the passage raises. In this case, it's the insufficiency of education in equipping learners for real-world difficulties.
- ❑ Consider each choice carefully in light of the main idea. Seek the exact match rather than merely a tangentially connected point.
- ❑ Keep an eye out for key words and phrases in the options and passage. Option (d)'s "Social and life-coping skills" directly reflects the issues brought up in the passage.
- ❑ Options that miss the main point or are too narrow should be eliminated. While options (c) is more inclusive but does not specifically address skills, options (a) and (b) concentrate only on academic aspects.

## ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

**Directions:** Read the following passages and answer the items that follow the passages. Your answers to these items should be based on the passages only.

### Passage

India's recent hosting of the UN Forum on Forests Country-Led Initiative (CLI) marked a pivotal moment in shaping the discourse on sustainable forest management. The focus? Forest fires, certification, and the crucial mantra of balancing conservation with community well-being. The alarming rise of forest fires, often a consequence of unsustainable practices, demands immediate attention. The CLI emphasized knowledge sharing and collaborative efforts to develop robust early warning systems, fire-fighting strategies, and community-based management approaches. Recognizing the need for responsible forestry practices, the CLI aimed to promote transparent and inclusive certification systems that ensure environmental sustainability while also guaranteeing the livelihoods of dependent communities. India's CLI also championed a holistic perspective, Balancing conservation with the needs of forest communities is vital. The forum recognized the value of traditional knowledge and encouraged partnerships with indigenous communities for sustainable forest management, ensuring their rightful share in the benefits. Ultimately, the CLI resonated with a powerful message: sustainable forest development is not just about protecting trees; it's about building a symphony of ecological, economic, and social harmony.

**1. Based on the information presented in the CLI and the author's emphasis, what is the crucial message conveyed about sustainable forest development?**

- (a) Prioritizing forest fire prevention is the single most important aspect of sustainable development.
- (b) Implementing stringent forest certification is critical for ensuring environmental protection.
- (c) Balancing conservation with community well-being is the cornerstone of sustainable forest management.
- (d) Embracing indigenous knowledge and collaborative partnerships is key to achieving forest sustainability.

### Passage

A new UNICEF report paints a grim picture of how climate change, the defining crisis of our era, is disproportionately impacting the world's children. Polluted air, rising sea levels to extreme weather events, the warming planet

casts a long shadow over their delicate futures. Nearly half the world's children – reside in countries classified as “extremely high-risk” from climate change impacts. This translates to disrupted education, compromised health, and diminished safety. Heatwaves and droughts threaten food security, leaving millions vulnerable to malnutrition. Flooding and storms displace children from their homes, jeopardizing their well-being. Air pollution, a byproduct of unsustainable practices, silently steals their right to breathe clean air, jeopardizing their respiratory health and cognitive development. The report reminds us that the choices we make today not only shape the future of our planet but also determine the fate of our children. Their vulnerability underscores the urgency of transitioning to a low-carbon, climate-resilient future. Delaying action is not an option; it's a betrayal of every child's right to a healthy and secure future.

**2. Based on the author's concerns, what is the best implied and most rational assumption about mitigating the adverse effects of climate change on children in the long run?**

- (a) Prioritizing immediate disaster relief efforts will effectively safeguard children from the impacts of climate change.
- (b) Investing heavily in renewable energy sources and sustainable practices will guarantee a secure future for all children.
- (c) Implementing child-centered climate education programs will empower the next generation to tackle the crisis effectively.
- (d) Strengthening global cooperation and adopting stringent emissions regulations is the most effective course of action to protect children from future threats.

### Passage

National Cooperation Organic Limited (NCO), operating under the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, is advancing its organic farming mission. The “Bharat Organic” brand recently expanded, incorporating six new product categories to meet the increasing demand for diverse, high-quality organic options. These additions, including honey, spices, millets, and basmati rice, address consumer preferences for natural, chemical-free alternatives and sustainable agriculture.

Organic honey now commands a premium price, providing economic benefits to beekeepers and farmers. Spice inclusion aligns with heightened health consciousness, while millets, recognized for nutritional richness and

eco-friendly cultivation, diversify the product range and promote responsible agricultural practices. However, establishing resilient supply chains for these diverse organic products poses a challenge, crucial for consistent availability and fair pricing. Additionally, dispelling misconceptions and educating consumers about the benefits of organic produce are essential for sustained market development. NCOC's expansion of the "Bharat Organic" brand is a significant step toward mainstreaming organic farming in India, offering a reliable range of high-quality products, empowering farmers, meeting consumer preferences, and building a foundation for a sustainable and healthier food system.

**3. Based on the passage, which of the following statements best reflects the most logical inference?**

- (a) Organic farming will soon replace conventional agriculture as the dominant farming practice in India.
- (b) The price of organic honey, spices, and millets will likely see a significant decline in the near future.
- (c) Increased demand for organic products through "Bharat Organic" will incentivize further diversification of organic offerings.
- (d) Organic farming will play a major role in enhancing food security and nutritional diversity in India.

**Passage**

The Paris Agreement, a beacon in the climate change fight, relies on Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). These pledges to cut greenhouse gas emissions are vital for global efforts to curb temperature rise and prevent severe climate impacts. The recent UNFCCC Paris Synthesis Report sheds light on NDCs' evolving landscape, revealing progress and challenges. Over 190 countries, covering 95% of global emissions, submitted NDCs, showcasing increased global commitment. However, combined ambitions fall short of the Paris Agreement's temperature goals, projecting a 2.5°C warming if unchanged. The report underscores the need for transparency and accountability, with many NDCs lacking specific measures for goal achievement. Developing countries require more support due to resource and expertise limitations. Despite challenges, a surge in updated and strengthened NDCs signals global dedication. The focus on adaptation and nature-based solutions signifies a shift in tackling climate change holistically. Progress has been made, but nations must revisit and fortify NDCs for the 1.5°C goal. Transparency, robust implementation plans, and support

for developing countries are vital for closing the ambition gap and securing a sustainable future.

**4. Based on the passage, the most logical, rational, and practical message for policymakers worldwide regarding NDCs is:**

- (a) Prioritize immediate financial aid for developing countries to implement their existing NDCs.
- (b) Focus solely on strengthening domestic emissions reduction measures within each nation.
- (c) Advocate for a global treaty with binding emission targets and stricter enforcement mechanisms.
- (d) Encourage all nations to revise and significantly strengthen their NDCs with clear implementation plans and increased transparency.

**Passage**

The UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) has revealed a concerning reality through its Desertification Dashboard. The data highlights land degradation exceeding sustainable limits. Climate change, unsustainable land-use practices, and overpopulation drive this alarming trend, leading to soil erosion, deforestation, and water scarcity. The consequences include jeopardized food security, biodiversity, and livelihoods globally. Urgent action is essential to avert increased poverty, mass migration, and heightened vulnerability to climate change. Africa, Asia, and Latin America, the most affected regions, face a precarious future without concerted efforts to reverse desertification. However, the dashboard offers hope through successful sustainable land management practices like agroforestry and regenerative agriculture. Scaling up these solutions, fostering knowledge sharing, and providing resources are crucial to empowering local communities in this battle. The message is clear: desertification is not inevitable, and our collective choices will shape its future. Investing in sustainable land management, international cooperation, and empowering communities is vital to reversing this tide and determining the health of our planet and the future of millions.

**5. Based on the passage, the most logical, rational and crucial message for policymakers worldwide regarding combating desertification is:**

- (a) Prioritize immediate financial assistance to developing countries most affected by desertification to implement urgent mitigation measures.

- (b) Solely focus on large-scale technological solutions for land restoration, such as advanced desalination plants and terraforming methods.
- (c) Advocate for a global treaty with binding targets for sustainable land management practices and increased research funding.
- (d) Encourage and empower local communities in affected regions to adopt and share traditional and innovative sustainable land management strategies.

### Passage

The recent tragic collapse of the Silkyara-Barkot tunnel in the Chardham all-weather road project raises serious concerns about India's infrastructure ambitions. This incident, claiming lives and leaving others trapped, highlights the human cost of poorly planned projects and emphasizes the need for a fundamental shift in our approach to infrastructure development. The Chardham project, aimed at improving connectivity to Himalayan pilgrimage sites, has faced environmental and geological concerns from the beginning. Environmentalists warn of potential ecological damage, and geologists question the project's suitability for the fragile Himalayan terrain. The tunnel collapse, attributed to geological vulnerabilities and potentially inadequate safety measures, underscores the validity of these concerns. Instead of deterring progress, this incident should be a catalyst for reform, presenting an opportunity to redefine "infrastructure development." The focus should shift from speed and connectivity to a more holistic approach that prioritizes environmental sustainability, geological considerations, and community well-being. Implementing this shift requires robust environmental impact assessments with genuine public participation, prioritizing geological studies and risk assessments, involving local communities in decision-making, and embracing technological advancements and sustainable construction practices to minimize environmental impact. The path forward is challenging but crucial. Blindly pursuing ambitious projects without due diligence poses unacceptable risks to human life and the environment. The Chardham tragedy can serve as a turning point, urging us to adopt a sustainable development model that prioritizes long-term well-being over short-term gains, building infrastructure for the present and safeguarding the future.

**6. Based on the information presented and the author's emphasis, the most logical, rational, and crucial message regarding sustainable infrastructure development is:**

- (a) Implement stricter environmental regulations and increase oversight to prevent similar infrastructure disasters in the future.

- (b) Prioritize technological solutions like advanced tunnel boring techniques and disaster mitigation tools for safer and faster infrastructure projects.
- (c) Redefine infrastructure development goals to prioritize environmental sustainability, community well-being, and long-term ecological resilience alongside connectivity.
- (d) Balance the need for infrastructure development with environmental considerations by opting for alternative routes and less disruptive construction methods.

### Passage

The International Energy Agency (IEA) has unveiled its Net Zero Roadmap, outlining a challenging yet achievable route for the global energy sector to reach the Paris Agreement's net-zero greenhouse gas emissions goal by 2050. Termed a "reality check," the report underscores the urgent need for a significant transformation. Urgency is stressed as current trends fall short, with global emissions plateauing instead of decreasing. The Roadmap calls for an unprecedented shift away from fossil fuels, advocating for the complete phase-out of coal by mid-century and significant reductions in oil and gas consumption. Achieving this transition demands advancements in renewable energy technology and substantial investments in energy efficiency and grid modernization. Acknowledging immense challenges, the Roadmap emphasizes the social and economic implications, urging governments to implement policies ensuring a fair transition for workers and communities reliant on fossil fuel industries. International cooperation is crucial to support developing nations facing climate change impacts while contributing less to the problem. While not a guaranteed path to success, the Net Zero Roadmap provides a realistic blueprint for a fossil fuel-free future. The message is clear: incremental change is insufficient, and the world must now embrace the challenging path outlined by the IEA to avert the worst impacts of climate change and secure a sustainable future for all.

**7. Based on the passage, the most logical message implied by the author is:**

- (a) Achieving net-zero emissions by 2050 is an unrealistic and unattainable goal, requiring technological breakthroughs beyond current capabilities.
- (b) While the Roadmap offers a valuable framework, successfully transitioning to a net-zero future ultimately hinges on individual lifestyle changes and consumer choices.

- (c) The urgent need for global cooperation and equitable transition strategies is paramount to navigating the economic and social challenges posed by the transition to net-zero.
- (d) Investing in renewable energy and technological advancements alone will suffice to achieve net-zero emissions, negating the need for significant policy changes or economic restructuring.

### Passage

The SDGs pose a multifaceted challenge requiring collaborative efforts from governments, businesses, and civil society. To address this, stakeholders must unlock new funding sources, allocate resources efficiently, and promote responsible investment practices. Through innovative solutions, enhanced regional collaboration, and mobilization of domestic and international resources, the region can progress towards a more sustainable and equitable future aligned with the SDGs. The latest UNESCAP report underscores a significant funding gap of almost \$5.4 trillion annually in the region to achieve the SDGs by 2030, posing a threat to critical areas such as poverty eradication, healthcare, education, and environmental protection. Developing nations, with limited resources, face the brunt of this disparity. Despite the challenges, the report identifies avenues to bridge the funding gap, including mobilizing domestic resources through improved tax systems, combating illicit financial flows, and leveraging private sector investments through mechanisms like green bonds and public-private partnerships. Strengthening regional cooperation and knowledge sharing can further enhance financing.

**8. Based on the passage, the most practical solution for UNESCAP member states to bridge the funding gap and accelerate progress towards achieving the SDGs by 2030 is:**

- (a) Implement a regional carbon tax with revenue directed towards SDG-focused projects in developing member states.
- (b) Establish an Asia-Pacific SDG Development Bank providing concessional loans and technical assistance to resource-constrained countries.
- (c) Prioritize domestic resource mobilization through improved tax administration, tackling tax evasion, and promoting public-private partnerships.
- (d) Advocate for increased official development assistance from developed nations alongside stricter accountability measures for SDG-related funding initiatives.

### Passage

The recent Conocarpus ban in Telangana sparks a heated debate, intertwining environmental concerns with livelihoods and coastal development aspirations. Proponents emphasize the invasive nature of Conocarpus, thriving in saline environments, outcompeting native mangrove species, and disrupting coastal ecosystems. Its dense root network can alter tidal patterns, impacting mangrove biodiversity. Concerns about flammability and pest outbreaks support the call for removal. Opponents, however, highlight socio-economic consequences, as Conocarpus serves as a vital livelihood source for coastal communities. Its wood is crucial for fuel, construction, and furniture, sustaining thousands. Some argue for a more nuanced approach, addressing multiple invasive species. The Conocarpus conundrum underscores the complex interdependencies within coastal environments. Balancing ecological protection and community needs demands a comprehensive, evidence-based approach. Demonizing a single species risks overlooking systemic issues and burdening vulnerable communities. A sustainable solution requires scientific research, community engagement, alternative livelihood exploration, and mangrove restoration efforts. Protecting coastlines necessitates collaborative efforts prioritizing environmental health and community well-being.

**9. Based on the passage, which of the following assumptions best underpins the argument in the passage?**

- (a) Eradicating Conocarpus entirely from the coastlines is the only effective way to restore the ecological balance of mangrove ecosystems.
- (b) Addressing the concerns of coastal communities impacted by the ban is secondary to achieving the overarching goal of environmental protection.
- (c) A comprehensive understanding of the ecological and socio-economic implications of Conocarpus, coupled with community engagement, is crucial for finding a sustainable solution.
- (d) Technological advancements will soon provide solutions to mitigate the harmful effects of Conocarpus, rendering the need for its removal obsolete.

### Passage

In the heart of the Amazon rainforest, a glaring sign of global warming's impact emerges: the near-disappearance of Lake Puraquequara. Once thriving, the lake now lies cracked and parched, reflecting the intensifying climate crisis in the Amazon basin. Lake Puraquequara's fate isn't

isolated; it's a chilling testament to the cascading effects of global warming. Rising temperatures fuel deforestation, disrupting the rainforest's water cycle. Reduced rainfall and increased evaporation create parched landscapes, triggering a cycle of drought and deforestation, priming the Amazon for wildfires. This ecological collapse extends beyond the Amazon, impacting the planet's climate regulation and biodiversity. The rainforest, a crucial "air conditioner," absorbs carbon dioxide, regulating global temperatures. Its demise would exacerbate climate change, disrupt weather patterns, and threaten ecosystems worldwide. The drying of Lake Puraquequara serves as a stark warning, demanding immediate measures to curb global warming. Investing in renewable energy, protecting remaining forests, and adopting sustainable practices are existential necessities. Failing to act will jeopardize the Amazon and the planet's fragile equilibrium. The Amazon's fate is intertwined with ours; Lake Puraquequara's parched bed mirrors the urgency of confronting climate change. It's a call to act now, for the Amazon, humanity, and the planet we call home.

**10. Which of the following options best captures the central message conveyed by the passage?**

- (a) The disappearance of Lake Puraquequara primarily highlights the negative impact of tourism and unsustainable
- (b) While concerning, the drying of Lake Puraquequara is a localized phenomenon unlikely to significantly impact the broader Amazon rainforest or global climate.
- (c) The near-disappearance of Lake Puraquequara serves as a powerful symbol of the escalating climate crisis and its far-reaching consequences for the Amazon and the planet.
- (d) Technological advancements in water management and reforestation offer promising solutions to mitigate the drying of Lake Puraquequara and avert ecological catastrophe in the Amazon.

## ECONOMY

**Directions:** Read the following passages and answer the items that follow the passages. Your answers to these items should be based on the passages only.

### Passage

India's Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) has revolutionized debt resolution, but concerns about transparency continue. The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) recently proposed reforms like stricter disclosure norms for insolvency professionals, real-time

updates on case proceedings, and increased public access to case documents. These measures aim to address allegations of bias, insider trading, and information asymmetry that often mar IBC processes. Critics remain skeptical, however, urging stricter regulations for resolution professionals and greater judicial oversight to fully restore public trust in the system.

**11. The passage best supports which of the following statements?**

- (a) The IBC has been an undeniable success in resolving corporate debt issues in India.
- (b) Transparency concerns surrounding the IBC necessitate immediate dissolution of the code.
- (c) Proposed reforms, coupled with stricter regulations, hold promise for strengthening IBC transparency.
- (d) Judicial control over the IBC is the sole solution to address all existing transparency issues.

### Passage

Marking its second anniversary, PM Gati Shakti continues to reshape India's infrastructure landscape. This ambitious Master Action Plan aims for seamless multi-modal connectivity, integrating diverse forms of transportation through a digital platform. Gati Shakti promises not only faster logistics and economic growth but also strengthened national integration by connecting remote regions and spurring regional development. However, challenges remain in operationalizing the plan's comprehensive vision, requiring efficient coordination between various stakeholders and robust infrastructure investment.

**12. Which of the following is the most logical corollary of the above passage?**

- (a) The success of PM Gati Shakti hinges solely on technological advancements in the transportation sector.
- (b) Gati Shakti's potential impact on regional development necessitates decentralization of infrastructure planning.
- (c) Despite challenges, efficient implementation of Gati Shakti can significantly strengthen India's competitive edge in the global market.
- (d) Concerns about inter-departmental coordination threaten the entire PM Gati Shakti initiative.

### Passage

The completion of the Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor (EDFC) sparks debate regarding its impact on India's ambitious \$5 trillion economic vision. Proponents

argue the improved logistics and reduced costs will fuel industrial activity and unlock the potential of eastern states. Skeptics, however, highlight concerns about uneven regional development, potential job losses in existing logistics hubs, and the long-term viability of dedicated corridors amidst evolving transportation technologies. They advocate for a balanced approach, emphasizing investments in diverse infrastructure and human capital development alongside freight corridors.

**13. On the basis of the passage, consider the following assumptions:**

1. The EDFC's primary impact on India's \$5 trillion vision will be through facilitating regional specialization and niche industrial clusters in eastern states.
2. The passage implicitly warns against focusing solely on the EDFC and suggests the need for a holistic infrastructure development strategy with emphasis on intermodal connectivity and technological integration.

Choose the most appropriate answer:

- (a) Only 1                      (b) Only 2  
(c) Both 1 and 2            (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**Passage**

The Microfinance Industry Network's (MFIN) latest "Micro Matters Macro View" report paints a complex picture of India's microfinance sector. While loan portfolios saw impressive growth, reaching Rs. 3.5 Lakh crore, concerns linger about portfolio quality and client activation. Despite a dip in the Portfolio at Risk (PAR) ratio, it remains above pre-pandemic levels, prompting calls for cautious lending practices. On the positive side, client activation is nearing pre-pandemic levels, hinting at renewed confidence in the sector. While challenges remain, the report underlines the sector's continued relevance in promoting financial inclusion and empowering low-income communities.

**14. Which of the following statements are correct based on the passage?**

1. Microfinance loan disbursement in India has stagnated due to growing portfolio quality concerns.
2. Increased client activation suggests successful post-pandemic recovery and improved risk management within the sector.

Choose the most appropriate answer:

- (a) Only 1                      (b) Only 2  
(c) Both 1 and 2            (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**Passage**

The recent amendments to the Companies Act 2013 permit domestic companies to directly list their shares on foreign stock exchanges. Proponents laud the move for facilitating easier access to global capital, boosting valuations, and enhancing corporate governance. However, concerns remain regarding regulatory complexities, potential manipulation by foreign investors, and the impact on domestic stock markets. Experts emphasize the need for robust safeguards and careful consideration of long-term implications before embracing this avenue. Balancing potential benefits with potential risks will be crucial for this policy to truly unlock its potential for Indian companies.

**15. Which of the following is the most rational and crucial message conveyed by the passage?**

- (a) Direct listing in foreign markets primarily benefits large, established companies, potentially widening the gap between them and smaller enterprises.
- (b) While potential benefits exist, regulatory complexities and long-term implications demand cautious implementation of direct listing.
- (c) The success of direct listing hinges on the government's ability to swiftly forge robust regulatory frameworks and investor protection measures.
- (d) Domestic companies should prioritize listing on domestic stock exchanges before considering foreign markets to ensure a stable national market.

**Passage**

The recent awarding of the Nobel Prize in Economics to Claudia Goldin for her work on women's economic history rekindles the global debate on female labor force participation (FLFP). Goldin's research highlights persistent historical and cultural barriers limiting women's economic opportunities, including unequal access to education, childcare burdens, and gender wage gaps. Despite remarkable progress in some countries, significant disparities remain, prompting renewed calls for policy interventions aimed at promoting gender equality in the workplace. Addressing these structural challenges will be crucial for unlocking the full potential of female talent and fostering inclusive economic growth.

**16. Which of the following is the most rational and logical inference of the passage?**

- (a) Goldin's Nobel win signifies the historical significance of women's economic roles, with little relevance to contemporary challenges.

- (b) Technological advancements and flexible work arrangements will solve historical and cultural barriers hindering women's economic participation.
- (c) Investing in universal childcare and education, alongside targeted policy interventions, are crucial to overcome structural challenges and close the FLFP gender gap.
- (d) Cultural shifts emphasizing traditional gender roles will ultimately lead to a natural increase in women's workplace participation.

#### Passage

The recent Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Open Market Operations (OMO) auction, aimed at withdrawing liquidity from the banking system, saw government bond yields rise. This surprised market participants who expected yields to fall due to increased demand for bonds from the RBI. However, analysts explain that the RBI's strategy focused on selling longer-term bonds, leading to a decrease in their prices and a consequent rise in their yields. The move aims to cool inflation and dampen excessive risk-taking in the stock market, but raises concerns about potential negative impacts on infrastructure investments and economic growth. Balancing the objectives of managing inflation and ensuring sustained economic growth will be crucial for the RBI in navigating this delicate situation.

#### 17. Which of the following assumptions best supports the argument of the passage?

- (a) The RBI prioritizes controlling inflation over supporting economic growth in its monetary policy decisions.
- (b) Rising bond yields automatically translate into increased borrowing costs for businesses and individuals, hindering economic activity.
- (c) The impact of OMOs on the secondary market can be unpredictable and difficult to anticipate accurately.
- (d) Bond prices and yields move in opposite directions, with higher prices leading to lower yields and vice versa.

#### Passage

The Punjab Agricultural University's (PAU) recent field experiments comparing nano urea with conventional urea for rice and wheat cultivation have thrown a wrench in the Indian government's ambitious push for this novel fertilizer. Despite government claims of increased yields with nano urea, PAU's trials revealed a significant decrease – 21.6% for wheat and 13% for rice – compared to conventional urea. Critics point to this as evidence of exaggerated claims and call for caution before widespread

adoption. Proponents, however, urge further research, arguing that PAU's results might not be conclusive given the limited scope of the study.

#### 18. Which of the following assumptions best underpins the argument of the passage regarding the efficacy of nano urea?

- (a) The government's promotion of nano urea is primarily driven by environmental concerns over conventional urea's potential harm.
- (b) PAU's experiment design and findings are universally accepted as unbiased and conclusive, eliminating the need for further research.
- (c) The potential economic benefits of nano urea for both farmers and the government outweigh any uncertainties regarding its performance.
- (d) Nano urea offers significant advantages in ease of application compared to conventional urea, even if yield improvement remains unclear.

#### Passage

Driven by climate change concerns and energy security goals, the Indian government has launched a pilot project introducing E20, a blend of 20% ethanol and 80% petrol, in select cities. Proponents highlight biofuels like ethanol as a cleaner alternative to fossil fuels, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and dependence on oil imports. However, challenges remain - concerns about food security due to ethanol production from crops like sugarcane, the need for robust infrastructure for distribution and blending, and the economic viability of biofuel production compared to traditional fuels. Experts urge a cautious approach, balancing environmental benefits with potential economic and social impacts.

#### 19. Which of the following is the long-term implication of the message conveyed by the passage?

- (a) E20 blending is likely to be a one-time initiative due to concerns about food security and economic viability, hindering significant progress towards green fuels.
- (b) While initial challenges exist, the E20 pilot project marks a crucial step towards widespread adoption of biofuels, potentially leading to a substantial shift in India's energy landscape.
- (c) Extensive research and development efforts are needed to address food security concerns and develop more efficient biofuel alternatives before considering large-scale implementation.
- (d) Continued E20 blending program will lead to increased dependence on foreign ethanol imports.

### Passage

The Small Farmers' Business Consortium (SFBC) launched the "Millets Giveaway" program, aiming to uplift small and marginalized farmers by promoting millet cultivation and consumption. This initiative distributes free millet seeds and connects farmers directly with consumers through online platforms. Supporters laud the program's potential to increase farmer incomes, enhance dietary diversity, and revive traditional crop varieties. However, concerns arise about its long-term sustainability. Critics question the dependence on freebies, fearing it might discourage long-term market engagement and sustainable farming practices. Experts advocate for a balanced approach, emphasizing market development, capacity building, and value-added processing alongside giveaways to ensure lasting impact.

**20. The passage best supports which of the following statements about the Millet Giveaway program?**

- (a) The program guarantees sustained economic benefits for all participating farmers, with negligible concerns about long-term sustainability.
- (b) While offering promising initial gains, the program's effectiveness hinges on a shift towards market-driven solutions and capacity building to avoid dependence on freebies.
- (c) Critics' concerns about freebies undermine the potential of the program, and its success can be attributed to increased consumer demand for millets.
- (d) The program faces inherent limitations due to its focus on marginal farmers and traditional crops, hindering its impact on overall economic upliftment.

## PHILOSOPHY

**Directions: Read the following passages and answer the items that follow the passages. Your answers to these items should be based on the passages only.**

### Passage

As a person develops and matures, he neither remains completely engrossed in the external objective world nor is satisfied with it. He also wants to find some inner meaning, some psychological and material satisfaction. Same is the condition of people and civilizations as they mature and develop and become adults. Every civilization and every person reflects these parallel streams of external life and inner life. When these currents mix together or remain adjacent to each other, then balance

and stability is maintained. When these go in different directions, conflict arises and a state of crisis arises that tortures the mind and soul.

**21. Which is the most important implication of this passage?**

- (a) Effect of foreign domination.
- (b) The desire to escape from foreign domination and find solace in imagining the great past.
- (c) Lack of balance between external life and internal life.
- (d) Inability of the individual to become neither a revolutionary nor a worldly person.

### Passage

Many people mistake knowledge for wisdom because they are closely related, and this is unfortunate because in a certain way they are completely different. Knowledge is the accumulation of facts and information. Wisdom is the synthesis of knowledge and experience that deepens one's understanding of relationships and the meaning of life. In other words, knowledge is a tool, and wisdom is the craft in which knowledge is applied.

**22. Which of the following is the most logical corollary of the above passage?**

- 1. Knowledge is not a static component.
- 2. A knowledgeable person can do nothing wrong.
- 3. Wisdom ensures the knowledge, reality and truth of life are comprehended seriously.

Select the correct option from the codes given below:

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) Only 3
- (c) 2 and 3 only
- (d) None of the above

### Passage

New ideas are not only necessary for expanding the boundaries of knowledge or for exploration and invention but they also help in improving goods and businesses, increasing work efficiency, finding solutions to problems and in short they are necessary to make everyone's life simple and happy. The first step in exploring new ideas is to try hard to solve problems at hand. Interest is the petrol that powers the engine of the brain. Without this motivational fuel the powers of body and mind will remain largely dormant and undeveloped. Interest is the basis of the three most important functions of the brain. These functions are concentration, memory power and imagination or originality. Interest in the form of emotional motivation transmits the energy needed to perform a task and helps in persisting despite difficulties and failures.

**23. How can a man's brain help him in generating new ideas?**

- (a) Through three important functions, such as concentration, memory and imagination.
- (b) By remembering all the facts and figures related to the problem
- (c) To find a solution to the problem in harmony between body and mind.
- (d) Cannot be determined from the passage

**Passage**

To me, a "classic" means precisely the opposite of what my predecessors understood: a work is classical by reason of its resistance to contemporaneity and supposed universality, by reason of its capacity to indicate human particularity and difference in that past epoch. The classic is not what tells me about shared humanity — or, more truthfully put, what lets me recognize myself as already present in the past, what nourishes in me the illusion that everything has been like me and has existed only to prepare the way for me. Instead, the classic is what gives access to radically different forms of human consciousness for any given generation of readers, and thereby expands for them the range of possibilities of what it means to be a human being.

**24. Choose the option that best captures the author's position.**

- (a) A classic is able to focus on the contemporary human condition and a unified experience of human consciousness.
- (b) A classical work seeks to resist particularity and temporal difference even as it focuses on a common humanity.
- (c) A classic is a work exploring the new, going beyond the universal, the contemporary, and the notion of a unified human consciousness.
- (d) A classic is a work that provides access to a universal experience of the human race as opposed to radically different forms of human consciousness.

**Passage**

In an era dominated by technological advancements, the ethical implications of innovation have come to the forefront of philosophical discourse. The intersection of artificial intelligence, bioengineering, and the digital age raises profound questions about the moral responsibilities of humanity. From debates on privacy and surveillance to concerns about the potential misuse of emerging technologies, ethicists grapple with the evolving landscape of moral decision making. As we

entrust machines with increasingly complex tasks, the ethical dimensions of autonomy, accountability, and the unintended consequences of innovation demand careful consideration. In the ethical calculus of the technological age, philosophers argue for a harmonious coexistence between progress and morality, emphasising the need for ethical frameworks to guide the trajectory of technological development.

**25. How does the passage characterise the relationship between technological progress and moral responsibility?**

- (a) Moral responsibility is irrelevant in the context of technological progress.
- (b) Ethical frameworks should play a crucial role in guiding the trajectory of technological development.
- (c) Moral responsibility is an impediment to technological innovation.
- (d) The passage suggests that technological progress can inherently resolve ethical dilemmas.

**Passage**

In the pursuit of knowledge, philosophers have long debated the nature of certainty and the boundaries of human understanding. The quest for absolute truth is a perennial journey, marked by scepticism and intellectual curiosity. Descartes, in his seminal work "Meditations on First Philosophy," questioned the foundations of knowledge, famously declaring, "Cogito, ergo sum" (I think, therefore I am). This statement becomes a cornerstone for epistemological exploration, challenging us to examine the reliability of our perceptions and the elusive nature of reality. As we navigate the labyrinth of doubt, it becomes evident that certainty is a rare commodity in the ever-expanding landscape of human inquiry. The very act of questioning, however, becomes a testament to our intellectual resilience, propelling us forward in the relentless pursuit of understanding.

**26. What is the message that can be most logically inferred from the passage regarding Descartes' statement "Cogito, ergo sum"?**

- (a) Certainty in knowledge is easily attainable through introspection.
- (b) The act of questioning is integral to the exploration of knowledge.
- (c) Descartes emphasised the infallibility of human perceptions.
- (d) Absolute truth is readily available in the pursuit of knowledge.

### Passage

Aristotle argues that our function, as humans, must be more than growth, nutrition and reproduction, as plants are also capable of this. Our function must also be more than perception, as non-human animals are capable of this. He thus proposes that our essence – what makes us unique – is that humans are capable of reasoning.

