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Vidhigya India Open Mock (VIOM)-04
CLAT 2025**Section A – English****PASSAGE - I**

The brain – that’s the tricky part. In January 2021, as the Covid-19 pandemic was surging toward what would become its deadliest week on record, Netflix released a documentary series called *Surviving Death*. In the first episode, some of near-death studies’ most prominent parapsychologists presented the core of their arguments for why they believe near-death experiences show that consciousness exists independently of the brain. “When the heart stops, within 20 seconds or so, you get flatlining, which means no brain activity,” Bruce Greyson, an emeritus professor of psychiatry at the University of Virginia and one of the founding members of the International Association for Near-Death Studies, says in the documentary. “And yet,” he goes on to claim, “people have near-death experiences when they’ve been (quote) ‘flatlined’ for longer than that.”

That is a key tenet of the parapsychologists’ arguments: if there is consciousness without brain activity, then consciousness must dwell somewhere beyond the brain. Some of the parapsychologists speculate that it is a “non-local” force that pervades the universe, like electromagnetism. This force is received by the brain, but is not generated by it, the way a television receives a broadcast.

In order for this argument to hold, something else has to be true: near-death experiences have to happen during death, after the brain shuts down. To prove this, parapsychologists point to a number of rare but astounding cases known as “veridical” near-death experiences, in which patients seem to report details from the operating room that they might have known only if they had conscious awareness during the time that they were clinically dead. Dozens of such reports exist. One of the most famous is about a woman who apparently travelled so far outside her body that she was able to spot a shoe on a window ledge in another part of the hospital where she went into cardiac arrest; the shoe was later reportedly found by a nurse.

At the very least, Parnia and his colleagues have written, such phenomena are “inexplicable through current neuroscientific models”. Unfortunately for the parapsychologists, however, none of the reports of post-death awareness holds up to strict scientific scrutiny. “There are many claims of this kind, but in my long decades of research into out-of-body and near-death experiences I never met any convincing evidence that this is true,” Sue Blackmore, a well-known researcher into parapsychology who had her own near-death experience as a young woman in 1970, has written.

The case of the shoe, Blackmore pointed out, relied solely on the report of the nurse who claimed to have found it. That’s far from the standard of proof the scientific community

would require to accept a result as radical as that consciousness can travel beyond the body and exist after death. In other cases, there's not enough evidence to prove that the experiences reported by cardiac arrest survivors happened when their brains were shut down, as opposed to in the period before or after they supposedly "flatlined". "So far, there is no sufficiently rigorous, convincing empirical evidence that people can observe their surroundings during a near-death experience," Charlotte Martial, the University of Liège neuroscientist, told me.

The parapsychologists tend to push back by arguing that even if each of the cases of veridical near-death experiences leaves room for scientific doubt, surely the accumulation of dozens of these reports must count for something. But that argument can be turned on its head: if there are so many genuine instances of consciousness surviving death, then why should it have so far proven impossible to catch one empirically?

1. Based on the passage, why do parapsychologists believe near-death experiences provide evidence that consciousness exists independently of the brain?

- (a) Because consciousness can be measured scientifically after death.
- (b) Because there are numerous scientifically proven instances of consciousness persisting after death.
- (c) Because near-death experiences often include accounts of details that seem to be known only during clinical death.
- (d) Because consciousness is generated by the brain and persists after death.

2. What is the writer's attitude towards the parapsychologist's claims about the near-death experiences and consciousness?

- (a) Supportive and convinced
- (b) Skeptical and critical
- (c) Indifferent and neutral
- (d) Enthusiastic and optimistic

3. Based on the passage, what cannot be inferred about the scientific community's stance on the evidence for consciousness existing independently of the brain except?

- (a) The scientific community discreetly accepts the evidence provided by parapsychologists.
- (b) The scientific community is ambivalent and diplomatic about the evidence.
- (c) The scientific community is largely skeptical of the evidence provided by parapsychologists.
- (d) The scientific community actively supports research into near-death experiences as proof of consciousness beyond the brain.

4. Which of the following would likely answer the question posed in the concluding lines of the passage: “if there are so many genuine instances of consciousness surviving death, then why should it have so far proven impossible to catch one empirically?”

- (a) The limitations of current scientific instruments.
- (b) The lack of verifiable genuine instances of consciousness surviving death.
- (c) The skepticism of scientific community.
- (d) The difficulty in replicating near-death experiences in a controlled environment.

5. Which of the following assumptions underlies the parapsychologists’ argument for existence of consciousness independent of the brain?

- (a) Near-death experiences can be scientifically measured and quantified.
- (b) Consciousness is a by-product of brain activity.
- (c) Consciousness continues to function after the brain has ceased activity.
- (d) All near-death experiences are hallucinations caused by a lack of oxygen to the brain.

PASSAGE - II

The quantum revolution in physics played out over a period of 22 years, from 1905 to 1927. When it was done, the new theory of quantum mechanics had completely undermined the basis for our understanding of the material world. The familiar and intuitively appealing description of an atom as a tiny solar system, with electrons orbiting the atomic nucleus, was no longer satisfactory. The electron had instead become a phantom. Physicists discovered that in one kind of experiment, electrons behave like regular particles – as small, concentrated bits of matter. In another kind of experiment, electrons behave like waves. No experiment can be devised to show both types of behaviour at the same time. Quantum mechanics is unable to tell us what an electron is.

More unpalatable consequences ensued. The uncertainty principle placed fundamental limits on what we can hope to discover about the properties of quantum ‘wave-particles’. Quantum mechanics also broke the sacred link between cause and effect, wreaking havoc on determinism, reducing scientific prediction to a matter of probability – to a roll of the dice. We could no longer say: when we do *this*, *that* will definitely happen. We could say only: when we do this, that will happen with a certain probability.

As the founders of the theory argued about what it meant, the views of the Danish physicist Niels Bohr began to dominate. He concluded that we have no choice but to describe our experiments and their results using seemingly contradictory, but nevertheless complementary, concepts of waves and particles borrowed from classical (pre-quantum) physics. This is Bohr’s principle of ‘complementarity’. He argued that there is no contradiction because, in the context of the quantum world, our use of these concepts is purely symbolic. We reach for whichever description – waves or particles –

best serves the situation at hand, and we should not take the theory too literally. It has no meaning beyond its ability to connect our experiences of the quantum world as they are projected to us by the classical instruments we use to study it.

Bohr emphasised that complementarity did not deny the existence of an objective quantum reality lying beneath the phenomena. But it did deny that we can discover anything meaningful about this. Alas, despite his strenuous efforts to exercise care in his use of language, Bohr could be notoriously vague and more than occasionally incomprehensible. Pronouncements were delivered in tortured 'Bohrish'. It is said of his last recorded lecture that it took a team of linguists a week to discover the language he was speaking. And physicists of Bohr's school, most notably the German theorist Werner Heisenberg, were guilty of using language that, though less tortured, was frequently less cautious.

It was all too easy to interpret some of Heisenberg's pronouncements as a return to radical subjectivism, to the notion that our knowledge of the world is conjured only in the mind without reference to a real external world. It did not help that Bohr and physicists of Bohr's school sought to shoehorn complementarity into other domains of enquiry, such as biology and psychology, and attempted to use it to resolve age-old conundrums concerning free will and the nature of life. Such efforts garnered little support from the wider scientific community and attracted plenty of opprobrium.

Albert Einstein famously pushed back, declaring that, unlike quantum mechanics, God does not play dice. He argued that, while quantum mechanics was undoubtedly powerful, it was in some measure incomplete.

In 1927, Bohr and Einstein commenced a lively debate. Einstein was joined in dissent by the Austrian physicist Erwin Schrödinger, who devised the conundrum of 'Schrödinger's cat' to highlight the seemingly absurd implications of quantum mechanics. But although both Einstein and Schrödinger remained strident critics, they offered no counter-interpretation of their own. Despite their misgivings, there was simply no consensus on a viable alternative to complementarity.

6. Which of the following best explains why Niels Bohr's principle of 'complimentarity' was considered significant in the context of quantum mechanics?

- (a) It provided a method to measure both particle and wave behavior simultaneously.
- (b) It suggested that the behavior of electrons could be fully explained by classical physics.
- (c) It offered a way to reconcile seemingly contradictory experimental results by using symbolic descriptions.
- (d) It denied the existence of an objective quantum easily.

7. Based on the passage, which of the following can be inferred about the impact of the uncertainty principle on scientific research?

- (a) It completely invalidated the findings of classical physics.
- (b) It limits the ability to predict experimental outcomes with absolute certainty.
- (c) It eliminated the need for further experiments in quantum mechanics.
- (d) It proved that electrons do not exist as tangible particles.

8. Which of the following captures the intention of the author in describing quantum revolution in physics?

- (a) To highlight the uncertainty and contradictory nature of quantum mechanics.
- (b) To emphasize the historical timeline and key figures involved in quantum revolution.
- (c) To advocate for a return to classical physics principles.
- (d) To explore the philosophical implications of quantum mechanics on our understanding of reality.

9 What did Albert Einstein mean by the statement, “unlike quantum mechanics, God does not play dice”?

- (a) He believed that quantum mechanics is a complete and accurate theory.
- (b) He rejected the idea that quantum events are determined by probability.
- (c) He thought that quantum mechanics could explain all physical phenomena.
- (d) He agreed with Neil Bohr’s principle of complementarity.

10. What does the passage highlight about the impact of quantum mechanics on our understanding of the material world?

- (a) It affirmed the traditional view of the atom as a tiny solar system.
- (b) It maintained the sacred link between cause and effect.
- (c) It completely undermined the basis of our previous understanding.
- (d) It provided a clear and definitive explanation of what an electron is.

PASSAGE - III

Generally, I sense that invoking super-AI makes little difference to the question. ‘Why would anyone do it?’ just becomes ‘Why would anyone use super-AI to do it?’ A real answer has to lie with human incentives in the present, on Earth.

So, if there is no *direct* product in the present, what about the *indirect* products, that do occur in the here and now? This is where the answer must lie. Space programmes have known about these since Apollo. The early space programme did [generate](#) some tech spin-offs, but the real product was something different – it was a taste of a new kind of purpose and meaning, as we constructed the story of humanity’s first tenuous steps into a new realm. In the kind of VNP project we’re imagining here, human meaning will be embedded in a cosmic story spanning billions of years, superclusters of galaxies, and a narrative that grants special status to those who participate. The story will contain a

moral dimension too, since you'll need an overpowering moral imperative to justify appropriating galaxies. Regardless of whether a moral imperative exists at present, if a demand for one exists, a supply will emerge to fill it.

Let's be sceptical of that last sentence. Perhaps we're offended by this entire discussion, and conclude that humanity must not despoil the cosmos with VNPs. Further, suppose we have total faith in our ability to convince the world that a 'no cosmic expansion' philosophy is the best vision. Well, that's not good enough, because this philosophy must also compete for all future opinions.

For the sake of argument, let's say that our 'no cosmic expansion' philosophy is dominant for 1,000 years before briefly falling out of favour, allowing a single VNP to be released. The net outcome for the cosmos is identical to a world in which our philosophy never existed at all. No, reliance on human persuasion is insufficient, if we're really committed to the cause. A more practical, long-term way to safeguard the Universe from life would be to launch a competing project of cosmic expansion, using our own VNPs. One whose goal is to spread everywhere and, with minimal use of resources, do nothing but prevent others from gaining a foothold on the trillions of worlds we come to occupy. Only then can we smugly sit back and let it all go to waste in sterility.

The point is that *any* competing philosophy with a sufficiently strong opinion must adopt some form of cosmic expansion, even if it opposes the entire concept. Those efforts will unavoidably create their own Cosmic Story with Moral Dimension, enshrining the progenitors and offering Purpose and Meaning. There doesn't seem to be any way around it, short of snuffing out humanity before any of this can happen.

What *about* this 'Cosmic Story with Moral Dimension that delivers Purpose and Meaning'? That description may seem familiar. That's because it's religion, by another name. It could be a secular religion (that will inevitably take offence at religious comparisons), or it could be one that imports spiritual beliefs from pre-existing religions. Either way, religion it will be. Cosmic Story. Moral Dimension. Transcendent Purpose and Meaning for practitioners. One can go further – based on what we've seen before, it's likely to be a cult.