What a good, flourishing human life involves, therefore, is “some kind of practical life of that part that has reason”. This is the starting point of Aristotle’s ethics. We must learn to reason well and develop practical wisdom and, in applying this reason to our decisions and judgements, we must learn to find the right balance between the excess and deficiency of virtue.

**27. Which of the following statements can be inferred from the above passage?**

- (a) Blind obedience of orders, without application of one’s own mind, is an unethical act.
- (b) Growth, nutrition and reproduction should not be the functions of humans.
- (c) One must look to maximise the virtues to become ethical.
- (d) Aristotelian ethics involves pondering over theoretical philosophical questions of interest.

### Passage

Humans often seek change due to a combination of innate curiosity, a desire for improvement, and a coping mechanism for discomfort or dissatisfaction. Evolutionarily, adaptability has been crucial for survival, driving the inclination to modify circumstances. In this ever-evolving journey of life, the Japanese philosophy of Uketamo emerges as a beacon of light. Uketamo, translated loosely as “to accept.” The philosophy teaches that all things, whether positive or challenging, are fleeting. It encourages individuals to acknowledge and receive both the joys and sorrows of life without resistance, fostering a profound sense of equilibrium.

**28. Which of the following statements most accurately represents the central idea of the passage?**

- (a) Changes in human lives are often desirable.
- (b) Changes should be avoided to bring about the sense of equilibrium.
- (c) Acceptance towards life’s ups and downs can lead to peace.
- (d) There is no mechanism to cope with discomfort or dissatisfaction.

### Passage

Former US president Franklin D Roosevelt declared in one of his speeches that “There’s nothing to fear but fear itself”. ‘Fear’ may vary in degrees and types, from fear of death to the fear of the unknown, from realistic fear to neurotic fear, but there is no denying that fear is no stranger to any of us. Ultimately our nature controls how we experience our world. For those who are naturally ‘fearful’ and ‘timid’, even a small incident can be a cause of trauma. It is for this reason that Freud says that “Religion thrives because it offers men who are really children a continuation of the infantile life, lived securely in the arms of a loving omnipotent omniscient father.”

**29. Which of the following statements is the most logical corollary of the passage?**

- (a) One has to be courageous to escape the sense of fear.
- (b) Religion is a deceptive tool to cure fear.
- (c) Fear is the worst and most taxing emotion.
- (d) Surrendering to the omnipotent is one tool to fight the sense of fear.

### Passage

Spiritual snobs are often known to condescend our pursuit of the material. But, is our material pursuit really as shallow as it’s made out to be?

According to Indian tradition, ‘artha’ is one of the four aims of human life. It means achievement of goals and relates specifically to the acquisition of valuable objects or wealth. To have money is to be free of it. Wealth gives us the freedom to pursue our dreams, actualize our imagination. Wealth helps us to transcend the banal and seek the sublime.

However, our material pursuit is deemed negative when it acquires the form of obsession and greed. When we chase the material rather than chasing our dream, our existence is arid and barren. One needs to remember that ‘artha’ is one of the four aims of life, not the only one!

**30. Which of the following statements is the most logical inference that can be drawn from the passage?**

- (a) One should snub ‘Artha’ to pursue dreams and actualize imagination.
- (b) Relentless pursuit of ‘Artha’ is the aim of human life.
- (c) Wealth provides the security which enables transcendence beyond material pursuit.
- (d) Spirituality and pursuit of wealth are antithetical.

## POLITY & GOVERNMENT POLICIES

**Directions:** Read the following passages and answer the items that follow the passages. Your answers to these items should be based on the passages only.

#### Passage

The Supreme Court of India, in a landmark move, has directed the Election Commission of India (ECI) to submit detailed data on electoral bond contributions received by all political parties till September 30, 2023. This order comes amidst ongoing petitions challenging the opacity of the electoral bond scheme, which allows anonymous donations to political parties through bearer instruments. The petitioners argue that the scheme undermines transparency and accountability in election funding, potentially facilitating undue corporate influence and money laundering. The ECI has been tasked with providing information on the amount, source, and recipient of each electoral bond transaction, raising hopes for a clearer picture of political party finances. The Supreme Court's decision is expected to have a significant impact on the future of electoral funding in India.

**31. Which of the following statements best summarizes the central theme of the passage?**

- (a) The Supreme Court has declared the electoral bond scheme unconstitutional.
- (b) The ECI has been mandated to disclose the identities of all electoral bond donors.
- (c) The Supreme Court is investigating potential misuse of electoral bonds by political parties.
- (d) Concerns about transparency and corporate influence have led to increased scrutiny of electoral bond funding.

#### Passage

In a significant move aimed at nurturing a politically aware citizenry, the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Election Commission of India (ECI) have joined forces through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). This collaborative effort seeks to integrate electoral literacy into the fabric of India's education system, starting from school to college levels. The MoU envisions the development of age-appropriate curriculum materials, capacity-building programs for educators, and engaging awareness campaigns to equip students with the knowledge and skills needed to make informed electoral choices. This initiative holds the potential to empower future generations with a deep understanding of their democratic rights and responsibilities, laying the groundwork for a more informed and engaged electorate.

**32. What is the most likely long-term consequence of the MoU?**

- (a) A significant increase in voter turnout in upcoming elections.

- (b) A rise in the number of politically active youth organizations.
- (c) A noticeable shift in voting patterns based on ideological considerations.
- (d) A gradual strengthening of democratic values and responsible political participation.

#### Passage

Across India, a growing number of bills passed by state legislatures are languishing in the hands of governors, stoking concerns about political interference and legislative paralysis. As of December 2023, over 200 bills await gubernatorial assent, spanning diverse issues like education reform, environmental protection, and economic policy. This backlog has sparked accusations of partisan bias, with critics alleging that governors are selectively delaying bills based on their alignment with the ruling party at the center. Supporters, however, argue that the governors are exercising their constitutional prerogative to scrutinize bills for legal and policy inconsistencies, ensuring they align with national interests. This tug-of-war between political expediency and constitutional duty has created an unsettling impasse, leaving crucial legislation in limbo and hampering the smooth functioning of state governments.

**33. In the context of the passage, the most logical and rational message to convey to governors would be:**

- (a) Act swiftly and approve all pending bills to avoid legislative stagnation.
- (b) Prioritize bills based on their economic and social impact, regardless of political affiliations.
- (c) Apply a transparent and consistent set of criteria for reviewing and approving bills.
- (d) Seek clarification from the center on any concerns before granting assent to potentially controversial bills.

#### Passage

The impending revision of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), a cornerstone of India's criminal justice system, has sparked debate about the fate of "Special and Local Laws" (SLLs). These state-specific laws address issues not covered by the IPC, ranging from cow protection to gambling regulations. While some advocate for their integration into the revised IPC, others warn of potential drawbacks. Proponents of integrating SLLs argue for legal uniformity and ease of access to information. They believe a single, comprehensive code would simplify legal proceedings and enhance transparency. Additionally, concerns about overlapping jurisdictions and conflicting provisions between the IPC and SLLs could be addressed. However, critics raise concerns about cultural sensitivity and regional specificities. They argue that SLLs often reflect local customs and traditions, and their integration into the IPC

could lead to a one-size-fits-all approach that overlooks regional nuances. Additionally, the sheer volume of SLLs necessitates careful consideration and thorough vetting to avoid contradictions and redundancies within the revised IPC. The debate highlights the need for a balanced approach. A comprehensive review of SLLs is crucial to identify those that deserve national relevance and those best suited to remain region-specific. This review should be guided by principles of consistency, cultural sensitivity, and effectiveness in addressing local concerns.

**34. The most crucial message conveyed in the passage regarding the upcoming IPC revision and Special and Local Laws is:**

- (a) Integrating all SLLs into the revised IPC is essential for legal uniformity and simplicity.
- (b) Concerns about cultural sensitivity and regional specificities must be addressed during the IPC revision process.
- (c) The fate of SLLs is irrelevant to the overall effectiveness of the revised IPC.
- (d) The new IPC should provide a framework for incorporating relevant SLLs, while respecting regional variations.

**Passage**

The call for Bihar to be granted Special Category State (SCS) status has rekindled discussions on regional development and fiscal imbalances in the Indian federation. Advocates argue that despite being the fourth most populous state, Bihar faces economic challenges, low per capita income, and insufficient infrastructure due to its hilly terrain and vulnerability to disasters. SCS status would provide increased central assistance, allowing Bihar to invest in key sectors like education, healthcare, and irrigation for economic growth and poverty reduction. Opponents, however, raise concerns about fund misuse and lack of accountability, suggesting a focus on efficient resource utilization and improved governance. Granting SCS may set a precedent, potentially burdening the central government and challenging competitive federalism. This debate underscores the complexities of balancing regional aspirations with national fiscal responsibility in India, emphasizing the need for a careful assessment of Bihar's needs and resource allocation before deciding on SCS status.

**35. Based on the passage, what is the MOST RATIONAL assumption about the potential consequences of granting Bihar SCS status?**

- (a) It would significantly improve Bihar's economic growth and poverty alleviation.

- (b) It would lead to a decrease in fiscal burden on the central government.
- (c) It would incentivize other states to focus on good governance and efficient resource utilization.
- (d) It would require the central government to establish a transparent and accountable mechanism for utilizing additional funds allocated to Bihar.

**Passage**

Launched in 2015, the Smart City Mission aimed to transform 100 Indian cities into models of sustainability and economic dynamism. While progress varies, the initiative has sparked a debate on whether competitive federalism can drive urban development. Proponents argue that the competitive selection process, where cities vie for central funding, encourages innovation and efficiency. Seeking grants motivates cities to streamline bureaucracy, prioritize citizen engagement, and embrace data-driven governance, fostering effective urban transformation. Critics, however, express concerns. They contend that the mission's specific criteria may neglect diverse cities' socio-economic needs, potentially exacerbating urban inequalities. Wealthier cities could gain an advantage in securing funding, risking a wider gap between developed and underdeveloped cities and compromising national urban coherence. The Smart City Mission serves as a case study in competitive federalism's potential and pitfalls. While the competitive spirit drives innovation, concerns about equity and inclusivity must be addressed. India must navigate these challenges to ensure smart cities benefit all, not just a select few.

**36. Which of the following best reflects the crux of the passage regarding the Smart City Mission and its implications for Indian federalism?**

- (a) The mission guarantees rapid and uniform urban development across all Indian cities.
- (b) Competitive funding fosters innovation and efficiency but risks widening urban inequalities.
- (c) Smart cities will act as independent economic hubs, weakening the role of the central government.
- (d) The mission serves as a model for applying market principles to solve urban challenges.

**Passage**

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) hosted a National Workshop for Capacity Building of Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) in India in alignment with its flagship Mission Karmayogi. This initiative aims to strengthen the

capabilities of ULB officials, enhancing their effectiveness in driving urban development. The workshop focused on equipping officials with knowledge and skills to address complex urban challenges, covering themes such as municipal service delivery, smart city infrastructure management, financial resource mobilization, and good governance practices. Emphasizing technology adoption and data-driven decision-making for sustainable urban growth, the workshop aligns with MoHUA's Mission Karmayogi, launched in 2020, which emphasizes holistic capacity building of government officials. By organizing targeted training programs and fostering knowledge sharing, the mission aims to bridge skill gaps, enhance leadership qualities, and promote a culture of continuous learning. Despite these efforts, challenges include overcoming bureaucratic hurdles, ensuring effective knowledge application at the local level, and sustaining capacity building beyond workshops. Additionally, fostering collaboration among ULBs, state governments, and the central government is crucial for creating a conducive ecosystem for urban development.

**37. Which of the following most accurately captures the crucial message conveyed by the passage ?**

- (a) The workshop primarily aimed to promote technology adoption and data-driven approaches in ULBs, neglecting traditional governance practices.
- (b) MoHUA's initiative solely focused on equipping ULB officials with technical skills, overlooking the importance of leadership development.
- (c) The workshop signifies a crucial step in MoHUA's strategy to empower ULBs for effective service delivery and sustainable urban growth.
- (d) The success of capacity building for ULBs hinges solely on organizing workshops, without requiring ongoing efforts and systemic reforms.

#### Passage

The Supreme Court has constituted a seven-judge bench to reassess the 1998 PV Narsimha Rao case, reopening the debate on legislators' immunity in India. The original ruling, decided by a 3-2 majority, granted absolute immunity to MPs and MLAs from criminal prosecution for their speeches and votes in the legislature. Concerns about potential misuse and a lack of accountability have prompted the review. Critics argue that the existing immunity might shield lawmakers from facing consequences for corruption, abuse of power, and incitement of violence within the legislature, creating a privileged class. Proponents emphasize the importance of immunity in protecting free speech and

fostering robust legislative debate, highlighting concerns about potential misuse of legal proceedings to target legislators. The outcome of the review will significantly influence the delicate balance between legislative freedom and accountability, potentially deterring misconduct but also raising concerns about chilling free speech in the legislative process.

**38. According to the passage, In the long term, what is the most likely implication of the Supreme Court's decision?**

- (a) The complete abolition of legislative immunity, leading to unrestricted legal action against all legislators.
- (b) A nuanced approach that balances legislative freedom with accountability, setting clear boundaries for permissible conduct.
- (c) The strengthening of legislative immunity, further insulating lawmakers from legal consequences and public scrutiny.
- (d) The politicization of the issue, with future rulings likely influenced by partisan considerations and electoral pressures.

#### Passage

The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) has released a report highlighting persistent shortcomings in public service delivery, citing manual processes, bureaucratic bottlenecks, and lack of transparency as major obstacles. The report emphasizes the urgent need for leveraging Information Technology (IT) to address these challenges, particularly in sectors like healthcare, education, and social welfare. Outdated infrastructure, paper-based documentation, and fragmented data hinder citizen access to services, leading to delays, corruption, and grievances. The report acknowledges the positive impact of IT, citing successful pilot projects with online portals, mobile apps, and data analytics improving service delivery and transparency. The CAG recommends a multi-pronged approach, including prioritizing e-governance initiatives, investing in digital infrastructure, developing user-friendly interfaces, and ensuring data security. Capacity building, specifically in digital literacy, is emphasized for government officials. Embracing IT solutions and addressing the digital divide can lead to improved service delivery, enhanced citizen satisfaction, reduced administrative costs, and greater effectiveness of government programs. The report calls for India to prioritize IT investments and accelerate its digital transformation to ensure technology becomes a catalyst for efficient, transparent, and inclusive public service delivery.

**39. The most logical crux of the CAG Report regarding the need for IT in public service delivery in India is:**

- (a) IT can revolutionize public services, eliminating all existing inefficiencies and bureaucratic hurdles.
- (b) Leveraging IT requires focusing solely on technological advancements, with minimal emphasis on institutional reforms and capacity building.
- (c) While IT presents immense potential, its successful integration demands a holistic approach addressing digital infrastructure, user-friendliness, and human resource preparedness.
- (d) The report primarily criticizes the shortcomings of traditional methods, neglecting the potential challenges of introducing IT solutions in public services.

**Passage**

India's Jan Dhan Yojana, coupled with Aadhaar and mobile phone penetration, has achieved ISO 27001 certification for information security management, marking a significant milestone in securing personal data and streamlining financial transactions. The Jan Dhan-Aadhaar-Mobile (JAM) trinity has revolutionized financial access for over 450 million unbanked citizens, enabling direct benefit transfers and subsidies. Despite privacy concerns, the ISO 27001 certification validates the government's commitment to data protection, adhering to international standards and building user trust. Challenges, such as the rural digital divide and the need for internet connectivity and mobile literacy, persist. Ongoing awareness campaigns are essential for educating users about data security practices. The JAM trinity's success depends on balancing financial inclusion, social empowerment, and individual privacy. Continuous emphasis on robust security, user education, and addressing the digital divide will ensure the system's long-term sustainability and empowerment of the financially excluded.

**40. The crucial and rational crux of the passage regarding the impact of the ISO 27001 certification for the JAM trinity (Jan Dhan-Aadhaar-Mobile) in India is:**

- (a) The certification solely addresses data security concerns, ensuring complete absence of risks in the JAM system.
- (b) While a commendable step, the certification is insufficient to overcome existing challenges and limitations of the JAM system.

- (c) The ISO 27001 certification serves as a significant confidence booster for both users and investors, paving the way for further advancements in financial inclusion.
- (d) The certification highlights the success of the JAM trinity but downplays the need for continued efforts to bridge the digital divide and address remaining privacy concerns.

**SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

**Directions: Read the following passages and answer the items that follow the passages. Your answers to these items should be based on the passages only.**

**Passage**

The CRISPR gene editing technology has revolutionised our ability to manipulate DNA. Once considered solely a tool for scientific research, CRISPR is now showing promise in treating various diseases, including genetic disorders and cancer. However, its ethical implications remain controversial, with concerns about unintended consequences and potential misuse. Some scientists even fear a future where designer babies become a reality.

**41. The main argument of the passage is:**

- (a) CRISPR technology is primarily a scientific tool without practical applications.
- (b) CRISPR offers tremendous potential for treating diseases but with ethical concerns.
- (c) Designer babies are inevitable due to the advancement of gene editing techniques.
- (d) CRISPR should be banned entirely due to its unpredictable consequences.

**Passage**

Recent advancements in artificial intelligence (AI) have led to significant progress in the field of renewable energy. AI algorithms are helping researchers design more efficient solar panels, predict wind patterns for better turbine placement, and develop smart grids that optimise energy distribution. While the potential of AI for tackling climate change is undeniable, some experts warn that its increasing dependence on fossil fuels for data processing and hardware production could ultimately undermine its environmental benefits.

**42. The conflict between AI's positive and negative environmental impact arises because:**

- (a) AI algorithms do not generate greenhouse gases.
- (b) Data processing requires extensive computer infrastructure powered by fossil fuels.

- (c) Manufacturing of hardware components for AI systems heavily pollutes the environment.
- (d) Both (b) & (c)

#### Passage

Quantum computing, harnessing the principles of quantum mechanics, has the potential to revolutionise computing power. Unlike traditional computers, which rely on bits that can be either 0 or 1, quantum computers utilise qubits, which can exist in a superposition of both states simultaneously. This allows them to tackle complex problems intractable for classical computers, such as drug discovery and materials science. However, building and maintaining stable quantum computers remains a significant challenge, and their practical applications are still years away.

**43. The passage portrays quantum computing as a “revolution awaiting” due to its potential to:**

- (a) Solve problems intractable for classical computers, despite significant challenges in building and maintaining them.
- (b) Challenge the fundamental principles of classical physics, necessitating a complete overhaul of scientific paradigms.
- (c) Unlock secrets of the universe beyond human comprehension, raising profound ethical and philosophical questions.
- (d) Offer immediate and tangible benefits across various fields, rendering classical computers obsolete within a decade.

#### Passage

Genetic technology, encompassing gene editing, therapy, and GMOs, promises breakthroughs in health, agriculture, and the environment. But this dazzling picture hides lurking concerns. Precise gene editing, like CRISPR-Cas9, while powerful, carries the risk of unintended mutations and unforeseen consequences, with potential long-term impacts on individuals or ecosystems. GMOs raise environmental concerns like gene transfer and “superweeds,” alongside ethical dilemmas of corporate control and potential societal inequalities. Shaping human traits raises questions of desirable characteristics, access, and potential for discrimination. We must acknowledge these shadows alongside the light, ensuring open dialogue, rigorous safety protocols, and ethical safeguards as we chart the course for responsible and equitable exploration of this potent field.

**44. According to the passage, which of the following most accurately reflects the potential environmental concerns associated with genetically modified organisms (GMOs)?**

- (a) The possibility of unintended mutations in human DNA due to consumption of GMO crops.
- (b) The potential for gene transfer from GMOs to wild relatives, leading to unforeseen ecological consequences.
- (c) The depletion of natural resources due to the increased energy requirements of GMO production.
- (d) The accumulation of toxic byproducts in soil and water as a result of GMO cultivation.

#### Passage

All attempts to detect oxygen in the atmosphere of Mars have been unsuccessful. and it can be concluded that the amount of oxygen is not more than one-thousandth part of the amount in the Earth’s atmosphere. Indirect evidence of oxygen is provided by the ruddy colour of Mars, which is unique among the heavenly bodies. This red colour is suggestive of rocks that have been completely oxidised and it may be contrasted with the grey or brownish colour of the rocks on the Moon, which have remained unoxidised because of the absence of oxygen. It appears probable that Mars may be a planet where the weathering of rocks followed by their oxidation, has resulted in the almost complete depletion of oxygen from the atmosphere.

**45. The presence of colouration in Mars is quite suggestive of the presence of**

- (a) brownish rocks in the atmosphere
- (b) grey and brown rocks on the moon
- (c) oxygen in the atmosphere in the past
- (d) no oxygen at all in the atmosphere

#### Passage

The scientist in society has no right to dictate to society; and this is the heart of the matter. In return, the society must not dictate his life to him. He must be free to follow his conscience, as a citizen should be free, in peace or war. Like every man and woman, the scientist has a duty himself which demands that his work shall not only be useful, but shall conform to his sense of human fulfilment and dignity. If this prompts him to reject research for war, or atomic physics, or science itself, he must be free and able to find other work.



Within the dance of opposites, clarity emerges. Just as darkness reveals the brilliance of light, and destruction underscores the miracle of creation, so too do opposing forces illuminate the nature of all things.

To embark on this path of understanding, one must actively seek the essence of contrasts. Merely accepting them as given truths is not enough. Delve into their depths, unravel their intricacies, and witness how they shape and define one another.

For concepts are not solitary islands, but threads woven into a tapestry of meaning. To grasp one thread is to perceive its connection to its opposite, and to the broader tapestry of knowledge itself.

**50. Which of the following statements best reflects the message of the author of the passage?**

- (a) Darkness is not a real thing, but merely the absence of light.
- (b) Opposites have no relation to each other and should be studied separately.
- (c) The nature of things cannot be understood through their opposites.
- (d) The nature of things can be understood through their opposites.

## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

**Directions: Read the following passages and answer the items that follow the passages. Your answers to these items should be based on the passages only.**

### Passage

The classical realist theory, prominent in the American government, dates back to the nation's founding, with figures like Alexander Hamilton endorsing this perspective. While the classical realist school is diverse, certain shared principles define it. Central to classical realism is a focus on war and peace, investigating their causes and conditions. Classical realists attribute conflict to the security dilemma, where nations, devoid of a global authority, address their security independently. However, these security pursuits, be it through military buildups or alliances, unsettle other nations, creating a cycle of aggression. Unlike idealists or liberal internationalists, realists view international conflict as a necessary outcome of structural anarchy. While other perspectives attribute conflict to various factors, classical realists see war as a logical result of a system lacking a central authority. Aligned with this view is the perception of the nation as a unitary actor in the global struggle for dominance. Contrary to the idea of nations as collections of diverse individuals, realists emphasise the formulation of a national interest, encapsulating a nation's survival, security, and relative power. Despite criticisms, classical realism continues to shape foreign policy due to its success in explaining real-world interactions between nations.

**51. Which of the following, if true, would best support the classical realist theory of international conflict as it is described in the passage?**

- (a) Despite the presence of a world superpower, all countries maintain peaceful relations with their neighbours.
- (b) Despite the presence of a world superpower, many countries continue to fight wars with their neighbours.
- (c) War has only occurred due to evil dictators or flawed socio-political systems, according to historical records.
- (d) After the nations of the world form an authoritative world court, wars increase significantly.

### Passage

India has valid concerns regarding China's expanding economic and military influence in the Subcontinent. While India cannot prevent China, the world's second-largest economic and military power, from playing a significant role in the region, it faces increasing challenges. The decline of Western presence in the Subcontinent allows China's strategic influence to grow, posing daunting challenges to India. Beyond China, other external powers like Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and the United Arab Emirates are gaining ground in South Asia, enhancing their economic and military capabilities. Notably, the Subcontinent's international relations are undergoing significant changes, with heightened tensions between the Taliban and the Pakistan army and challenges to Burmese army control in the east by ethnic armed groups and pro-democracy forces. These shifts indicate a transformed Subcontinent compared to the mid-20th century, emphasising that regions evolve in terms of geography, politics, and economics. The key consideration is not India "losing South Asia" but adapting to a changing region. India possesses sufficient capabilities to safeguard its interests and extend influence in its neighbourhood. However, achieving this requires discarding an outdated focus on the old South Asia.

**52. Which of the following statements best reflects the most crucial, logical, and rational message implied by the passage?**

- (a) India must rethink its strategic approach to adapt to the new reality of South Asia, taking into account China's influence, evolving regional dynamics and a holistic engagement with all the key players.
- (b) While China poses a threat, India retains the capacity to exert her influence in South Asia, with proactive strategies that fits the need of the hour.

- (c) The decline of Western power necessitates India's assertive leadership in South Asia to counter China's influence and maintain regional stability amidst diverse internal and external dynamics.
- (d) Recognizing the unavoidable rise of China and other external powers, India should prioritise internal development and military modernization to ensure its own stability and secure influence in the evolving South Asian environment.

### Passage

Independence, Delhi realised its inability to prevent great powers from entering the region or dissuade its Asian neighbours from aligning with external powers. The notion of insulating the region from great power influence, encapsulated in ideas like "Asia for Asians," persisted but clashed with Asian contradictions. Delhi's insistence on NAM membership criteria, emphasising no foreign military bases, overlooked real-world survival priorities. Post the Cold War, India shifted focus to regional engagement, prioritising trade and investment over unrealistic principles. India broke traditional rules, collaborating with major powers through the RIC forum and BRICS. Recent challenges with China led India to embrace the Indo-Pacific framework and the Quad, showcasing a growing salience of strategic partnerships with Western powers over engagement with Russia and China. Delhi now adopts an integrated approach to pursue interests through various forums, recognizing its increasing ability to shape the intersection between its extended neighbourhood and the world.

**53. Which of the following statements best summarises the primary shift in India's regional security priorities after the Cold War?**

- (a) A move from ideological non-alignment to active participation in security alliances.
- (b) A shift from internal development focus to prioritising regional trade and investment.
- (c) A transition from isolationism to increased engagement with both Western and Eastern powers.
- (d) A move from prioritising national security to addressing broader regional stability concerns.

**Directions: Read the following passage and answer the two items that follow. Your answers to these items should be based on the passage only.**

### Passage

Among the many impacts of Russia's war on Ukraine, the most consequential may be in pushing the world in the direction of Three Worlds—the global West, the global East and the global South. One is led by the United States

and Europe, the second by China and Russia, and the third by an amorphous grouping of non-western developing nations. These Three Worlds are not blocs or coherent negotiating groups, but loose, constructed and evolving global factions. This article makes four arguments. First, the Three Worlds system has the makings of a fairly durable pattern of global order, shaping struggles over rules and institutions. Second, the Three Worlds system will encourage a 'creative' politics of global order-building. The global West and global East will have incentives to compete for the support and cooperation of the global South. Third, there are deep principles of world order that provide a foundation for the Three Worlds competition. Finally, if the global West is to remain at the centre of world order in the decades ahead, it will need to accommodate both the global East and the global South, and adapt itself to a more pluralistic world. But in the competition with the global East for the support of the global South, it has the advantage. The global South's critique of the global West is not that it offers the wrong pathway to modernity, but that it has not lived up to its principles or shared sufficiently the material fruits of liberal modernity.

**54. Based on the above passage following assumptions have been made.**

**Assumption 1:** The emergence of the Three Worlds system will inevitably lead to conflict between the West, East, and South, with little opportunity for cooperation or order-building.

**Assumption 2:** For the global West to maintain its central position in world order, it must adopt a more self-critical and inclusive approach, addressing the legitimate criticisms of the global South regarding unfulfilled promises and unequal distribution of benefits.

Which of the following assumptions is/are correct?

- (a) Only 1
- (b) Only 2
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**55. Which statement best reflects the crux of the passage regarding the potential consequences of the Three Worlds system emerging from Russia's war on Ukraine?**

- (a) The emergence of Three Worlds will inevitably lead to an unstable and conflict-ridden global order, with little hope for cooperation.
- (b) The competition between the West and East for the support of the South will be the defining feature of this new world order, shaping struggles for power and influence.

- (c) While competition may exist, the Three Worlds system also presents an opportunity for a “creative” approach to global order-building, with the South playing a critical role.
- (d) Despite its initial disadvantage, the global West can maintain its central position in this new world order by adapting to a more pluralistic and inclusive approach that addresses the South’s concerns.

**Passage**

Multilateralism is ingrained in the UN’s essence, as the Charter not only outlines the organisation’s structure and mission but also serves as a fundamental component of today’s international system. In his 2018 General Assembly report, UN Secretary-General António Guterres emphasised the Charter’s role as a “moral compass” for fostering peace, human dignity, prosperity, and upholding human rights and the rule of law. The UN functions to facilitate agreements and collective decisions among Member States, harmonising actions to prevent threats to peace, nurture friendly relations, and encourage international cooperation. Over 75 years, multilateral processes have evolved, marked by a substantial increase in Member States from 51 to 193, alongside the vertical expansion involving NGOs, private entities, and international organisations. Multilateralism, evident in over 1,000 NGOs and international organisations holding observer status, has yielded significant achievements, from eradicating smallpox to fostering arms control and human rights promotion within the UN framework, showcasing its vital role in global collaboration and problem-solving. (Difficult)

**56. Which of the following statements best reflects the most crucial, logical, and rational message implied by the passage.**

- (a) The UN’s core principle of multilateralism remains essential for addressing global issues, facilitating collective action, and promoting peace, development, and human rights.
- (b) The evolution of multilateralism within the UN, with its expanding membership and diverse stakeholders, strengthens its capacity to navigate contemporary challenges and achieve tangible results.
- (c) While celebrating the UN’s multilateral achievements, like eradicating smallpox and promoting arms control, we must acknowledge the need for continuous improvement to address emerging threats and uphold ethical principles.

- (d) Maintaining a robust UN system based on multilateral cooperation is crucial for navigating the increasingly complex 21st century, where global problems necessitate collective solutions.

**Passage**

International human rights law dictates governments’ obligations to respect, protect, and fulfil human rights and fundamental freedoms. A cornerstone of the United Nations (UN) is the establishment of a universal body of human rights law, providing a globally recognized code. The UN defines and codifies various internationally accepted rights across civil, cultural, economic, political, and social domains. The Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted in 1945 and 1948 respectively, constitute the foundational pillars of this legal framework. Over time, the UN has expanded human rights standards to address the specific needs of vulnerable groups, including women, children, persons with disabilities, and minorities. These expansions aim to rectify historical discrimination widespread in various societies.

**57. Which of the following statements best reflects the main argument presented in the passage about international human rights law?**

- (a) The UN, through its human rights framework, offers a comprehensive set of internationally recognized rights, aiming to tackle historical discrimination and protect vulnerable groups.
- (b) Despite its limitations, the UN’s efforts in defining and promoting human rights globally represent a significant step towards international legal accountability for governments.
- (c) Established by the UN Charter and various treaties, international human rights law compels governments to uphold diverse fundamental freedoms across various societal aspects.
- (d) While progress has been made, challenges remain in implementing and enforcing international human rights law consistently across all nations.

**Directions: Read the following passage and answer the two items that follow. Your answers to these items should be based on the passage only.**

**Passage**

The BRICS summit in South Africa, seen through the lens of global geopolitical tensions, reflects both the success of the non-West in expanding and the West’s victory due to the BRICS+ remaining an informal group. However, assessing the outcome should consider broader

international trends rather than rivalry. Attempts to turn BRICS into an anti-Western alliance were not dominant, with members, aside from Russia, avoiding direct conflict with the West. The decision to invite new members reflects a choice between deepening existing ties or expanding outward. BRICS opted for expansion, signalling a move toward an alter-West approach, not an anti-West one. The group aims to broaden interaction independently of the Western world, emphasising each member's freedom to engage with the U.S. and Europe without harming BRICS relations. Shared among BRICS states, including new members, is a rejection of U.S. and EU imposition of restrictions on foreign policy and economic activities. The BRICS space emerges as a tool for diversifying the world, moving away from Western dominance, and fostering a more multifaceted global scenario, evolving gradually over time.

**58. Which statement best reflects the central message of the passage about the BRICS summit?**

- (a) The summit successfully solidified BRICS as a unified anti-Western alliance, marking a significant victory for the non-West in challenging Western dominance.
- (b) While expanding its membership, BRICS remains an informal group, suggesting its potential impact on global power dynamics is limited.
- (c) Despite global tensions, the summit revealed BRICS' focus on independent collaboration and engagement beyond the West, prioritising internal growth over direct confrontation with Western powers.
- (d) The inclusion of new members signifies a strategic shift for BRICS, aiming to establish an alternative global order independent of Western control.

**59. Based on the above passage following assumptions have been made.**

**Assumption 1:** All BRICS members will prioritise economic and political cooperation within the group over their individual relationships with Western nations.

**Assumption 2:** The expansion of BRICS by inviting new members signifies a rapid and imminent shift towards a full-fledged alternative global order challenging Western dominance.

Which of the following is/are correct?

- (a) Only 1
- (b) Only 2
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**Passage**

In recent decades, international relations theories, such as realism, liberalism, and constructivism, provided optimism for global cooperation and conflict

resolution. Realists emphasised bipolar and unipolar systems' stability, with nuclear weapons making major power conflicts unlikely. Liberal theorists highlighted institutions, interdependence, and democracy fostering cooperation. Constructivists emphasized evolving norms curbing practices like piracy and torture. However, these optimistic factors now appear unravelling. A shift to a multipolar world, particularly the rise of China and relative U.S. decline, raises concerns about instability and miscalculated wars. The Fourth Industrial Revolution introduces disruptive military technologies, potentially challenging traditional deterrence. Liberal principles face challenges as international institutions become arenas for competition, economic decoupling accelerates, and a democracy vs. autocracy divide emerges. The clash between liberal and illiberal world orders, coupled with ideological contests, intensifies global tensions. Despite some positive aspects, concerns loom over the potential for major-power conflicts, prompting caution in interpreting current geopolitical dynamics.

**60. Based on the above passage following assumptions have been made.**

**Assumption 1:** The emergence of a multipolar world, regardless of the specific actors involved, inherently increases the likelihood of major-power conflict due to power competition and miscalculation risks.

**Assumption 2:** The challenges to liberal principles and the clash between competing world orders necessitate the abandonment of liberal internationalism and its associated institutions in favour of a purely realist approach to manage future geopolitical dynamics.

Which of the following is/are correct?

- (a) Only 1
- (b) Only 2
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**SOCIETY**

**Directions: Read the following passages and answer the items that follow the passages. Your answers to these items should be based on the passages only.**

**Passage**

Now that children in India have got the right to receive a minimum of eight years of education, it is a painful question whether this right will remain limited only on paper or will it take the form of reality. It hardly needs reminding that this right is distinct from other rights enshrined in the Constitution, because its beneficiary – a six-year-old child – cannot demand it, nor can he/she fight a legal battle if it is denied or violated. In all cases, it is the adult society that must act on behalf of the child.

The second peculiarity is that when a child is deprived of his right to education, any subsequent compensation

may be neither adequate nor relevant. The schooling opportunity lost in childhood cannot be compensated for in later years of life. This is sadly perhaps more true for girls because our society provides them with only a short childhood, if at all. In Indian history, the right to education has taken the form of law at a time when the horrific practice of female infanticide has re-emerged in the form of foeticide. This is indicative of a deeper disturbance in society, compounded by traditional barriers to girls' education. A stubborn bias against girls' intellectual capacity runs rampant through our diverse cultures, and the education system has been unable to overcome it.

**61. Which of the following statements best expresses the conclusion of the passage?**

- (a) Society suffers from a strong prejudice against the intellectual capacity of girls.
- (b) Adults cannot be trusted to fight for children's right to education
- (c) Legal battles to provide education to children are often long and prohibitive
- (d) There is no adequate replacement of the education received in childhood.

#### Passage

The advanced industrial society has created some such artificial needs which, through mass communication, advertising, industrial management and contemporary ideologies, have linked people to the existing traditional production and consumption system. This gives rise to a world of "one-dimensional" thought and behaviour due to which the interest and ability for critical thinking and oppositional behaviour gets blurred.

Consumerism is a form of social control. The system we live in may claim to be democratic, but in reality it is an authoritarian society in which a few people trample on our sense of freedom by giving us the option to buy happiness. In this state of "dependence", consumers act irrationally, as people work more than is necessary to meet their basic needs, ignoring the psychological side effects of doing so. They also ignore the environmental damage it causes, and at the same time seek social attachment in material goods.

**62. What does a "one-dimensional" world mean?**

- (a) Blindly following consumer goods.
- (b) Spiritual dimension of a person does not develop due to consumerism.
- (c) To dampen critical thinking and imagination in the field of understanding.
- (d) None of these.

#### Passage

The global economic shifts in 1991 compelled the Indian economy to adopt liberalisation, privatisation, and globalisation. India opened its market to multinational companies and foreign direct investments, leading to the partial or full privatisation of many public sector industries, including education, health, railways, and banking. Unfortunately, this had a negative impact on marginalised communities.

The intentional exclusion of Dalits, STs, minorities, women, and OBCs by the private sector has led to a reduction in public sector jobs, increasing the unemployment percentage among marginalised communities. According to a 2021 Reserve Bank of India report more than 20 lakh jobs were lost in the public sector as a result of privatisation between 1991 and 2012. With 50 per cent reservation in the public sector, it would mean that at least 10 lakh families belonging to marginalised communities lost their opportunities.

Multinational companies and private educational institutions have failed to implement constitutional provisions of economic and social justice by providing employment opportunities to subaltern communities.

**63. Based on the above passage, the following assumptions have been made:**

- 1. The LPG reforms of 1991 have proven non-fruitful for the Indian economy.
- 2. Dalits, STs and women are the victims of deliberate exclusion since 1991 economic policy reforms.
- 3. Privatisation, as a policy measure, should be avoided.

Which of the above assumptions are valid?

- (a) 1 and 3
- (b) 2 only
- (c) 2 and 3
- (d) 3 only

#### Passage

As education transitioned to remote and online platforms during lockdowns, the peril of illiteracy became evident in terms of its hindrance to access and engagement. Illiterate individuals faced significant barriers in accessing digital resources, online classes, and educational content. This digital divide highlighted the urgent need for digital literacy alongside traditional literacy. The education and learning outcomes of the vulnerable sections of society, the girl child and the children of the poor, the lower castes, tribals, those in backward states, and those in rural areas were more severely hit by the pandemic.

**64. Which of the following statements represents the most logical corollary of the passage?**

- (a) Government failed to ensure equal accessibility to digital literacy for all.
- (b) Vulnerable sections, due to their illiteracy, are disproportionately impacted during disasters.
- (c) Online education should be resorted to only under critical situations, to prevent inequality.
- (d) It is solely the responsibility of the government to impart digital literacy to the vulnerable sections.

**Passage**

The tapestry of societal acceptance around same-sex marriage is slowly being woven into a more unified whole. Yet, threads of dissent remain, fueled by deeply held moral convictions and cultural interpretations. Those who oppose same-sex marriage often cite religious doctrines. They view marriage as a sacred union divinely ordained between a man and a woman, intended for procreation and family formation. To them, granting marriage rights to same-sex couples undermines the sanctity of their beliefs. Proponents of same-sex marriage emphasize equality and fundamental rights. They believe that love, commitment, and shared values, not gender or orientation, are the true cornerstones of a successful marriage. Beyond these opposing views lies a spectrum of nuanced stances. Some acknowledge the religious arguments but prioritise equal rights, advocating for civil unions or alternative legal frameworks that provide similar protections. Others, while accepting same-sex couples, prioritise preserving traditional conceptions of marriage and its connection to procreation. Engaging in this complex conversation demands respect and empathy. Recognizing the legitimacy of differing viewpoints, even those we disagree with, is crucial.

**65. Which of the following statements best represents the crux of the passage?**

- (a) Same-sex marriage should be legalized to realize the goals of equality and fundamental rights.
- (b) The traditional conception of marriage should be preserved. However, alternative legal frameworks should be explored to ensure protection to same-sex couples.
- (c) Deeply held moral convictions prevent the realization of same-sex marriage rights.
- (d) By respecting diversity, and engaging in reasoned debate, we can gradually weave a tapestry of acceptance around all forms of human love and commitment.

**Passage**

The relentless march of urbanization, fueled by economic aspirations and technological advancements, reshapes landscapes and societies at breakneck speed. Gleaming skyscrapers pierce the sky, housing burgeoning populations drawn by the promise of jobs and opportunities. Yet, this urban exodus casts long shadows, leaving behind rural communities hollowed out and struggling to adapt. While cities hum with the dynamism of innovation and cultural exchange, they also grapple with the burgeoning challenges of infrastructure strain, environmental degradation, and social inequities. Urbanization, in its inexorable dance, presents a Janus-faced portrait – a beacon of progress, yet a harbinger of potential pitfalls.

**66. On the basis of the passage, following inferences can be made -**

- 1. Urbanization is primarily responsible for rural depopulation.
- 2. Technological advancements are primarily driving the urbanization trend.
- 3. Cities offer a universally positive environment for economic and social well-being.
- 4. Urbanization poses greater environmental and social challenges than its benefits.

How many inferences can be drawn from the passages?

- (a) Only 1
- (b) Only 1 and 2
- (c) Only 2 and 3
- (d) All 4

**Passage**

The chasm between the haves and have-nots yawns wider, casting long shadows on our collective conscience. While gleaming skyscrapers pierce cityscapes, millions sleep under bridges. This grotesque juxtaposition isn't merely a statistical anomaly; it's a ticking time bomb. Unchecked inequality breeds despair, fuels social unrest, and erodes the very fabric of society. It's not just about charity or handouts; it's about ensuring a level playing field, equitable access to opportunity, and a social safety net that catches those falling behind. Ignoring this chasm isn't an option; it's a recipe for instability and a betrayal of our shared humanity.

**67. What is the long-term and most crucial implication of unaddressed inequality highlighted in the passage?**

- (a) It will primarily lead to increased economic stagnation and reduced national competitiveness on the global stage.
- (b) It will foster erosion of public trust and break in social fabric, potentially sparking unrest and instability.

- (c) It will fuel resource depletion and environmental degradation as desperate populations exploit natural resources for survival.
- (d) It will exacerbate social and cultural divisions, perpetuating cycles of discrimination and hindering societal progress.

**Passage**

India's surging population, a billion strong and still climbing, casts a long shadow on our aspirations. Our bulging cities groan under the weight of burgeoning numbers, straining resources and infrastructure. Farmlands dwindle, yielding to concrete jungles, further jeopardizing food security. Education and healthcare grapple with stretched capacities, their noble ambitions dimmed by the sheer tide of humanity. While celebrating human life, we must acknowledge the harsh reality: unchecked population growth hinders sustainable development, erodes environmental stability, and threatens the very foundations of our progress."

**68. Which of the following assumptions best underpins the author's argument about the challenges of overpopulation in India?**

- (a) Population control measures should be the primary and immediate solution to alleviating India's development and resource strain.
- (b) Unbridled population growth intrinsically leads to environmental degradation and depletion of natural resources.
- (c) Societal development and environmental sustainability in India are inherently incompatible, requiring a trade-off between economic progress and ecological well-being.
- (d) Checking population growth will mitigate the risks of environmental stability and promote sustainable growth.

**Passage**

Equality of women is not just a tagline, it's a reality we must create. No longer can daughters be left behind. Their education is the foundation of a strong and vibrant India. When a girl learns, she lights a lamp that not only brightens her own life but also the lives of those around her. Let us break the shackles of discrimination and give wings to their aspirations. Women in leadership positions, in science, in technology, in business - these are the role models who will inspire future generations. Empowering women isn't just about quotas or reservations; it's about recognizing their inherent potential and creating a level playing field. When women rise, India rises.

**69. On the basis of the passage, which of the following inferences can be made:**

1. Reservation will aid women to uplift their status and break the shackles of society.
2. Women should get representation in the leadership and STEM (Science Technology Engineering and Management) fields to provide role models to society.

Select the best option -

- (a) Only 1
- (b) Only 2
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**Passage**

India's greying wave, rising faster than ever before, casts a long shadow on our future. While longer life expectancy is a cause for celebration, the sheer numbers pose challenges unlike any we've faced. Ageing populations demand robust healthcare systems, adaptive social safety nets, and innovative approaches to eldercare. Ignoring this demographic shift would be akin to building a sandcastle on a rising tide. Investing in the well-being of our ageing population isn't a burden; it's an investment in the future of our nation. Their wisdom, experience, and untapped potential can be harnessed for social good, fostering intergenerational collaboration and enriching the fabric of our society."

**70. Which of the following assumptions, if true, contradicts the central theme of the passage?**

- (a) Technological advancements and automation can significantly alleviate the strain on healthcare and social security systems caused by population ageing.
- (b) Addressing social biases and ageism prevalent in Indian society is crucial for ensuring the full participation and well-being of older adults.
- (c) Focusing primarily on economic productivity and workforce participation among older adults is the most effective way to mitigate the challenges of population ageing.
- (d) While healthcare and social safety nets are important, promoting traditional family structures and eldercare within families is the primary solution to managing population ageing.

## POLITICAL SCIENCE

**Directions:** Read the following passages and answer the items that follow the passages. Your answers to these items should be based on the passages only.

### Passage

“The market, left to its own devices, will not, on its own, generate the conditions for a just and flourishing society. History teaches us that unfettered markets often concentrate wealth and power in the hands of a few, leaving the majority behind in economic insecurity and social alienation. While competition can drive innovation and efficiency, it also breeds inequality and fosters a culture of individualism that undermines community and solidarity. Therefore, we must embrace a political economy that balances the freedom of the market with the guiding principles of social justice and collective well-being. This may require regulations to curb monopolies, progressive taxation to redistribute wealth, and investments in public goods like education and healthcare. Ultimately, the success of any economic system should be measured not just by its GDP growth, but by its ability to provide a decent standard of living and meaningful opportunities for all citizens.”

**71. The passage best supports which of the following statements about political economy?**

- (a) Unfettered markets are inherently detrimental and should be abolished in favor of complete state control of the economy.
- (b) Achieving a just and flourishing society requires a hybrid approach that leverages both the dynamism of the market and the corrective intervention of the state.
- (c) Concerns about inequality and social well-being are less relevant in the pursuit of economic growth and should not influence policy decisions.
- (d) The primary goal of any economic system should be maximizing individual freedom and minimizing regulations, which will lead to equal opportunities for all.

### Passage

To speak of ‘the state’ as a singular entity is a dangerous oversimplification. Beneath the surface of shared sovereignty and governance, a constellation of diverse actors and institutions pulsates with life. The parliament debates, the courts adjudicate, the bureaucracy implements, and civil society agitates - each playing a distinct yet intertwined role in the grand orchestration of statecraft. To understand power, therefore, we must look beyond the monolithic facade and delve into the symphony of competing voices, shifting alliances, and dynamic power struggles that define the true essence of the state.”

**72. What is the most logical assumption that can be made from the passage?**

- (a) The concept of a unified and sovereign state is outdated and should be abandoned in favor of decentralized governance models.
- (b) Understanding the complexities of internal power dynamics within a state is crucial for effectively analyzing and predicting its behavior on the global stage.
- (c) The smooth functioning of a state hinges on the harmonious cooperation of all its constituent actors, with minimal friction or disagreements.
- (d) The character and actions of a state are solely determined by its formal government structure and official ideologies.

### Passage

The pursuit of equality cannot merely focus on equal starting lines. To truly level the playing field, we must confront the historical baggage of disadvantage that weighs down certain groups. Affirmative action, while imperfect, represents a necessary corrective measure. It aims to bridge the chasm created by generations of systemic bias, fostering inclusion and promoting opportunities for those who have been systematically excluded. Critics may lament quotas and preferential treatment, but true equality demands recognition of unequal realities and active measures to redress them.

**73. The passage best supports which of the following statements about equality and affirmative action?**

- (a) Achieving equality requires providing everyone with identical resources and opportunities regardless of their background.
- (b) Affirmative action programs are by nature are differentiative and unfair, privileging one group over another based on identity.
- (c) While addressing past injustices, affirmative action policies should prioritize long-term solutions for systemic change over temporary measures like quotas.
- (d) Equality can be achieved through individual meritocratic effort, and any form of group-based preferential treatment undermines this ideal.

### Passage

Power, like water, seeks the path of least resistance. While overt coercion can subdue, it often breeds resentful compliance. Hegemony, the subtle art of shaping minds and influencing desires, offers a more enduring dominion. By controlling narratives, setting norms, and subtly shaping aspirations, the hegemon reigns not through brute force, but through the consent of the governed. Yet, legitimacy, the cloak of moral authority draped upon power, remains fragile. Questioned narratives, challenged norms, and awakened aspirations can unravel the fabric of consent, revealing the bare bones of coercion beneath.

**74. Based on the passage, consider the following assumptions:**

1. While acknowledging the fragility of legitimacy, the passage ultimately suggests that effective manipulation of public perception through dominant narratives can render challenges to hegemony inconsequential.
2. The passage implies that the vulnerabilities of hegemonic power lie not just in overt challenges to narratives and norms, but also in the inherent tension between the hegemon's need for legitimacy and its pursuit of self-interest.

Which of the following is true?

- (a) Only 1                      (b) Only 2  
(c) Both 1 and 2            (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**Passage**

Socialism's core lies not in rigid blueprints or centralized mandates, but in a vision of shared human flourishing. It seeks to dismantle the structures that concentrate wealth and power in the hands of a few, replacing them with systems that prioritize collective well-being and equitable distribution of resources. This pursuit of equality doesn't equate to stifling individual initiative or homogenizing society. Instead, it aims to create a level playing field where everyone has the opportunity to contribute and thrive, their potential unbound by artificial constraints of birth or circumstance.

**75. What is the most logical and crucial message conveyed by the passage?**

- (a) Socialism advocates for centralized control and rigid economic planning, overlooking individual freedom.
- (b) True socialism thrives on a delicate balance between economic redistribution, fostering individual potential, and maintaining a level of personal liberty.
- (c) While acknowledging the need for economic fairness, socialism ultimately prioritizes collective well-being.
- (d) Despite its diverse interpretations, socialism refers to a fixed set of principles and doctrines that offer a one-size-fits-all solution for all societies.

**Passage**

Judicial activism, while a double-edged sword, serves a crucial purpose in safeguarding constitutional principles and fundamental rights. When legislative or executive actions veer off course, the judiciary must step in, wielding its interpretative power to bridge the gap between legal text and lived reality. But this delicate role isn't without its pitfalls. Overreach can undermine democratic processes and create friction between branches of government. The true challenge lies in finding the sweet spot: a judiciary

vigilant against injustice, yet respectful of democratic norms and committed to long-term institutional harmony."

**76. What is the potential long-term implication of judicial activism as described in the passage?**

- (a) It could lead to a weakening of the legislature and executive as citizens increasingly rely on the judiciary for solutions, creating an imbalance of power.
- (b) It could foster a culture of legalism and litigiousness, with individuals turning to courts for any perceived grievance, overburdening the judicial system.
- (c) It could strengthen democratic institutions by promoting public trust in the judiciary as a neutral arbiter and protector of fundamental rights.
- (d) It could lead to increased political polarization and tensions between branches of government due to contested interpretations of judicial decisions.

**Passage**

In the postmodern era, political theories witness a profound transformation. As articulated by Michel Foucault, postmodernism challenges metanarratives, prompting a reevaluation of power dynamics. Foucault's discourse on the deconstruction of grand narratives reveals a shift towards localized, fragmented perspectives. This upheaval challenges traditional political frameworks and necessitates an exploration of micro-politics. Postmodernism's impact extends beyond critique; it requires an engagement with diverse, often conflicting, narratives, fostering a nuanced understanding of political realities.

**77. What is the long term implication of the message conveyed by the passage?**

- (a) The passage implies that postmodernism's challenge to grand narratives leads to a more localized and fragmented understanding of political dynamics.
- (b) According to the passage, postmodernism advocates for a return to stable and universal truths in political ideologies.
- (c) The passage suggests that postmodernism, by challenging traditional frameworks, reinforces a harmonious and cohesive political landscape.
- (d) Postmodernism's influence, as per the passage, results in a definitive and unambiguous restructuring of political theories.

### Passage

Competitive Federalism in India has become a cornerstone in fostering regional development. As envisioned by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, the father of the Indian Constitution, this approach encourages states to compete in creating an environment conducive to economic growth and social progress. It empowers states to formulate policies that suit their unique needs, fostering innovation and efficiency. This paradigm shift from a centralized to a competitive federal structure not only enhances governance but also spurs economic vitality, creating a dynamic and responsive framework for the nation's progress."

**78. Which of the following is the most logical and rational inference drawn from the passage?**

- (a) Dr. B.R. Ambedkar believed in a centralized federal structure for India.
- (b) Competitive Federalism in India is solely focused on economic growth at the expense of social progress.
- (c) The paradigm shift to Competitive Federalism allows states to tailor policies, promoting innovation and efficiency.
- (d) The current federal structure in India inhibits regional development and innovation.

### Passage

In the realm of governance, the importance of women as lawmakers cannot be overstated. As articulated by former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, women bring a unique perspective to policymaking, enriching legislative debates with diversity of thought. Their inclusion is not just a matter of representation but a pragmatic necessity for holistic decision-making. Gandhi emphasized that a society thrives when it harnesses the talents of all its members. Recognizing the significance of women in lawmaking is not just a nod to equality but a strategic move towards effective and inclusive governance.

**79. The passage best supports which of the following statements?**

- (a) Women's inclusion in law-making is about inclusive representation over pragmatic necessity.

- (b) Former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi believed that women's perspectives in policy making provides efficiency to legislative debates.
- (c) Recognizing the importance of women in lawmaking, is primarily a gesture towards gender equality.
- (d) Women's participation in lawmaking is crucial for holistic decision-making, effective governance and equal representation.

### Passage

To truly dismantle the roots of violent extremism, we must dismantle the systems of inequality and exclusion that breed it. When women are systematically marginalized, denied education, and subject to discrimination, their vulnerability to exploitation by extremist groups increases. By prioritizing gender equality and empowering women through access to education, economic opportunities, and political participation, we build resilient communities less susceptible to the allure of hate and violence. True security doesn't come from walls and weapons, but from building a world where everyone, regardless of gender, has the power to build a peaceful and prosperous future.

**80. What is the most crucial message conveyed by the passage about countering terrorism?**

- (a) The primary strategy for combating terrorism should be military intervention and increased security measures, with gender equality playing a supporting role.
- (b) Addressing gender inequality through economic empowerment is influential to prevent women from being influenced by terrorist groups.
- (c) Countering terrorism effectively requires a comprehensive approach that prioritizes empowering women and dismantling systems of inequality as a fundamental preventative measure.
- (d) While ensuring women's rights is important, addressing broader socio-economic inequalities holds the ultimate key to eliminating the appeal of extremism.

## ANSWERS

- |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1. (c)  | 2. (d)  | 3. (c)  | 4. (d)  | 5. (d)  | 6. (c)  | 7. (c)  | 8. (c)  | 9. (c)  | 10. (c) |
| 11. (c) | 12. (c) | 13. (b) | 14. (d) | 15. (b) | 16. (c) | 17. (d) | 18. (d) | 19. (b) | 20. (b) |
| 21. (c) | 22. (b) | 23. (d) | 24. (c) | 25. (b) | 26. (b) | 27. (a) | 28. (c) | 29. (d) | 30. (c) |
| 31. (d) | 32. (d) | 33. (c) | 34. (d) | 35. (d) | 36. (b) | 37. (c) | 38. (b) | 39. (c) | 40. (c) |
| 41. (b) | 42. (d) | 43. (a) | 44. (b) | 45. (c) | 46. (d) | 47. (b) | 48. (d) | 49. (c) | 50. (d) |
| 51. (b) | 52. (a) | 53. (b) | 54. (b) | 55. (c) | 56. (a) | 57. (a) | 58. (c) | 59. (d) | 60. (d) |
| 61. (d) | 62. (c) | 63. (b) | 64. (b) | 65. (d) | 66. (a) | 67. (b) | 68. (d) | 69. (b) | 70. (d) |
| 71. (b) | 72. (b) | 73. (c) | 74. (b) | 75. (b) | 76. (d) | 77. (a) | 78. (c) | 79. (d) | 80. (c) |

## ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

1. (c)

**Explanation:**

While all options contribute to sustainable forest development, the passage explicitly places the balance between conservation and community needs at the forefront. The CLI's focus on fire management, certification, and indigenous knowledge all ultimately serve this greater goal.

Option (a) simplifies the issue, ignoring the interconnectedness of different aspects.

Option (b) focuses solely on one element, missing the broader perspective.

Option (d) is an important piece of the puzzle but not the core message.

Therefore, option (c) captures the crucial message conveyed by the CLI and the author: sustainable forest development thrives on a harmonious balance between protecting ecosystems and empowering communities dependent on them, which is also reflected in conclusive sentence: "Ultimately, the CLI resonated with a powerful message: sustainable forest development is not just about protecting trees; it's about building a symphony of ecological, economic, and social harmony."

2. (d)

**Explanation:**

While each option offers valuable solutions, the passage emphasizes the need for comprehensive, long-term strategies.

Option (a) addresses immediate consequences but neglects the root cause.

Option (b) is a positive step but not sufficient without global commitment since the passage talks about UNICEF, emphasis on 'Global Cooperation' makes 'd' a more suitable answer."

Option (c) empowers future generations but doesn't address immediate risks.

Therefore, option (d) most rationally aligns with the report's message. Strengthening global cooperation and implementing stricter regulations are crucial to curb greenhouse gas emissions and prevent the escalation of climate change, ultimately protecting children from the worst impacts in the long run.

3. (c)

**Explanation:**

While all options present potential outcomes, the passage's impact.

The focus lies on the potential impact of the "Bharat Organic" expansion on the future of organic farming. Option (a) is an ambitious overstatement given the current context.

Option (b) lacks logical basis as increased demand typically leads to price stability or increase, not decline.

Option (d) is a possible long-term benefit, and passage does mention food security and nutritional diversity but the central idea of passage is expansion of Bharat Brand and its varied benefits apart from above two.

Therefore, option (c) best reflects the logical inference. NCOC's strategic decision to broaden the "Bharat Organic" basket indicates a response to increased market demand for diverse organic products. This success is likely to incentivize further expansion into additional organic items, catering to evolving consumer preferences and promoting a wider range of healthy, sustainable food options.

4. (d)

**Explanation:**

While all options offer potential solutions, the passage's emphasis lies on a collective, multifaceted approach to address the ambition gap and enhance NDC effectiveness.

Option (a) is important but addresses only one aspect and risks neglecting domestic action.

Option (b) ignores the need for international cooperation and overlooks the challenges faced by developing countries.

Option (c) might be a long-term goal but requires international consensus and may not be immediately practical.

Therefore, option (d) best reflects the logical, rational, and practical message for policymakers. It emphasizes the need for individual national responsibility while recognizing the importance of clear implementation plans, transparency, and strengthened NDCs to bridge the ambition gap and collectively achieve the Paris Agreement's goals

5. (d)

**Explanation:**

While all options offer potential steps, the passage emphasizes the centrality of local communities and sustainable land management practices in effectively combating desertification.

Option (a) is important but ignores the need for local agency and knowledge.

Option (b) prioritizes technological solutions at the expense of existing, proven methods.

Option (c) advocates for a broader framework but neglects the immediate need for localized action.

Therefore, option (d) best represents the logical, rational, and crucial message. It aligns with the UNCCD's focus on local communities, highlights the value of traditional and innovative solutions, and recognizes the power of knowledge sharing in empowering the frontline actors in desertification control.

6. (c)

**Explanation:**

While all options offer important elements of a solution, the passage's emphasis lies on a fundamental shift in how we conceptualize and approach infrastructure development.

Option (a) is necessary but addresses only one symptom, not the root cause.

Option (b) focuses on technological solutions while neglecting the need for systemic change.

Option (d) acknowledges environmental considerations but doesn't capture the broader emphasis on community well-being, geological consideration and long-term resilience.

Therefore, option (c) best reflects the logical, rational, and crucial message. It aligns with the author's call for a paradigm shift, prioritizing not just connectivity but also environmental sustainability, community well-being, and long-term ecological resilience as core goals of infrastructure development. This message emphasizes a holistic and future-oriented approach, recognizing the interconnectedness of human development and environmental well-being.

7. (c)

**Explanation:**

While all options address aspects of the Roadmap, the passage's emphasis lies on the interconnectedness of global cooperation, equitable transition, and overcoming the significant social and economic challenges associated with a drastic shift away from fossil fuels.

Option (a) is overly pessimistic and ignores the Roadmap's emphasis on feasibility.

Option (b) underestimates the scale of change required and neglects the role of policy and economic restructuring.

Option (d) oversimplifies the solution and ignores the acknowledged need for social and economic considerations.

Therefore, option (c) best captures the implied message. It aligns with the author's focus on the need for international collaboration, ensuring a just and equitable transition, and addressing the economic and social challenges inherent in achieving net-zero.

8. (c)

**Explanation:**

While all options offer potential strategies, the passage emphasizes the importance of internal resource mobilization, financial efficiency, and leveraging existing economic mechanisms within the region.

Option (a) is a potential revenue source but ignores private sector investment.

Option (b) offers a solution which is beyond the scope of the passage and makes an extreme assumption.

Option (d) relies on external aid while downplaying the crucial role of domestic resource management.

Therefore, option (c) best reflects the most practical solution. It aligns with the emphasis on domestic resource mobilization, tackling financial leakages, and fostering partnerships that leverage private sector resources. This promotes financial self-reliance within the region, encourages efficient resource allocation, and empowers member states to take ownership of their SDG progress.

9. (c)

**Explanation:**

The passage avoids advocating for extreme solutions or prioritizing one aspect over the other. It emphasizes the need for a balanced approach that considers both environmental and social implications. Phrases like "complex narrative," "nuanced approach," "sustainable solution," and "collaborative local practices on the Amazon ecosystem."

While other options offer relevant aspects, they don't capture the full scope of the author's argument.

Option (a) proposes an eradication approach, overlooking the potential economic ramifications.

Option (b) prioritizes environmental protection at the expense of community well-being, contradicting the author's call for balance.

Option (d) relies on an unproven technological solution and dismisses the immediate need for action.

Therefore, option (c) best reflects the underlying assumption of the passage. It aligns with the author's emphasis on comprehensive understanding, collaboration, and finding a sustainable solution that addresses both ecological and socio-economic concerns

10. (c)

**Explanation:**

The passage carefully avoids portraying the shrinking lake as solely a local issue or attributing it to specific external factors like tourism. The author draws a clear connection between Lake Puraquequara's fate and the broader Amazonian ecosystem, emphasizing the potential for irreversible damage.

While other options offer relevant aspects, they don't capture the full essence of the author's message.

Option (a) narrows the focus to tourism and misses the central theme of global warming.

Option (b) downplays the significance of the event and its broader implications, contradicting the author's emphasis on urgency.

Option (d) offers a potentially optimistic solution but neglects the immediate and dire consequences highlighted in the passage.

Therefore, option (c) best reflects the crux of the passage. It aligns with the author's focus on global warming, the interconnectedness of the Amazon and global climate, and the urgent need for action, making it the most logical and accurate representation of the message conveyed.

## ECONOMY

11. (c)

**Explanation:**

The passage acknowledges the IBC's success but identifies transparency concerns and proposes specific reforms to address them.

Option (a) is contradicted by the passage "India's Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) has revolutionized debt resolution, but concerns about transparency continue,"

Option (b) is an extreme interpretation, advocating for drastic action without considering the potential of proposed reforms.

Option (d) overemphasizes one solution, neglecting the role of other proposed reforms and stricter regulations.

Therefore, the passage most strongly supports the potential of proposed reforms and stricter regulations to enhance IBC transparency, making Option (c) the most logical choice.