That may sound like a stretch, so let's unpack it. If your goal is to conquer and utilise the accessible Universe, you'll need absolute certainty in your philosophy. At least, you'll need to approach certainty before launching your VNPs (it's no good changing your mind after the launch!) So, you'll need to identify and recruit participants inclined to fully commit to your cause. And you'll need to relentlessly purge dissenters who occasionally arise inside your organisation – they threaten to mutate the 'absolutely certain' goal. You'll also have a strong incentive to adopt secrecy as a tool to prevent infiltration, spying and sabotage from competing groups, or government interference. So, then, what

do you call an insular, highly dogmatic religion that ruthlessly enforces conformity? Exactly.

The underlying philosophy will need supreme self-confidence to justify asserting itself on the cosmos, and it must strenuously avoid meddling from outsiders before the launch date. These projects won't necessarily start out as cults – they may even work against cultish behaviour – but as the decades pass and objectives become less abstract and goals get nearer, they'll find strong incentives to move in a cult-like direction, and very little incentive to move back.

Another obvious observation is that competing religions tend not to get along with each other. When they do get along, it's usually because one or more has given up on certain ambitions, and/or stopped taking their doctrine too seriously. They become more agreeable as they become more about 'personal faith', and less outward-focused. That condition will *not* be present in a race to deploy VNPs to capture the cosmos. The next 100 billion years of the Universe will be at stake, depending crucially on events happening today. The future of millions of galaxies. Someone will surely point out that direct physical conflict in the here-and-now on Earth is preferable to cosmic-scale conflict later on. In other words, there will be an incentive to violence, before launch-day. The most successful cult – by hook or by crook – is going to inherit the cosmos. I'm hardly unique in predicting conflict over future technology. Science fiction loves to do that. Others, like Hugo de Garis, have predicted an eventual world war over the question of 'whether humanity should build godlike massively intelligent machines'.

But this is different. I'm talking about the few. Conflict between small, secretive groups of highly technical zealots. People who could tell you the distance to the Andromeda Galaxy but hope you don't want to know. While the rest of humanity is fretting over issues like AI safety on Earth and shouting about impacts to their personal way of life, these people will be thinking about something else entirely, and watching with a jealous eye for others like themselves. Because the most successful cult – by hook or by crook – is going to inherit the cosmos.

11. Why does the author argue that a philosophy opposing cosmic expansion must still engage in some form of cosmic expansion?

- (a) To spread human civilization to other galaxies
- (b) To gain technological advancements
- (c) To prevent other groups from gaining a foothold in the universe
- (d) To establish a new form of government in space.

12. Which of the following conveys the core idea of the passage?

- (a) The inevitability of human expansion into space despite philosophical opposition.
- (b) The technological advancements resulting from space exploration
- (c) The conflict between different groups over the future of cosmic expansion.
- (d) The role of religion in motivating space exploration.

13. Which of the following can be concluded from the passage?

- (a) Human expansion into the cosmos will likely lead to the creation of new cult-like organizations.
- (b) The primary goal of cosmic expansion is to establish new forms of government in space.
- (c) Technological advancements from space exploration will solve many of Earth's current problems.
- (d) Cosmic expansion projects will always be driven by purely scientific motives.

14. In the statement "The point is that *any* competing philosophy with a sufficiently strong opinion must adopt some form of cosmic expansion, even if it opposes the entire concept. "what is the author suggesting?

- (a) All philosophies will ultimately support cosmic expansion for technological advancement.
- (b) Philosophies opposed to cosmic expansion will need to expand to prevent others from doing so.
- (c) Cosmic expansion is universally accepted as the best course of action.
- (d) Philosophies that oppose cosmic expansion will never participate in it.

15. From the passage, what can be inferred about the future of ideologies apposing cosmic expansion?

- (a) They will eventually dominate the discourse on cosmic exploration.
- (b) They will likely lead to conflicts over control of cosmic territories.
- (c) They will rapidly adopt cosmic expansion as their primary goal.
- (d) They will collaborate with other ideologies to prevent cosmic conflicts.

PASSAGE - IV

Economics until the 1970s was, then, rather like the British food scene today: many different cuisines, each with different strengths and weaknesses, competing for attention; all of them proud of their traditions but obliged to learn from each other; with lots of deliberate and unintentional fusion happening.

This intellectual 'monocropping' of economics has narrowed the intellectual gene pool of the subject

Since the 1980s, however, economics has become the British food scene before the 1990s. One tradition – neoclassical economics – is the only item on the menu. Like all

other schools, it has its strengths; it also has serious limitations. This ascent of the neoclassical school is a complex story, which can't be adequately considered here.

If told, the story would have many ingredients. Academic factors – like the merits and demerits of different schools, and the increasing dominance of mathematics as a research tool (which advanced knowledge of particular kind while suppressing others) – have mattered, of course. However, the ascent has also been critically shaped by power politics – both within the economics profession and in the outside world. In terms of professional power politics, the promotion of neoclassical economics by the so-called Nobel Prize in economic sciences (it is not a real Nobel prize but only a prize 'in memory of Alfred Nobel', given by Sveriges Riksbank, the Swedish central bank) has played a big role. In terms of power politics beyond the profession, the neoclassical school's inherent reticence to question the distribution of income, wealth and power underlying any existing socioeconomic order has made it more palatable to the ruling elite. The globalisation of education during the post-Second World War era, in which the disproportionate 'soft' cultural power of the United States has been the biggest influence, has played a crucial role in spreading neoclassical economics, which had become dominant in the US first (in the 1960s).

But, whatever the causes, neoclassical economics is today so dominant in most countries (Japan and Brazil, and, to a lesser extent, Italy and Turkey are exceptions) that the term 'economics' has – for many – become synonymous with 'neoclassical economics'. This intellectual 'monocropping' has narrowed the intellectual gene pool of the subject. Few neoclassical economists (that is, the vast majority of economists today) even acknowledge the existence, never mind the intellectual merits, of other schools. Those who do, assert the other varieties to be inferior. Some ideas, like those of the Marxist school, they will argue, are 'not even economics'. It's claimed that the few useful insights these other schools once possessed – say, for instance, the Schumpeterian school's idea of innovation, or the idea of limited human rationality from the behaviouralist school – have already been incorporated into the 'mainstream' of economics, that is, neoclassical economics. They fail to see that these incorporations are mere 'bolt-ons', like the baked potato beside a Pizzaland pizza, rather than genuine fusions – like Peruvian cuisine, with Inca, Spanish, Chinese and Japanese influences, or the dishes by the Korean American chef David Chang (no relation), with American, Korean, Japanese, Chinese and Mexican influences.

I am not saying that neoclassical economics is particularly bad. Like all other schools of economics, it was built to explain particular things on the basis of certain ethical and political premises. So it is very good at some things but very bad at other things. The problem, rather, is the almost total dominance of one school, which has limited the scope of economics and created theoretical biases and blindspots.

In the same way in which the country's refusal to accept diverse culinary traditions made Britain before the 1990s a place with a boring and unhealthy diet, the dominance of economics by one school has made economics limited in its coverage and narrow in its ethical foundation.

Some readers may legitimately ask: why should I care if a bunch of academics become narrow-minded and engage in intellectual monocropping? However, you should all care, because, like it or not, economics has become the language of power. You cannot change the world without understanding it. In fact, I think that, in a capitalist economy, democracy cannot function effectively without all citizens understanding at least some economics. These days, with the dominance of market-oriented economics, even decisions about non-economic issues (such as health, education, literature or the arts) are dominated by economic logic. I have even met some British people who are trying to justify the monarchy in terms of the tourist revenue it allegedly generates. I am not a monarchist, but how insulting is it for the institution to be defended in that kind of way? When so many collective decisions are formulated and justified with the help of the dominant economic theory, you don't really know what you are voting for or against, if you don't understand at least some economics.

Economics is not like studying, say, the Norse language or trying to identify Earth-like planets hundreds of light-years away. Economics has a direct and massive impact on our lives.

We all know that economic theories affect government policies regarding taxes, welfare spending, interest rates and labour market regulations, which in turn affect our daily material lives by influencing our jobs, working conditions, wages and the repayment burdens on our mortgages or student loans. Economic theories also shape the long-term collective prospects of an economy by influencing policies that determine its abilities to engage in high-productivity industries, to innovate, and to develop in an environmentally sustainable way. But beyond even that: economics doesn't just influence economic variables, whether personal or collective. It changes who we are.

16. According to the passage, why has the neoclassical school of economics become dominant since the 1980s?

- (a) Because it is the only school of thought that addresses income distribution, wealth, and power.
- (b) Due to its ability to integrate ideas from other schools seamlessly.
- (c) Because of the combination of academic factors, professional power politics, and the influence of global education dominated by the United States.
- (d) Because it is the most innovative and comprehensive school of economic thought.

17. Which of the following best captures the meaning of “intellectual ‘monocropping’ of economics” as used in the passage?

- (a) The diversification and enrichment of economic theories.
- (b) The exclusive focus on a single economic school to the detriment of others.
- (c) The natural evolution and improvement of economic thought over time.
- (d) The increase in collaborative efforts among different economic schools.

18. Which of the following is true about economics as per the passage?

- (a) Neoclassical economics has always been the dominant school of thought.
- (b) The dominance of neoclassical economics has resulted in diverse intellectual landscape in the field.
- (c) Understanding economics is crucial for participating effectively in a democratic society.
- (d) The Nobel Prize in economic sciences is awarded by the Nobel Foundation.

19. According to the passage, why has the dominance of neoclassical economics been particularly appealing to the ruling elite?

- (a) It promotes innovation and technological advancements.
- (b) It avoids questioning the distribution of income, wealth and power.
- (c) It encourages cultural exchanges and global education.
- (d) It integrates insights from all other school of economics.

20. Which of the following favors the author’s contention about the limitations of neoclassical economics?

- (a) The increasing use of mathematical tools in economic research.
- (b) The dominance of neoclassical economics in most countries today.
- (c) The failure to acknowledge and integrate insights from other school of economics.
- (d) The global spread of neoclassical economics through the influence of the United States.

PASSAGE - V

A 2015 study looked into the reasons why people who try to quit social media fail. The survey data came from a group of people who had signed up to quit Facebook for just 99 days. Many of these determined quitters couldn’t even make the first few days. And many of those who successfully quit had access to another social networking site, like Twitter, so that they had simply displaced their addiction. Those who stayed away, however, were typically in a happier frame of mind and less interested in controlling how other people thought of them, thus implying that social media addiction is partly a self-medication for depression and partly a way of curating a better self in the eyes of others. Indeed, these two factors may not be unrelated.

For those who are curating a self, social media notifications work as a form of clickbait. Notifications light up the reward centres of the brain, so that we feel bad if the metrics we accumulate on our different platforms don't express enough approval. The addictive aspect of this is similar to the effect of poker machines or smartphone games, recalling what the cultural theorist Byung-Chul Han calls the "gamification of capitalism".

But it is not only addictive. Whatever we write has to be calibrated for social approval. Not only do we aim for conformity among our peers but, to an extent, we only pay attention to what our peers write insofar as it allows us to write something in reply, for the likes. Perhaps this is what, among other things, gives rise to what is often derided as virtue-signalling, not to mention the ferocious rows, overreactions, wounded amour-propre and grandstanding that often characterise social media communities.

The analogy between the gambler and the social-media junkie is hard to avoid. Tristan Harris, Google's former design ethicist, calls your smartphone "The Slot Machine in Your Pocket". Most smartphone apps use "intermittent variable rewards" to keep users hooked. Because rewards are variable, they are uncertain: you have to pull the lever to see what you are going to get. Adam Alter adds that, with the invention of the like button, users are gambling every time they post. The anthropologist Natasha Dow Schüll, based on her work on machine gambling, agrees.

Today's casinos are very different from the macho dice-and-card play organised by old-school crime bosses. At the roulette table, the gambler could justify his perverse pleasure in risk-taking as a matter of honour in competition with peers. In recent decades, however, the favoured form has moved from the table to the slot machine. The machines have a range of devices to give users the appearance of regular wins to keep them playing. These are often losses disguised as wins, insofar as the payoff is less than the cost of playing. But the wins are not even the goal of playing. When we are on the machine, Schüll finds, our goal is to stay connected. As one addict explains, she is not playing to win but to "stay in that machine zone where nothing else matters". The gambling industry recognises this desire to avoid social reality. It is called "time on device", and everything about the machine is designed to cultivate it.

Source: <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2019/aug/23/social-media-addiction-gambling>

21. Based on the passage, which of the following best explains why social media can be as addictive as gambling?

- (a) Social media platforms use strategies that make users feel constantly rewarded.
- (b) Social media users are often motivated by a desire to control how others perceive them.
- (c) Both social media and gambling provide a way to escape from social reality.
- (d) Social media notifications can negatively affect a user's mental health.

22. Which of the following statements can be rightfully inferred from the passage?

- (i) People who successfully quit Facebook but use another social networking site might not have truly overcome their addiction.
 - (ii) Social media addiction is primarily driven by the need to avoid social reality.
 - (iii) Notifications on social media platforms can trigger the brain's reward centers, similar to clickbait.
- (a) Only (i) (b) (ii) and (iii) (c) (i) and (iii) (d) All of the above

23. Based on the passage, which of the following can be inferred about social media addiction?

- (a) People who quit social media tend to be more interested in controlling how others perceive them.
- (b) The variable rewards provided by social media notifications contribute to its addictive nature.
- (c) Most people who attempt to quit social media are successful within the first few days.
- (d) The gambling industry's strategies are fundamentally different from the techniques used by social media platforms.

24. What concept or behavior does the statement, "stay in that machine zone where nothing else matters" from the passage refer to?

- (a) The addictive behaviour exhibited by individuals using social media platforms.
- (b) The mindset of individuals focused solely on winning in gambling and gaming activities.
- (c) The state of flow experienced by individuals deeply engaged in productive work.
- (d) The mental state of individuals seeking self-improvement through mindfulness practices.

Section B-Current Affairs with GK

PASSAGE - VI

India has firmly opposed a joint counter notification submitted at the WTO alleging that its sugar subsidies breached WTO norms by a wide margin. The methodology used for calculating the subsidies was questioned by India, which argued against the use of the rupee in making the calculations on the ground that the currency was "heavily" impacted by inflation, according to sources. The joint counter notification, which was discussed at an agriculture committee meeting of the WTO last week, however, received "strong support" from several other nations, including Brazil, Canada, Costa Rica, Paraguay, New Zealand, the EU, and Guatemala, the official added. India's opposition is centered on the belief that the calculation methodology does not accurately reflect the economic reality, particularly considering the inflationary pressures on the rupee. The

country has consistently maintained that its sugar subsidies are within the limits set by the WTO and that the notification is based on flawed assumptions. The dispute over sugar subsidies is part of a broader debate within the WTO about agricultural support and the rules governing international trade. India has long argued for more flexibility in these rules to allow developing countries to support their agricultural sectors and ensure food security for their populations. The support for the counter notification from countries like Brazil and the EU reflects the significant global interest in the regulation of agricultural subsidies and the competitive pressures faced by sugar producers in different parts of the world.

25. Who recently contended that India is giving sugarcane subsidies beyond the limits set in the WTO's Agreement on Agriculture (AoA)?

- (a) Cuba and Australia
- (b) The US and Australia
- (c) The US and Honduras
- (d) None of the Above

26. During which round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade was the Agreement on Agriculture (AoA) negotiated?

- (a) Tokyo Round
- (b) Doha Round
- (c) Uruguay Round
- (d) Kennedy Round

27. What are the three pillars of the Agreement on Agriculture (AoA)?

- (a) Domestic support, Market access, Export subsidies
- (b) Tariff reduction, Export subsidies, Export bans
- (c) Trade facilitation, Domestic support, Tariff elimination
- (d) Investment protection, Trade services, Market Access

28. How are subsidies categorized under the Domestic Support provisions of the Agreement on Agriculture (AoA)?

- (a) Red Box, Yellow Box, Green Box
- (b) Blue Box, Green Box, Amber Box
- (c) Gold Box, Silver Box, Bronze Box
- (d) Black Box, White Box, Gray Box

29. Which of the following statements about the MFN principle is correct?

- (a) It allows WTO members to apply preferential tariff rates to products originating from neighboring countries.
- (b) It prohibits differential treatment in tariffs between developed and developing countries.
- (c) It permits exceptions for regional trade agreements that enhance economic integration among member countries.
- (d) It requires all WTO members to grant unconditional and immediate trade advantages to each other.

PASSAGE - VII

Recently, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) released its Regional Economic Outlook for Asia and the Pacific Report for April 2024. The report highlighted India as the source of repeated positive growth surprises, attributing this to resilient domestic demand. Despite challenges such as elevated monetary policy rates, a weak external environment, and potential spillovers from China's property sector correction, the region showed surprising resilience. Asia and the Pacific remained the world's most dynamic region in 2023, contributing significantly to global growth, with domestic consumption being the primary driver, especially in emerging Asia. Additionally, the report noted a retreat in inflation, aided by timely monetary tightening in 2022 and early 2023, along with falling commodity and goods prices. However, the speed of disinflation varied across economies. The overall outlook for most countries improved, suggesting the potential for a "soft landing" in 2024. This improvement is expected to strengthen purchasing power and potentially pave the way for monetary easing later in the year.

30. What is the significant factor driving India's economy, according to the IMF's Regional Economic Outlook for Asia and Pacific Report April 2024?

- (a) External demand (b) Public investment
(c) Monetary policy (d) Export performance

31. Which country has been cited along with India as the source of repeated positive growth surprises, according to the IMF's report?

- (a) China (b) Philippines (c) Japan (d) South Korea

32. By which year is India aiming to become the world's third-largest economy?

- (a) 2047 (b) 2025 (c) 2027 (d) 2030

33. What is the Special Drawing Right (SDR) in relation to the International Monetary Fund (IMF)?

- (a) A currency issued by the IMF
(b) A claim on the IMF's reserves
(c) A potential claim on the freely usable currencies of IMF members
(d) None of the Above

34. Which currencies are included in the Special Drawing Right (SDR) basket?

- (a) US dollar, Euro, Indian Rupee, British pound sterling
(b) US dollar, Euro, Japanese yen, British pound sterling, Chinese renminbi
(c) US dollar, Indian Rupee, Japanese yen, Chinese renminbi
(d) None of the Above

PASSAGE - VIII

In a landmark development for South India, the region has unveiled its first and the country's largest leopard safari, meticulously crafted in adherence to guidelines set by the Central Zoo Authority. Spanning a sprawling 20 hectares, the safari is enclosed by a robust 4.5-meter-high vertical chain-link mesh, reinforced with MS sheets inclined at a 30° angle across 1.5 meters. This expansive enclosure is nestled amidst natural rocky outcrops and semi-deciduous forests, presenting a scenic vista for the safari's notable residents – eight majestic leopards. This ambitious initiative, with a financial outlay of ₹4.5 crore, aims not just to provide a sanctuary for these elusive big cats but also to serve as an educational hub for visitors keen on understanding their habitat and behaviour. Amidst escalating human-animal conflicts, the safari also plays a crucial role in the conservation efforts by providing a safe haven for leopard cubs rescued from various parts of the state. A specially designated four-acre area within the safari, cordoned off with a solar fence, facilitates the gradual adaptation of these cubs to their new environment. Officials underscore the safari's dual purpose: to educate the public about leopards and their conservation needs, while also shedding light on the factors contributing to human-wildlife conflicts. This initiative not only aims to raise awareness but also encourages visitors to actively participate in safeguarding these endangered species for future generations.

35. Which state in South India is home to the First and Country's largest leopard safari?

- (a) Kerala (b) Tamil Nadu (c) Karnataka (d) Andhra Pradesh

36. Which of the following statement is/are correct?

I. India's leopard population from 2018 to 2022 as per Report on the Status of Leopards in India 2022 increased by 8%.

II. Central India and Eastern Ghats region showed the largest growth rate in leopard population.

- (a) Only I (b) Only II (c) Both I and II (d) None of the above

37. Which state has the highest number of leopards according to the 2022 report?

- (a) Maharashtra (b) Karnataka (c) Tamil Nadu (d) Madhya Pradesh

38. What is the name of the valley covered within South India's first and the country's largest leopard safari?

- (a) Valley of the Flowers (b) Parvati Valley
(c) Valley of the Champakadhama (d) Chumbi Valley

39. What is the conservation status of the leopard according to the IUCN Red List?

- (a) Endangered (b) Vulnerable
(c) Critically Endangered (d) Near Threatened

PASSAGE - IX

Cyclone Remal, which made landfall in low-lying Bangladesh and neighbouring India on May 26 evening with fierce gales and crashing waves, left at least 38 people dead, destroyed thousands of homes, smashed seawalls and flooded cities across the two countries. The toll includes 12 workers who died on May 28 when a quarry collapsed in India's Mizoram state, which the government attributed to torrential rains as the storm progressed inland. In terms of its land duration, it is one of the longest in the country's history," Azizur Rahman, director of the state-run Bangladesh Meteorological Department told AFP, adding it had battered the country for more than 36 hours. In contrast, Cyclone Aila, which hammered Bangladesh in 2009, lasted around 34 hours. Cyclones have killed hundreds of thousands of people in Bangladesh in recent decades, and the number of superstorms hitting its densely populated coast has increased sharply, from one a year to as many as three, due to the impact of climate change. Slow-moving and longer-lasting storms bring greater destruction. "I've seen many storms in my life but nothing like this cyclone", said Asma Khatun, an 80-year-old widow who lives with her son, a fisherman in Bangladesh's hard-hit coastal town of Patuakhali. "Before, the storm came and went away... now it doesn't seem to go away. The incessant pouring and heavy wind kept us stuck for days".

40. Which organization is primarily responsible for naming cyclones in the North Indian Ocean region?

- (a) World Meteorological Organization (WMO)
- (b) Panel on Tropical Cyclones (PTC)
- (c) India Meteorological Department (IMD)
- (d) Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)

41. Which of the following statements about tropical cyclones is incorrect?

- (a) Tropical cyclones rarely form near the equator
- (b) Tropical cyclones rotate clockwise in the Northern Hemisphere
- (c) Warm ocean temperatures are necessary for tropical cyclone formation
- (d) Tropical cyclones typically weaken when they move over land

42. When is World Meteorology Day observed annually?

- (a) March 21
- (b) March 23
- (c) April 22
- (d) May 15

43. Where is the headquarters of the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) located?

- (a) Mumbai, Maharashtra
- (b) Chennai, Tamil Nadu
- (c) Hyderabad, Telangana
- (d) Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh

44. Which of the following statements is/are Correct?

I. The name Remal to this Cyclone was given by Thailand.

II. Remal is an Arabic word meaning 'Sand'.

- (a) Only I (b) Only II (c) Both I and II (d) None of the Above

PASSAGE - X

India has attained an exceptional outcome in the Mutual Evaluation conducted during 2023-24 by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), according to a statement by the government. The Mutual Evaluation Report of India, which was adopted during the FATF plenary session held in Singapore from June 26 to June 28, has placed India in the "[X]" category. This classification signifies a crucial milestone in India's efforts to combat money laundering (ML) and terrorist financing (TF). A press release from the Press Information Bureau emphasized that the FATF plenary concluded that India had achieved a high level of technical compliance with the FATF's stringent requirements. The country's regime for anti-money laundering (AML), countering the financing of terrorism (CFT), and counter-proliferation financing (CPF) was noted for its effectiveness, delivering substantial results. These results include enhanced international cooperation, improved access to basic and beneficial ownership information, effective utilization of financial intelligence, and successful efforts in depriving criminals of their assets, among other areas. However, the FATF also identified areas needing improvement. The organization highlighted the necessity for stronger supervision and implementation of preventive measures in some non-financial sectors. Additionally, the FATF pointed out that India needs to address delays in concluding ML and TF prosecutions. The FATF stressed the importance of ensuring that CFT measures aimed at preventing the misuse of the non-profit sector for TF are implemented according to a risk-based approach. This includes conducting outreach to Non-Profit Organisations (NPOs) to educate them on their TF risks. Overall, while India has made significant strides in aligning with FATF standards, ongoing efforts are required to enhance certain aspects of its AML, CFT, and CPF frameworks.