12. (c)

**Explanation:**

The passage highlights Gati Shakti's potential for economic growth, national integration, and regional development through efficient multimodal infrastructure.

Option (a) oversimplifies the plan's success, neglecting aspects like coordination and investment. Option (b) focuses on a specific, potential consequence, not fully capturing the broad impact of Gati Shakti's success.

Option (d) exaggerates the challenges, ignoring the potential benefits of overcoming them.

Therefore, considering the plan's comprehensive vision and emphasis on efficiency, if implemented successfully, Gati Shakti could significantly enhance India's global competitiveness, making Option (c) the most logical corollary

13. (b)

**Explanation:**

Assumption 1: This statement focuses on a specific potential impact of the EDFC - encouraging regional specialization in eastern states. While the passage mentions the potential for unlocking the potential of these states, it doesn't explicitly claim this will be the primary impact or the sole pathway to the \$5 trillion vision. Therefore, assuming this is the main focus might be an extreme interpretation.

Assumption 2: This statement aligns more closely with the balanced perspective presented in the passage. The passage highlights concerns about uneven development and emphasizes the need for a broader infrastructure strategy. Recognizing this need for a holistic approach is a key insight from the passage.

Therefore (b) Only 2 is the answer.

14. (d)

**Explanation:**

Statement (1) is incorrect: The passage explicitly mentions growth in the loan portfolio (Rs. 3.5 Lakh crore), contradicting stagnation.

Statement (2) is incorrect: The passage does mention increased client activation to the pre pandemic levels but portfolio at risk is still above pre-pandemic levels which contradicts with "improved risk management" in sentence 2.

Therefore (d), neither of the given two statements are correct.

15. (b)

**Explanation:**

(a) Emphasizes a potential consequence (widening gap) but is nowhere mentioned in the passage.

While option (c) does touch the essence of the passage but it is wrong in placing the entire responsibility in the government's hand, rather the whole ecosystem as highlighted by the passage.

(d) Offers a strong stance but goes beyond the passage's scope by advocating for prioritizing domestic listings, since passage nowhere compares domestic listing with listing on foreign stocks.

Option (b) is correct as it captures the core message: cautious implementation is crucial to balance potential benefits with potential risks for the successful outcome of this policy, as evident in the conclusion of the passage.

16. (c)

**Explanation:**

The passage emphasizes the persistence of barriers restricting women's economic opportunities and calls for policy interventions to address them.

Option (a) misinterprets the relevance of Goldin's work, overlooking its implications for contemporary challenges.

Option (b) oversimplifies the issue by relying solely on technological advancements and ignores the need for structural changes.

Option (d) leaves out the passage's call for policy interventions and promotes a passive approach that relies on cultural shifts.

Therefore, option (c) aligns most closely with the passage's message:

It acknowledges the existence of structural challenges like childcare burdens and unequal access to education.

It emphasizes the crucial role of policy interventions in addressing these challenges and promoting gender equality in the workplace. It highlights the importance of investing in universal childcare and education as key mechanisms for overcoming these barriers.

17. (d)

**Explanation:**

The passage focuses on the specific effect of the RBI's OMO strategy on bond prices and yields in the secondary market.

The passage talks about a specific instance. Based on this passage, we can't comment on all monetary policy decisions, hence option (a) is incorrect.

Passage raises concern about 'possible' negative impacts on economic activity, so it can't be assumed that a rise in bond yield will automatically impact economic activity. Hence option (b) is incorrect.

Option (c) acknowledges a potential challenge but is not sufficient to support the main argument about the link between selling long-term bonds and rising yields.

Option (d) accurately explains the inverse relationship between bond prices and yields: when one rises, the other falls.

This principle directly explains the observed outcome of the RBI's OMO strategy: selling long-term bonds (reducing their price) led to an increase in their yields.

Understanding this relationship is crucial for comprehending the impact of OMOs on the secondary market as given in the passage.

18. (d)

**Explanation:**

The passage highlights the conflicting findings on nano urea's yield compared to conventional urea.

Option (a) focuses on environmental concerns, which are mentioned peripherally but not central to the core argument about yield comparison.

Option (b) misinterprets the passage by assuming PAU's findings are definitive, contradicting the call for further research.

Option (c) oversimplifies the argument by prioritizing economic benefits over yield uncertainties, ignoring the need for conclusive evidence.

Therefore, option (d) best aligns with the passage's argument: It acknowledges the uncertainty about yield improvement while highlighting the potential advantage of ease of application with nano urea. This focus on a non-yield related benefit aligns with the proponents' call for further research to explore other potential advantages even if immediate yield gains are uncertain.

It avoids definitive conclusions about yield but recognizes the practical advantage of application as a possible rationale for continued exploration.

19. (b)

**Explanation:**

Option (a) overstates the negative implications. The passage acknowledges challenges but also emphasizes the potential for future progress.

Option (b) accurately reflects the long-term perspective. It recognizes the challenges as hurdles to overcome on the path towards wider biofuel adoption, offering a potentially transformative impact on India's energy landscape.

Option (c) is partially correct but incomplete. Research and development are important, but the passage suggests the E20 project already represents a step towards greater biofuel usage, rather than talking about developing alternatives.

Option (d) misinterprets the information. The focus is on domestic ethanol production, and the passage doesn't imply increased dependence on imports.

20. (b)

**Explanation:**

Option (a) is overly optimistic. The passage acknowledges potential sustainability concerns and advocates for a broader approach beyond giveaways.

Option (b) accurately reflects the passage's nuanced perspective. It recognizes the program's potential benefits while emphasising the need for long-term solutions like market development and capacity building to avoid dependence on freebies.

Option (c) misinterprets the information. The critics' concerns are acknowledged as valid considerations, but consumer demand alone isn't presented as the sole success factor.

Option (d) is inaccurate and biased. The passage doesn't suggest inherent limitations, and emphasises the program's focus on marginalised farmers and traditional crops as a way to promote inclusivity and diversity.

## PHILOSOPHY

21. (c)

**Explanation:**

Option (a) and (b) talks about foreign domination, which is beyond scope of the subject of the passage.

Rather than talking about worldly or revolutionary, the passage talks about balance between both, hence option (d) is wrong.

According to the passage, the reason for suffering of mind and soul is the lack of balance between the inner and outer life.

22. (b)

**Explanation:**

We do not have enough information in the passage to confirm whether statements 1 and 2 are correct or incorrect

While statement 3 best reflects the core of the passage.

23. (d)

**Explanation:**

The passage talks about how interest can stimulate three most important functions of the brain. However, it does not indicate that these three functions help in generation of new ideas. Statement a is, thus, wrong.

Statements b and c are beyond the scope of the passage, since the passage does not explicitly or

implicitly mentions about it so, we can't determine whether they are true or false.

24. (c)

**Explanation:**

The passage mentions that classic gives access to radically different forms of human consciousness rather than unified experiences hence option (a) is wrong.

Option (b) is wrong since, passage mentions that classic accepts a range of possibilities.

Option (d) contradicts what the passage is trying to convey in "classic is what gives access to radically different forms of human consciousness", thus it is wrong.

The author, in the passage, emphasises 'particularity', 'different forms of human consciousness.'

25. (b)

**Explanation:**

Option (a) is an extreme and a wrong assumption as the passage clearly mentions "The intersection of artificial intelligence, bioengineering, and the digital age raises profound questions about the moral responsibilities of humanity."

Option (c) contradicts the theme of the passage as it talks about harmonious coexistence between progress and morality.

Option (d) is an incorrect suggestion in that passage talks about coexistence between technology and ethics rather than utility of anyone to solve problems in the other area.

Passage emphasises the emerging moral concerns due to technological progress and the need to have ethical frameworks to guide such development, as evident in concluding remarks of passage.

26. (b)

**Explanation:**

Option (a) contradicts what the passage is trying to convey in "The quest for absolute truth is a perennial journey", hence it is incorrect.

Option (c) is wrong, since Descartes emphasises capacity of thinking in humans, thus that of human perceptions.

Option (d) contradicts what the passage is trying to convey in "certainty is a rare commodity in the ever-expanding landscape of human inquiry", hence it is wrong.

Descartes, through this statement, regards thinking (questioning) as integral to human existence

27. (a)

**Explanation:**

Aristotle's ethics begins with learning how to reason and the development of practical wisdom, hence blind obedience will be unethical as per Aristotle's ethics. Thus, statement (a) is correct.

Growth, nutrition and reproduction are the functions of humans, though these are not unique to us. So, statement (b) is incorrect.

The passage calls for balance between the excess and deficiency of virtue. Thus, statement (c) is incorrect.

Aristotelian ethics is about application of practical wisdom, rather than dwelling upon theoretical questions. Hence, statement (d) is incorrect.

28. (c)

**Explanation:**

While statement (a) is true but as per the passage, it is not the central idea. Since passage emphasises individuals to accept the changes rather than talking about whether they are desirable or not.

Passage guides us to accept the changes whether they are positive or challenging rather than avoiding it, so statement (b) is wrong.

The Japanese philosophy of Uketamo is described in the passage as a mechanism to deal with ups and downs, hence option (d) is wrong.

The passage emphasises Uketamo which means acceptance. It can foster a sense of equilibrium. Thus statement (c) represents the central idea.

29. (d)

**Explanation:**

As per the passage fear is stranger to none of us. No one can escape fear. Hence, Statement (a) is wrong.

Passage does not have enough information to determine whether Religion is a deceptive tool or not. Statement (b) is, thus, wrong.

The passage talks about fear but there is no comparison among characteristics of different emotions. Statement (c) is, thus, wrong.

Religion, i.e. surrendering to the omnipotent, provides a sense of security and thus helps fight fear, as implicit in the concluding remarks of the passage.

30. (c)

**Explanation:**

As per passage, Artha is one of the four aims of human life. It must not be snubbed. Thus, statement (a) is wrong.

As per passage, relentless chase of material leads to arid and barren life. Thus, statement (b) is also wrong.

As per passage, To have money is to be free of it. Wealth enables the pursuit of sublime. Hence, statement (c) is correct.

As per passage, Spirituality and pursuit of wealth can go hand in hand. Wealth enables the spiritual journey. Thus, statement (d) is wrong.

## POLITY & GOVERNMENT POLICIES

31. (d)

**Explanation:**

While the passage mentions the Supreme Court's order and the petitioners' concerns, it does not explicitly state any definitive conclusions or actions.

Option (a) is incorrect as the passage only mentions scrutiny, not a final verdict.

Option (b) is inaccurate as ECI has been mandated to provide various information about electoral bonds and not to disclose identities of donors.

Option (c) is partially correct but lacks the broader context of transparency and corporate influence.

Therefore, option (d) best captures the central theme by highlighting the key issues mentioned in passage such as transparency and accountability in election funding and clarity in political finance.

Hence, option (d) is correct.

32. (d)

**Explanation:**

While the MoU may indirectly influence voter turnout (a), youth activism and organizations (b), or even voting patterns based on ideological consideration (c); These are not its primary or guaranteed outcomes as discussed in the passage.

Option (d) best captures the long-term vision of the MoU, which is to cultivate a generation of responsible and informed citizens actively engaged in the democratic process. This option emphasizes the deeper impact on democratic values and responsible participation, aligning with the passage's focus on electoral literacy education.

33. (c)

**Explanation:**

While options (a) and (b) advocate for specific actions, they lack the nuance required in a complex political situation which is maintaining balance between constitutional prerogative to scrutinize bills and allegations on governors of aligning with the ruling party at the center. So, option (a) and (b) are incorrect.

Option (d) implies deferring to the center, potentially compromising the governor's constitutional role, which may amplify accusations of partisan bias. So, (d) is incorrect.

Option (c) best captures the essence of the passage's concerns. It emphasizes transparency, consistency, and adherence to legal and policy considerations, which are crucial for governors to fulfill their constitutional duty while minimizing accusations of bias. This option encourages a balanced approach, ensuring responsible and effective utilization of the governor's power to review and approve bills.

34. (d)

**Explanation:**

Option (a) is an oversimplification and ignores the concerns raised about cultural sensitivity and regional specificities.

Option (b) accurately identifies a crucial message but ignores balanced approach including identifying areas that have national relevance.

Option (c) is incorrect as the passage clearly establishes the relevance of SLLs to the IPC revision.

Option (d) captures the most crucial message – advocating for a balanced approach that recognizes the need for both national standards and respect for regional variations. This aligns with the passage's emphasis on a comprehensive review, guided by principles that address both consistency and cultural sensitivity advocating balanced approach.

35. (d)

**Explanation:**

While option (a) suggests a potential positive outcome, the passage explicitly mentions concerns about the potential for misuse of funds and lack of accountability. Option (b) directly contradicts the passage, which states that SCS would increase the central government's fiscal burden.

Option (c) is not supported by the passage, since passage suggests that granting SCS status to Bihar will challenge competitive federalism rather than incentivizing efficient resource utilizations

Option (d), directly aligns with the passage's concluding point about the need for a transparent and accountable mechanism if SCS is granted as reflected in "careful assessment of resource allocation before deciding upon SCS status.

36. (b)

**Explanation:**

Option (a) is incorrect, since it is overly optimistic in hoping development across all Indian cities and contradicts the passage's acknowledgement of uneven progress and potential inequality between developed and underdeveloped cities.

Option (c) is incorrect since it misinterprets the passage's focus on competitive federalism. While cities compete for funding, the central government remains heavily involved in setting criteria and allocating resources.

Option (d) is partially accurate but ignores the central concern about inequality. The passage acknowledges the mission's market-driven approach but emphasizes the potential negative consequences in terms of widening urban disparities and neglecting cities' diverse socio-economic needs. Hence, (d) is incorrect.

Option (b) directly captures the passage's core tension - the trade-off between efficiency and equity. It acknowledges the mission's positive impact on innovation and efficiency but also highlights the critical concern about potentially exacerbating existing urban inequalities, thus aligning with the passage's central argument.

37. (c)

**Explanation:**

Option (a) misinterprets the focus on diverse themes, not solely technology, and neglects the mention of good governance practices in the passage.

Option (b) ignores the passage's aim of enhancing leadership qualities and broader capacity building goals beyond technical skills.

Option (d) exaggerates the workshop's impact, as the passage acknowledges the need for sustained efforts and wider reforms.

Option (c) directly aligns with the central message. The passage highlights the workshop's significance within MoHUA's strategy, its contribution to ULB empowerment, and its potential impact on service delivery and urban growth. This option captures the essence of the initiative without overlooking challenges or overpromising results.

Therefore, considering the workshop's purpose, its alignment with Mission Karmayogi, and its potential contribution to ULB performance and India's urban development goals, option (c) emerges as the most accurate reflection of the crucial message conveyed by the passage.

38. (b)

**Explanation:**

Option (a) is an extreme possibility, unlikely to be a direct outcome of the review. The passage emphasizes the need for a balanced approach, not complete abolition.

Option (c) contradicts the concerns raised in the passage about delicate balance between legislative

freedom and accountability and is not a likely outcome based on the arguments presented.

Option (d) is simply out of the scope, since passage nowhere explicitly or implicitly talks about partisan considerations or electoral pressures.

Option (b) aligns with the central theme of the passage. It recognizes the need for a nuanced approach that upholds both legislative freedom and accountability. The review itself suggests a willingness to set clear boundaries and establish a more balanced framework, making this the most likely long-term implication.

Therefore, considering the arguments presented, the context of the review, and the need for a solution that addresses concerns without jeopardizing legislative function, option (b) emerges as the correct one.

39. (c)

**Explanation:**

Option (a) is incorrect, since the passage talks about improved service delivery and greater efficiency of government programs due to IT Solutions, which does not imply that it will eliminate all the inefficiencies.

Option (b) is a misinterpretation, as the report emphasizes the need for comprehensive efforts such as increasing digital literacy, capacity building and improving infrastructure beyond just technological advancements.

Option (d) is incorrect, since the primary focus of passage is scope of IT Solutions in improving public services rather than criticizing traditional methods.

Option (c) directly aligns with the central message. It acknowledges the potential of IT while highlighting the crucial factors for its effective utilization, namely infrastructure, user-friendliness, and capacity building. It captures the report's nuanced perspective without overpromising or neglecting potential hurdles.

Therefore, considering the balanced approach toward IT integration and the emphasis on multiple aspects beyond just technology, option (c) emerges as the correct one.

40. (c)

**Explanation:**

Option (a) overstates the impact of the certification, because as per the passage "Despite privacy concerns, the ISO 27001 certification validates the government's commitment to data protection," which means privacy concerns will still remain.

Option (b) acknowledges limitations but underestimates the significance of the certification which is evident in "marking a significant milestone in securing personal data and streamlining financial transactions." Hence (b) is incorrect.

Contrary to option (d), the passage put emphasis upon addressing digital divide and robust security, as evident in the concluding remarks of the passage. Hence, (d) is wrong.

Option (c) directly captures the passage's central message. It highlights the ISO 27001 certification as a key milestone that enhances user trust and opens doors for further development in financial inclusion. This option acknowledges the remaining challenges while emphasizing the positive trajectory established by the certification.

Therefore, considering the balanced perspective of the passage and the emphasis on future potential, option (c) emerges as the correct one.

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

41. (b)

**Explanation:**

As the passage mentions, CRISPR finds application in treating diseases and Genetic disorders. Thus, option a is incorrect.

The passage clearly states CRISPR's promise in treating diseases. It also highlights the ethical implications such as potential misuse and fear of designer babies. Thus, option b is correct.

Passage talks about the possibility of designer babies and doesn't suggest that it is inevitable. Also, the main argument revolves around the use of CRISPR, not the designer babies. Thus, option c is incorrect.

Passage says nothing about banning the use of CRISPR, though it highlights the associated concern. Thus, option d is incorrect.

42. (d)

**Explanation:**

The passage talks about the negative environmental impact of AI technology due to which conflict between its positive and negative impact arises.

Use of AI can propel the use of fossil fuels and the release of greenhouse gases. Thus, option a is incorrect.

The passage clearly states the need of fossil-fuel powered infrastructure for data processing. Thus, option b is correct.

The passage also talks about the polluting impact of manufacturing hardware components for AI. Thus, option c is also correct.

43. (a)

**Explanation:**

The passage emphasises the immense potential of quantum computing in tackling complex problems such as drug discovery and its transformative capabilities, while acknowledging the existing technical hurdles such as maintaining stability. Thus option (a) is correct.

Option (b) is too extreme, as the passage only talks about revolutionising computing power and doesn't claim to dismantle classical physics.

Option (c) mentions potential ramifications such as unlocking secrets of the universe, but the passage primarily focuses on practical applications, hence it is incorrect.

Option (d) is overly extreme as the passage nowhere suggests about classical computers turning obsolete.

44. (b)

**Explanation:**

Passage nowhere talks about consumption of GMOs by humans, hence option (a) is incorrect.

Passage nowhere mentions depletion of natural resources, hence option (c) is incorrect.

Though the passage shows concern about environmental impacts and ecological ramifications, it is focused on the ecosystem as whole including humans and not just soil and water, hence option (d) is incorrect.

The passage explicitly mentions the concern of "gene transfer and superweeds" as a potential environmental risk.

45. (c)

**Explanation:**

Brownish rocks are the features of the moon's surface and not the Mars. Thus, option a is incorrect.

The question is about the colouration of Mars hence answer would suggest something about the atmosphere of Mars, not moon. Thus, option b is incorrect.

Mars' Red (present) colour is because of its rocks which were oxidised. Thus, the colour is indicative of the presence of oxygen in the past which was depleted due to oxidation of rocks. Thus, option c is correct.

The passage clearly mentions that the colouration of Mars is due to oxidation of rocks by oxygen which was present in the past. Thus, option d is incorrect.

46. (d)

**Explanation:**

The passage doesn't indicate the scientist to be the most intelligent member of society. Thus, option a is incorrect.

Passage talks about individual freedom and freedom of conscience of scientists which doesn't imply that a scientist is abnormal. Thus, option b is incorrect.

Passage doesn't seem to confer superior status to scientists, rather it just focuses on scientists' individuality just as any other citizen. Thus, option c is incorrect.

Passage says "He must be free to follow his conscience, as a citizen should be free" which is reflected in option (d).

47. (b)

**Explanation:**

Passage clearly states the role of Antarctic rocks in protecting the lichens. Thus, option a is not the correct answer.

Passage does not talk about the role of bacteria in protecting lichens. Thus, statement b is not correct according to the passage.

According to the passage "Lichens survive just beneath Antarctic rocks where sunlight can still penetrate". Thus, option c is not the correct answer.

"The Antarctic rock absorbs water and also protects lichens from cold. Thus, it is crucial for the survival of lichens in Antarctica." is mentioned in the passage. Hence, d is not the correct answer.

48. (d)

**Explanation:**

Passage mentions factors such as climatic environments, types of food supply and mode of living which can cause changes in organisms hence, statement 1 is correct.

Author through various examples of changes in form or some part of organisms in response to external factors, explains the theory of evolution in passage, hence statement 2 is correct.

Through the concept of homologous and example of a bat and a whale, the passage explains how structurally different organs could be similar in evolution. Hence, statement 3 is correct.

49. (c)

**Explanation:**

Passage states that the static cloud 'somehow' got disturbed. Thus question 1 can't be answered. Hence option a and option d can't be correct.

The passage says that as the density increases, the cloud further attracts more matter and the gravitational field further increases. Thus, the second question can be answered.

The passage directly answers that the gradually increasing concentration of gas finally leads to the formation of stars. Thus, the third question can be answered.

50. (d)

**Explanation:**

As per the passage, darkness reveals the brilliance of light. However, the debate of light and darkness doesn't reflect the message of the author in its entirety. Thus, option a is incorrect.

The passage provokes one to study the opposites to have a better grasp of thing as reflected in "To truly grasp the essence of a thing, immerse yourself in the realm of its opposite.. Thus, option b and c are incorrect. Option d is correct, since the passage tries to convey it throughout, as reflected in initial and concluding remarks as well as in the example of darkness and light.

## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

51. (b)

**Explanation:**

Option (a), This statement contradicts the classical realist theory, which argues that conflicts arise due to the security dilemma and the absence of a global authority. If all countries maintain peaceful relations, it does not align with the idea of ongoing struggles and potential conflicts.

Option (c) contradicts the realist view of conflict as inherent to the system. It attributes wars to specific factors like bad leaders, which realists see as secondary to the systemic issue of anarchy.

Option (d) doesn't directly support or contradict the core tenets of classical realism. While it shows an increase in war, it doesn't establish whether it's due to anarchy or other factors, and the presence of a world court could lead to different interpretations in a realist framework.

Option (b), aligns with the classical realist perspective that even in the presence of a global authority or superpower, nations may still engage in conflicts due to the security dilemma and the inherent structural anarchy in the international system.

52. (a)

**Explanation:**

Option (b) is incorrect since, while acknowledging India's potential, it lacks emphasis on the need for adaptation and holistic engagement.

Option (c), focuses on assertive leadership against China's influence, neglecting the nuanced approach suggested by the passage.

Option (d), suggests an inward focus on internal development, neglecting the importance of engaging with the changing regional dynamics.

Option (a), captures the crucial point that the passage emphasises changing regional dynamics and the need for India to adapt.. While India needs to protect its interests, the passage doesn't portray China as an existential threat or advocate for an assertive leadership role. Option A avoids these extremes

53. (b)

**Explanation:**

Option (a) mentions a move away from non-alignment, it doesn't capture the central theme of the shift, which is towards economic engagement.

Option (c) exaggerates the change. The passage talks about increased engagement with both Western and Eastern powers, but the primary shift emphasises economic priorities, not just a broader diplomatic outreach.

Option (d) is entirely misleading. The passage doesn't suggest any shift away from prioritising national security or towards a concern for regional stability.

The passage explicitly states that post-Cold War, India shifted its focus to regional engagement, prioritising trade and investment. This is directly stated in the sentence: "Post the Cold War, India shifted focus to regional engagement, prioritising trade and investment over unrealistic principles, making B the correct answer.

54. (b)

**Explanation:**

Assumption 1 is not supported by the information in the passage. The passage emphasises the potential for a 'creative' politics of global order-building within the Three Worlds system, with incentives for the global West and East to compete for the support and cooperation of the global South. It doesn't imply an inevitable scenario of conflict.

Assumption 2 aligns more closely with the information in the passage. The passage suggests that for the global West to maintain its central position in world order, it must accommodate both the global East and the global South, adapting to a more pluralistic world. The global South's critique is framed as a call for the global West to address legitimate concerns about unfulfilled promises and unequal distribution of benefits. Therefore, only Assumption 2 is considered correct.

55. (c)

**Explanation:**

**Option (a) is too negative:** While the passage acknowledges potential competition, it emphasises the “creative” possibilities and the South’s critical role, not inevitable conflict.

**Option (b) focuses solely on competition:** The passage recognizes competition but also highlights the broader potential for building a new world order with the South’s involvement.

**Option (d) misinterprets the West’s advantage:** The passage states the West has advantages, but the key is accommodation and adaptation, not maintaining dominance through its existing approach.

Option (c) best captures the crux of the passage as It acknowledges the possibility of competition between the West and East, emphasises the opportunity for “creative” global order-building in this new multi-polar arrangement, and highlights the critical role the South is expected to play in this process.

56. (a)

**Explanation:**

Options (b) is incorrect since rather than highlighting possible capacity of multilateralism, passage focuses on significance multilateralism till now

Option (c) is wrong since passage nowhere talks about need for continuous improvement in Multilateralism  
Option (d) is incorrect since the passage does not talk about complexities of 21st century,

Option (a) embodies the crucial message due to its comprehensive approach. It acknowledges but asserts the intrinsic value of multilateralism as a core principle and moral compass, directly referencing the Charter and Secretary-General’s perspective.

57. (a)

**Explanation:**

Option (b), While acknowledging limitations, it focuses on accountability rather than the broad scope and vulnerable groups aspect.

Option (c), accurately describes the legal aspect but misses the emphasis on addressing historical discrimination and protecting specific groups.

Option (d), This addresses challenges, but it’s not the main argument. The passage primarily describes the framework and its goals, not solely the implementation hurdles

Option (a) best reflects the passage’s central message about the UN’s comprehensive human rights

framework, its aim to address historical injustices, and its focus on protecting vulnerable groups.

58. (c)

**Explanation:**

Option (a) is incorrect since the passage mentions that members apart from Russia avoided conflict with the west, which contradicts option A’s emphasis on BRICS solidifying into an anti west alliance.

Option (b) is incorrect since rather than suggesting that BRICS’ potential impact on global power dynamics is limited, it tells about the possibility of BRICS shaping a multifaceted global scenario.

Decision to invite new members reflects a choice between deepening existing ties or expanding outward with freedom for each member to engage with the west and not aim to establish an alternative global order. Hence, Option (d) is incorrect.

Option (c) best reflects the central message of the passage since it mentions groups aim to broaden interaction independently of Western World and it aims to adopt an alter-west, not anti west approach.

59. (d)

**Explanation:**

**Assumption 1 is incorrect:** The passage acknowledges that while BRICS seeks to diversify the world and reduce dependence on Western systems, it emphasises members’ individual freedom to engage with the West (excluding Russia). This suggests members might prioritise their own interests over absolute bloc unity.

**Assumption 2 is incorrect:** BRICS expansion is presented as a gradual approach towards an “alter-West,” not a swift transition to a rival order. The passage emphasises long-term evolution and a rejection of direct confrontation with the West, suggesting a less dramatic power shift.

60. (d)

**Explanation:**

**Assumption 1 is incorrect:** While a multipolar world can increase competition and miscalculation risks, it’s not inherent that major-power conflict is more likely. The passage offers counterpoints – positive aspects and the potential for cooperation/new principles.

**Assumption 2 is incorrect:** The challenges to liberal principles are acknowledged, but the passage doesn’t advocate abandoning it entirely. It suggests caution in interpretation, not complete dismissal. Additionally, “purely realist” approaches might not consider the potential for cooperation or evolving norms, which the passage mentions as positive factors.

## SOCIETY

61. (d)

**Explanation:**

Options (b) is an extreme assumption which can't be inferred from the passage, hence it is wrong.

Option (c) is wrong, since the passage nowhere talks about efficiency of legal battle

Option (a) can be seen in the passage but it only reflects one of the reasons behind inadequate girl child education and not the core of passage

Option (d) is the right choice since the passage clearly mentions that the schooling opportunity lost in childhood cannot be compensated for in later years of life.

62. (c)

**Explanation:**

Consumerism is one of the implications of one-dimensional thinking rather than its whole meaning, hence (a) is incorrect.

Option (b) may appear true since spirituality is the opposite of consumerism and materialism but careful reading of passage makes it evident that passage talk about critical thinking rather than spiritual dimension of thinking

As passage mentions, A world of 'One-dimensional' thoughts and behaviour means a state of the individual where critical thoughts and behaviour lose their value.

63. (b)

**Explanation:**

The passage sheds light on the social impact of economic reforms. It doesn't indicate the comprehensive failure or success of the economic reforms. So, statement 1 is wrong.

The passage clearly indicates that the exclusion in the post-reform period has been intentional. So, statement 2 is correct.

Passage highlights the lack of the implementation of constitutional provisions of economic and social justice but it doesn't indicate that the issue can't be solved within the existing framework and hence it can't be assumed that passage suggests moving away from privatisation. Therefore, statement 3 is wrong.

64. (b)

**Explanation:**

The passage highlights the digital divide, but it doesn't look to fix the responsibility of that on the government. So, statement (a) is wrong.

The passage highlights how the covid induced lockdown disproportionately impacted the educational outcomes of the vulnerable section. Hence, statement (b) is correct.

The passage highlights the need for digital literacy alongside traditional literacy. Thus, statement (c) is wrong.

The passage does not look to fix the sole responsibility on the government, in any manner. It does not talk about whose responsibility it should be. Hence, statement (d) is also wrong.

65. (d)

**Explanation:**

Option (a) simply takes one side while the passage argues about balancing both viewpoints, hence it is incorrect.

Option (b) while at first appears the correct answer and captures a part of the message but it ignores the core value which is talked about here, which is respecting diversity, empathy and it solely focusing on legal measures. Hence, it is incorrect.

Option (c) is providing reason preventing realisation of same sex marriage but it doesn't reflect crux of the passage, which is to engage in a meaningful conversation respecting different viewpoints.

Passage presents both sides of the views in body and in concluding remarks it talks about balance, harmony and respecting different points of views, which is reflected in option (d).

66. (a)

**Explanation:**

The passage acknowledges rural depopulation as it says "this urban exodus casts long shadows, leaving behind rural communities hollowed out and struggling to adapt" Hence 1 is correct.

While technology plays a role, the passage emphasizes broader economic forces as it says "fueled by economic aspirations and technological advancements" Hence, 2 is incorrect.

The passage highlights both the positive and negative aspects of urbanization, as it says "burgeoning challenges of infrastructure strain, environmental degradation, and social inequities", hence 3 is incorrect.

Though, The passage mentions both the benefits and challenges, however it doesn't weigh the benefits and harms and leaves room to think about sustainable urbanization hence 4 is incorrect.

67. (b)

**Explanation:**

Option (a) is out of the scope of passage as passage focuses on social consequences rather than economic downturn.

Option (b) accurately captures the core long-term implication. The passage mentions ‘ Ignoring this chasm isn’t an option; it’s a recipe for instability and a betrayal of our shared humanity’

Option (c) is a valid concern but out of the scope of the passage as passage focuses on damage to social fabric and social unrest, rather than environmental degradation and exploitation of natural resources

Option (d) is partially true but not the most crucial implication, as the passage prioritises the potential for societal breakdown and possibility of cultural divisions can not be concluded based on given information.

68. (d)

**Explanation:**

Option (a) is not in line with the theme of passage, passage talks about complexities of overpopulation rather than corrective measures.

Option (b) is true based on the passage, but it is not an assumption but direct inference from the passage.

Option (c) presents a false dichotomy which we can not infer based on information given in passage.

Option (d) captures the underlying assumption. The last line mentions “unchecked population growth hinders sustainable development, erodes environmental stability, and threatens the very foundations of our progress”, hence the author assumes that checking the population will solve the majority of issues.

69. (b)

**Explanation:**

(1) is incorrect because the passage mentions- “Empowering women isn’t just about quotas or reservations”. Though quotas aid in women empowerment it is beyond the scope of this passage.

(2) is correct as the passage says “Women in leadership positions, in science, in technology, in business - these are the role models who will inspire future generations”

70. (d)

**Explanation:**

Option (a) does not directly contradict the theme. The passage acknowledges the potential of technology but emphasises a comprehensive approach.

Option (b) aligns with the central theme. The passage highlights the need to address social issues faced by older adults.

Option (c) though is not consistent with the central theme of the passage, it doesn’t contradict it either since it talks about the possibility of economic contribution by adults as mentioned in “Their wisdom, experience, and untapped potential can be harnessed” in the passage.

Option (d) directly contradicts the theme. The passage advocates for external and multidimensional solutions such as robust healthcare systems, adaptive social safety nets, and innovative approaches rather than internal solutions such as family structure.

## POLITICAL SCIENCE

71. (b)

**Explanation:**

Option (a) is an extreme step that is negated by the passage itself as it mentions “we must embrace a political economy that balances the freedom of the market with the guiding principles of social justice and collective well-being” a balance between free, competitive market and social justice.

Option (b) accurately reflects the central message of the passage. It emphasizes the need for a balanced approach that recognizes the benefits of the market while acknowledging its limitations and advocating for social justice-oriented interventions.

Option (c) directly contradicts the passage. The passage talks about “regulations to curb monopolies, progressive taxation to redistribute wealth, and investments in public goods like education and healthcare” i.e. policy and regulations for social justice Option (d) misinterprets the author’s perspective. The passage prioritizes social justice and collective well-being over prioritizing individual freedom to establish equal opportunity.

72. (b)

**Explanation:**

Option (a) overstates the passage’s argument. While acknowledging the diversity within states, it doesn’t advocate complete abandonment of the “state” concept.

Option (b) accurately reflects the key insight of the passage. It emphasizes the importance of understanding internal power dynamics and their influence on a state’s external behavior.

Option (c) contradicts the passage’s portrayal of diverse actors and competing voices as it says - “we must look beyond the monolithic facade and delve into the symphony of competing voices”. The voices

often compete and contradict each other and we must understand the symphony to understand the true essence of state.

Option (d) goes out of scope of passage simplifies the picture, however, the passage highlights the interplay of various actors as it says - "The parliament debates, the courts adjudicate, the bureaucracy implements, and civil society agitates - each playing a distinct yet intertwined role in the grand orchestration of statecraft"

73. (c)

**Explanation:**

Option (a) contradicts the passage. The author explicitly mentions "The pursuit of equality cannot merely focus on equal starting lines"

Option (b) Though the passage acknowledges the caveats of affirmative it says "Affirmative action, while imperfect, represents a necessary corrective measure", however the passage doesn't criticize affirmative actions more but rather support them as they are corrective measures .

Option (c) accurately reflects the key message. The author sees affirmative action as a temporary bridge but ultimately advocates for systemic changes to address the root causes of inequality.

Option (d) ignores the context of historical disadvantage and is out of scope of passage

74. (b)

**Explanation:**

Statement 1 is incorrect. While the passage acknowledges the role of dominant narratives in maintaining hegemony, it doesn't claim they render all challenges inconsequential. The text clearly mentions "Questioned narratives, challenged norms, and awakened aspirations can unravel the fabric of consent, revealing the bare bones of coercion beneath" hence hegemony can not last long .

Statement 2 is accurate and well-supported by the passage. The text presents an inherent tension between the hegemon's need for legitimacy and its pursuit of self-interest. By relying on consent, the hegemon must maintain a facade of moral authority, which can be challenged by its actions that prioritize self-interest. This internal conflict poses a significant vulnerability to the hegemonic system.

75. (b)

**Explanation:**

Option (a) misinterprets and oversimplifies. The passage mentions that 'Socialism's core lies not in rigid blueprints or centralized mandates'

Option (b) accurately captures the message. It highlights the delicate balance between economic redistribution, fostering individual potential, and maintaining some level of personal liberty as the key tenets of socialism.

Option (c) limits the message of the passage and only focuses on collective well being. However the passage mentions ' systems that prioritize collective well-being and equitable distribution of resources', hence both are equally important.

Option (d) is inaccurate. The passage presents socialism as a dynamic and evolving body of thought, not a set of fixed doctrines.

76. (d)

**Explanation:**

Option (a) is partially true but oversimplifies. The passage acknowledges potential weakening of other branches, but focuses more on finding balance than a decisive shift in power.

Option (b) is a valid concern but not the main long-term implication. The passage's primary focus is on the relationship between judiciary and democracy, not the overall legal culture.

Option (c) is partly true but doesn't capture the nuanced implications. The passage acknowledges potential for trust, but also raises concerns about friction and overreach.

Option (d) accurately captures the long-term potential for increased polarization and tension. The passage highlights the challenge of balancing activism with respecting democratic norms, suggesting potential for conflict over contested interpretations.

77. (a)

**Explanation:**

Option (a) is Correct. The passage explicitly states, "Foucault's discourse on the deconstruction of grand narratives reveals a shift towards localized, fragmented perspectives." This directly supports the idea that postmodernism's challenge to grand narratives leads to a more localized and fragmented understanding of political dynamics.

Option (b) is incorrect. The passage emphasizes the opposite of this statement, stating that postmodernism challenges grand narratives and prompts a shift away from stable and universal truths.

Option (c) is incorrect. The passage contradicts the notion that postmodernism reinforces a harmonious and cohesive political landscape; it mentions a shift towards localized, fragmented perspectives and a challenge to traditional frameworks.

Option (d) is incorrect. The passage does not suggest that postmodernism results in a definitive and unambiguous restructuring of political theories; instead, it emphasizes the need for nuanced understanding and engagement with diverse narratives.

78. (c)

**Explanation:**

Option (a) is incorrect. The passage does not support the idea that Dr. B.R. Ambedkar believed in a centralized federal structure. It emphasizes the competitive federal structure he envisioned.

Option (b) is incorrect. The passage contradicts the notion that Competitive Federalism is solely focused on economic growth at the expense of social progress. It mentions that the approach encourages states to compete in creating an environment conducive to both economic growth and social progress.

Option (c) is Correct. The passage explicitly mentions that Competitive Federalism in India encourages states to compete, fostering innovation and efficiency. It states, "It empowers states to formulate policies that suit their unique needs, fostering innovation and efficiency."

Option (d) is incorrect. The passage does not suggest that the current federal structure inhibits regional development and innovation. It emphasizes the positive aspects of the paradigm shift to Competitive Federalism.

79. (d)

**Explanation:**

Option (a) is incorrect. The passage limits the idea that women's inclusion in lawmaking is about symbolic representation majorly.

Option (b) is incorrect. Though the passage highlights Indira Gandhi's thought about women's participation in law making, however the representation has far reaching consequence in terms of governance, representation and symbol of equality. (d) is a better option to choose than (b).

Option (c) is incorrect. The passage emphasizes that recognizing the importance of women in lawmaking is not primarily a symbolic gesture but a pragmatic move towards effective and inclusive governance.

Option (d) is correct. The passage emphasizes that women's inclusion in lawmaking is not just a matter of representation but a pragmatic necessity for holistic decision-making. It states, "Their inclusion is not just a matter of representation but a pragmatic necessity for holistic decision-making."

80. (c)

**Explanation:**

Option (a) directly contradicts the passage. The passage by saying "True security doesn't come from walls and weapons", emphasizes the limitations of traditional security measures and highlights gender equality as a key preventative approach.

Option (b) is out of the scope of the passage and solely focus on one aspect of women empowerment through economic means.

Option (c) captures the core message. It aligns with the text's focus on dismantling underlying inequalities and empowering women as central to preventing the conditions that foster terrorism.

Option (d) partially aligns but misses the crucial point. The passage prioritizes gender equality as a critical preventative measure, not just a secondary concern compared to broader inequalities.

# Verbal Reasoning and Analytical Ability

# 2

## ASSERTION AND REASON

Assertion and Reason is a significant type of verbal reasoning that is repeatedly asked in several exams to test your logical and analytical skills. In general, an assertion is a declaration or a strong statement and a reason is an explanation for the given assertion.

Assertion and reason type questions ask you to judge two statements:

- ❑ The first statement (Assertion) claims something.
- ❑ The second statement (Reason) gives a cause.

You have to judge whether the two statements are individually correct and whether the reason explains the assertion well or not? Out of four or five answer choices, pick the one that best describes the truth of both statements and their connection. Like solving puzzles, the more you practise, the better you'll get at spotting the right answer!

As stated above, an Assertion(A) and Reason(R) type question contains four, or sometimes five options (Unlikely in UPSC: CSAT but possible in other government Exams). They generally look as follows:

- Both (A) and (R) are true and (R) is the correct explanation of (A)
- Both (A) and (R) are true but (R) is not the correct explanation of (A)
- (A) is true, but (R) is false
- (A) is false, but (R) is true
- Both (A) and (R) are false

This can be better understood through an illustration.

## KEY CONCEPTS

It is important to understand the concepts behind such questions to be able to solve them with minimal inaccuracy. Let us understand this in an easy manner.

### Imagine you're a detective with two clues:

**Clue 1:** The Assertion (A) - This is a statement like "Cats like milk." It's the main mystery you're trying to solve.

**Clue 2:** The Reason (R) - This explains why the assertion might be true, like "They find it tasty." But is it the real culprit?

### Your Job is to Figure out:

- Are both clues true? Is it true that cats like milk and is it because they find it tasty?
- Does the reason explain the assertion? Does "finding it tasty" actually make cats like milk?

### Answer Choices:

- ❑ Both are true, reason explains the assertion: Bingo! You solved the mystery!
- ❑ Both are true, reason doesn't explain assertion: The clues are true, but the reason isn't the whole story.
- ❑ Only the assertion is true: The cat mystery remains! The reason might be wrong or unrelated.
- ❑ Only one reason is true: Interesting, but not relevant to the cat case.

Let us now learn to apply this through an illustration.

## ILLUSTRATION

**Assertion (A):** The rate of migration from hilly areas of Uttarakhand has increased since it was formed in the year 2000.

**Reason (R):** Migration leads to the abandonment of villages.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

(UKPSC 2016)

- Both A and R are true and R is the correct explanation of A
- Both A and R are true and R is not correct explanation of A
- A is false but R is true
- A is true but R is false

**Ans:** (b)

### Explanation:

Due to limited job opportunities in Uttarakhand and the increasing ambitions of people, the rate of migration from hilly areas of Uttarakhand has actually increased since 2000. Thus, A is true. Also, R in itself is a valid statement. According to 2011

census. 405 villages in Uttarakhand had less than 10 people left. However, the reason statement appears more to be the effect of migration, than a cause. Thus, it does not explain A.

## TRENDS IN UPSC

Verbal reasoning questions based on the concepts of assertion and reason have not appeared in the UPSC CSAT paper in recent years. However, this does not imply that practising such questions is to be ignored before the exam. UPSC has a knack of being unpredictable, more often than not. In such a situation, it is important to be armed with sufficient practice. Moreover, assertion and reason form an important part of reasoning and are very common in the question papers of state public service commission exams and other exams. Thus, it will not be a surprise if it soon finds its way into the UPSC CSAT paper too.

## HOW TO SOLVE/APPROACH IN EXAM HALL

A systematic and organised approach to solving such questions can reduce confusion in the exam hall. Such questions are often of a scoring nature and thus a systematic approach that reduces confusion must be adopted to stay ahead of the competition. Following steps demonstrate one such approach.

- Think about each statement individually. Break down the questions and evaluate each of the statements individually in order to solve such questions.
- Use your existing knowledge to judge the correctness of each statement independently.
- Analyse if there is a logical cause-and-effect relationship between the assertion and reasoning. Determine if the reasoning adequately supports the assertion.
- Be a critical thinker: Don't just assume the reason is true because it's given.
- Look for alternatives: Are there other reasons the assertion might be true?

You may have to use simple scientific principles to establish the interconnectedness of some questions.

For example, consider a question-

A - Birds can fly

R - Birds have wings.

**Ans:** Both A and R are true and R is the correct explanation of (A). Here, we must understand that wings provide aerodynamic lift to birds which enables them to fly. Thus, R correctly explains (A).

## QUESTIONS

Given below are two statements in each questions, one is labelled as Assertion (A) and other as Reason (R) — Select the correct answer using the code given below in each question

**Q1. Assertion (A):** Clarity of communication is essential for an effective communication process.

**Reason (R):** Because adequacy and timing are not essential for an effective communication process.

(UPPSC 2023)

For the above given assertion and reason, choose the correct alternative from the following.

- (a) Both A and R are true and R is the correct explanation of A
- (b) Both A and R are true and R is not correct explanation of A
- (c) A is false but R is true
- (d) A is true but R is false

**Ans:** (d)

**Explanation:**

A is true as clarity of communication is a prerequisite for an effective communication process. It helps in better understanding of the message being conveyed. (d) R is false as adequacy and timing are very essential for effective communication. One must know how much to say and when to say it so that the message being conveyed has a greater impact.

**Q2. Assertion (A):** Education is a must for success.

**Reason (R):** Education is key to success.

(UPPSC 2018)

For the above given assertion and reason, choose the correct alternative from the following.

- (a) Both A and R are true and R is the correct explanation of A
- (b) Both A and R are true and R is not correct explanation of A
- (c) A is false but R is true
- (d) A is true but R is false

**Ans:** (c)

**Explanation:**

The definition of success may vary for each individual or society. It may be material, spiritual or based on any other parameter. Education enhances the cognitive ability of individuals and can play an important role, especially in material success. Thus the reason is true. However, education is not a must for success e.g. Many cricketers representing India hold no or minimal degrees. Thus, the assertion is false.

**Q3. Assertion (A) :** India is the world's most populous country.

**Reason (R) :** The problem of unemployment is increasing with the increase in population in India.

For the above given assertion and reason, choose the correct alternative from the following.

- (a) Both A and R are true and R is the correct explanation of A
- (b) Both A and R are true and R is not correct explanation of A
- (c) A is false but R is true
- (d) A is true but R is false

**Ans:** (b)

**Explanation:**

As per recent UN estimates, India has become the world's most populous country. Thus, A is true. An increase in population has led to increased problems of unemployment, e.g. disguised unemployment in agriculture. However, R is actually a consequence of the increasing population rather than the reason for it. Thus, it does not explain (A).

**Q4. Assertion (A):** There is no difference between 'policy making' and 'decision making'.

**Reason (R):** Policy refers to the formulation of a particular plan or course of action by the government or an organisation. (UKPSC 2016)

For the above given assertion and reason, choose the correct alternative from the following.

- (a) Both A and R are true and R is the correct explanation of A
- (b) Both A and R are true and R is not correct explanation of A
- (c) A is false but R is true
- (d) A is true but R is false

**Ans:** (c)

**Explanation:**

A is false, as policy making and decision making are different exercises with little overlap. While policy making is almost exclusive to organisations, decision making is present in every individual's daily life.

R presents a clear and accurate definition of policy. Thus, R is true.

**Q5. Assertion (A) :** We prefer to wear white clothes in the winter.

**Reason (R) :** White clothes are good reflectors of heat. (UKPSC 2012)

For the above given assertion and reason, choose the correct alternative from the following.

- (a) Both A and R are true and R is the correct explanation of A
- (b) Both A and R are true and R is not correct explanation of A
- (c) A is false but R is true
- (d) A is true but R is false

**Ans:** (c)

**Explanation:**

A is false, as white clothes are preferably worn in summers, not winters. This is because white clothes are good reflectors of heat. They absorb very little heat and thus keep the body cool in the summer. Thus, R is true.

## CAUSE AND EFFECT

Imagine life as a domino effect. One event (cause) triggers another (effect), and the chain continues. Cause and effect reasoning helps us understand why things happen and predict what might come next. Cause is the main factor or initial event that happens before an effect.

- Cause and effect are complementary to each other. As the cause occurs, it causes an effect. A cause is the logical or scientific reasoning of an event that has occurred and the effects of this cause are the consequences of the event.
- For a cause to be valid, it must be sufficient or necessary. The conditions for an event to take place is the condition without which the event will not occur.

## TYPES OF CAUSES

### 1. Immediate cause

- An immediate cause immediately precedes the effect. In other words, immediate causes are the most proximate in time to the effect.

**Example:** Suppose a driver was drunk and crashed his car and died.

Here, the immediate cause of death is the crash, whereas drinking is the principal cause.

### 2. Principal cause

- It is the main cause behind the effect. It may or may not be the same as the immediate cause. Usually, a principal cause in the long term effectively leads to the cause.

**Example:** Suppose a boy failed in his exam because he did not study.

Here, the principal i.e., main cause of failing is not studying.

### 3. Independent cause

- In such cases, the given 'cause' has no relation to the 'effect'. The 'effect' is the consequence of some other 'cause' that is not given in the question.

## TYPES OF QUESTIONS

### TYPE 1: TWO-STATEMENT BASED QUESTIONS

- Two statements are given. You are supposed to identify which one is the cause and which one is the effect.

#### ILLUSTRATION

(a) Ahmed is a healthy boy.

(b) His mother is very particular about the food he eats.

**Read both statements and decide which of the following answer choices correctly depicts the relationship between these two statements.**

- (a) If statement A is the cause and statement B is its effect;
- (b) If statement B is the cause and statement A is its effect;
- (c) If both the statements A and B are independent causes;
- (d) If both the statements A and B are effects of independent causes.

**Ans:** (b)

**Explanation:**

Since Ahmed's mother takes care of what he eats, Ahmed has good health. Hence, (B) is the cause and (A) is the effect. Therefore, (b) is correct.

### TYPE 2: CHOOSING LOGICALLY RELATED CAUSE AND EFFECT

- A cause or effect is given in the question statement. You need to choose the most logical effect or cause from among the given options.

#### ILLUSTRATION

**Cause:** A severe cyclonic storm swept away most part of the state during the last two days

**Which of the following cannot be a possible effect of the above cause?**

- (a) Heavy rainfall was reported in most part of the state during the last two days
- (b) many people were rendered homeless as their house were flown away
- (c) The communication system of the state was severely affected and continues to be out of gear.
- (d) Government has ordered that all the offices and schools should be kept open

**Ans:** (d)

**Explanation:**

In such a cataclysmic scenario, the Government is likely to order the closure of offices and schools. Hence, statements (d) cannot be a possible effect of the given cause.

### KEY CONCEPTS

- **Cause:** The reason or trigger for an event. It can be one thing or a combination of factors.
- **Effect:** The result or outcome of the cause. It can be immediate or have long-term consequences.
- **Correlation vs. Causation:** Just because two things happen together doesn't mean one caused the other. Let's say ice cream sales are rising along with a rise in cases of drowning – summer heat, not ice cream, is likely the culprit!
- **Necessary Conditions:** Necessary condition for an event to take place is the condition without which the event will not occur.
- Sufficient condition for an event to take place is that condition under which the event must occur.

### TREND IN UPSC

Verbal reasoning questions based on the concept of cause and effect have not appeared in the UPSC CSAT paper in recent years. However, this does not mean that practising such questions is to be ignored before the exam. UPSC has a knack of being unpredictable, more often than not. In such a situation, it is important to be armed with sufficient practice. Moreover, cause and effect form an important part of reasoning and is very common in the question papers of state public service commission exams and other exams. Thus, it will not be a surprise if it soon finds its way in to the UPSC CSAT paper too.

### HOW TO SOLVE/APPROACH IN EXAM HALL

- Read the question carefully. Identify the type of question from among the two categories mentioned above.
- In case of two statement based questions read both the statements and apply your logic to understand if one can cause the other. Also identify if it is an immediate cause or a principal cause, if required.

- ❑ This can be done using the tests of 'necessity' and 'sufficiency' as mentioned under the key concepts.
- ❑ Further, the tenses used in the statements can be used to identify their chronology. The event that occurs first is the 'cause'. 'Effect' becomes visible only later.
- ❑ In the case of single statement based questions carefully, check all options.
- ❑ Examine the 'necessity' or 'sufficiency' to establish any relation between the given statement and the option statements.

## QUESTIONS

**Directions:** Below in each of the questions are given two statements I and II. These statements may be either independent causes or may be effects of independent causes or a common cause. One of these statements may be the effect of the other statements. Read both the statements and decide which of the following answer choice correctly depicts the relationship between these two statements.

**Q6. Statement 1:** The factory was shut down due to environmental concerns.

**Statement 2:** The unemployment rate in the city increased

- (a) Statement 1 is the cause and statement 2 is its effect
- (b) Statement 2 is the cause and statement 1 is its effect
- (c) Both the statements 1 and 2 are independent causes
- (d) Both the statements 1 and 2 are effects of independent causes

**Ans:** (a)

**Explanation:**

Shutting down the factory is likely to result in rendering workers in the factory unemployed, so statement 1 is the cause and statement 2 is the effect.

**Q7. Statement 1.** There has been mass recruitment of IT professionals by Indian IT companies.

**Statement 2.** Many developed countries are increasingly outsourcing IT related functions to India and China.

- (a) Statement 1 is the cause and statement 2 is its effect
- (b) Statement 2 is the cause and statement 1 is its effect
- (c) Both statements are independent causes
- (d) Both statements are effects of independent causes

**Ans:** (b)

**Explanation:**

Outsourcing has led to the creation of jobs in IT in India. So, Statement 2 is the cause while Statement 1 is the effect. Hence, the correct answer must be B.

**Q8. Statements:**

- I. The price of aircraft fuel has risen during the past few months.**
- II. Many passenger airlines in India have been forced to cut their air fares by about 10%.**

- (a) Statement I is the cause and statement II is its effect
- (b) Statement II is the cause and statement I is its effect
- (c) Both statements are independent causes
- (d) Both statements are effects of independent causes

**Ans:** (d)

**Explanation:**

Statement I is usually the effect of the hike in global petroleum prices. Because of some cause. Similarly, Statement II is usually the effect of competition in aviation, due to some cause. But the causes of these effects seem to be different and independent. So the answer is D.

**Q9. Statements**

- I. There is a sharp decline in the production of oil seeds this year.**
- II. The Government has decided to increase the import quantum of edible oil.**

- (a) Statement I is the cause and statement II is its effect
- (b) Statement II is the cause and statement I is its effect
- (c) Both statements are independent causes
- (d) Both statements are effects of independent causes

**Ans:** (a)

**Explanation:**

The decrease in production of oil seeds may lead to a shortage of edible oil in the country. Because of this, the government has decided to increase the import quantum of edible oil. Thus, statement I is the cause and statement II is the effect.

**Q10. Statements**

- I. The farmers have decided against selling their kharif crops to the government agencies.**
- II. The Government has reduced the procurement price of kharif crops from last month to the next six months.**

- (a) Statement I is the cause and statement II is its effect
- (b) Statement II is the cause and statement I is its effect
- (c) Both statements are independent causes
- (d) Both statements are effects of independent causes
- (e) Both statements are effects of some common cause

Ans: (b)

**Explanation:**

As the government reduced the procurement price of kharif crops so the farmers would decide against selling their kharif crops to government agencies.

## VERIFICATION OF TRUTH/LIE OF STATEMENTS

Verification means using conclusive evidence to demonstrate the truthfulness of any statement. Verifying the truth or lie of a statement is a crucial skill in various competitive exams, especially verbal reasoning sections. It tests your ability to analyse information, identify logical fallacies, and reach well-founded conclusions.

### KEY CONCEPTS

In such questions, a group of statements are provided. These statements are logically examined by applying one's analytical skills to the statements in order to find out which of these statements are true and which are not

- ❑ **Statements:** These are declarative sentences that convey information, either true or false.
- ❑ **Verification:** The process of confirming the truth of a statement using evidence, facts, or logical reasoning.
- ❑ **Data Sufficiency:** Determining if the information provided (usually in the form of additional statements) is sufficient to confirm or reject the original statement.

### COMMON QUESTION TYPES

- ❑ **Direct Verification:** These questions ask you to judge the truth or lie of a statement based on the information provided in the passage or question stem itself.
- ❑ **Data Sufficiency:** These questions present additional statements along with the main statement and ask whether these statements are sufficient to determine the truth or lie of the original statement.
- ❑ **Assumption Identification:** These questions ask you to identify the hidden assumptions that a statement relies on for its truth.

### TREND IN UPSC

Verbal reasoning questions based on the concept of verification of truth/lie of a statement have not appeared in the UPSC CSAT paper in recent years. However, this does not imply that practising such questions is to be ignored before the exam. UPSC has a knack of being unpredictable, more often than not. In such a situation, it is important to

be armed with sufficient practice. Moreover, verification of the truth/lie of statements forms an important part of reasoning and is very common in the question papers of state public service commission exams and other exams. Thus, it will not be a surprise if it soon finds its way into the UPSC CSAT paper too.

## HOW TO SOLVE/APPROACH IN EXAM HALL

- ❑ **Critical Thinking:** Analysing information objectively, questioning assumptions, and identifying biases.
- ❑ **Logical Reasoning:** Applying logical rules and deduction to evaluate arguments and statements.
- ❑ **Attention to Detail:** Carefully scrutinising the wording and nuances of statements and data.
- ❑ **Knowledge of Fallacies:** Recognizing and avoiding common errors in reasoning that can lead to incorrect conclusions.

### QUESTIONS

**Q11. Read the following statements.**

- (i) Shivam is taller than Bhaskar
- (ii) Sanjeev is taller than Shivam
- (iii) Bhaskar is taller than Sanjeev

**If the first two statements are true, then the third statement is -**

- (a) True
- (b) False
- (c) Uncertain
- (d) None of these

Ans: (b)

**Explanation:**

The first statement implies - Shivam > Bhaskar. The second statement implies that Sanjeev > Shivam. These two together imply that Sanjeev > Shivam > Bhaskar. Thus, statement III is false.

**Q12. A person was killed There are 4 suspects. A says C is the killer. B says C is the killer. C says that B is lying. D says that it wasn't him. There is only one person who can tell the truth. Who is the person telling the truth?**

- (a) A
- (b) B
- (c) C
- (d) D

Ans: (c)

**Explanation:**

a and b both say that c is the killer. Both of them together can't speak the truth. Thus, they are both lying. Further, as b is lying, c is speaking the truth.

**Q13. X always lies. Y always tells the truth. A boy tells you an old man said he is an "X". The boy's mom says her son is lying. The mom is a-**

- (a) X
- (b) Y
- (c) Can't be determined
- (d) None of these

**Ans: (b)**

**Explanation:**

First, consider the old man's nature

If he is an X, then he will always lie and say he is a Y.

And if he is a Y, then he will always speak the truth and thus saying he is a Y.

So, either way he will only say, he is a Y. Therefore the boy must be lying. Hence, the boy is an X.

And the boy's mom is saying that her son is lying, which is true. Thus she is a Y.

**Q14. At a party, there were only liars. The first liar said, "We are more than twelve". The second said, "We are an even number". The third said, "The word denoting our number consists of less than six letters." How many liars were at the party?**

- (a) 7
- (b) 8
- (c) 10
- (d) 11

**Ans: (d)**

**Explanation:**

Since there are only liars at the party, all of these statements can be taken as false, which means the opposite is true.

The first liar said "We are more than twelve." This means there are twelve liars or less.

The second liar said "We are an even number. This means there is an odd number of liars at the party. Combined with the first liar's statement, this means an odd number less than twelve.

The third liar says, "The word for our number has less than six letters." So we are looking for an odd number less than twelve with six or more letters.

Eleven is the only such number.

**Q15. A flower vase was broken and there were ten people nearby. G says A did it, A says B did it, B says C did it, C says F did it, and E says F did it, so F confessed H says E did it, D then confessed and so did J. I says he didn't do it. If only 1 says the truth & G did not do it, then who did it?**

- (a) B
- (b) G
- (c) A
- (d) H

**Ans: (d)**

**Explanation:**

- (i) C says F did it, E says F did it, so F confessed (d) → If F did it, then all three of C, E, and F would speak the truth. Thus, F did not do it and C, E, and F are lying.
- (ii) If 'I' is lying, then he did it. That means everyone else is lying too. But we know someone told the truth so that can't be the case. So, 'I' is telling the truth and he didn't do it.
- (iii) Now, as 'I' is telling the truth, this means everybody else is lying. Thus, A, B, C, D, E, and J also did not do it. Thus, H did it.

## STATEMENTS AND ARGUMENTS

An argument is a sentence containing a claim or conclusion aimed at convincing others about one's point of view. In these types of questions, a statement is given along with two or more arguments. The statement talks about a subject matter or presents a suggested course of action. Arguments offer varying degrees of explanation and support for the given statement. You are asked to identify which argument is/are 'strong argument(s)', and which is/are weak.

### KEY CONCEPTS

- ❑ **Statement:** The main question sentence that presents a future course of action, poses a question or simply presents an idea.
- ❑ **Arguments:** Phrases that try to answer the question raised by the above statement. E.g. It tends to explain why a particular future course of action must be chosen.
- ❑ Weak arguments and strong arguments - discussed above in detail.
- ❑ **Strong arguments:** are those which are directly related to the given statement. The claim or reason provided in the argument comprehensively addresses all the ideas put forward in the statement.
- ❑ **Weak arguments:** are those which are not directly related to the statement. It does not address the ideas put forward in the statement in their entirety. It provides a partial explanation or reason for the statement.

### Points to keep in Mind to Identify Strong Arguments

- ❑ Adheres to common reasoning and prevalent notion of truth.
- ❑ It is correct.
- ❑ Presents an idea that is desirable, if the statement is of positive nature.

- ❑ Presents an idea that is undesirable, if the statement is of negative nature.
- ❑ It is directly related to the statement.
- ❑ Provides reason in support of the entirety of the statement, rather than partial explanation.

### Points to Keep in Mind to Identify Weak Arguments

- ❑ Do not adhere to established facts or truths.
- ❑ Do not adhere to common sense and logic.
- ❑ Are vague in nature.
- ❑ Go against the nature of the statement, i.e. Negative argument when the statement is of positive nature and vice-versa.
- ❑ Are based on certain assumptions rather than complete evidence or knowledge.
- ❑ Provides a partial explanation of the statement.

Let us understand the above through an example.

### ILLUSTRATION

**Statement:** Should only one company be allowed to run the transport system in a big city?

**Arguments:**

- Yes. This will put an end to the unhealthy competition among different companies.**
- No. The travellers should be given a wider choice of transportation.**

- Only argument I is strong
- Only argument II is strong
- Both arguments are strong
- None of the arguments are strong

**Ans:** (b)

#### Explanation:

Argument I goes against the established facts and logic. More companies means more healthy competition. Argument II, on the other hand, argues for providing more rights to citizens in terms of the right to choose. Thus, Argument II is strong, while I is weak.

### TREND IN UPSC

Statements and arguments can be said to form the backbone of verbal reasoning. It tests one's analytical as well as logical skills along with common sense and logic. Though the question from this topic has featured only once in the UPSC CSAT paper, in 2015, it must be practised beforehand. UPSC, in recent years, has revived

the types of questions asked in the GS paper and the CSAT paper in early times. This trend thus further enhances the significance of this topic. Further, such questions are commonplace in state PCS exams, like the UPPSC exam, UKPSC exam and others.

### HOW TO SOLVE/APPROACH IN THE EXAM HALL

- ❑ First of all, read the statement very carefully. Identify the nature of the statement i.e. positive or negative, based on how it talks about a particular topic.
- ❑ Arguments of a different nature, thus, will have a high probability of being the weak arguments.
- ❑ Further, try to find a commonsensical answer to the statement.
- ❑ Arguments that are close to the answer will have a high probability of being the strong argument.
- ❑ Read both the arguments very carefully and independently.
- ❑ Try to establish, using common knowledge, which of the arguments most comprehensively explain the statement. That will be the strong argument.
- ❑ In cases where more than two arguments have been given in the question, examine each argument carefully. There can be more than one strong argument also.