45. When was the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) established?

- (a) 1985 (b) 1989 (c) 1991 (d) 1995

46. What has been redacted by [X] in the passage?

- (a) Enhanced follow-up (b) Regular follow-up
(c) Grey list (d) Black list

47. What does JAM stand for in the context of India's transition to a digital economy?

- (a) Jan Dhan, Aadhaar, Mobile (b) Jan Dhan, Aadhaar, Money
(c) J- Curve, Assets, Market (d) Junk Bond, Aadhaar, Money

48. What is the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) 'blacklist' also known as?

- (a) Non-Cooperative Countries or Territories (NCCTs)
- (b) Safe Haven Countries
- (c) Low-Risk Countries
- (d) Compliance Countries

PASSAGE - XI

The Indian Navy's ambitious Project-75I, involving a substantial submarine deal valued at over ₹43,000 crore, has achieved a significant milestone with the completion of Field Evaluation Trials (FET). These trials are crucial in assessing the compliance of bids submitted by contenders for the project: TKMS (Thyssenkrupp Marine Systems) and Navantia of Spain. Officials have confirmed that while a team from the Indian Navy conducted FET at TKMS's shipyard in March, the evaluation of Navantia's offer took place recently. Following the conclusion of FET, a comprehensive field evaluation report will be compiled. This report will be submitted to the Defence Ministry, which will then determine the bids that have successfully cleared the evaluation phase. This decision-making process is anticipated to span approximately two months, as explained by a defence official. Subsequently, the qualified bidders will undergo the next phase, involving the opening of bids and initiation of cost negotiations. Project-75I stands as a critical initiative aimed at enhancing India's naval capabilities through the acquisition of advanced submarines. The project's progress through rigorous evaluation stages underscores its strategic importance and the meticulous approach taken in selecting suitable partners for this crucial defence acquisition endeavour.

49. Which Indian shipbuilder has partnered with TKMS for the Project-75I submarine deal?

- (a) Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers
- (b) Hindustan Shipyard Limited
- (c) Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited
- (d) Cochin Shipyard Limited

50. How many submarines are planned to be procured under Project 75I?

- (a) Four
- (b) Six
- (c) Eight
- (d) Ten

51. Which one of the following is not among the submarines constructed under Project 75?

- (a) INS Kalvari
- (b) INS Vela
- (c) INS Karanj
- (d) INS Arihant

52. What is the target percentage of indigenisation for the first submarine under Project 75I?

- (a) 30%
- (b) 45%
- (c) 60%
- (d) 75%

Section C-Legal Reasoning**PASSAGE - XII**

According to Article 110 of the Constitution, a Bill can be designated as a money Bill if it deals with certain subjects including imposition, abolition, alteration of tax, regulation of the borrowing of money by Government, or amendment of law with respect to any financial obligations undertaken by Government, custody of the consolidated fund, or “any matter incidental” to the such subjects. Article 110 also states that the Lok Sabha Speaker will have the final say on whether a Bill is a money Bill or not. Typically, both the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha must pass a Bill before it can become law. Under Article 109, however, a Bill introduced as a money Bill only requires assent from the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha merely has 14 days to consider the Bill and return it with recommendations. The Lok Sabha may either accept or reject these recommendations and enact the money Bill into law. The current issue emerged when the NDA government began to use the money Bill route to enact crucial laws such as the Aadhar Act, 2016 and the FCRA, 2010. The petitioners claimed that parts of the Act were passed as a money Bill, despite containing provisions that were unrelated to the subjects listed under Article 110. The Supreme Court, however, upheld the Aadhar Act as constitutional in September 2018. Justice Ashok Bhushan, in his concurring judgement, said the main aim of the Act was to provide subsidies and benefits. But he representing the majority also added that the Speaker’s decision on whether a Bill is a money Bill or not, despite being “final” according to the Constitution, can still be subject to judicial review. Then Justice D Y Chandrachud authored a dissenting opinion in the case. He also highlighted how passing an ordinary Bill as a money Bill would limit the role of the Rajya Sabha in law-making. Hence such actions should be curbed and proper procedure should be adopted. Another challenge came in the form of pleas in 2019 questioning the constitutionality of the Finance Act, 2017 — it brought in a number of changes to different Acts. The Act which was also enacted through the money Bill route. The Supreme Court while hearing such plea observed that the five-judge bench in the Aadhar case had not detailed the scope of what constitutes a money Bill. As they were a bench of the same size, the court referred the question of whether the 2017 Finance Act was validly passed as a money Bill to a larger seven-judge bench. Proceedings to the challenges to amendments passed through the money Bill route have been put on hold until the seven-judge bench decides on what constitutes a money Bill.

Source: Extract (with edits and revisions) from an article titled “What are Money Bills and why are they the subject of a constitutional challenge?” published at The Indian Express.

53. Vidhan, a Member of Parliament from the opposition party, notices that a new Bill relating to an extensive framework for digital taxation on companies is introduced in the Lok Sabha. The Speaker of the Lok Sabha certified the Bill as a money Bill. Vidhan strongly believes that the Bill contains provisions that fall outside the ambit of Article 110 as it also covers regulatory aspects on how digital companies operate, which he feels is far-fetched from being a financial matter. Vidhan in October 2018 is considering challenging the certification of this Bill as a money Bill as it will restrict the Rajya Sabha's ability to make amendments and contribute effectively. Given the judicial ruling in force at this moment with respect to money Bill, decide:

- (a) Vidhan cannot challenge the Speaker's decision; it is final and conclusive.
- (b) Vidhan must wait for the seven-judge bench's ruling on the constitutionality of another money Bill before he can challenge this Bill.
- (c) Vidhan can challenge the Speaker's certification by approaching the Supreme Court as decisions on money Bills are subject to judicial review.
- (d) Vidhan should not challenge because any Bill related to taxation must be considered a money Bill.

54. Vidhi, a senior economist, is engaged in a televised debate over the amendment via the Finance Act, 2018, which reversed the burden of proof in money laundering cases and introduced restrictive bail conditions. One of her points of contention is that such a significant change to the criminal law framework should not have been passed using the money Bill route as it entails much broader implications. She argues that the restrictive bail conditions infringe on civil liberties and the passage of the Finance Act, 2018, as a money Bill was an abuse of the constitutional process, similar to what Justice D Y Chandrachud opined in the Aadhaar case. Decide whether her argument is valid or not, assuming that the seven-judge bench held that money bill has to be restrictive to the matters listed in the article 110 of the constitution.

- (a) Vidhi is incorrect because the Finance Acts are considered money Bills and civil liberties are not paramount over fiscal management.
- (b) Vidhi cannot question the Act's status as a money Bill since it relates to the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), which is inherently financial.
- (c) Since the Supreme Court upheld the Aadhaar Act as a money Bill, it confirms the appropriateness of using the money Bill route for complex legislation like the Finance Act, 2018.
- (d) Vidhi is justified in her argument since changes to the burden of proof and bail conditions extend beyond the scope of money bill, and the Act's passage as a money Bill could be contested.

55. Vidhan, a legal advisor for an NGO that works on transparency in governance, is scrutinizing the Finance Act, 2017, which amended the Foreign Contributions Regulations Act (FCRA), 2010. The Act regulates the acceptance and utilisation of foreign contribution or foreign hospitality by individuals or associations or companies and to prohibit acceptance and utilisation of foreign contribution or foreign hospitality for any activities detrimental to the national interest. He proves that the amendment through the Finance Act, 2017, which was passed as a money Bill, modified the procedural regime of FCRA but did not deal with the consolidated fund or impose any taxation. Vidhan contends that such amendments even though it is made to the financial law should not have been passed as a money Bill since they fall outside the stipulated subjects listed under Article 110 and that the Money Bill route was incorrectly used to bypass the Rajya Sabha's contributions. Decide the case considering the dissenting view of the Aadhar judgment to be the binding rule.

- (a) Vidhan's concerns are moot since any amendments to existing financial laws automatically qualify as a money Bill.
- (b) Vidhan is correct in his assessment, and can legally dispute the categorization of the Finance Act, 2017, as a money Bill to uphold legislative efficiency.
- (c) Vidhan should accept the Finance Act, 2017, since the Lok Sabha Speaker's decision to pass it as a money Bill is final.
- (d) Vidhan's claim is invalid because the Finance Act, 2017, relates to a changes in a pre-existing financial regulation Act.

56. If the fact is introduced that the Supreme Court in the seven-judge constitution bench definitively determines what constitutes a money Bill and held that all matters relating to a financial legislation can be modified, altered or amended through a money bill, what effect would it have?

- (a) Strengthen Vidhan's case, as the formation of a seven-judge constitution bench suggests that the Supreme Court is taking serious consideration of the issues raised about the misuse of the money Bill route, potentially aligning with Vidhan's argument regarding the Finance Act, 2017.
- (b) Weaken Vidhan's case, because the constitution bench's decision indicates the legality of using the money Bill route for such amendments, implying that the Finance Act, 2017, might still be upheld as constitutionally passed.
- (c) Strengthen the government's position, as the decision by a constitution bench could imply that there is substantial legal ground to consider that the Finance Act, 2017, was appropriately passed as a money Bill.
- (d) Both (b) and (c).

57. Based on the passage, which of the following statements is true?

- (a) The Supreme Court has always upheld the use of the money Bill route for passing any kind of legislation without exceptions.
- (b) The Supreme Court's pending consideration on the use of money Bills suggests that there's ongoing judicial scrutiny regarding what constitutes a money Bill.
- (c) Justice D Y Chandrachud fully supported the passing of the Aadhaar Act as a money Bill, highlighting its constitutional validity.
- (d) The Supreme Court struck down the entire Finance Act, 2017, because it was passed as a money Bill.

58. Based on the passage, which of the following statements cannot be inferred?

- (a) The Supreme Court has recognized the possibility of judicial review of the Lok Sabha Speaker's decisions on whether a Bill is a money Bill.
- (b) The introduction of legislation through the money Bill route has been a point of contention and legal challenge, particularly when it involves subjects that may not fall strictly within the fiscal subjects listed in Article 110 of the Constitution.
- (c) The Supreme Court has definitively resolved the debate over what constitutes a money Bill, with a clear set of guidelines that are universally accepted.
- (d) Challenges to the constitutionality of legislation passed as money Bills highlight concerns over the potential for bypassing the Rajya Sabha's role in the legislative process.

59. Based on the passage, decide:

Assertion (A): Money Bills provide a fast-tracked option for the enactment of laws by Parliament.

Reason (R): A Bill introduced as a money Bill only requires assent from the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha merely has 14 days to consider the Bill and return it with recommendations. The Lok Sabha may either accept or reject these recommendations and enact the money Bill into law.

- (a) Both A and R are true and R is the correct explanation for A's truthfulness.
- (b) Both A and R are true but R is not the correct explanation for A's truthfulness.
- (c) A is true but R is false.
- (d) A is false but R is true.

PASSAGE – XIII

The amendment to the IT Rules, 2021, which allowed the Ministry to appoint the 'Fact Check Unit' (FCU), were notified. A two-judge Bench of the HC will hear the challenge to the Rules. The amendment to the IT Rules, 2021 notified in 2023 did two things: first, they brought in a legal framework for the online gaming and second, more crucially, introduced a legal mechanism for the government to fact-check online content. The changes raised concern that the FCU will make the government the "sole arbiter of

truth”. Subsequently, the rules were challenged before the Bombay High Court. The petitioners challenged Rule 3(1)(b)(v) of the IT Rules 2021 as being violative of Articles of Part III of the Constitution, and Section 79 of the Information Technology Act, 2000 (IT Act). The amendment to Rule essentially expanded the term “fake news” to include fake news involving government business. This provision, when enacted in 2021, referred to “...any information which is patently false or misleading in nature but may reasonably be perceived as a fact”. By the 2023 amendment, after the word “nature”, the words “or, in respect of any business of the Government, is identified as fake or false or misleading by such fact check unit of the Central Government as the Ministry may, by notification published in the Official Gazette, specify” were inserted. The petitioners argued before the court that this would have a “chilling effect” upon the fundamental right of freedom of speech and expression.