### QUESTIONS

**Directions:** Each question given below consists of a statement, followed by two arguments numbered I and II. You have to decide which of the arguments is a 'strong' argument and which is a 'weak' argument.

**Q16. Statement:** College students should be restricted from participating in political activities.

**Arguments:**

- Yes. College students should concentrate on their studies**
  - Yes. Colleges are becoming battle grounds for political parties.**
- Only argument I is strong
  - Only argument II is strong
  - Both arguments are strong
  - None of the arguments are strong

**Ans:** (b)

#### Explanation:

Restricting participation in political parties won't automatically lead college students to focus on their studies. Thus, argument I is a weak argument.

Whereas, college elections and associated political violence clearly show that colleges are becoming the battlegrounds for political parties. Thus, argument II is a strong argument.

**Q17. Statement: Should school education be made free in India?**

**Arguments:**

- I. **Yes. This is the only way to improve the level of literacy.**
- II. **No. It will add to the already heavy burden on the exchequer**

- (a) Only argument I is strong
- (b) Only argument II is strong
- (c) Both arguments are strong
- (d) None of the arguments are strong

**Ans: (b)**

**Explanation:**

There is no certain way to establish that free school education will lead to an improved level of literacy. Thus, argument I is weak.

Further, it is certain that free school education will further put an extra burden on the public exchequer. Thus, it is a strong argument.

**Q18. Statement: Should one close relative of a retiring government servant be given a job in government in India?**

**Arguments:**

- I. **Yes, where else will the relatives get a job like this?**
- II. **No, It will close the doors of government service to competent and needy youth.**

- (a) Only argument I is strong
- (b) Only argument II is strong
- (c) Both arguments are strong
- (d) None of the arguments are strong

**Ans: (b)**

**Explanation:**

The relative may get a government job by various other means than this one. Thus, argument I is weak. Further, this move will reduce the number of seats available for recruiting youths, thus depriving them of opportunities. Thus, argument II is strong.

**Q19. Statement: Should the purchase of gold be restricted in India to improve its foreign exchange positions.**

**Arguments:**

- I. **Yes, interference with customer's rights and freedom is desirable.**
- II. **No, business interest has to be guarded first.**

- (a) Only argument I is strong
- (b) Only argument II is strong
- (c) Both arguments are strong
- (d) None of the arguments are strong

**Ans: (d)**

**Explanation:**

Argument I presents a very wide and vague picture. It says interference as desirable, without specifically talking about the issue mentioned in the statement. Thus, it is a weak argument.

Further, business interest must not always be guarded over and above the sovereign interest. Thus, argument II is also weak.

## STATEMENT AND COURSE OF ACTION

Instead of asking you direct questions, it evaluates your capacity to evaluate a situation, determine the best course of action, and analyse it. This set of abilities is essential for making decisions in many facets of life, from everyday choices to administrative ones.

### KEY CONCEPTS

- ❑ **Statement:** A clear and concise description of a specific scenario, problem, or situation. It gives important information and background for making well-informed decisions.
- ❑ **Courses of Action (CoAs):** Suggested actions or remedies made in reaction to the assertion. The viability, efficacy, and possible outcomes of these options differ.
- ❑ The main goal of SCA is to critically assess each course of action in light of predetermined standards after analysing the statement, and then choose the one that most logically and practically resolves the issue.

### ILLUSTRATION

**In the given situation, choose one of the given actions which can possibly be the right course of action.**

**Situation:** A team member is consistently missing deadlines, causing delays in the project.

**Action I:** Schedule a one-on-one meeting with the team member to discuss the reasons for missing deadlines and provide necessary support or resources.

**Action II:** Ignore the matter.

### Explanation:

Action I is the ideal course of action to be taken as it leads to a solution, in this case discussing the reasons for delays. Action II does not lead to any solution or any reasonable step forward which would rectify the situation.

Hence, the correct answer is Action I.

## TYPES OF QUESTIONS

- ❑ **Two Courses of Action:** In these types of questions, a statement is given, followed by two courses of action, Action I and II. And the candidate is asked to analyse the problem and take the appropriate course of action.
- ❑ **Three Courses of Action:** In these types of questions, a statement is given, followed by three courses of action, Action I, II and III. And the candidate is asked to analyse the problem and take the appropriate course of action.

## HOW TO SOLVE/APPROACH IN EXAM HALL

Statements and Courses of Action (SCA) questions assess your ability to make insightful and objective decisions in various situations. Here's a breakdown of the key steps to acing these questions:

- ❑ **Let Go of Personal Biases:**
  - Set aside sentiments and inclinations. An unbiased and neutral approach is required for SCA.
  - Concentrate on the data presented in the statement and conduct an unbiased analysis of it.
- ❑ **Look for the Cause:**
  - Don't merely address the symptoms! Determine the central concern underlying the issue as stated in the statement.
  - Finding the source of the problem guarantees a more long-lasting and efficient solution.
- ❑ **Steer clear of Negativity and Extremes:**
  - Avoid using too strict or harsh of a solution. Strive to take just and democratic actions.
  - Avoid negativity and concentrate on solutions that support constructive development and resolution.
- ❑ **Adopt Reason and Practicality:**
  - Consider all options using reasonable reasoning and logic.
  - Pick the course of action that, in the circumstances, is most practical, effective, and likely to succeed.
  - For a simple problem, a simple solution is frequently the best option. Aim for simplicity!

### ❑ Expect Consequences:

- Think about the possible results of every decision you make, both good and bad.
- Select the course of action that reduces unfavourable effects and produces a favourable result overall.

### ❑ Steer Clear of the Unexpected:

- Avoid taking actions that could have unanticipated and potentially dangerous consequences.
- Choose actions that have foreseeable and controllable outcomes.

## QUESTIONS

**Directions:** In each of the questions below a statement is given followed by courses of actions. A Course of action is a step or an administrative decision to be taken for improvement, follow-up or further action in regard to the problem, policy, etc. Based on the information given in the statement, you have to assume everything in the statement to be true, then decide which of the suggested courses of action logically follows worth pursuing.

**Q20.** Sea levels are rising due to global warming, endangering coastal communities across the globe.

**Courses of Action:**

1. To keep coastal areas safe, make significant investments in the construction and upkeep of seawalls.
2. Put in place initiatives to inform and support coastal communities to strengthen their resilience.

**Which of the following approaches to mitigating the threat posed to coastal communities by rising sea levels is the most effective?**

- (a) Only one                      (b) Only two  
(c) Both of them                (d) Neither of them

**Ans:** (c)

**Explanation:**

Combining the two approaches is probably the best course of action. Seawalls could offer instant security while preparations are made for relocation. Infrastructure and community resilience investments are necessary for long-term sustainability.

**Q21.** In the given situation, choose one or more of the given actions which can possibly be the right course of action.

**Statement:** People are finding it more and more difficult to get the essential medical care they need due to the rising cost of healthcare.

**Course of Action:**

1. Establish a government-funded single-payer healthcare system.
2. To lower the cost of private insurance, give businesses and individuals tax breaks and subsidies.

Which of the following strategies has the best chance of ensuring that every citizen has access to affordable healthcare?

- (a) Only one                      (b) Only two  
(c) Both of them                (d) Neither of them

**Ans:** (d)

**Explanation:**

There are drawbacks to both choices. Wait times and resource allocation are problems for single-payer systems, and subsidies may not be sufficient to make private insurance truly affordable for all and it puts pressure on the fiscal health of the economy. It might be more efficient to look into alternate options like regulating insurance costs or increasing the availability of public healthcare.

**Q22. In the given situation, choose one or more of the given actions which can possibly be the right course of action.**

**Statement:** Hate speech and false information are becoming more common on social media platforms.

**Courses of Action:**

1. Ban social media platforms that proliferate harmful content.
2. Inspire users to evaluate information they come across on the internet more critically and advance digital literacy.

Which of the following strategies is most likely to deal with the issues of hate speech and disinformation on social media?

- (a) Only one                      (b) Only two  
(c) Both of them                (d) Neither of them

**Ans:** (b)

**Explanation:**

Internet censorship and content moderation are not the best solutions since they cast doubt on net neutrality and the freedom to use the internet as you see fit. Increasing awareness and improving digital literacy will enable users to distinguish between harmful content and false information more effectively.

**Q23. In the given situation, choose one or more of the given actions which can possibly be the right course of action.**

**Statement:** Deforestation is causing soil erosion, habitat loss, and a decline in biodiversity.

**Courses of Action:**

1. Increased rules and sanctions should be put in place for illicit logging.
2. Encourage the use of sustainable forestry methods and make investments in replanting.

Which of the following strategies is most likely to successfully counteract deforestation and its detrimental effects?

- (a) Only one                      (b) Only two  
(c) Both of them                (d) Neither of them

**Ans:** (c)

**Explanation:**

Enforcing stricter laws by themselves might be challenging, and encouraging sustainable practices exclusively might not be sufficient to stop illicit logging. Positive incentives combined with enforcement are probably a more effective two-pronged strategy.

**Q24. In the given situation, choose one or more of the given actions which can possibly be the right course of action.**

**Statement:** The curriculum is getting narrowed and students are under too much pressure because of standardised tests.

**Courses of Action:**

1. Eliminate standardised testing.
2. Use alternate evaluation methods that emphasise critical thinking and practical skills.

Which of the following strategies is most likely to help students feel less stressed and receive a higher quality education?

- (a) Only one                      (b) Only two  
(c) Both of them                (d) Neither of them

**Ans:** (c)

**Explanation:**

Just eliminating standardised tests could potentially alleviate pressure, but in order to maintain a fair evaluation of learning, substitute measures must be implemented. In a similar way, eliminating the pressure imposed by standardised testing and concentrating solely on alternative assessments might not result in significant change. As a result, a combined strategy has the best chance of working.

## STATEMENT AND CONCLUSION

UPSC CSAT Paper II frequently includes statement and conclusion questions that test your ability to analyse data and make sense of it. Don't worry—this guide will give you the tools you need to face them head-on with poise and clarity.

### KEY CONCEPTS

#### Core Principles

- ❑ **Premise and Inference:** A statement (premise) is presented in each question, followed by possible conclusions. It is your responsibility to determine which conclusions the statement's factual data inevitably leads to.
- ❑ **Objectivity is Key:** Assumptions and outside knowledge are strictly prohibited. Rely only on the statement's content for your analysis.

#### Objective

- ❑ **Careful Reading:** Pay close attention to the statement, making sure you understand all of its nuances and possible ramifications. Highlight important details and conditional statements (such as "if...then").
- ❑ **Examining the Potential:** Consider the following situation. What are the possible outcomes and logical ramifications? Make a list of potentials to help you with your analysis.
- ❑ **Critical Analysis:** Compare each conclusion to the assertion. Does it make sense out of the information given, or does it introduce erroneous conclusions or assumptions? Recall that a valid conclusion is one that follows logically from the statement.
- ❑ **Elimination Technique:** Discard a conclusion if it introduces unrelated information or contradicts the main idea. Steer clear of options that seem appealing but don't make sense.
- ❑ **The Art of Inference:** Drawing the right conclusion occasionally requires drawing inferences. Consider logical extensions of the facts that are presented, implied meanings, and cause-and-effect relationships with great rigour.

Although the fundamentals never change, UPSC CSAT frequently introduces new difficulties: introducing statements that touch on complex political or socio-economic issues. Avoid biases and personal opinions and stay rooted in reason in order to approach such questions.

### HOW TO SOLVE/APPROACH IN THE EXAM HALL

#### Step 1: Dissect the statement

- ❑ Read the statement carefully, perhaps more than once, to make sure you understand all of the details and any possible ramifications.

- ❑ Emphasise important details and statements with conditions (such as "if...then").
- ❑ Seek for any inconsistencies in the statement; these frequently indicate the main idea behind it.

#### Step 2: Examine Your Options

- ❑ Envision the situation that the statement describes. What are the possible outcomes and logical ramifications?
- ❑ Make a list of these options so you can direct your analysis and come up with some possible conclusions.

#### Step 3: Carefully Consider Conclusions

- ❑ Evaluate each conclusion in light of the statement.
- ❑ Does it make sense out of the information given, or does it introduce erroneous conclusions or assumptions?
- ❑ Recall that a valid conclusion isn't merely a possibility; it's an inevitable result of the statement.

#### Step 4: Get Rid of False Leads

- ❑ Throw out a conclusion if it introduces unrelated information or conflicts with the main idea.
- ❑ Steer clear of options that seem appealing but don't make sense.

#### Step 5: Draw Inferences (if Needed)

- ❑ Drawing inferences is sometimes required in order to arrive at the right conclusion.
- ❑ Consider logical extensions of the facts that are presented, implied meanings, and cause-and-effect relationships with great rigour.

#### Step 6: Selecting the Best Fit

- ❑ Examine each conclusion's breadth and strength in light of the statement if more than one seems reasonable.
- ❑ Choose the conclusion that most closely fits the statement's implications and main meaning.

#### Bonus Advice: Be Objective in Your Approach:

- ❑ Recall that these questions assess your capacity to deduce conclusions logically from facts rather than from your own judgement or outside information.

### TREND IN UPSC

On this specific topic one question was asked in the 2019 UPSC exam and two questions in the 2017 exam. Furthermore, this topic has always been covered in at least one question in the previous years question papers. It emphasises how important it is to pay attention to this chapter because there is a good chance that you will come across questions about statements and conclusions in UPSC exams.

## QUESTIONS

**Q25. Examine the following statements**

1. None but the rich can afford air travel.
2. Some of those who travel by air become sick.
3. Some of those who become sick require treatment.

**Which one of the following conclusions can be drawn from the above statements?**

- (a) All the rich persons travel by air
- (b) Those who travel by air become sick
- (c) All the rich persons become sick
- (d) All those who travel by air are rich

**Ans:** (d)

**Explanation:**

The first claims that “only the wealthy can afford to travel by air.” This suggests that air travel is only for the wealthy.

The second and third statements discuss the fact that some airline passengers become ill and need medical attention, but they don’t say anything about the people who don’t. They stand alone as statements and have no bearing on the connection between flying and wealth that the first statement established. Consequently, we are limited to the conclusion that everyone who travels by air is rich.

**Q26. All good athletes want to win and all athletes who want to win eat a well-balanced diet, therefore all athletes who do not eat a well-balanced diet, are bad athletes.**

**The best conclusion from this statement is that:**

- (a) no bad athlete wants to win
- (b) no athlete who does not eat a well-balanced diet is a good athlete
- (c) every athlete who eats a well-balanced diet is a good athlete
- (d) all athletes who want to win are good athletes

**Ans:** (b)

**Explanation:**

We only know that bad athletes don’t eat a good diet, we cannot make inferences about their intention to win or lose from given information, hence option (a) is wrong.

Eagerness to win is must to be a good athlete, as per given information. Hence, option (c) is incorrect.

Bad athletes may also have the intention to win, hence option (d) is incorrect.

Since it is given that “all” athletes who want to win eat a well balanced diet, and “all” good athletes want to win, option (b) is the correct choice.

**Q27. Examine the following statements:**

1. I watch TV only if I am bored
2. I am never bored when I have my brother’s company.
3. Whenever I go to the theatre I take my brother along.

**Which one of the following conclusions is valid in the context of the above statements?**

- (a) If I am bored I watch TV
- (b) If I am bored, I seek my brother’s company.
- (c) If I am not with my brother, then I’ll watch TV.
- (d) If I am not bored I do not watch TV.

**Ans:** (d)

**Explanation:**

**Option (a):** This is the original statement’s opposite, which makes no sense. It is stated in the original statement that watching TV implies being bored, but not that watching TV ensures being bored. Beside watching TV there can be other avenues when bored.

**Option (b):** The statements do not support this conclusion. Although statement 2 implies that having a brother around keeps one from getting bored, it makes no mention of how boredom makes one want to spend time with their brother. There might be other strategies for handling boredom.

**Option (c):** This conclusion does not flow from any of the statements and is not logically equivalent to any of them. What transpires when the person is not with their brother is not mentioned in the statements.

**Option (d):** This is the logically equivalent contrapositive of the original statement.

**Q28. Consider the following statements :**

1. A man had a wife, two sons and daughters in his family
  2. The daughters were invited to a feast and the male members of the family went out to take part in a picnic
  3. The man’s father did not return from his work.
- Which of the following statements is true?**

- (a) Only the man’s wife was left at home.
- (b) It is likely that the man’s wife was left at home.
- (c) None was left at home
- (d) More than one person was left at home.

**Ans:** (b)

**Explanation:**

The family composition is disclosed in Statement 1, but their location is not mentioned.

According to Statement 2, the male members, including the man himself, went on a picnic while the daughters attended a feast. It seems from this that none of them stayed at home.

Statement 3 doesn't specify the man's father's place of employment or residence, so we cannot determine his location at the present moment.

The wife being left at home is the most likely scenario (option b). She wouldn't be expected to attend the picnic or the feast because the other members have all left the house as mentioned in the statements.

**Q29. Consider the following statements:**

**Some claim to have seen UFOs (Unidentified Flying Objects).**

**Life on other heavenly bodies is considered to be a possibility.**

**The voyage to space is now an established fact.**

**From the above statements, it may be concluded that**

- (a) UFOs are heavenly bodies
- (b) UFOs are sent from other heavenly bodies
- (c) Some living species in other heavenly bodies are more intelligent than men
- (d) Nothing definite can be said about the UFOs

**Ans: (d)**

**Explanation:**

**Statement 1:** proves that there are unidentified flying objects, but it provides no information regarding their nature or place of origin.

**Statement 2:** makes no mention of UFOs and only raises the possibility of extraterrestrial life, without offering any proof of it.

**Statement 3:** shows that we are capable of space exploration, but it does not establish or refute the existence of sentient alien life or their association with extraterrestrial bodies.

Combining these claims does not offer sufficient data to draw firm conclusions about UFOs. They might be man-made artefacts, natural phenomena, or something else entirely.

**Q30. Given the statement: "Buses are the cause of more accidents than cars, and trucks cause fewer accidents than buses", which of the following conclusions can we draw?**

- (a) There are more buses on the road than trucks.
- (b) Car drivers are more careful than bus drivers.
- (c) Truck drivers are more skilled than either car or bus drivers.
- (d) None of the above

**Ans: (d)**

**Explanation:**

Option (a): The statement does not compare the number of vehicles on the road; it only compares the accident rates. It doesn't tell us anything about their relative numbers on the road, which causes more accidents.

Option (b): The statement ignores driver behaviour or skill and only concentrates on accident statistics. Based purely on these accident statistics, we are unable to draw any conclusions about the relative caution of drivers.

Option (c): As with option b, we are unable to infer driver skill levels from accident rates. It's possible that the accident statistics are influenced by variables other than driving ability.

Therefore, none of the conclusions can be made with certainty due to the limitations of the available data.

## STATEMENT AND ASSUMPTIONS

"**Statements and Assumptions**" is an important category that frequently shows up in these tests. Even though the UPSC hasn't asked any questions in this section thus far, it doesn't imply that this section is to be ignored. This kind of question tests your ability to spot implicit claims that are concealed within a statement and determine whether or not they are necessary to reach the conclusion that has been drawn.

## KEY CONCEPTS

### Core Principle

This question type hinges on two fundamental concepts:

- ❑ **Statements:** These are the facts or observations that are given to support the question's premise.
- ❑ **Assumptions:** These are statements that are taken to be true but not stated outright and which support the validity of the conclusion.

### Objectives

- ❑ A statement is provided in a statement and assumption (SA) inquiry, and then some assumptions are formed based on the statement. Applicants must decide which assumption makes the most sense and follows logic.
- ❑ The author of a statement assumes that the assumption is true, which is one of the most crucial things to understand about assumptions. Candidates responding to questions on this subject should follow the same approach.

## HOW TO SOLVE/APPROACH IN THE EXAM HALL

- Read the statement carefully. Ensure that you thoroughly understand the facts and context offered.
- Identify the conclusion. Determine the statement's major point.
- Analyse every assumption: Ask yourself:
  - Is this assumption consistent with the conclusion taken from the statement?
  - Is it required that the conclusion be logically sound?
  - Could the conclusion still be true without this assumption?
- Remove irrelevant assumptions: Remove those that do not directly contribute to the conclusion's validity.
- Select the correct answer. Select the option that includes the assumption(s) required for the conclusion's logical foundation.

### Tips and Tricks

- Look for keywords Words like "because," "therefore," "hence," or "implies" sometimes suggest a link between the statement and an implicit assumption.
- Beware of overthinking. Concentrate on the logical relationship, not the hidden meanings or interpretations.

## QUESTIONS

**Directions:** In each question below is given a statement followed by assumptions. You have to consider the statement and the following assumptions and decide which of the assumptions is implicit in the statement.

**Q31. Consider the statement:**

The old order changed, yielding place to new.

**Assumption I:** Change is a law of nature.

**Assumption II:** Discard old ideas because they are old.

**Consider the arguments and decide which option is the correct answer.**

- (a) Only one                      (b) Only two  
(c) Both of them                (d) Neither of them

**Ans:** (a)

**Explanation:**

The expression refers to a specific instance of change (old order replaced by new), rather than calling for change in general.

Discarding all old ideas merely on the basis of their age is an incorrect generalisation that is not supported by the statement.

Only the "change is a law of nature" concept is directly related to the observation of change in the context of the statement.

**Q32. Consider the statement:**

**Do Scientists believe in religion ?**

- I. Yes, because science, a profession, does not come in the way of faith  
II. No, because reason and faith do not go together.

**Consider the arguments and decide which option is the correct answer.**

- (a) Only one                      (b) Only two  
(c) Both of them                (d) Cannot be determined

**Ans:** (d)

**Explanation:**

The statement contains no information about the specific scientist(s) in question or their personal beliefs. It is impossible to make a broad claim about "scientists' belief in religion" with such a narrow perspective.

Both assumptions present extreme opinions while neglecting the full range of individual experiences and interpretations.

Given the constraints of the statement and the intrinsic intricacy of the subject, neither premise can be clearly confirmed as true or incorrect. This is consistent with the answer choice (D): Cannot be determined.

**Q33. Consider the statement:**

'Swachhh Bharat Mission' is an important initiative of the Govt. of India.

**Assumption I:** Aims to provide universal sanitation coverage and access to safe sanitisation in India.

**Assumption II:** Aims to promote and provide clean toilets to each and every household in India.

**Consider the arguments and decide which option is the correct answer.**

- (a) Only one                      (b) Only two  
(c) Both of them                (d) Neither of them

**Ans:** (c)

**Explanation:**

Swachh Bharat Mission: This Indian government project seeks to: Eliminate open defecation and obtain Open Defecation Free (ODF) status throughout the country; Improve solid waste management, including collection, treatment, and disposal; Raise public knowledge and influence sanitation and hygiene habits.

**Assumption I:** conveys the broader goal of universal sanitation access, which is consistent with the SBM's main objective.

**Assumption II:** reflects providing bathrooms but lacks the nuance of emphasising open defecation elimination as the major driver.

**Q34. Statement :** Let us increase the taxes to cover the deficit.

**Assumptions:**

- I. The present taxes are very low.
- II. Deficit in a budget is not desirable.
- III. Deficits can not be met without increasing the tax.

**Consider the arguments and decide which option is the correct answer.**

- (a) Only I and II                      (b) Only I and III  
(c) Only III                              (d) Only II

**Ans:** (d)

**Explanation:**

**Assumption I:** The statement does not necessarily imply this assumption. While increasing taxes may imply that present rates are insufficient, the remark does not explicitly declare that they are "very low" when compared to some standard.

**Assumption II:** This assumption is acceptable, given that covering a deficit entails resolving a financial shortage. While not expressly stated, most governments strive for balanced budgets, therefore this is likely an implicit idea underlying the phrase.

**Assumption III:** This assumption is overly strong and not necessarily implied. The statement suggests raising taxes, but it does not rule out other possible alternatives, such as budget cuts or borrowing.

Given the statement's minimal information, only Assumptions II bear weight.

**Q35. Statement:** In addition to traditional academic courses, the new education policy places an emphasis on vocational training.

**Assumptions:**

- I. Traditional academic courses are no longer relevant in today's work environment.
- II. Vocational training will provide pupils with improved employment options.
- III. The current educational system only focuses on theoretical knowledge.

**Which of the preceding assumptions are implicit in the statement?**

- (a) Only I and II                      (b) Only I and III  
(c) Only III                              (d) Only II and III

**Ans:** (c)

**Explanation:**

**Assumption I:** The statement emphasises the importance of vocational training alongside traditional disciplines, rather than replacing them. This does not imply that contemporary topics are irrelevant.

**Assumption II:** The statement suggests that greater work prospects with vocational training are feasible, but it does not guarantee them. Individual skills and industry demand are other important aspects to consider.

**Assumption III:** The statement's reference to vocational training implies that the current system may overemphasise theory, making Assumption III implied.

As a result, only Assumption III is logically consistent with the statement's connotation of rectifying a perceived flaw in the current educational system.

## PRACTICE QUESTIONS

**Directions (1-2):** The questions given below have a statement followed by two conclusions I and II. Consider the statement and the following conclusions. Decide which of the conclusions follows from the statement.

1. **Statement:** To be eligible for the UPSC (Union Public Service Commission) Civil Services Examination, a candidate must be at least 21 years old and not older than 32 years as of August 1st of the examination year.

**Conclusion:**

- I. Prakash is eligible for the examination in the year 2023 if his date of birth is September 15, 1991.
- II. Candidates should commence their preparations in advance to clear the examination.

- (a) If Conclusion I follows
- (b) If Conclusion II follows
- (c) If both conclusion I & II follows
- (d) If neither conclusion I nor II follows

2. **Statement:** The Chandrayaan-3 mission is India's first successful attempt to land on the moon and the world's first successful landing in the southern lunar region making it a historic achievement for India, Pragyan rover spent a little under two weeks exploring the promising area where deposits of frozen water might exist trapped inside permanently shadowed craters.

**Conclusion:**

- I. The Chandrayaan-3 mission was the first successful attempt by India to land on the moon.
- II. It is a historic achievement as this mission was the world's first successful landing in the southern lunar region.

- (a) If Conclusion I follows
- (b) If Conclusion II follows
- (c) If both conclusion I & II follows
- (d) If neither conclusion I nor II follows

**Directions (3-4):** Questions given below have a statement followed by assumptions. You have to consider the statement and the following assumptions and decide which of the assumptions is implicit in the statement.

3. **Statement:** India is a constitutional democracy with a parliamentary system of government, and at the heart of the system is a commitment to hold regular, free, and fair elections.

**Assumptions:**

- I. In a constitutional democracy, regular, free, and fair elections are a fundamental requirement for the functioning of the government.
- II. India's commitment to holding regular, free, and fair elections is a well-established practice.

- (a) Only Assumption II is implicit
- (b) Only Assumption I is implicit
- (c) Both Assumptions I & II are implicit
- (d) None is implicit

4. **Statement:** Teachers are important because they change lives, inspire dreams, and push the limits of human potential. A teacher's job is to nurture, teach, and raise children to become useful to society.

**Assumptions:**

- I. Effective teaching and nurturing by teachers play a significant role in positively impacting students' lives and potential.
- II. Its sole responsibility of teachers to contribute to a person's development and usefulness to society.

- (a) Only Assumption II is implicit
- (b) Only Assumption I is implicit
- (c) Both Assumptions I & II are implicit
- (d) None is implicit

**Directions (5-6):** In each of the questions below a statement is given followed by three courses of action numbered I, II and III. A Course of action is a step or an administrative decision to be taken for improvement, follow-up or further action in regard to the problem, policy, etc. Based on the information given in the statement, you have to assume everything in the statement to be true, then decide which of the suggested courses of action logically follows worth pursuing.

5. **Statement:** Meta, the parent company of Facebook, is set to undergo significant layoffs, primarily affecting the partnerships and marketing divisions. Meta wants to restructure its operations to avoid more layoffs.

**Course of Action:**

- I. The affected employees in the partnerships and marketing divisions should be provided with support services to help in finding new roles and alternative employment.

- II. The company should review and restructure its operations to ensure reducing the need for future layoffs.
- III. Meta should consider offering voluntary retirement packages to eligible employees in the affected divisions to minimize the impact of layoffs.
  - (a) All three courses of action should be taken.
  - (b) Course of Action I and II should be taken.
  - (c) Course of Action II and III should be taken.
  - (d) Only Course of Action I should be taken.

6. **Statement:** Cheating in online exams not only impacts the individual student but also has severe consequences for educational institutions. It undermines the fundamental principles of academic integrity, eroding trust, and fairness in the assessment process.

**Course of Action:**

- I. A committee responsible for investigating and addressing instances of cheating in online exams should be made.
- II. Institutes should stop taking online examinations.
- III. Educational institutions should collaborate with online service providers to regularly update and enhance their monitoring and detection technology to prevent cheating effectively.
  - (a) All three courses of action should be taken.
  - (b) Course of Action I and III should be taken.
  - (c) Course of Action II and III should be taken.
  - (d) Only Course of Action I should be taken.

**Directions (7-8):** Given below are questions having two statements, one is labelled as assertion (A) and other as reason (R) — Select the correct answer using the code given below each question

7. **Assertion:** Nuclear power plants produce no greenhouse gas emissions during operation and over the course of their life-cycle.

**Reason:** Nuclear power plants generate electricity through nuclear fission, a process that does not involve the combustion of carbon-based fuels.

For the above given assertion and reason, choose the correct alternative from the following.

- (a) Both A and R are true and R is the correct explanation of A
- (b) Both A and R are true and R is not the correct explanation of A
- (c) A is true but R is false
- (d) A is false but R is true

8. **Assertion:** Hindu Marriage Act, which came into effect in 1955, made it clear that Hindu polygamy would be abolished and criminalized.

**Reason:** The objective of these reforms was to promote gender equality and discourage practices that were seen as discriminatory or exploitative.

For the above given assertion and reason, choose the correct alternative from the following.

- (a) Both A and R are true and R is the correct explanation of A
- (b) Both A and R are true and R is not the correct explanation of A
- (c) A is true but R is false
- (d) A is false but R is true

**Directions (9-10):** Question given below consists of a statement, followed by three arguments numbered I, II and III. You have to decide which of the arguments is a 'strong' argument and which is a 'weak' argument.

9. **Statement:** Should interest rates on educational loans be completely waived off to alleviate the financial burden on students pursuing higher education?

**Arguments:**

- I. Yes, eliminating interest rates on educational loans can make higher education more accessible to a broader range of students.
- II. No, some students may take advantage of interest-free loans by borrowing more than they need.
- III. Yes, this will decrease the number of loan defaulters.
  - (a) Only Arguments I & II are strong
  - (b) Only Arguments II & III are strong
  - (c) Arguments I, II, III are strong
  - (d) Only argument II is strong

10. **Statement:** Should the Goods and Services Tax (GST) be applicable to every object, regardless of its nature or purpose, in order to create a more comprehensive and uniform taxation system?

**Arguments:**

- I. Yes, it ensures that all individuals and businesses pay their fair share of taxes, regardless of the type of product or service they consume or provide.
- II. No, Same taxation rules cannot be applied to different goods and services.
- III. No, Applying GST to every object, especially essential items like food and healthcare etc., can affect low-income individuals and families, leading to financial burden.

- (a) If only Argument I is strong
- (b) If only Arguments I & III are strong
- (c) If only Argument II is strong
- (d) If Arguments I, II & III are strong

**11. Two statements I and II are given. These statements may be either independent causes or may be effects of independent causes or a common cause. One of these statements may be the effect of the other statements. Read both the statements and decide which of the following answer choice correctly depicts the relationship between these two statements.**

**Statement I:** EWS reservation has provided economically disadvantaged students with greater access to educational institutions, including top-tier universities and professional colleges.

**Statement II:** EWS reservation has led to increased competition for limited seats in educational institutions and government jobs.

- (a) Statement I is the cause and statement II is its effect
- (b) Statement II is the cause and statement, I is its effect
- (c) Both statements I and II are independent causes.
- (d) Both statements I and II are effects of some common cause.

**12. Anita is moving from the east to the west direction. Then, the pole star will be on her left-hand side.**

- (a) Always True
- (b) Generally True
- (c) Sometimes True
- (d) Never True

**13. Three suspects - Ashish, Bhuvi, and Chetan - are being interrogated by the police. Each suspect makes the following statement:**

**Ashish: "Bhuvi is guilty."**

**Bhuvi: "Chetan is innocent."**

**Chetan: "I am innocent."**

**If a guilty suspect always lies, and innocent suspects always tell the truth, who is guilty?**

- (a) Ashish
- (b) Bhuvi
- (c) Chetan
- (d) Not enough information to determine

**14. Three friends – A, B and C- make the following statements:**

**A: "I am older than B."**

**B: "C is older than A."**

**C: "B is older than me."**

**If only B is telling the truth, who is the oldest?**

- (a) C
- (b) A
- (c) B
- (d) Cannot be determined

### ANSWERS

1. (a)    2. (c)    3. (b)    4. (b)    5. (b)    6. (b)    7. (a)    8. (a)    9. (a)    10 (b)  
 11. (d)    12. (d)    13. (a)    14. (a)

### EXPLANATIONS

**1. (a)**

**Explanation:**

According to the statement, candidates must be at least 21 years old as of August 1st of the examination year. In 2023, Prakash would be less than 32 years old since he was born on September 15, 1991, making him eligible for the UPSC Civil Services Examination.

Nothing is mentioned regarding the preparation to clear the examination.

Therefore, only conclusion I follows.

**2. (c)**

**Explanation:**

Both conclusions directly follow from the statement, which mentions that Chandrayaan-3 was India's first

successful attempt to land on the moon and the world's first successful landing in the southern lunar region. It also highlights the historic nature of this achievement for India.

**3. (b)**

**Explanation:**

As per the given statement, in a constitutional democracy, elections are the primary means by which leaders are chosen, and these elections must be regular, free, and fair to ensure the legitimacy of the government. Hence, Assumption I is implicit.

Assumption II is not implicit as this information is not provided in the statement.

4. (b)

**Explanation:**

Assumption I is implicit because the statement emphasizes the importance of teachers in changing lives and implies that effective teaching and nurturing are key factors.

Assumption II is not implicit in the statement as the statement does not mention that teachers have the sole responsibility for a person's development and usefulness to society.

5. (b)

**Explanation:**

Providing career support services to affected employees is a human approach to helping them in finding new jobs. Also, restructuring and reviewing operations so that it prevents or minimizes future layoffs and maintains the company's health.

Nothing is mentioned about voluntary retirement packages in the statement therefore it may or may not be a suitable course of action depending on the specific circumstances.

Hence, course of action I and II should be taken.

6. (b)

**Explanation:**

Establishing a committee for investigating can ensure a thorough and unbiased approach to sort out cheating cases. Hence, the course of action I should be taken.

Stopping online examinations is not a good solution to stop students from cheating. Course of action II should not be taken.

Collaboration of educational institution with online service providers to improve monitoring and detection technology can help prevent cheating and maintain the integrity of online exams. Also, to prevent evolving cheating methods regular upgradation of technology is essential. Hence, Course of action III should be taken.

7. (a)

**Explanation:**

Unlike fossil fuel power plants that burn coal, natural gas, or oil to generate electricity, nuclear power plants use nuclear fission. In this process, the nucleus of an atom is split into smaller nuclei. This process does not involve the combustion of carbon-based fuels, so it does not release carbon dioxide or other greenhouse gases into the atmosphere.

Hence, both reason and assertion are true and the reason is correct explanation of given assertion.

8. (a)

**Explanation:**

Polygamy, the practice of a man having multiple wives simultaneously, often had negative consequences for women, as it could lead to unequal treatment, financial insecurity, and emotional distress. Abolishing polygamy aimed to promote the principles of gender equality and women's rights within Hindu marriages.

Hence, both reason and assertion are true and the reason is the correct explanation of the given assertion.

9. (a)

**Explanation:**

By eliminating interest rates on educational loans, higher education will be accessible to a broader range of students, including those from lower-income backgrounds. This increased access can contribute to a more educated and skilled workforce. Hence, the argument I is strong.

Students can take loans more than they need and can invest the excess funds, potentially benefiting from the spread between the interest rate they would have paid and the returns they would gain on their investments. This would lead to siphoning of funds for unintended purposes. Therefore, argument II is strong.

Since interest will be waived off, there will be reduction in timely repayment and applications for loans and the number of loan defaulters will increase. Therefore, argument III is not strong.

10. (b)

**Explanation:**

Applying GST to every object ensures a uniform and fair taxation system, where all goods and services are subject to the same tax rules. It will eliminate any complexity and reduce chances for tax evasion. Hence, argument I is strong.

Same taxation rules can be applied to different goods and services to bring uniformity and transparency in the system. Hence, Argument II is a weak argument.

Certain items, such as Food, medicines, and education, are often exempted or subject to lower tax rates to promote social welfare. Taxing them could affect lower middle class and poor people and will increase their financial burden. Hence, argument III is strong.

11. (d)

**Explanation:**

The introduction of EWS (Economically Weaker Sections) reservation in India has had several effects. Statements I and II are effects of EWS reservation.

12. (d)

**Explanation:**

The Pole star is always in the north direction. Anita is moving from east to west direction therefore pole star will always be towards her right-hand side.

So, this statement will never be true.

13. (a)

**Explanation:**

**Scenario 1:** Ashish is guilty which means he lies.

Ashish: "Bhuvi is guilty."-Lie- So, Bhuvi is not guilty.

Bhuvi: "Chetan is innocent."-truth

Chetan: "I am innocent."-truth

All 3 statements are consistent with Ashish being guilty.

**Scenario 2:** Bhuvi is guilty which means he lies.

Ashish: "Bhuvi is guilty."-truth

Bhuvi: "Chetan is innocent."-lie- which makes Chetan also guilty.

Chetan: "I am innocent."-truth

All 3 statements are not consistent with the given information.

**Scenario 3:** Chetan is guilty which means he lies.

Ashish: "Bhuvi is guilty."-truth

Bhuvi: "Chetan is innocent."-truth

Chetan: "I am innocent."-lie -which makes Chetan guilty.

All 3 statements are not consistent with the given information.

So, the only scenario with Ashish being guilty is correct.

14. (a)

**Explanation:**

A is lying which means, B is older than A.

B is telling the truth which means, C is older than A.

C is lying which means, C is older than B.

So, the correct order is  $C > B > A$ , C being the oldest.

## INTRODUCTION

Decision-making is the process of choosing a course of action or selecting from alternative options objectively, to solve a particular problem, based on careful consideration of available information, preferences, and goals. Effective decision-making involves a systematic approach and can significantly impact outcomes and success.

## TYPES OF DECISIONS

The types of decisions are classified into following three categories:

### Whether Decisions

“Whether” decisions typically refer to decisions where the primary consideration is whether or not to take a particular action. These decisions often involve a binary choice: to proceed with a course of action or not. For example, deciding whether to launch a new product, whether to hire a candidate, or whether to invest in a project.

### Which Decisions

“Which” decisions involve choosing among various alternatives. When faced with multiple options or alternatives, the decision-maker must evaluate and select the most suitable one. For instance, deciding which marketing strategy to adopt, which supplier to choose, or which software solution to implement.

### Contingent Decisions

“Contingent” decisions are those that are dependent on fulfillment of certain conditions or events. The decision is made with the understanding that it may need to be adjusted or reconsidered based on future developments. Contingent decisions are often made in dynamic or uncertain environments. For example, deciding on a contingent budget plan that can be adjusted based on the actual financial performance.

In summary, “whether” decisions involve a binary choice, “which” decisions involve selecting from multiple options, and “contingent” decisions are made with the awareness that they may be subject to adjustment based on future conditions.

## STEPS OF DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

The decision-making process involves a series of steps that guide individuals or groups from identifying a problem or opportunity to implementing and evaluating a chosen course of action.

### Step-1: Identify the Problem or Opportunity

Clearly define and understand the issue that requires a decision. This step involves recognizing a deviation from the desired state or identifying an opportunity for improvement.

### Step-2: Define the Decision Criteria

Establish the criteria or factors that will be used to evaluate potential solutions. Criteria are the standards or measures against which alternatives will be assessed.

### Step-3: Gather Relevant Information

Collect information and data that is pertinent to the decision at hand. This may involve research, analysis, and consultation with experts or stakeholders.

### Step-4: Identify Alternatives

Generate a list of possible solutions or a course of action. Consider a range of options that could potentially address the identified problem or opportunity.

### Step-5: Evaluate Alternatives

Assess the pros and cons of each alternative based on the defined criteria. This step involves a careful analysis of the potential risks, benefits, costs, and feasibility of each option.

### Step-6: Make a Decision

Choose the best alternative based on the evaluation. The decision-maker selects the option that aligns most closely with the established criteria and goals.

## EXAMPLES

- E1. A manager's steps in a decision making process are given below. Arrange them in the correct sequence and choose the correct answer. (UPPSC 2014)
1. Define the problem
  2. Identify the limiting factors
  3. Develop potential alternatives

#### 4. Establish a control and evaluation system

- (a) 1,4,2,3                      (b) 2,1,3,4  
(c) 1,3,4,2                      (d) 2,4,3,1

Ans: (b)

##### Explanation:

Option (b) satisfies the framing of a decision.

## THREE SKILL APPROACH FOR EFFECTIVE ADMINISTRATION

Leadership skills can be broadly categorized into three main types: **technical skills, human skills (also known as interpersonal skills), and conceptual skills.** These skills are often referred to as the “**skills model of leadership.**” Here’s a breakdown of each:

### 1. Technical Skills

Technical skills refer to the knowledge and proficiency in a specific field or area of expertise. In a leadership context, these skills are related to the leader’s ability to understand and apply the tools, techniques, and processes relevant to their industry or profession.

#### Examples

Technical expertise in a particular technology or field.  
Proficiency in data analysis, financial management, or project management.  
Understanding industry-specific regulations and compliance.

### 2. Human Skills (Interpersonal Skills)

Human skills involve the ability to work effectively with people, understand their emotions, communicate well, and build positive relationships. These skills are crucial for leaders to create a collaborative and supportive work environment.

#### Examples

Effective communication and active listening.  
Empathy and understanding others’ perspectives.  
Conflict resolution and negotiation.  
Building and maintaining relationships within the team and across the organization.

### 3. Conceptual Skills

Conceptual skills involve the ability to think strategically, see the big picture, and understand how various parts of an organization or system interrelate. Leaders with strong conceptual skills can analyze complex situations, make informed decisions, and formulate effective strategies.

#### Examples

Strategic thinking and planning.  
Analyzing market trends and predicting future developments.  
Understanding the organization’s mission, vision, and goals.  
Systematic thinking and understanding the interdependencies within the organization.

## LEADERSHIP AND THE SKILLS MODEL

**Entry-Level Positions:** In entry-level positions, technical skills may be more emphasized as individuals are expected to have a strong foundation in their area of expertise.

**Mid-Level Positions:** As individuals move into mid-level leadership roles, human skills become increasingly important. The ability to lead and work well with others becomes critical.

**Top-Level Positions:** Conceptual skills are particularly crucial for top-level leaders (CEOs, executives, Bureaucrats). They must have a comprehensive understanding of the organization, industry, and global trends, while also relying on their human skills to lead effectively.

## DIMENSIONS OF DECISION-MAKING STYLES

### Ways of Thinking

- (i) **Rational Decision-Making Process:** It is a systematic process of making choices that are based on careful consideration of available information, analysis of alternatives, and alignment with specific goals and values.
- (ii) **Intuitive Decision-Making Process:** It is a process that relies on gut feelings, instincts, and subconscious knowledge rather than a systematic and analytical approach.

### Tolerance for Ambiguity

It refers to an individual’s comfort level with uncertainty, complexity, and situations lacking clear definition.

- (i) **Low tolerance for Ambiguity:** Individuals with low tolerance may prefer clear guidelines, well-defined processes, and structured environments. They may feel uncomfortable with ambiguity and uncertainty.
- (ii) **Moderate Tolerance for Ambiguity:** Individuals with a moderate level of tolerance can navigate some degree of uncertainty. They may seek information to reduce ambiguity but can adapt to ambiguous situations.

- (ii) **High Tolerance for Ambiguity:** Individuals comfortable with ambiguity are often open to new experiences, adaptable to change, and able to work effectively in unstructured environments. They may view ambiguity as an opportunity for growth.

## TYPES OF DECISION MAKERS

While there are various models and frameworks for categorizing decision-making styles, one commonly used model identifies four primary decision-making styles.

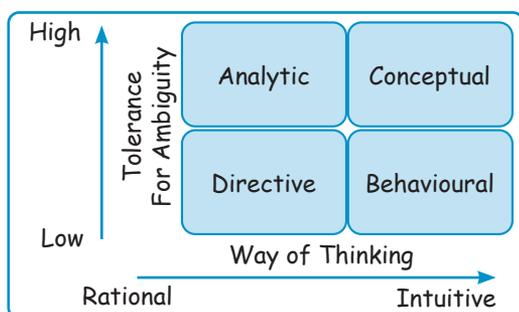


Fig. 3.1: Tolerance For Ambiguity

### Analytical Decision Maker

Logical, systematic, and thorough in their approach. Analytical decision makers gather and analyze data, weigh pros and cons, and take decisions based on objective information. They seek precision and accuracy.

### Directive Decision Maker

Authoritarian and assertive in decision-making. Directive decision makers prefer making decisions independently without extensive consultation. They provide clear instructions and expect prompt execution.

### Conceptual Decision Maker

Creative and open to innovative ideas. Conceptual decision makers focus on the big picture, often considering long-term goals and seeking unconventional solutions. They may involve others in brainstorming sessions.

### Behavioral Decision Maker

People-oriented and relationship-focused. Behavioural decision makers prioritize team dynamics, collaboration, and the impact of decisions on individuals. They seek consensus and build positive relationships.

## EXAMPLES

- E2. You are the chairperson of a state sports committee. You have received a complaint and later it was found that an athlete in the junior age category who won a medal has crossed the age criteria by 5 days. You would** (UPSC CSAT 2012)

- (a) Ask the screening committee for a clarification  
 (b) Ask the athlete to return the medal  
 (c) Ask the athlete to get an affidavit from the court declaring his/her age  
 (d) Ask the members of the sports committee for their views.

Ans: (a)

### Explanation:

**Option (a):** Asking for clarification from screening committee is correct as they have initially screened the candidates on some basis.

**Option(b):** Directly asking to return the medal is not appropriate as this is equivalent to questioning the authority and decision of the committee and your leadership also (being the chairperson of the committee).

**Option(c):** Getting a court's affidavit won't change the situation. So, this is also incorrect.

**Option(d):** Asking the sports committee is partially correct but option(a) is more appropriate.

## DECISION MAKING ENVIRONMENT

In decision-making contexts, environments are often categorized based on the level of uncertainty and the predictability of outcomes. The three primary types of decision-making environments are:

### Certain Environment

In a certain environment, all relevant information is known, and the outcomes of different decision alternatives are completely predictable.

#### Characteristics:

- ❑ **Certainty and Precision:** Information is clear, accurate, and unambiguous.
- ❑ **Predictable Outcomes:** The consequences of each decision alternative are known with certainty.

**Example:** A well-established and routine manufacturing process where all variables are controlled, and the outcome of each step is known.

### Uncertain Environment

In an uncertain environment, there is a lack of complete information, and the outcomes of decision alternatives are not predictable.

#### Characteristics:

- ❑ **Incomplete Information:** Some information may be unavailable, unreliable, or difficult to obtain.
- ❑ **Lack of Predictability:** The consequences of decisions are not entirely known, and there is a degree of unpredictability.

**Example:** Launching a new product in a market with changing consumer preferences and unpredictable economic conditions.

### Risky Environment

In a risky environment, there is a level of uncertainty, but the probabilities associated with possible outcomes are known or can be estimated.

#### Characteristics:

**Known Probabilities:** While the outcomes are uncertain, the probabilities associated with different outcomes are quantifiable.

**Risk Assessment:** Decision makers can assign probabilities to various scenarios to evaluate the risk involved.

**Example:** Investing in the stock market where historical data and market trends allow for the estimation of probabilities associated with different investment outcomes.

These distinctions help decision makers tailor their approaches and strategies based on the nature of the decision-making environment. In certain environments, a more straightforward and deterministic approach may be suitable, while in uncertain or risky environments, decision makers may need to incorporate flexibility, risk management, and adaptive strategies.

## APPROACHES TO DECISION MAKING

Authoritarian and participative decision-making are two contrasting styles that leaders can adopt when making decisions.

### Authoritarian Decision Making

#### □ Decision-Making Authority:

- **Authority:** The decision-making authority lies primarily with the leader or top executives.
- **Centralized Control:** Decision-making power is concentrated at the top of the hierarchy.

#### □ Decision Process:

- **Top-Down Approach:** Decisions are made at the top and then communicated downward to subordinates.
- **Limited Input:** Input from team members or subordinates may be minimal or non-existent.

#### □ Speed and Efficiency:

- **Speed:** Authoritarian decision-making can be quick and efficient, as it does not involve extensive consultation.
- **Clarity:** Decision instructions are clear and unambiguous.

#### □ Applicability:

- **Emergency Situations:** Authoritarian decision making is often used in emergencies or situations that require a rapid and decisive response.
- **Hierarchical Organizations:** Common in hierarchical or traditional organizational structures.

### Participative Decision Making

#### □ Decision-Making Authority

- **Shared Authority:** Decision-making authority is distributed among team members or relevant stakeholders.
- **Decentralized Control:** There is a move away from centralized control, with input from multiple sources.

#### □ Decision Process

- **Collaborative Approach:** Team members are actively involved in the decision-making process.
- **Input Gathering:** Encourages the collection of ideas, feedback, and perspectives before a decision is made.

#### □ Speed and Efficiency

- **Time-Consuming:** Participative decision-making can be time-consuming, especially in situations where consensus is sought.
- **Enhanced Quality:** The decision may benefit from diverse perspectives, potentially leading to a higher-quality outcome.

#### □ Applicability

- **Complex Decisions:** Well-suited for complex decisions that benefit from diverse expertise and insights.
- **Team Empowerment:** Fosters a sense of empowerment and engagement among team members.

### Hybrid Approach

It is important to note that in many situations, leaders adopt hybrid approaches that combine elements of both authoritarian and participative decision-making. The choice of approach depends on the specific circumstances, the urgency of the decision, and the organizational culture.

## DECISION MAKING CRITERION

Decision-making criteria are the factors or standards that individuals or groups use to evaluate and compare alternatives when making a decision. These criteria help decision makers assess the desirability, feasibility, and appropriateness of different options. Here are common decision-making criteria:

## Maximax Decision Criterion

Maximax (maximizing the maximums) is a decision-making criterion that aims to maximize the potential gain or payoff. It involves choosing the alternative that offers the highest possible benefit or the most favorable outcome.

### Key Features:

- ❑ Focuses on the best-case scenario.
- ❑ Assumes a highly optimistic view of the future.
- ❑ Commonly used in situations where risk tolerance is high, and decision makers seek to capitalize on optimistic projections.

## Maximin Decision Criterion

Maximin (maximizing the minimums) is a decision-making criterion that aims to minimize the potential loss or regret. It involves choosing the alternative that offers the highest payoff in the worst-case scenario, considering the most pessimistic conditions.

### Key Features

- ❑ Focuses on risk aversion and downside protection.
- ❑ Assumes a highly conservative view of the future.
- ❑ Commonly used in situations where risk tolerance is low, and decision makers prioritize avoiding potential negative outcomes.

## Optimizing

Optimizing is a decision-making approach that seeks to find the best possible solution or outcome. It involves maximizing the benefit or utility while considering all available information and alternatives.

### Key Features

- ❑ Comprehensive analysis of alternatives.
- ❑ Aim for the most favorable result.
- ❑ Often involves weighing multiple criteria to determine the optimal choice.

## Satisficing

Satisficing is a decision-making approach that focuses on finding a satisfactory or “good enough” solution rather than the optimal one. It acknowledges that decision makers may have constraints such as time, information, or resources.

### Key Features

- ❑ Acceptance of a solution that meets minimum criteria.
- ❑ Balances trade-offs between effort and outcome.
- ❑ Common in situations where exhaustive optimization is impractical.

## EXAMPLES

**E3. You are the head of your office. There are certain houses reserved for the allotment to the office staff and you have been given the discretion to do so. A set of rules for the allotment of the houses has been laid down by you and has been made public. Your personal secretary, who is very close to you, comes to you and pleads that as his father is seriously ill, he should be given priority in the allotment of a house. The office secretariat that examined the request as per the rules turns down the request and recommends the procedure to be followed according to the rules. You do not want to annoy your personal secretary. In such circumstances, what would you do? (UPSC CSAT 2013)**

- Call him over to your room and personally explain why the allotment cannot be done
- Allot the house to him to win his loyalty.
- Agree with the office note to show that you are not biased and that you do not indulge in favoritism.
- Keep the file with you and not pass any orders.

**Ans:** (a)

### Explanation:

In such cases the decision maker needs to be unbiased.

Option (a) and option (c) are the correct course of action, out of which option (a) seems more appropriate in this case. Explaining to your personal secretary the reason why the allotment cannot be done will make your secretary realize that according to the rules you were not able to fulfill his request.

Allotting the house to him to win his loyalty means breaking the rules which is obviously unacceptable.

## HEURISTIC DECISION MAKING

Heuristic decision-making refers to the process of making judgments and decisions based on mental shortcuts or rules of thumb rather than a comprehensive and exhaustive analysis of all available information. Here are some common heuristic decision-making strategies:

### Representativeness Heuristic

Judging the probability of an event based on how similar it is to a prototype or representative model.

**Example:** Assuming that a person who enjoys reading literature and discussing philosophy is more likely to be an English professor than a truck driver.

### Availability Heuristic

People rely on information that is readily available or easily recalled when making decisions.

**Example:** If recent news reports highlight a specific type of crime, individuals may overestimate the likelihood of encountering that crime.

### Anchoring and Adjustment Heuristic

A cognitive bias where individuals rely too heavily on the first piece of information encountered (the “anchor”) when making decisions. Subsequent judgments or decisions are then adjusted based on this initial anchor, even if the anchor is arbitrary or irrelevant.

**Example:** Negotiators may be influenced by an initial offer, adjusting their subsequent offers or concessions based on that starting point.

## EXAMPLES

**E4. In decision making, judging a sample on the basis of similarity and random looking appearance is known as** (UPPSC 2012)

- (a) Representativeness Heuristic
- (b) Availability Heuristic
- (c) Anchoring Heuristic
- (d) Adjustment Heuristic

**Ans:** (a)

#### Explanation:

Judging something on the basis of its similarity with a representative model is representativeness heuristic

## DECISION MAKING VS PROBLEM SOLVING

Decision making and problem solving are related concepts often used interchangeably, but they refer to distinct processes. While they share common elements, they serve different purposes and involve different cognitive activities.

**Decision Making:** The process of choosing a course of action from among several alternatives to achieve a goal or solve a problem. It involves evaluating alternatives, assessing risks and benefits, and making a choice based on available information.

**Problem Solving:** The process of finding solutions to a specific issue or challenge that is hindering the achievement of a goal. It concentrates on identifying, analyzing, and resolving obstacles or difficulties. It involves defining the problem, analyzing its root causes, generating potential solutions, and implementing the best solution.

**Examples:** Addressing declining sales, troubleshooting a malfunctioning system, resolving conflicts within a team.

Problem solving may require decision making at various stages, and decision making can involve solving problems related to conflicting goals or uncertainties. Effective problem solving can lead to better decision making. By thoroughly understanding and resolving the underlying issues, decision makers can make more informed and strategic choices.

## RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES IN DECISION MAKING AND PROBLEM SOLVING

In order of precedence the strategies are

### 1. Dismiss Extremely remote or Unrealistic

**Possibilities:** In decision making, it is essential to focus on practical and feasible options while dismissing extremely remote or unrealistic possibilities. This approach helps decision makers allocate their resources, time, and efforts effectively, ensuring a more rational and pragmatic decision-making process.

### 2. Avoiding Catastrophes:

Avoiding catastrophes in decision making involves taking measures to minimize the likelihood of extreme negative outcomes and mitigate their potential impact.

### 3. Recognizing trade-offs:

Recognizing trade-offs is a fundamental aspect of decision making. Trade-offs involve making compromises or sacrifices between different options or objectives, as pursuing one goal may come at the expense of another. Recognizing trade-offs is not about avoiding them but rather about making deliberate and conscious choices that align with the priorities and goals of the decision maker or organization.

### 4. Maximizing the Expected Value:

Maximizing the expected value is a decision-making strategy that involves selecting the alternative with the highest expected value. The expected value is a measure that represents the average outcome of a decision when considering all possible scenarios and their respective probabilities. Maximizing the expected value may involve considering not only immediate gains but also the sustainability and impact of the decision over time.

## ADMINISTRATIVE ETHICS AND DECISION MAKING

Administrative ethics plays a critical role in decision-making within organizations and government agencies. It involves the principles, values, and standards of conduct that guide the actions and behaviors of individuals in administrative roles. Ethical decision-making is essential for maintaining public trust, upholding the integrity of institutions, and ensuring accountability. Here are key considerations related to administrative ethics and decision-making:

### Principles of Administrative Ethics

- ❑ **Integrity:** Uphold honesty and truthfulness in all administrative actions and decisions.
- ❑ **Accountability:** Take responsibility for decisions and actions, acknowledging and rectifying mistakes when necessary.
- ❑ **Fairness and Impartiality:** Treat all individuals fairly and impartially, avoiding discrimination and favoritism.
- ❑ **Transparency:** Communicate openly and transparently, providing clear information about decisions and their rationale.

### Legal Compliance

- ❑ **Adherence to Laws and Regulations:** Ensure that administrative decisions comply with relevant laws, regulations, and organizational policies.
- ❑ **Ethical Standards Beyond Legal Requirements:** Recognize that ethical considerations may go beyond legal requirements, requiring a commitment to higher ethical standards.

### Conflict of Interest Management

- ❑ **Awareness of Circumstances:** One needs to be aware about possible circumstances in an organization in which conflict of interests can arise.
- ❑ **Building Capacities:** Based on those circumstances decision-maker should prohibit unacceptable forms of private interests and ensure effective procedures to resolve conflict of interest situations.

### Decision-Making Processes

- ❑ **Inclusive Decision-Making:** Include diverse perspectives and stakeholders in decision-making processes.
- ❑ **Participatory Governance:** Promote participatory governance, allowing affected parties to have a voice in decisions that impact them.

### Ethical Leadership

- ❑ **Setting the Tone:** Leaders should set an ethical tone by modeling ethical behavior and values.

- ❑ **Promoting a Culture of Ethics:** Foster a culture of ethics within the organization, emphasizing the importance of ethical decision-making.

### Ethical Dilemmas

- ❑ **Recognition and Resolution:** Acknowledge and address ethical dilemmas that may arise in administrative decision-making.
- ❑ **Ethics Committees:** Establish ethics committees or similar mechanisms to provide guidance on complex ethical issues.

### Public Service Ethos

- ❑ **Commitment to Public Service:** Maintain a strong commitment to public service, prioritizing the public interest over personal or private interests.
- ❑ **Stewardship of Resources:** Exercise responsible stewardship of public resources, ensuring their efficient and ethical use.

### Public Communication

- ❑ **Honest and Transparent Communication:** Communicate decisions honestly and transparently, providing clear information to the public.
- ❑ **Acknowledging Mistakes:** Acknowledge and rectify mistakes promptly, demonstrating accountability.

### Social Responsibility

- ❑ **Community and Environmental Impact:** Consider the social and environmental impact of administrative decisions on the community and broader society.
- ❑ **Sustainable Practices:** Promote sustainable and responsible practices in decision-making.

## APPROACHES TO ETHICAL DECISION MAKING

Several approaches and frameworks have been developed to guide individuals and organizations through the ethical decision-making process. Here are some common approaches to ethical decision-making:

### Utilitarian Approach

**Principle:** Focuses on maximizing overall happiness or well-being and minimizing harm.

#### Steps:

- ❑ Identify all possible options and the potential consequences of each.
- ❑ Evaluate the overall positive and negative impacts on all stakeholders.
- ❑ Choose the option that maximizes the overall good and minimizes harm.

### Rights-Based Approach

**Principle:** Emphasizes the protection and respect for individual rights and fundamental human rights.

### Steps:

- ❑ Identify the rights of individuals affected by the decision.
- ❑ Assess whether the proposed action respects and upholds those rights.
- ❑ Choose courses of action that safeguard individual rights.

### Fairness or Justice-Based Approach

**Principle:** Focuses on fairness, equity, and the just distribution of benefits and burdens.

### Steps:

- ❑ Consider the impact of the decision on various stakeholders and assess fairness.
- ❑ Ensure that the decision promotes equal opportunities and fair treatment.
- ❑ Strive to achieve a just distribution of benefits and burdens.

### Common Good Approach

**Principle:** Centers around the promotion of the common good and well-being of the community.

### Steps:

- ❑ Identify the common values, goals, and interests of the community.
- ❑ Evaluate how each option contributes to or hinders the common good.
- ❑ Choose the option that best serves the well-being of the community.

### The Virtue Approach

**Principle:** Focuses on the development of virtuous character traits and personal integrity.

### Steps:

- ❑ Reflect on the virtues and character traits associated with ethical behavior.
- ❑ Consider what a virtuous person would do in the given situation.
- ❑ Strive to cultivate virtuous character traits in decision-making.

## EXAMPLES

**E5. You are a Deputy Secretary in a Ministry of Government of India where you are dealing with the appointment of Technical Assistants'. On the basis of a written examination, 10 candidates shortlisted for the two posts. Based on their educational and previous work experience you have to make your recommendation in order of preference. A senior official in the ministry, who is known to you asks you**

**to recommend the name of candidate Y amongst the first two choices. What will you do? (UPPSC 2012)**

- (a) Bring the matter to the knowledge of your immediate superior officer and do as he verbally directs.
- (b) Comply with the request of the senior officer, who approached you and recommend the name of his candidate in the top two despite knowing that he is not among the best two.
- (c) Examine the profile of all ten candidates and take decision on merits even if it means that candidate Y is eventually selected.
- (d) See to it that the candidate Y is not selected at all by placing him down in the preference.

**Ans:** (c)

### Explanation:

In this case an ethical and moral decision is required, which here could be best done by adopting virtue approach.

One should not harm relation with the senior official, reporting this to your superior will harm your relation with ministry official, hence option (a) is eliminated. Option (b) is completely unethical. Rejecting candidate Y outright is unjust and unfair, so option (d) can also be eliminated. Option (c) seems to be most moral and ethical decision in this case.

**E6. You are a teacher in a University and are setting a question paper on a particular subject. One of your colleagues, whose son is preparing for the examination on that subject, comes to you and informs you that it is his son's last chance to pass that examination and whether you could help him by indicating what questions are going to be in the examination. In the past, your colleagues had helped you in another matter. Your colleague informs you that his son will suffer from depression if he fails in this examination. In such circumstances, what would you do? (UPPSC 2013)**

- (a) In view of the help he had given you, extend your help to him.
- (b) Regret that you cannot be of any help to him.
- (c) Explain to your colleagues that this would be violating the trust of the University authorities and you are not in a position to help him.
- (d) Report the conduct of your colleague to the higher authorities.

**Ans:** (c)

**Explanation:**

In such a circumstance stated above, one must uphold administrative ethics. This situation can be best handled by adopting the Virtue approach.

**Option (a):** would violate the trust of the University authorities. Extending help in this matter will mean doing injustice to other candidates who have been preparing honestly. It would also violate the ethics and morality of a teacher.

**Option (d):** As the colleague asked for a favor expecting help and did not ask anything illegal to do, it would also harm the relation with colleague so it would be inappropriate to report to the higher authorities.