Section 69 of the IT Act empowers the government to issue directions to block public access to any information through any computer resource. The Rules were framed essentially in exercise of this power. However, no rule-making or legislation-making powers can be exercised in a manner that is contrary to Part III of the Constitution, which deals with fundamental rights. The Bombay High Court will examine if these Rules are violative of free speech, and are arbitrary in nature. Navigating the line between judicial review and Parliament’s powers to legislate, courts generally shy away from staying laws before they can rule on its constitutionality. Further there is a presumption of constitutionality of law. However, two crucial aspects are at play in this case one of which is that the Rules in question are not acts of legislation. They are made by the Ministry in exercise of powers delegated to the central government by Parliament, and are not a direct expression of the will of Parliament. Hence they do not enjoy the same benefit and the court holds power to rule that said rules be in abeyance.

Source: Extract (with edits and revisions) from an article titled “Why Supreme Court has stayed Govt’s ‘Fact Check Unit’ for now” published at the The Indian Express.

60. Vidhan, the owner of a prominent news website, publishes an article claiming the government’s recent policies on start-up funding have severely diminished opportunities for innovation. Subsequently, the newly installed Fact-Checking Unit (FCU) flags the article as misleading information relating to government business. Vidhan contests the FCU's decision, claiming it as an infringement of his right to free speech, and decides to challenge the Rules under which the FCU operates before the Supreme Court. Considering the various legal thresholds and the actions which the courts are capable of as depicted in the passage, which of the following outcomes is Vidhan most likely to confront?

- (a) The Supreme Court upholds the FCU's decision, as the amendment carries a presumption of constitutionality and Vidhan failed to prove unconstitutionality.
- (b) The Supreme Court defers the decision, stating only the Bombay High Court's final ruling on the existing challenges can determine the FCU's legitimacy.
- (c) The Supreme Court may grant a stay on the FCU's decision till the constitutionality of the amended rules is decided.
- (d) The Supreme Court dismisses Vidhan's petition outright, relying on the Bombay High Court that did not stay the FCU's operations.

61. Vidhi, a social media influencer in Mumbai, posts an investigative video on her platform that contradicts the government's narrative on an environmental policy. Her content is subsequently tagged as 'fake news' by the FCU. The Bombay High Court division bench hearing the challenge to the Rules gave a split verdict. Then a third judge who was assigned to give an opinion on the split verdict declined to stay the operation of the FCU. In the wake of ongoing legal disputes regarding the IT Rules, 2021, Vidhi decides to continue disseminating her content, arguing that the Rules have been practically invalidated by a split verdict and can't be enforced. Is Vidhi's action legally justifiable?

Note: When a matter is heard by a bench and they are divided in opinion, the matter, with their opinions, shall be laid before another Judge of that Court, and that Judge, after such hearing as he thinks fit, shall deliver his opinion, and the judgment or order shall follow that opinion.

- (a) Yes, because the split verdict stands as an explicit finding of unconstitutionality, thus diminishing the effect of the FCU's ability to restrict content.
- (b) No, because the third judge declined to stay the operation of the FCU, indicating continuity of operations until a definitive outcome is reached.
- (c) Yes, because the onus to prove that the information is fake rests with the government, and until proven, Vidhi is free to post content.
- (d) No, because the bench unanimously decided not to stay the operation of the FCU, which implies that the FCU is in full legal force.

62. A group of journalists, after observing the ongoing legal tussles over the latest IT Rules, which were framed essentially in exercise of the power provided under section 69 of the IT Act which empowers the government to issue directions, decide to proactively take the government to Supreme court over potential future curtailments of their reporting, which often involves scrutinizing the state's actions in policy matter. The petitioners argued before the court that these rules would have a "chilling effect" upon the fundamental right of freedom of speech and expression which also includes the freedom of press. Government on the other hand argues that the presumption of constitutionality applies in this instance due to the nature of the Rules as a subordinate

legislation. Considering the grounds of petitioner's challenge and the defence provided by government, what conclusion is most likely to be drawn?

- (a) Their challenge is premature and thus not justiciable, as no specific infringement of rights has occurred.
- (b) Their challenge can be heard but the defence is unacceptable, as the passage outlines that rules does not enjoy the presumption of constitutionality.
- (c) Their challenge will likely be dismissed because the Supreme Court typically refrains from granting stays before ruling on constitutionality.
- (d) Their challenge holds merit, but will be set aside until the Bombay High Court completes its review of the current challenges to the Rules.

63. If the fact is introduced that similar rules regarding online content and government fact-checking units have been implemented in several other democracies without significant legal challenges of infringements on freedom of speech, would this fact strengthen the group of journalists' case, weaken it, or have no effect?

- (a) Strengthen the journalists' case, as it underscores the global precedence of safeguarding freedom of speech against government overreach, suggesting that the Indian government's rules may be an outlier in democratic practice.
- (b) Weaken the journalists' case, because the successful implementation of similar rules in other democracies without legal challenges could imply that such rules do not inherently infringe on freedom of speech and that the journalists' concerns may be overblown.
- (c) Have no effect on the journalists' case, as the constitutionality of the Indian government's IT Rules must be assessed in the context of India's specific legal framework and constitutional protections, regardless of practices in other countries.
- (d) Cannot be determined.

64. Based on the passage, which of the following statements can be considered not to be untrue?

- (I) The Supreme Court has confirmed the constitutionality of the IT Rules, 2021 amendment, and the establishment of the Fact Check Unit (FCU).
- (II) The Bombay High Court provided a unanimous verdict in favor of the IT Rules, 2021 amendment.
- (III) The Bombay High Court has stayed the amended IT Rules until it reaches a final conclusion on their constitutionality.
- (IV) The amendment to the IT Rules, 2021, has been accepted without any legal challenges or concerns raised.

- (a) (I) and (IV) (b) Only (III) (c) All of them. (d) None of them.

65. Based on the passage, which of the following statements cannot be inferred?

- (I) The Court's power to stay the Rules reflects judicial caution in certain matters until a final verdict is reached by the court.
- (II) The Supreme Court's practice of not staying laws pending a review of their constitutionality is an established norm.
- (III) The IT Rules, 2021 amendment, directly stemmed from the explicit legislative will of the Indian Parliament.
- (IV) The Rules introduced a legal mechanism for the government to fact-check online content, which was challenged for potentially infringing on freedom of speech and expression.

- (a) Only II (b) II and III (c) Only III (d) None of them.

66. Based on the passage, decide:

Assertion (A): The Amendment to the Act gave the Central Government an authoritarian power to decide the truthfulness of news which is concerned about the business of government.

Reason (R): The fact check unit (FCU) of the Central Government may identify as fake or false or misleading any information in respect of any business of the Government.

- (a) Both A and R are true and R is the correct explanation for A's truthfulness.
- (b) Both A and R are true but R is not the correct explanation for A's truthfulness.
- (c) A is true but R is false.
- (d) A is false but R is true.

PASSAGE – XIV

"One need not be an accused in the predicate offence to be an accused under PMLA," Additional Solicitor General SV Raju told a Delhi Court, while seeking remand of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal. What Raju meant was that even if Kejriwal has not been named as an accused in the corruption case (the Delhi excise policy case) itself, he can be booked for the offence of laundering "proceeds of crime" derived from the case. This distinction brings to focus the debate on whether money laundering is a standalone offence or if it is extrinsically linked to a larger predicate offence.

What is a predicate offence? The Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) criminalises money laundering as: "Whosoever directly or indirectly attempts to indulge or knowingly assists or knowingly is a party or is actually involved in any process or activity connected with the proceeds of crime including its concealment, possession, acquisition or use and projecting or claiming it as untainted property shall be guilty of offence of money laundering." Here, "proceeds of crime" is "any property derived or obtained, directly or indirectly, by any person as a result of criminal activity relating to a scheduled offence..." The law also defines scheduled offences, which are listed in the schedule attached to the PMLA. These offences in the schedules are certain offences of

IPC like cheating or fraudulent acts or of other laws like the Narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances Act or The prevention of corruption Act. These are also called predicate offences. A plain reading shows that to be accused of money laundering, one has to be tied to the scheduled offence, which in Kejriwal's case would be under the Prevention of Corruption Act. However, he is not named as an accused in the excise case itself.

What have the courts said? In the *Vijay Madanlal Choudhary & Ors v Union of India* case, the Supreme Court had said that if an accused in the predicate offence is acquitted or discharged, he cannot be prosecuted for the offence punishable under the PMLA. But what if an accused is not even shown as an accused in any scheduled or predicate offence? The Supreme Court in *Pavana Dibbur v Enforcement Directorate* verdict, answered this question. The verdict by Justices Abhay Oka and Pankaj Mithal said that an accused in the PMLA case who comes into the picture after the scheduled offence is committed, by assisting in the concealment or use of proceeds of crime, need not be an accused in the scheduled offence. Here, the proceeds of crime that the accused has allegedly concealed or possessed must simply be linked to the scheduled offence. "Such an accused can still be prosecuted under PMLA so long as the scheduled offence exists," the court had said.

Source: Extract (with edits and revisions) from an article titled "Can Arvind Kejriwal be booked for money laundering, even if he is not named in Delhi excise policy case?" published at The Indian Express.

67. Vidhan, a prominent businessman in Delhi, was implicated in a high-profile corruption case linked to the allocation of government contracts. He was arrested and charged with multiple counts under the Prevention of Corruption Act. Subsequently, his long-time associate, Vidhyut, was found to have purchased several properties and luxury goods shortly after the revelation of the corruption case. The funds used for these purchases were traced back to a company owned by Vidhan but were made in Vidhyut's name. An investigation under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) was initiated, and Vidhyut was arrested despite not being named in the original corruption case. The prosecution claims that Vidhyut was knowingly involved in the laundering of proceeds derived from Vidhan's criminal activities. Vidhyut's defense argues that since he was not an accused in the predicate offence, the money laundering charges do not apply to him. Which of the following is the most defensible position in court, according to the legal principles described in the passage?

(a) Vidhyut cannot be tried under PMLA since he was not named in the original corruption case.

(b) Vidhyut can only be prosecuted under PMLA if the trial for the corruption case involving Vidhan has concluded.

(c) Vidhyut can be prosecuted for money laundering, as long as the link between his assets and the predicate offence is established.

(d) Vidhyut must be acquitted of money laundering charges as there is no precedent for trial under PMLA without direct accusation in the predicate offence.

68. In the state of Maharashtra, a group of individuals was arrested for a massive fraud involving the embezzlement of funds from a government housing project. Vidhi, a local politician, was later implicated when bank records revealed large deposits into her accounts around the same time the fraud occurred. Although Vidhi was never charged with the embezzlement itself, the investigating agency claims that the deposits are proceeds of the crime linked to the fraud. They argue Vidhi's involvement in the process of laundering these funds by disguising them as legitimate political donations. The defense contends that without a direct charge in the housing project fraud case against Vidhi, the funds cannot be considered proceeds of a crime, and thus she cannot be charged under PMLA. Based on the information in the passage, which argument aligns with the established legal principles?

(a) Vidhi can be charged under PMLA solely based on the embezzlement case's outcome.

(b) Vidhi cannot be charged under PMLA since the alleged proceeds are not from a scheduled offence.

(c) Vidhi should be charged under PMLA because the funds in her account originate from the fraud, making them proceeds of crime, even though she is not named in the fraud case.

(d) The charge of money laundering against Vidhi must be dropped as it is not supported by the judicial precedents concerning PMLA.

69. A renowned jeweler in Chennai, Vidhan, was found to have connections with an organized crime group involved in drug trafficking. While Vidhan was never implicated in the drug trafficking case, investigations revealed that he frequently transacted with the crime group and had suspiciously large deposits in his offshore accounts. The enforcement authorities surmise that Vidhan's transactions and wealth accumulation are tied to the money derived from drug sales. They filed charges of money laundering against him based on the evidence of his financial engagements with the crime group being linked to the predicate offence. Vidhan's legal team insists that since he has no formal accusation in the drug-related activities, the money laundering charges should not hold. What argument should the prosecution present to further their case in alignment with the judicial clarification stated in the passage?

(a) Vidhan's financial engagements suggest he possessed proceeds of crime and thus can be prosecuted under PMLA, notwithstanding direct involvement in the trafficking case.

- (b) The money laundering charges must be dismissed as Vidhan's transactions are not explicitly mentioned as part of the drug trafficking case.
- (c) Vidhan can only be charged with money laundering if the drug trafficking case concludes with a conviction for the crime group.
- (d) The prosecution must first prove Vidhan's direct involvement in drug trafficking before charging him with money laundering.

70. If the fact is introduced that the crime group involved in drug trafficking with which Vidhan transacted has been officially designated as a terrorist organization under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), further complicating the legal scrutiny of Vidhan's financial transactions, would this fact strengthen Vidhan's case, weaken it, or have no effect?

- (a) Strengthen Vidhan's case, as it emphasizes the necessity of proving direct involvement or support of terrorist activities under UAPA, distinct from mere financial transactions, potentially mitigating the money laundering charges against him.
- (b) Weaken Vidhan's case, because the designation of the crime group as a terrorist organization under UAPA could imply a more severe scrutiny of his financial transactions and associations, reinforcing the prosecution's argument of money laundering linked to serious criminal activities.
- (c) Have no effect on Vidhan's case, as the core issue remains whether his assets are derived from the proceeds of the predicate offense of drug trafficking, irrespective of the additional complications introduced by the UAPA designation.
- (d) Strengthen the prosecution's case, as the UAPA designation could serve as supplementary evidence of Vidhan's involvement in a broader spectrum of criminal activities beyond the initial money laundering charges, highlighting the gravity of his alleged financial engagements.

71. Based on the passage, which of the following statements is true?

- (a) To be prosecuted under the PMLA, an individual must be directly involved in the commission of the predicate offence.
- (b) The Supreme Court has ruled that if an individual is acquitted or discharged in the predicate offence, they cannot be prosecuted under the PMLA for money laundering.
- (c) Arvind Kejriwal's involvement in the Delhi excise policy case as an accused is necessary for him to be charged under the PMLA.
- (d) The Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) does not allow for the prosecution of individuals who are indirectly involved in laundering proceeds of crime.

72. Based on the passage, which of the following statements cannot be inferred?

- (a) The definition of money laundering under the PMLA includes both direct and indirect involvement in activities connected with the proceeds of crime.
- (b) The Supreme Court has provided clarity on the prosecution of individuals under the PMLA who are not directly accused in the predicate offence.
- (c) The trial for money laundering under the PMLA cannot proceed unless the trial for the predicate offence has concluded.
- (d) An individual's prosecution under the PMLA is not contingent upon being named as an accused in the predicate offence.

PASSAGE – XV

The Supreme Court expressed concern about media censorship and stifling of free speech in a recent judgement while asking lower courts to generally restrain from passing injunction orders that restrain publication of news articles. The top court, while setting aside an injunction order passed by the Delhi high court asking Bloomberg to take down an article concerning the Zee group, said that such orders could have huge ramifications on the freedom of speech and expression. The bench added that courts should only grant ex-parte injunctions in exceptional cases.

The court also noted the use of Strategic Litigation against Public Participation (SLAPP) suits to prevent the publication of important information. The term 'SLAPP' is an umbrella term used to refer to litigation predominantly initiated by entities that wield immense economic power against members of the media or civil society, to prevent the public from knowing about or participating in important affairs in the public interest. "We must be cognizant of the realities of prolonged trials (in SLAPP cases). The grant of an interim injunction, before the trial commences, often acts as a 'death sentence' to the material sought to be published, well before the allegations have been proven. While granting ad-interim injunctions in defamation suits, the potential of using prolonged litigation to prevent free speech and public participation must also be kept in mind by courts," the court observed. The court passed the order on a plea filed by Bloomberg Television Production Services, which approached it against Zee Entertainment Enterprises challenging orders of a trial court and Delhi HC, which had directed it to take down an article against Zee and also restrained it from posting, circulating or publishing the article in a defamation case filed by Zee. Allowing the plea, SC quashed the HC order. The court said in its order that for granting interim relief in suits concerning defamation by media platforms and/or journalists, an additional consideration of balancing the fundamental right to free speech with the right to reputation and privacy must be borne in mind besides the three-fold test of establishing (i) a prima facie case, (ii) balance of convenience and (iii) likely irreparable loss or harm.

Further it said, “Merely recording that three grounds exist, would not amount to an application of mind to the facts of the case. The court should record its reason for granting the relief. The three-fold test cannot merely be recorded as a mantra without looking into the facts on the basis of which an injunction has been sought”. “An unreasoned ad-interim injunction granted by the trial judge amounts to unreasoned censorship which cannot be countenanced,” the court said in its order, adding that the error committed by the trial Judge was perpetuated by the high court in its order.

Source: Extract (with edits and revisions) from an article titled “SC: ‘Injunction Orders Stifle Public Debate, Free Speech’, Lower Courts Should Exercise Restrain” published at The Indian Express.

73. Vidhan, a seasoned journalist with 'The Daily Report', published an article, revealing financial discrepancies in the accounts of a prominent pharmaceutical company, Swasthya Corp, based on an inquiry conducted by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). Swasthya Corp's management, claiming that the article was defamatory and that it had caused substantial monetary loss and reputational damage, immediately approached the Mumbai City Civil Court for redress. Judge Agnihotri of the City Civil Court, even before taking any evidence of complainant and without summoning Vidhan or 'The Daily Report' and without considering the relevance of this information for general public, granted an ex-parte ad interim injunction obliging them to retract the published article within 24 hours. Vidhan and 'The Daily Report' argue that the injunction is an unreasonable restriction on freedom of speech and amounts to unreasoned censorship. If they decide to contest the injunction order before a higher court, what is the most appropriate rationale they could cite as per the referenced Supreme Court judgment?

- (a) The City Civil Court failed to consider the potential of misdemeanour charges against Swasthya Corp before granting the injunction.
- (b) The potential for using prolonged litigation to stifle free speech and public participation should have been a factor considered by the court.
- (c) Since the CBI had already investigated the matter, the court should have allowed for public scrutiny of Swasthya Corp's actions.
- (d) The injunction was necessary to avoid further damage to the pharmaceutical company before the allegations could be proven in trial.

74. Vidhan, a corporate lawyer, closely followed a landmark Supreme Court judgement against excessive censorship and took particular note of the Court's criticisms of the improper use of Strategic Litigation against Public Participation (SLAPP) suits. One of his clients, VidyaTek, a tech-firm, had faced damaging claims of intellectual property theft

published in 'Innovate Now', an industry magazine. The claims were not based on any reliable sources, and no formal legal charges had been made. Feeling threatened by possible market repercussions and seeing the loss of business, VidyaTek's board impulsively asked Vidhan to immediately file for a defamation suit and seek an urgent injunction order to prevent any further publications. If Vidhan were to apply for the interim relief, based on the Supreme Court's position, which of the following would best summarize the outcome?

- (a) Since there were no official charges, filing a defamation suit would be baseless and VidyaTek could be counter-sued for malicious prosecution.
- (b) The allegations published were based on reliable sources, giving them a higher degree of protection against defamation claims.
- (c) A suit with the aim of preventing publication could be perceived as SLAPP, intending to censor important information under the guise of prolonged litigation.
- (d) VidyaTek's claim for interim relief can be sustained as the conditions required for it are fulfilled.

75. In Kolkata, Professor Banerjee encourages students to analyze the recent Supreme Court judgement concerning Bloomberg and the Zee group. He presents a scenario in which a little-known blogger, Vidhi Chopra, writes a post alleging that a large electronics company is engaging in illegal e-waste dumping based on her investigations. The electronics company sues for defamation and attains an ad-interim injunction, preventing her from writing further on the subject. The court did not give a sound order with respect to injunction. Professor Banerjee asks his students to consider whether the Supreme Court judgement could impact Vidhi's case if she appeals. What fundamental aspect as per the referenced judgement should be the main point of contention in Vidhi's appeal?

- (a) The legitimacy of Vidhi's allegations based on her capacity as an individual blogger rather than a recognized news entity.
- (b) The potential chilling effect on freedom of speech and expression due to an unreasoned injunction granted by the court.
- (c) The request for injunction stemming from a major corporation should never be considered as it amounts to SLAPP suit.
- (d) The public interest in the alleged illegal e-waste dumping information always outweighs the company's right to reputation.

76. If the fact is introduced that several other independent investigations have surfaced since Vidhi Chopra's blog post, all corroborating her allegations about the electronics company's illegal e-waste dumping practices and presented and noted by the appellate court, would this fact strengthen Vidhi's case, weaken it, or have no effect at the appellate stage?

- (a) Strengthen Vidhi's case, as it introduces additional evidence supporting the credibility of her allegations, reinforcing the argument against the injunction, by demonstrating the lack of prima facie case in company's favour.
- (b) Weaken Vidhi's case, because the presence of additional investigations might suggest that her initial post was unnecessary for bringing attention to the company's practices, reducing the argument against the injunction's impact on her freedom of speech.
- (c) Have no effect on Vidhi's case, as the primary issue remains the legality of the ad-interim injunction granted without proper reasoning or trial, regardless of subsequent corroborations.
- (d) Weaken the electronics company's position, as the multiple independent verifications of Vidhi's claims underscore the significance of the public's right to know, making the injunction against her more evidently an attempt to stifle free speech rather than protect reputation.

77. Based on the passage, which of the following statements is true?

- (a) The Supreme Court encourages the use of Strategic Litigation against Public Participation (SLAPP) suits to ensure the accountability of news publications.
- (b) The Supreme Court has mandated that lower courts must always grant ex-parte injunctions in cases involving defamation suits against media organizations.
- (c) The Delhi High Court found Bloomberg guilty of defamation in its final verdict, leading to the Supreme Court's intervention.
- (d) The interim injunction order in defamation case must be constrained but court has the power to grant it in line with the guidelines laid by the Supreme Court.

78. Based on the passage, which of the following statements cannot be inferred?

- (a) The Supreme Court views the granting of ex-parte injunctions as a measure that should be used sparingly and only in exceptional circumstances.
- (b) Strategic Litigation against Public Participation (SLAPP) suits are recognized by the Supreme Court as a legitimate tactic to protect individuals and corporations from defamatory publications.
- (c) Prolonged litigation in defamation cases can be used strategically to inhibit free speech and public participation.
- (d) The Supreme Court's decision to set aside the injunction order reflects its stance on protecting the freedom of speech against unreasoned censorship.

PASSAGE – XVI

In December 2019, the Parliament passed an amendment to The Citizenship Act, 1955 introducing a new proviso to Section 2(1)(b) which defines “illegal migrants.” Accordingly, persons belonging to Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi or Christian communities from Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Afghanistan who entered India on or before December 31, 2014 without proper authorization and resided in India, were not to be treated as “illegal migrants” and would instead be eligible for citizenship under the 1955 Act. In essence, the amendment relaxed the eligibility criteria for certain classes of migrants from three neighbouring Muslim-majority countries on religious lines. However, certain tribal areas in Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram, and Tripura as included in the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution and areas covered under “the Inner Line” notified under the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulations of 1873 were exempted from the legislation’s ambit of residence by migrant. To access these protected areas, an Inner Line Permit (ILP) is needed from the concerned State governments. Viewed in combination with the proposed all-India National Register of Indian Citizens (NRC), the CAA has the potential to disproportionately impact Muslims migrants by depriving them of citizenship. While non-Muslims will have the opportunity to have citizenship via the CAA, such an opportunity will not be available to Muslims. With the newly notified rules, the Centre has eased the process of granting Indian citizenship to members of the specified communities by excluding the requirement of a “valid passport” of their origin countries or a valid visa from India. Instead, “any document” that shows one of the parents, grandparents or even great-grandparents of the applicant was from one of these countries is sufficient to prove their nationality. Additionally, a certificate issued by an elected member of a local body can be a replacement for a visa. The Indian Union Muslim League (IUML) filed a petition in the Supreme Court challenging its constitutionality. The petition primarily challenges the law for violating Article 14 of the Constitution which guarantees all ‘persons’ equality before the law and equal protection of law. It also argues that making religion a qualifier for citizenship violates secularism, which is a basic feature of the Constitution. To pass constitutional muster as per settled judgments, any differentiation between groups of persons must be founded on an “intelligible differentia” (a clear criterion) and this differentiation must have a “reasonable nexus” (connection) with the objective sought to be achieved by the legislation. Referring to this, the petitioners have contended that the special treatment given to the specific “persecuted religious minorities” from the three Muslim-majority neighbouring countries does not constitute a “reasonable classification” under Article 14.