**Option (b):** can also be eliminated.

## DECISION MAKING AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

Governance refers to the processes, practices, and structures through which an organization or a community directs and controls its activities, manages resources, and ensures that its objectives are achieved effectively and in accordance with established values and norms. Governance is a multifaceted concept that applies to various contexts, including corporate governance, public governance, and global governance.

### KEY PRINCIPLES OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

**Accountability:** Organizations and governments should be accountable for their actions and decisions.

**Transparency:** Information should be accessible and easily understood by stakeholders.

**Responsiveness:** Governance should be responsive to the needs and concerns of stakeholders.

**Equity and Inclusiveness:** Governance should be fair, just, and inclusive, considering the interests of all stakeholders.

**Effectiveness and Efficiency:** Governance structures should be effective in achieving objectives and efficient in resource utilization.

### PUBLIC GOVERNANCE

Public governance refers to the systems, processes, and structures through which public entities, including government organizations and institutions, make decisions, implement policies, and manage public resources. It encompasses the principles and practices that guide the behavior of public officials, ensure accountability, and promote the public interest. Effective public governance is essential for the functioning of democratic societies and the delivery of public services. Here are key elements and considerations related to public governance:

### Government Structures: Legislative, Executive, and Judicial Branches

Public governance typically involves a separation of powers among the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government to prevent the concentration of authority.

### Rule of Law

Public governance is closely tied to the rule of law, emphasizing that government actions should be consistent with established laws and regulations.

### Transparency and Accountability

Transparency is a cornerstone of public governance, ensuring that government actions, decisions, and information are open and accessible to the public. Public officials are accountable for their actions and decisions. Mechanisms such as audits and oversight committees help ensure accountability.

### Citizen Participation: Democratic Processes

Public governance encourages citizen participation in decision-making processes through democratic practices such as elections, public hearings, and consultations.

### Public Service Delivery: Efficiency and Effectiveness

Governance structures aim to ensure that public services are delivered efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of citizens.

### Policy Development and Implementation: Evidence-Based Decision-Making

Public governance involves making policy decisions based on evidence and data to ensure informed choices. Governance structures focus on effective implementation of policies, programs, and projects to achieve desired outcomes.

### Financial Management: Budgeting and Fiscal Responsibility

Public governance includes sound financial management practices, responsible budgeting, and fiscal responsibility to manage public resources prudently.

### Civil Service and Human Resources: Professionalism and Training

Public governance emphasizes a professional and well-trained civil service to carry out government functions.

### Emergency Management and Crisis Response

Governance structures need to be adaptable and resilient, especially in responding to emergencies, crises, and unforeseen challenges.

### International Cooperation (Collaboration with Global Entities)

Public governance extends to international cooperation, where nations collaborate on global issues, share best practices, and work collectively on common challenges.

## EXAMPLES

**E7. There is a shortage of sugar in your district, where you are the District Magistrate. The government has ordered that only a maximum amount of 30 kg sugar is to be released for wedding celebrations. A son of your close friend is getting married and your friend requests you to release at least 50 kg sugar for his son's wedding. He expresses annoyance when you tell him about the government's restrictions on this matter. He feels that, since you are the District Magistrate, you can release any amount. You do not want to spoil your friendship with him. In such circumstances, how would you deal with the situation? (UPSC CSAT 2013)**

- (a) Release the extra amount of sugar which your friend has requested for.
- (b) Refuse your friend the extra amount and strictly follow the rules.
- (c) Show your friend the copy of the government instructions and then persuade him to accept the lower amount as prescribed in the rules.
- (d) Advise him to directly apply to the allotting authorities and inform him that you do not interfere in this matter.

**Ans: (c)**

### **Explanation:**

A District Magistrate should follow the rule of law, so releasing extra amount of sugar is not an option. So, option (a) can be eliminated.

Both option (b) and (c) are correct course of action but option (c) is more appropriate as refusing him plainly would displease him. Advising him to directly apply to the allotting authorities and inform him that you do not interfere in this matter is like escaping the situation.

**E8. A person lives in a far off village which is almost two hours by bus. The villager's neighbour is a very powerful landlord, who is trying to occupy the poor villager's land by force. You are the District Magistrate and busy in a meeting called by a local minister. The villager has come all the way, by bus and on foot, to see you and give an application seeking protection from the powerful landlord. The villager keeps on waiting outside the meeting hall for an hour. You come out of meeting and rushing to another meeting. The villager follows you and submits his application. What would you do? (UPSC CSAT 2013)**

- (a) Tell him to wait for another two hours till you come back from your next meeting.

- (b) Tell him that the matter is actually to be dealt with by a junior officer and that he should give the application to him.
- (c) Call one of your senior subordinate officers and ask him to solve the villager's problem.
- (d) Quickly take the application from him, ask him a few relevant questions regarding his problem and then proceed to the meeting.

**Ans: (c)**

### **Explanation:**

In such situations, a District Magistrate should be responsive to the needs of the citizen and be an effective decision maker. According to the situation, option (a) and option (b) would be like clearly ignoring the sufferings of the villager and trouble he has faced to visit him.

Option (c) is relevant course of action as the poor man will be helped by this,

Option (d) is relevant too but it is practically not feasible as the Magistrate is busy with back to back meetings and this would delay the decision.

Hence, option (c) is the correct answer.

**E9: While traveling in a Delhi-registered commercial taxi from Delhi to an adjacent city (another State), your taxi driver informs you that as he has no permit for running the taxi in that city, he will stop at its Transport Office and pay the prescribed fee of Rs. forty for a day. While paying the fee at the counter you find that the transport clerk is taking an extra fifty rupees for which no receipt is being given. You are in a hurry for your meeting. In such circumstances what would you do? (UPSC CSAT 2013)**

- (a) Go up to the counter and ask the clerk to give back the money which he has illegally taken.
- (b) Do not interfere at all as this is a matter between the taxi driver and the tax authorities.
- (c) Take note of the incident and subsequently report the matter to the concerned authorities.
- (d) Treat it as a normal affair and simply forget about it.

**Ans: (c)**

### **Explanation:**

Option (b) and option (d) can be directly eliminated as the clerk is taking the money without any receipt which makes this a case of corruption, which is against the rule of law and accountability to citizens.

Option (a) can also be rejected as this may lead to a tussle with the clerk and you may get late for the meeting.

Clearly option (c) is the best course of action.

## DECISION MAKING IN LEGAL ISSUES

Effective legal decision-making requires a combination of legal expertise, ethical considerations, and strategic thinking to navigate complexities and achieve optimal outcomes. Here are key qualities that contribute to effective decision-making in legal matters:

### Legal Knowledge

- ❑ **Depth of Understanding:** Possess a thorough and up-to-date understanding of relevant laws, statutes, regulations, and legal precedents.
- ❑ **Specialized Expertise:** Have specialized knowledge in the specific area of law relevant to the issue at hand.

### Analytical Skills

- ❑ **Critical Thinking:** Apply critical thinking skills to analyze complex legal issues and identify key elements.
- ❑ **Problem-Solving:** Demonstrate strong problem-solving abilities to navigate legal challenges.

### Ethical Judgment

- ❑ **Integrity:** Uphold a high standard of integrity and ethical conduct.
- ❑ **Conflict Resolution:** Navigate ethical dilemmas with fairness, transparency, and a commitment to the rule of law.

### Adaptability

- ❑ **Flexibility:** Adapt to changes in legal landscapes, statutes, and regulations.
- ❑ **Open-Mindedness:** Approach legal issues with an open mind, considering diverse perspectives and potential alternative solutions.

## EXAMPLES

**E10. Example :** You, as an administrative authority, have been approached, by the daughter-in-law of an influential person regarding harassment by her in-laws on account of insufficient dowry. Her parents are not able to approach you because of social pressures. You would (UPSC CSAT 2011)

- Call the in laws for an explanation
- Counsel the lady to adjust, given such circumstances.
- Take action after her parents approach you.
- Ask her to lodge a complaint with the police

Ans: (d)

### Explanation:

The duty of an administrative officer is to be accountable to every citizen (the girl in this case) and follow rule of law without any pre-conceived notions (other person being influential).

Calling the in-laws for an explanation would not do any good. Counseling her in this situation to adjust is asking her to tolerate the harassment done by her in laws which is unjust and unfair with the girl. Also, it's not necessary for her parents to be present to start any proceeding against the culprits.

Asking her to lodge a complaint with the police is the best option as police will verify her allegations and take legal action against the wrongdoings (if any).

## DISASTER MANAGEMENT BASED DECISION MAKING

Governments (decision makers) play a crucial role in disaster management, encompassing a range of activities aimed at preventing, preparing for, responding to, and recovering from disasters. Effective disaster management by governments involves coordination among various agencies, development of comprehensive plans, and engagement with communities. Here are key aspects of disaster management by governments:

### Preparedness and Planning

- ❑ **Risk Assessment:** Conduct comprehensive risk assessments to identify potential hazards, vulnerabilities, and risks in specific regions.
- ❑ **Scenario Planning:** Develop various disaster scenarios and corresponding response plans to ensure preparedness for different types of disasters.

### Early Warning Systems

- ❑ **Establishment of Systems:** Implement early warning systems to provide timely and accurate information about potential disasters.
- ❑ **Decision Triggers:** Define clear decision triggers for activating early warning systems and initiating pre-disaster actions.

### Evacuation and Shelter Management

- ❑ **Evacuation Plans:** Develop evacuation plans with clear routes, destination points, and communication strategies.
- ❑ **Shelter Coordination:** Establish and coordinate emergency shelters, considering capacity, accessibility, and provision of essential services.

## Resource Allocation

- ❑ **Pre-positioning of Resources:** Identify and pre-position resources, including emergency supplies, medical assistance, and personnel, based on the potential impact of disasters.
- ❑ **Resource Mobilization:** Develop mechanisms for rapid resource mobilization, including local, national, and international support.

## Communication Strategies

- ❑ **Public Awareness:** Implement communication strategies to raise public awareness about potential risks, preparedness measures, and emergency procedures.
- ❑ **Inter-Agency Communication:** Establish communication channels and protocols for effective coordination among various agencies involved in disaster response.

## Incident Command System

- ❑ **Clear Chain of Command:** Implement an incident command system with a clear chain of command to streamline decision-making processes during emergencies.
- ❑ **Multi-Agency Coordination:** Facilitate coordination among multiple agencies involved in disaster response, ensuring a unified and efficient approach.

## Data and Information Management

- ❑ **GIS and Technology:** Utilize Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and technology for real-time data collection, analysis, and mapping of disaster impacts.
- ❑ **Decision Support Systems:** Implement decision support systems to assist in data-driven decision-making during disasters.

## Post-Disaster Assessments

- ❑ **Rapid Damage Assessment:** Conduct rapid damage assessments to understand the extent of the disaster's impact on infrastructure, communities, and the environment.
- ❑ **Needs Assessment:** Assess the immediate and long-term needs of affected populations to guide recovery efforts.

## Recovery and Rehabilitation Planning

- ❑ **Community Engagement:** Involve affected communities in recovery planning and decision-making processes.
- ❑ **Infrastructure Resilience:** Plan for the reconstruction of resilient infrastructure that can withstand future disasters.

## Learning from Experience

- ❑ **After-Action Reviews:** Conduct after-action reviews to evaluate the effectiveness of response efforts and identify areas for improvement.

- ❑ **Institutional Learning:** Incorporate lessons learned into future disaster management plans, policies, and training programs.

## EXAMPLES

**E11. You are an officer-in-charge for providing basic medical facilities to the survivors of an earthquake affected area. Despite your best possible effort, people put allegations against you for making money out of the funds given for relief. You would (UPSC CSAT 2011)**

- (a) Let an enquiry be set up to look into the matter.
- (b) Ask your senior to appoint some other person in your place.
- (c) Not pay attention to allegations.
- (d) Stop undertaking any initiative till the matter is resolved.

**Ans:** (a)

### Explanation:

Choosing Option (b) means running away from your duties and is equivalent to seeking escape from a situation. So this is a negative option.

Not paying attention is like being dishonest to yourself, also this might prove to be a wrong step in future.

Stopping other initiatives would be over-reacting also not doing your duties should not be an option.

Choosing option (a) is the most positive approach. Taking this step is itself a proof of your honesty.

**E12: You have been made responsible to hire boats at a short notice to be used for an area under flood. On seeing the price mentioned by the boat owners you found that the lowest price was approximately three times more than the approved rate of the Government. You would (UPSC CSAT 2011)**

- (a) reject the proposal and call for a fresh price.
- (b) accept the lowest price.
- (c) refer the matter to the government and wait.
- (d) threaten the boat owners about a possible cancellation of the license.

**Ans:** (b)

### Explanation:

Rejecting the proposal will delay the hiring of boats which should not be an option in case of an emergency. This also rejects option (c).

Threatening the boat owners is unethical and morally wrong.

In case of emergency expediting the process is the best option. So, option (b) is most appropriate step given the situation.

## PRACTICE QUESTIONS

**Directions:** In the questions given below each item describes a situation and is followed by four possible responses. Indicate the response you find most appropriate. Choose only one response for each item.

- 1. In the capacity of Municipal Commissioner, your office has received a complaint from a concerned resident who is notably upset about the irregularities in the garbage collection services within their local area. The resident has raised specific concerns regarding the inconsistency in the pickup schedule, highlighting the adverse impact this has on the overall cleanliness and hygiene of the community. How would you address this complaint?**
  - (a) Personally inspect the affected area and take immediate steps to improve garbage collection.
  - (b) Ask the resident to handle the issue independently since it concerns their locality.
  - (c) Disregard the complaint, stating that garbage collection is not within your purview.
  - (d) Refer the matter to the sanitation department for resolution and ask them to keep you updated.
- 2. As the District Collector, you find yourself in the midst of a complex situation where a group of farmers is actively protesting the proposed acquisition of their land for a development project. The farmers, deeply connected to their agricultural livelihoods, have voiced concerns about the potential impact on their communities, livelihoods, and the rich agricultural heritage tied to the land in question. In these circumstances, what will be your course of action?**
  - (a) Accept the farmers' demand and abandon the project for the time being.
  - (b) Order law enforcement to disperse the farmers and proceed with the land acquisition.
  - (c) Initiate a dialogue with the protesting farmers, understand their grievances and explore various solutions.
  - (d) Refer the matter to higher authorities and let them decide what action to take.
- 3. In your capacity as the District Education Officer, you have been confronted with some parent's deep concern about the issue of teacher absenteeism in a nearby village school, significantly impacting the quality of education for their children. The frustrated parents have earnestly sought your assistance in addressing this critical issue and ensuring that their children receive the requisite educational support to thrive academically. How would you handle the situation?**
  - (a) Acknowledge the complaint and assure them of prompt action to address the problem.
  - (b) Advise the parents to register a formal complaint with the village panchayat.
  - (c) Recommend the District Magistrate to suspend the teachers who remain absent.
  - (d) Ask the parents to directly approach the school administration.
- 4. In your role as the Chief Medical Officer overseeing the district, a resident has raised a pressing issue regarding the inadequate healthcare facilities within their locality. The complaint underscores a critical need for improved access to essential health services in the community, demanding immediate attention and strategic intervention to address these concerns effectively. How do you handle this situation?**
  - (a) Apologize for the inconvenience and promise to look into the matter personally.
  - (b) Assign a health department official to investigate and resolve the healthcare issues.
  - (c) Suggest the resident to visit a nearby hospital and register a formal complaint there.
  - (d) Dismiss the complaint, citing resource constraints in the healthcare system.
- 5. As the District Magistrate, you find yourself in a challenging situation with a group of villagers gathered outside your office. They are expressing discontent with the recent distribution of relief supplies after a natural disaster. The specific grievances include concerns about unequal allocation, perceived lack of transparency, and frustration over the overall handling of the relief efforts. In such circumstances, what would you do?**
  - (a) Meet with the villagers personally and address their concerns.
  - (b) Direct your security personnel to disperse the crowd immediately.
  - (c) Ignore the situation and proceed with your scheduled tasks.
  - (d) Request the local police to handle the matter and keep you updated.

6. **You are the Superintendent of Police of a district. Some concerned and vigilant citizens have taken the initiative to bring to your attention a pressing issue—the increasing rate of crime in their neighborhood. These engaged residents are not only expressing unease but are also seeking your guidance and assistance in addressing the growing security challenges that are impacting the safety and well-being of the community. In these circumstances, how would you respond to their concern?**
- Arrange a community meeting to discuss the security issues and possible solutions.
  - Ask the local SHO to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the situation and submit a report within the time limit.
  - Ask the citizens to approach the local police station having jurisdiction over the area.
  - Will prioritize the community policing initiatives as this will foster a sense of resilience against criminal elements.
7. **As a Revenue Officer, you have encountered a farmer in significant distress because his land records are not updated. This issue has created substantial hurdles for the farmer, preventing him from seamlessly accessing government schemes and assistance programs implemented to support agricultural development. How do you handle this situation?**
- Immediately start the process to update the farmer's land records and resolve the issue.
  - Suggest the farmer consult a legal advisor to address the land record discrepancies.
  - Ignore the issue, assuming it to be a minor administrative issue.
  - Delegate the matter to a subordinate officer for timely resolution.
8. **In your capacity as the Chief Urban Planner, you are faced with some resident's legitimate concerns and frustration regarding unauthorized construction in their neighborhood. The residents, rightly so, are troubled by the potential implications of such unregulated development on the overall aesthetics, safety, and functionality of the community. How would you respond to this complaint?**
- Immediately order an investigation and take necessary steps to halt any ongoing unregulated development.
  - Advise the concerned residents to personally negotiate with the builders to address their grievances.
  - Disregard the complaint, stating that unauthorized construction falls outside the purview of urban planning.
  - Request the local law enforcement authorities to handle the unauthorized construction issues.
9. **You are the manager of a company with the authority to reimburse travel expenses for employees attending professional development conferences. One of your close friends, who works in a different department, submits a reimbursement request for a personal vacation, claiming it as a business trip. The official guidelines strictly prohibit reimbursement for personal travel. How would you handle this situation?**
- Discuss with your friend privately, explaining the company's policy and the importance of honest expense reporting.
  - Approve the reimbursement to support your friend, overlooking the violation of company policy.
  - Uphold the company policy and deny the reimbursement, emphasizing the need for adherence to guidelines.
  - Keep the reimbursement request pending by holding onto the file without taking any immediate action.
10. **You are the Chief Editor of a reputable newspaper, and you've observed a change in one of your senior journalists. This journalist has been known for their professionalism and timely delivery of quality articles. However, in recent months, their performance has declined, and colleagues have reported instances of uncooperative behavior. Additionally, the journalist's appearance has become unkempt, which is unusual for someone who used to maintain a polished image. How do you approach him?**
- Approach him privately for a detailed conversation to understand the root cause of his issues.
  - Arrange a meeting in his office to address the concern regarding his unkempt appearance.
  - Grant him a leave of absence to provide the opportunity for self-recovery and reflection.
  - Express empathy towards his situation and suggest considering a transfer for a fresh start.

- 11. You are a Senior Project Manager overseeing a crucial project. A close friend, who is also a talented professional, expresses a strong desire to be part of the project team. While your friend possesses the required skills, you are unsure if they are the best fit for the project. How would you handle this situation?**
- Inform your immediate supervisor about your friend's interest and let them make the decision, considering the project's needs.
  - Agree to include your friend in the project, assuming their skills will contribute positively and justify the decision.
  - Evaluate your friend's profile along with other potential candidates, prioritizing merit and project requirements over personal connections.
  - Deliberately provide negative feedback about your friend during the selection process to ensure they are not chosen for the project.
- 12. You are a software engineer working on a critical project with a tight deadline. Your team lead assigns you an additional task that is not directly related to the ongoing project but is considered important for the overall goals of the company. Simultaneously, a team member, who is struggling with their assigned tasks, approaches you for assistance. What would you do in this situation?**
- Prioritize the additional task assigned by your team lead, as it aligns with the company's overall goals.
  - Assist your struggling team member first, as helping them may contribute to the overall success of the project.
  - Complete your ongoing project tasks before addressing either the additional task or helping your team member.
  - Express your concerns to your team lead about the potential impact on the project deadline and seek guidance on task prioritization.
- 13. You are the manager of a national art competition exclusively for participants aged 18 and below. However, you received an entry from a talented artist who just turned 18 yesterday. This artist happens to be the sibling of a famous celebrity. In this situation, what would you do?**
- Allow the artist to participate, considering the proximity to the age limit by only one day.
  - Adhere strictly to the age limit rules and disqualify the entry.
  - Reach out to the celebrity sibling, asking them to withdraw the entry voluntarily.
  - Modify the age on the entry form to make it appear under 18, aiming to avoid conflicts with the celebrity.
- 14. You are a manager at a software development company, and your team is working on a critical project with a tight deadline. One of your team members, who is known for being sociable, frequently drops by your office for casual conversations. You have a pressing workload and need to ensure the team meets the project deadline. In this situation, you would:**
- Set aside time for a brief conversation to maintain a positive work environment.
  - Ignore the team member's attempts to engage in conversation, hoping they will understand your workload.
  - Politely express that you are currently occupied with a time-sensitive project and schedule a later time to chat.
  - Assign someone else on the team to handle the work for the time being while you talk to your colleague.
- 15. You are a senior executive at a multinational tech company, and you have recently discovered that a junior employee in your team is engaged in unethical practices to gain a competitive advantage. This information has the potential to harm the company's reputation and business interests. In this situation, you would:**
- Report the unethical behavior to the appropriate internal channels immediately.
  - Confront the employee privately and give them a chance to rectify their actions.
  - Ignore the issue and hope it resolves itself without impacting the company.
  - Consult with external legal advisors before taking any action.

16. A coastal town is expecting a severe cyclone to hit within 24 hours. The local authorities have issued evacuation orders for low-lying areas, but some residents are hesitant to leave due to concerns about their belongings and livelihoods. As the emergency management officer, what is the MOST appropriate course of action to ensure the safety of residents and minimize damage?
- Forcefully evacuate all residents, regardless of their concerns.
  - Allow residents to stay at their own risk, focusing resources on vulnerable groups.
  - Organize community meetings to address concerns, providing assurances and offering alternative accommodation options.
  - Delay the evacuation order until residents are more willing to leave.
17. A major river is expected to overflow its banks, potentially flooding nearby villages. There are limited evacuation centers and resources available. As the local disaster management official, what should be your immediate priority?
- Organize mass evacuations to the nearest city, regardless of capacity.
  - Focus on evacuating the elderly and children first, using available resources strategically.
  - Prioritize securing critical infrastructure like hospitals and communication towers.
  - Wait for the floodwaters to recede before assessing damage and taking action.
18. A strong earthquake has struck a densely populated urban area, causing widespread damage and potential building collapses. Rescue teams are overwhelmed with requests. As a team leader, which group should you prioritize rescuing first?
- High-ranking officials trapped in government buildings.
  - People trapped in easily accessible locations with visible injuries.
  - Residents calling for help from high-rise buildings with potential structural damage.
  - Individuals stuck in collapsed buildings with faint signs of life.
19. A war-torn region faces a severe food shortage, leading to widespread malnutrition and potential famine. International aid organizations arrive with limited resources. As the local coordinator, how would you ensure that aid reaches those who need it most?
- Distribute aid equally among all affected communities, regardless of needs.
  - Partner with local authorities to identify and prioritize the most vulnerable populations.
  - Implement a voucher system allowing refugees to choose their own food supplies.
  - Focus on providing food to major population centers, attracting refugees towards aid.
20. A highly contagious disease with limited treatment options is rapidly spreading in a rural community. Resources for testing and quarantine are scarce. As the health official in charge, how should you prioritize resources to effectively contain the outbreak?
- Focus on widespread testing and isolate everyone who tests positive.
  - Implement strict lockdowns and enforce mandatory vaccinations upon arrival.
  - Prioritize testing and isolation for high-risk groups and healthcare workers.
  - Focus on public awareness campaigns and encourage self-isolation for symptomatic individuals.

## ANSWERS

1. (d)    2. (c)    3. (a)    4. (b)    5. (a)    6. (b)    7. (d)    8. (a)    9. (a)    10. (a)  
 11. (c)    12. (d)    13. (b)    14. (c)    15. (a)    16. (c)    17. (b)    18. (c)    19. (b)    20. (c)

## EXPLANATIONS

1. (d)

**Explanation:**

This option involves acknowledging the resident's concerns and involving the relevant department. The idea is to entrust the department with investigating the irregularities and implementing necessary improvements. By referring the matter, you are utilizing their expertise and authority in managing municipal services. Additionally, by asking them to keep you updated, you maintain oversight and ensure accountability in resolving the issue.

2. (c)

**Explanation:**

As the District Collector, you are in a position to directly engage with the community and work towards a resolution. Initiating a dialogue with the protesting farmers is a constructive approach. This allows you to understand the specific concerns and grievances of the farmers. Conducting a series of consultations and dialogues will not only ensure that their voices are heard throughout the decision-making process but also help to explore alternative solutions that strike a balance between the need for development and the preservation of the farmers' interests.

3. (a)

**Explanation:**

Acknowledging the complaint and assuring prompt action is a proactive response. It shows that you take the concerns of the parents seriously and are committed to addressing the issue of teacher absenteeism. As the District Education Officer, you have the authority and responsibility to address such issues directly. Providing assurance also helps in building trust with the parents and demonstrates a commitment to the quality of education in the district.

4. (b)

**Explanation:**

As the designated health authority, your leadership is important in bringing positive changes in the system and ensuring the well-being of the residents in the district. Assigning a health department official is a proactive step to be taken as the CMO. This will not only ensure that someone with the necessary expertise and authority is tasked with investigating and resolving the issue in hand, but also shows the commitment to addressing the problem in a structured and efficient manner.

5. (a)

**Explanation:**

Meeting the villagers personally allows you, as the District Magistrate, to directly understand their grievances and address their concerns. It shows empathy and willingness of the administration to engage with the community. By addressing their specific issues regarding the unequal allocation of relief supplies and lack of transparency, you can work towards finding a resolution and rebuilding trust.

6. (b)

**Explanation:**

Asking the local SHO, who is familiar with the local dynamics, to conduct a comprehensive assessment ensures a detailed understanding of the security challenges faced by the community, their root causes and the potential solutions. Setting a time limit for the report emphasizes the urgency of the situation and ensures a prompt response to the citizens' concerns.

7. (d)

**Explanation:**

Delegating the issue to a subordinate officer allows for specialized attention and efficient resolution promptly without causing unnecessary delays in the farmer's access to government schemes and programmes.

8. (a)

**Explanation:**

Order for an immediate investigation not only shows a proactive approach to address the residents' concerns promptly, but also fosters confidence among residents that their concerns are being taken seriously and that steps are being taken to preserve the integrity of their neighborhood by upholding urban planning standards and regulations.

9. (a)

**Explanation:**

Discussing with the friend privately and explaining the company's policy and the importance of correct expense reporting is the best option in this situation. Engaging in an open and honest conversation allows you to address the issue directly, provide guidance on company policies, and emphasize the significance of maintaining integrity in expense reporting. This approach encourages accountability and ethical behavior while fostering a culture of compliance within the organization without impacting the personal relations.

10. (a)

**Explanation:**

This step prioritizes open communication, privacy, and empathy, laying the foundation for a supportive and constructive response to the observed changes in the journalist's behavior and performance. After that, better course of steps can be thought of depending upon the nature of the issue.

11. (c)

**Explanation:**

The option (c) prioritizes fairness and meritocracy. By evaluating all candidates impartially, including your friend, you ensure that the selection is based on qualifications and suitability for the project. This approach maintains professionalism, aligning with ethical standards and the project's success criteria.

12. (d)

**Explanation:**

Communicating with your team lead allows for transparency and collaboration. By expressing concerns about the additional task affecting the project deadline, you demonstrate a proactive approach and seek guidance, ensuring a collective decision-making process that considers both the importance of the new task and the progress of the ongoing critical project.

13. (b)

**Explanation:**

Option (b) is the appropriate choice as it maintains fairness and upholds the integrity of the competition's rules. Consistency in applying age limits ensures equal opportunities for all participants, regardless of their connections. This approach preserves the integrity of the competition, setting a precedent that is essential for maintaining a level playing field and the overall credibility of the event.

14. (c)

**Explanation:**

Politely expressing the current workload's urgency and suggesting a later time for a conversation strikes a balance between acknowledging the team member's sociability, maintaining a positive work environment, and ensuring focus on the pressing project deadline by setting clear boundaries and offering an alternative time for interaction.

15. (a)

**Explanation:**

This action prioritizes the company's integrity and upholds ethical standards. Timely reporting ensures appropriate measures are taken to address the issue, safeguarding the company's reputation and interests while demonstrating commitment to ethical conduct and accountability.

16. (c)

**Explanation:**

Forceful evacuation goes against the idea of consensual and democratic decision making. It may be somewhat justified in an emergency situation but addressing the concerns of residents can enhance cooperation and ease the process. Thus, option (a) is not the correct choice.

Allowing residents to stay at their own risk goes against the constitutional ideal of a welfare state. Thus, option b is not the correct choice.

Delaying the evacuation in such an emergency situation would amount to negligence of duty and weak decision making while endangering the lives of many. Thus, option d is not the ideal choice.

Option (c) represents democratic attitude of bureaucracy and enhances the confidence among the masses over the administration.

17. (b)

**Explanation:**

Option (a) risks overwhelming capacities. This will put an unprecedented burden on the city infra including hospitals, putting into risk the lives of many.

Option (c) delays saving lives while diverting the limited resources towards securing infrastructure.

Option (d) reflects a tiresome and negligent approach towards flood management. The masses would be left to fend off on their own, thus, compromising upon the duty of the state to ensure safety of the lives of its citizens.

While saving everyone is ideal, prioritizing the most vulnerable ensures maximum lives are saved with limited resources. Thus, option (b) is the best available choice.

18. (c)

**Explanation:**

Option (a) prioritizes authority over saving lives. All high-ranking officials trapped in government buildings may not be equally vulnerable and at risk. Thus, 'high-ranking officials' should not be the determining criteria.

Option (b) may neglect those at greater risk.

Option (d) might be resource-intensive with uncertain outcomes. It would be a non-conceptual and non-analytical decision to invest limited resources where there is less chance of saving lives among collapsed buildings.

Prioritizing trapped individuals in structurally unsound buildings minimizes further risk and maximizes potential salvages. Such people can be rescued if resources are mobilized timely and adequately. Thus, it would be a pragmatic decision to prioritize their rescue.

19. (b)

**Explanation:**

Option (a) appears fair at first glance but, ignores the diverse needs within various communities. Some might be closer to conflict zones, lack proper sanitation, or have more children or elderly residents requiring specialized care. Equal distribution may not address the most critical needs first.

Option (b), while empowering refugees and potentially fostering market recovery, assumes that market infrastructure functions even in a war-torn region and that vulnerable groups have equal access to information and ability to navigate the system. This might not be true in most of the cases.

Option (d) concentrates resources in specific locations, neglecting outlying communities suffering

equally or potentially more. It creates competition and potential conflict among refugees competing for aid.

Option (b) leverages local knowledge and relationships. Local authorities understand the region's demographics, specific needs of different communities, and access routes. Utilizing local expertise alongside aid organization resources is crucial for ensuring aid reaches those who need it most effectively and equitably, minimizing waste and maximizing impact during a humanitarian crisis.

20. (c)

**Explanation:**

Option (a), while being ideal, widespread testing may overwhelm the resources and isolate potentially healthy individuals, straining the system and reducing its effectiveness.

Option (b), Strict lockdowns restrict movement and can have negative economic and social impacts. Further, mandatory vaccinations require resources and might not be effective against all diseases.

Option (d), While public awareness is crucial, relying solely on individual responsibility might be ineffective with limited information and healthcare access. Encouraging self-isolation without proper support systems might be challenging. This approach might not be sufficient to contain the outbreak, especially with asymptomatic carriers.

Option (c) Focusing on high-risk groups (elderly, immunocompromised) and healthcare workers protects the most vulnerable and ensures the healthcare system's functionality, crucial for containing the outbreak.

Thus, option (c) is the best available choice in the given situation.