Source: Extract (with edits and revisions) from an article titled “CAA: Legal issues and status of judicial proceedings | Explained, published at The Hindu.

79. Vidhan, a Buddhist from Bangladesh, entered India on December 20, 2014, and has been residing in Mizoram. He possesses a certificate issued by an elected member of a local body. Lately, he applied for citizenship under the amended Citizenship Act after the passage of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019. Mizoram's area where he resides does not fall under the area covered under Sixth Schedule of the Constitution, over which special provisions apply for certain tribal areas. The tribal council of Mizoram has raised objections, citing that Vidhan's residence violates specific provisions of the Indian Constitution concerning tribal areas and the need for an Inner Line Permit (ILP). What should be the outcome of Vidhan's application for citizenship based on the facts provided?

- (a) Vidhan's application will be successful because he possesses a certificate from a local body member and fulfils the other requirements.
- (b) Vidhan's application will not be successful as he violated the constitution and he has likely not obtained the Inner Line Permit (ILP) required to reside there.
- (c) Vidhan will be considered an illegal migrant regardless of his documents since the CAA provisions do not override the constitutional protection of tribal areas under the Sixth Schedule.
- (d) Vidhan can be given citizenship but only after being reviewed by the Supreme Court due to the on-going petitions challenging the CAA.

80. Vidhan, a 40-year-old Hindu who came in India with his parents who emigrated from Bangladesh in 1991, seeks to apply for Indian citizenship under the amended Citizenship Act. His parents never formalized their citizenship status upon arrival and lived in India without official documentation. With the introduction of the new rules, Vidhan attempts to utilize a letter from a local community leader in Bangladesh, dated 1989, which mentions his grandparents residing in Bangladesh as it's national. Additionally, Vidhan provides a school leaving certificate of his father issued in Bangladesh in 1985. Despite these documents, his application faces scrutiny due to the informal nature of the proofs and his parents' undocumented status in India. The government officials handling his case question the authenticity and relevance of the documents, citing potential fraud and misrepresentation in such cases. Should Vidhan's application for citizenship be accepted based on the documents provided, under the newly amended rules?

- (a) No, as the documents provided, while historically relevant, do not meet the contemporary legal standards for establishing nationality, especially in cases with undocumented residency.
- (b) Yes, since the documents Vidhan provided directly connect his lineage to Bangladesh, fitting within the flexible document acceptance policy under the new citizenship amendment.

(c) Yes, as the documents suffice to establish Vidhan's familial ties to Bangladesh under the amended rules, and no further scrutiny of other facts is required to grant citizenship.

(d) No, given the potential for fraud and the informal nature of the documents, which could undermine the integrity of the citizenship verification process under the new rules.

81. The state of Assam, following the amendment, found that 19 lakh people's application were rejected and left out of the citizenship register. Vidhan, a Muslim resident of Assam, found himself excluded from the benefit despite submitting the requisite documents and other fulfilments. He argues that, as a result of the CAA, non-Muslims migrants have a route to get citizenship, but no equivalent option exists for Muslims like him. Vidhan claims that this lack of recourse solely based on his religious identity amounts to discrimination and a violation of the Constitution. Given Vidhan's situation, what is the most likely judicial interpretation regarding the constitutionality of this aspect of the CAA if the argument made by the petitioners is to be considered the governing law?

(a) The judiciary would not find the CAA unconstitutional since Vidhan has a right to appeal his exclusion and is thus not deprived of due process.

(b) The judiciary will likely find the CAA to be in violation of Article 14 because it results in differential treatment based on religion, without an intelligible differentialia.

(c) The judiciary will uphold the CAA's constitutional validity, as the purpose of the CAA is to protect persecuted religious minorities, and Vidhan's exclusion from the NRC does not negate that intent.

(d) The judiciary is expected to deem the CAA constitutional on the ground that the NRC process was supervised by the Supreme Court and therefore any fallout concerning citizenship status cannot be attributed to the CAA.

82. If the fact is introduced that the Government of India has initiated a special program to expedite the citizenship application process under the CAA, would this fact strengthen Vidhan's case, weaken it, or have no effect if no governing law as provided in previous question is to be considered and case has to be decided?

(a) Strengthen Vidhan's case, as it demonstrates the government's acknowledgment of the discriminatory impact of the CAA.

(b) Weaken Vidhan's case, because the introduction of an expedited process addresses the core of his claim, suggesting that the government has provided a fast relief for citizenship.

(c) Have no effect on Vidhan's case, as his challenge is specifically against the constitutional validity of the CAA's provisions, which differentiate based on religion.

(d) Strengthen the government's argument, as it indicates proactive measures to mitigate any adverse effects of the NRC process, underscoring the government's commitment to

inclusivity and fairness in citizenship determination, regardless of the CAA's original provisions.

83. Based on the passage, which of the following statements is true?

- (a) The Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019, offers a path to citizenship for all religious minorities from the neighbouring countries.
- (b) The Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019, mandates that applicants must have a valid passport or visa from their country of origin to apply for Indian citizenship.
- (c) The legislation concerning citizenship, share the same criteria for determining illegal migrants even after the amendment.
- (d) A law would be constitutional even if it shows apparent inequality if it stands right with intelligible differentia” and “reasonable nexus”.

84. Based on the passage, which of the following statements cannot be inferred?

- (a) The Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019, has been implemented with the intention of providing relief to persecuted religious minorities from three specific Muslim-majority neighbouring countries.
- (b) NRC and the provisions of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019, in Assam work in conjunction to ensure that all migrant residents of Assam, are treated equally in the citizenship verification process.
- (c) The amendment to The Citizenship legislation, through the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019, exempts certain migrants from being treated as illegal migrants based on their religious affiliation and country of origin.
- (d) With the newly notified rules, the Centre has eased the process of granting Indian citizenship to members of the specified communities.

Section D-Logical Reasoning

PASSAGE - XVII

Numerous studies have shown that people can be aware of their implicit biases. One 2014 study by the psychologist Adam Hahn and his colleagues shows that people can generally predict their own IAT scores with a high degree of accuracy. They found an average correlation of $r = .65$ between participants' predictions of their IAT scores and their actual IAT scores – a correlation that is typically considered large in psychological research; for instance, the heritability of IQ and education are also around that mark. If it were the case that people generally aren't aware or conscious of their implicit biases, they wouldn't be able to predict their IAT performance. Insofar as the IAT measures implicit biases, these biases are likely not unconscious.

Unfortunately, this misunderstanding remains widespread. For instance, an article by Christine Ro on the BBC in 2021 uses 'implicit biases' and 'unconscious biases'

synonymously, as does an article on the website of the Office of Diversity and Outreach at the University of California San Francisco, an article by David Robson in *The Guardian* in 2021, and an article by Francesca Gino and Katherine Coffman in the *Harvard Business Review* in 2021.

To be clear, unconscious biases may exist, and just because someone might be aware of their implicit biases doesn't mean they're conscious of the *effects* of their biases on other people or that we can effectively control them.

But here's why it's important not to conflate 'implicit bias' and 'unconscious bias': claiming that discrimination arises from the unconscious psychologises it, presents discrimination as an unintentional act rather than a preventable consequence – and thereby enables people to feel less morally culpable for discriminating. One study from 2019 demonstrates this experimentally. The social psychologist Natalie Daumeyer and her colleagues at Yale showed participants a fabricated article in which both Democratic and Republican doctors demonstrated bias toward patients based on their own political ideology when they engaged in somewhat politicised health behaviours (say, gun ownership or marijuana use). In one condition, they read that the doctors were somewhat aware that they were treating patients differently. However, in the other condition, they defined bias as *unconscious* bias – the 'attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in ways that we are typically not aware of' – and also read that the doctors held no conscious knowledge that they treated their patients differently based on their own political views. Finally, participants completed a questionnaire measuring whether the doctor should be held responsible and whether their merit being punished.

What did they find? When the doctors were described as having no conscious knowledge of unfair treatment, participants rated them as needing to be held less accountable, and less deserving of punishment, compared with when the doctors' behaviour was ascribed to conscious bias. Why the difference? Awareness signifies intentionality, and we generally pardon wrongdoers if their offence was accidental as opposed to intentional. This detail matters. If diversity practitioners perpetuate this notion that unconscious bias underlies daily acts of discrimination, they could reduce accountability toward perpetrators and prevent behaviour change.

Even when implicit bias is conscious, it is notoriously hard to change. One study tested nine implicit bias interventions previously shown to reduce implicit biases, and found that these changes subsided after several hours or, at best, several days. That's because, while biases might be an individual characteristic (similar to someone's personality type or temperament), they require people's social environment – work, family, political and technological circumstances, for instance – to make them accessible, as the social

psychologist Keith Payne argues in 'The Bias of Crowds' (2017). If the environment does not change, the bias will return.

To support this view, consider the fact that IATs generally measure individuals' implicit biases unreliably. In other words, the IAT score you receive today can differ from the IAT score you receive tomorrow.

85. Which of the following can be reasonably inferred, according to the IAT measures, from the passage?

- (a) If people are aware of their implicit biases they are reasonably conscious of the effects of their biases.
- (b) If people aren't aware of their implicit biases they would be reasonably aware of their consequences and performance.
- (c) If people aren't unaware of their implicit biases they wouldn't be unable to predict their IAT performances.
- (d) If people are unaware of their implicit biases they would be more conscious about the outcomes and effects.

86. Which of the following is a likely assumption taken in the argument advanced by Payne ?

- (a) One's implicit biases do not affect other people.
- (b) Implicit bias is affected by the change in environment.
- (c) The effects of the implicit biases on others cannot be controlled.
- (d) None of the above.

87. With which of the following will the author most agree to except?

- (a) The IAT scores' correct predictions denote that people are aware of their own biases.
- (b) The unconscious bias could be considered as considering discrimination as a preventable consequence.
- (c) Being aware of one's biases doesn't necessarily make one aware of the effects of one's biases.
- (d) A conscious bias if not considered an offence would reduce the accountability of its effect.

88. Which of the following is not a conclusion derived from the experiment?

- (a) If doctors had no conscious knowledge of unfair treatment they are less deserving of punishment.
- (b) Accidental offence makes one less accountable and less deserving of punishment.
- (c) Doctors with conscious bias are less deserving of and are held less punishment accountable.
- (d) Intentional offences elicit punishment and accountability of the act and intuition.

PASSAGE – XVIII

At the ninth edition of the annual Raisina Dialogue, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar called India a “bridging power”, a country seeking common ground through a “multi-vector” policy, and playing the role of a “Vishwamitra” or friend of the world. Such lofty ambitions are why the conference, launched by the Ministry of External Affairs, aims to engage global leaders on the big issues and challenges in the world. Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis, who inaugurated the event, spoke about the importance of connectivity projects such as the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor. Global governance, the inequality at the top of the UN Security Council and the need for reform were discussed. India’s rightful place at the high table of global decision-making, or as Mr. Jaishankar put it, “to be a player, rather than a playing field”, was referred to repeatedly, as was India’s success in hosting the G-20 last year. Due to the G-20 Foreign Ministers Meeting in Brazil, there was no senior ministerial presence from the P-5 or the major G-7 or BRICS-10 countries. However, the large ministerial contingent from Central and Eastern Europe, which included all Ministers of the Baltic-Nordic forum, enabled a new diplomatic outreach for the government that is seeking trade agreements and investment ties with this part of Europe that is oft-overlooked but competitive, economically.

The greater part of the conversations, however, focused on global conflicts, with the heavy presence of the European dignitaries turning the spotlight on the Russian war in Ukraine, and panels on military and naval strategy concentrating on the need to handle an aggressive China. Unfortunately, these conversations did not strive for balance, as neither Russia nor China was invited. There was minimal presence from South East Asia, Latin America, and even South Asia (excepting Nepal and Bhutan); a larger presence may have offered more variegated positions and thrown light on the pressures they face from these conflicts. Panels on democracy understandably steered clear of the vibrant debates within India on the decline of freedoms, but the lack of non-governmental civil society organisations in the discourse produced a narrow view of the challenges that democracy faces worldwide. Notably absent were conversations focusing on the Israeli war in Gaza. Such omissions not only mean a lack of diversity in conversations at India’s premier forum for foreign policy thinking but they also take something away from Mr. Jaishankar’s otherwise sound observation that the Raisina Dialogue has become the “Made in India” version of the “Global Public Square”.

Source: At the high table: On the Raisina Dialogue, The Hindu, 26 Feb, 2024.

89. Which of the following is a correct expression of the author's opinion as stated in the passage regarding the Raisina Dialogue's approach to global conflicts?

- (a) The Raisina Dialogue successfully achieved a balanced perspective on global conflicts by including diverse international participants.
- (b) The exclusion of Russia and China from the discussions on global conflicts at the Raisina Dialogue provided a more focused debate on their respective roles.
- (c) The absence of Russia and China from the discussions skewed the Raisina Dialogue's perspective on global conflicts, making it less balanced.
- (d) The Raisina Dialogue focused predominantly on South Asian conflicts, which marginalized the importance of European issues.

90. Which of the following would support the author's conclusion that the Raisina Dialogue has become a significant forum for global policy discussion, akin to a "Global Public Square"?

- (a) A survey showing that the majority of international policymakers view the Raisina Dialogue as a pivotal platform for addressing global issues.
- (b) Evidence that the Raisina Dialogue has consistently failed to influence any major international policy decisions.
- (c) Reports that the discussions at the Raisina Dialogue are often disregarded by major global leaders and international forums.
- (d) Data indicating that the Raisina Dialogue has had lower attendance rates each year from international delegates.

91. Based on the author's arguments, which of the following must necessarily be true?

- (a) The inclusion of a wide range of global perspectives is essential for a truly comprehensive discussion of world issues at forums like the Raisina Dialogue.
- (b) Global governance and UN Security Council reforms are considered less critical topics than economic corridors at international forums.
- (c) The Raisina Dialogue is the only international forum where issues of global governance and connectivity projects are discussed.
- (d) India's success in hosting the G-20 summit has not contributed to its international reputation as a significant global player.

92. Which of the following, if true, would most strengthen the author's argument that the Raisina Dialogue's discussions on democracy did not fully capture the global challenges facing democracy due to the absence of non-governmental civil society organizations?

- (a) Reports showing that civil society organizations often provide critical insights into democratic practices and challenges that are not covered by governmental bodies.
- (b) Data indicating that previous Raisina Dialogue sessions included multiple civil society organizations and were noted for their comprehensive discussions on democracy.

(c) Evidence that governmental representatives at the Raisina Dialogue deliberately avoided discussing sensitive topics related to democracy.

(d) Surveys revealing that participants felt the dialogue on democracy at this year's Raisina Dialogue was the most informative and balanced to date.

93. Which of the following implicit assumptions can be logically deduced from the author's critique of the panel discussions at the Raisina Dialogue?

(a) Global forums like the Raisina Dialogue are expected to invite representatives from all relevant geopolitical entities to ensure balanced discussions.

(b) The presence of European dignitaries at the Raisina Dialogue inherently ensures a comprehensive understanding of global conflicts.

(c) Panel discussions at international forums typically avoid contentious topics to maintain diplomatic neutrality.

(d) Civil society organizations are generally more critical and outspoken on issues of democracy than governmental panels.

PASSAGE – XIX

Let's face it: we've all had second thoughts about language. Hardly a day goes by when we don't stumble for words, stagger into misunderstandings, or struggle with a double negative. It's a frightfully cumbersome way to express ourselves. If language is such a slippery medium, perhaps it is time to replace it with something more dependable. Why not cut out the middleman and connect brains directly? The idea is not new. As the American physicist and Nobel laureate Murray Gell-Mann mused in *The Quark and the Jaguar* (1994): 'Thoughts and feelings would be completely shared, with none of the selectivity or deception that language permits.'

It is useful to examine this view of language carefully, for it is quite alluring. Rao and his team complain about how hard it can be to verbalise feelings or forms of knowledge even if they are introspectively available. On Twitter, Musk has described words as 'a very lossy compression of thought'. How frustrating to have such a rich mental life and be stuck with such poor resources for expressing it! But no matter how much we can sympathise with this view, it misses a few crucial insights about language. First, words are tools. They can be misplaced or misused like any tool, but they are often useful for what they've been designed to do: help us say just what we want to say, and no more. When we choose our words carefully, it is because we know that there is a difference between private worlds and public words. There had better be, since social life depends on it.

Second, and more subtly, this view sees language as merely a channel for information: just as the speaking tube has made way for the telephone, so language can be done away with if we connect brains directly. This overlooks that language is also an

infrastructure for social action. Think of everyday conversations, in which we riff off on a theme, recruit others to do stuff, relate to those around us. We don't just spout information indiscriminately; we apportion our words in conversational turns and build on each other's contributions. Language in everyday use is less like a channel and more like a tango: a fluid interplay of moves in which people can act as one, yet also retain their individuality. In social interaction there is room, by design, for consent and dissent. The difference with current concepts of brain-to-brain interfaces couldn't be greater. A transcranial magnetic pulse leaves no room for doubt, but none for deliberation either. Its effect is as immediate as it is involuntary. We can admire the sheer efficiency of this form of interaction, but we also have to admit that something is lost. A sense of agency and autonomy; and along with that, perhaps even a sense of self. Nor does this problem go away merely by upgrading bandwidth, as is Musk's ambition for Neuralink, his implantable brain-computer interface. The very possibility of social (as opposed to merely symbiotic) life depends on there being some separation of private worlds, along with powers to interact on our own terms. In other words, we *need* something like language in order to be human.

When we directly connect one individual's mental life to that of another, individual agency might slip through our fingers. Biology offers plenty of examples. Take the fascinating slime mould *Physarum polycephalum*, which is essentially a bag of cytoplasm holding millions of individual nuclei, the result of a mass merger of amoebae. Moving and sensing in unison, the slime mould can crawl towards light, find food in mazes, and even mimic the design of urban metro networks. The price for this perfect symbiosis is a complete loss of autonomy for individual elements. The real challenge for brain-to-brain interfaces is not to achieve some interlinking of brains. It is to harness technology in a way that doesn't reduce people to the level of amoebae fused to a slime mould.

94. Which of the following is the underlying assumption about language use?

- (a) Selective usage of words can avoid any could be created ambiguity that could be created.
- (b) Use of imposer words can become specious and cause ambiguity.
- (c) Words can be chosen according to their use in public.
- (d) All of the above.

95. Which of the following would be a critical difference between social and symbiotic.

- (a) The latter enjoys the presence of autonomy and the former suffers from the absence of autonomy.
- (b) The former does not provide for separate worlds and the latter does not provide for combined actions.

- (c) The former works somewhat arbitrarily and the latter works almost in unison.
- (d) The latter justifies the use of language, and the former signifies the irrelevance of language.

96. Which of the following if false, would not support the author's statements?

- (a) Brain-brain interfaces have immediate and voluntary effects
- (b) The conversation becomes fluid with the individual contributions adding to its flow.
- (c) Achieving the interlinking of the brains proved to be a challenge for brain-to-brain interfaces.
- (d) In symbiotic life there is an autonomy of using individual elements.

97. Which of the following would be synchronous to the author's opinion except?

- (a) Social interactions provide no elbow room for the interplay of autonomous individual opinions.
- (b) A brain-to-brain magnetic pulse leaves no room for deliberation
- (c) Many would agree to the unambiguous use of language being tedious and an impediment to perfect expression of ideas.
- (d) Language helps us to build our conversations by apportioning our words according to the other's contributions.

98. The most likely reasonable conclusion about the word 'this' as used in the sentence, 'But no matter how much we can sympathise with this view, it misses a few crucial insights about language.', is that -

- (a) brain-to-brain transmission enhances the use of perfect language.
- (b) it is taxing to appropriately word your feelings.
- (c) words are sometimes proved to be lousy instruments of expressing ideas.
- (d) brain-to-brain connection is an infrastructure of social action.

PASSAGE – XX

The legitimacy of any demand for a change in public policy lies in the rationale behind it and not in the strength in support for it. There is a reason why even after States have bowed down to popular demands for reservation to social groups which were not considered backward earlier, their actions have been reversed or nullified by the higher judiciary. This has been true of previous pieces of legislation passed by the Maharashtra government to grant reservation to the Maratha community. Yet, the community's political dominance is evident in the fact that the State Assembly unanimously passed a Bill on February 20, granting Marathas 10% reservation in education and government jobs. This is the third time in a decade that such legislation for the community has been passed; earlier, there was the Socially and Educationally Backward Classes Act, 2018 under the Bharatiya Janata Party-Shiv Sena-led coalition. The two pieces of legislation are similar, but the current Bill is based on a report by the Maharashtra State Backward Class Commission, which expands the total quota for reservations to 72% with the

inclusion of 10% for Marathas after the application of a “creamy layer” criterion. This also includes 10% reservation for “Economically Weaker Sections” focusing on the poor among the Maratha community.

It is understandable why the political class in Maharashtra has chosen the easier, even if legally dubious, path of expanding the reservation pie. The other alternative of treating Marathas as a backward class community and providing reservations from within the 19% quota for OBCs was always going to be a problem with OBC groups expressing opposition. But the legislation is bound to face problems if and when it is challenged in the Supreme Court. The top court had struck down the 2018 Act in May 2021 by citing the Indra Sawhney judgment (1992) that limited reservations to 50% and also held that only the Union government is empowered to identify socially and educationally backward classes to include them in the central list to avail reservations. Yet, the Court’s November 2022 judgment upholding the 10% quota for EWS, over and beyond the 50% limit, has opened a Pandora’s box. The vagaries of addressing demands of politically dominant groups such as the Marathas, which have stratifications due to significant intra-community variations in terms of income and educational outcomes, suggest a case for a comprehensive socio-economic census alongside the delayed decennial Census. Such a census will establish the true nature of backwardness and discrimination across States and could even clarify a new means of providing affirmative action based on the data while staying true to principles of social justice.

Source: Strength vs reason: On legislation and reservation to certain social groups, The Hindu, 29 Feb, 2024.

99. Which of the following implicit assumptions can be logically deduced from the author’s critique of the Maratha reservation policy?

- (a) The political decision to expand the reservation quota to 72% will ensure equitable access to government jobs and educational opportunities for all communities.
- (b) The Supreme Court’s rulings on reservation policies are consistent and will uphold the expanded quota without objections.
- (c) The Indra Sawhney judgment may no longer provide a sufficient legal framework given the current socio-economic realities and political pressures.
- (d) Expanding the reservation pie is the only feasible solution to address the backwardness claims of the Maratha community.

100. Which of the following would support the author’s conclusion that a comprehensive socio-economic census could clarify a new means of providing affirmative action based on data while staying true to principles of social justice?

- (a) The socio-economic census reveals that intra-community variations in income and educational outcomes are smaller than previously believed.

- (b) The socio-economic census confirms significant disparities in income and educational outcomes both within and between communities.
- (c) Previous censuses have shown that data collection often exacerbates social divisions rather than providing a basis for equitable policy.
- (d) Affirmative action policies based on previous census data have consistently been upheld by the judiciary without any legal challenges.

101. Based on the author's arguments, which of the following must necessarily be true?

- (a) The expansion of the reservation quota for Marathas to 72% is a legally sound and sustainable solution given the existing judicial framework.
- (b) A new legislative approach, such as a comprehensive socio-economic census, is needed to adapt affirmative action policies to current realities.
- (c) The Maharashtra State Assembly's unanimous support for the Maratha reservation bill indicates widespread public support for the policy.
- (d) The political class in Maharashtra has always favoured the Maratha community in its policy decisions.

102. Which of the following, if true, would most weaken the author's arguments about the need for a comprehensive socio-economic census to address reservation policies?

- (a) Recent studies show that the current reservation policies have significantly reduced income and educational disparities among backward classes.
- (b) The socio-economic census proposed by the author is found to be prohibitively expensive and logistically impossible to implement within a reasonable timeframe.
- (c) Data from recent socio-economic surveys indicate that intra-community variations are not significant enough to warrant individual community-based reservations.
- (d) The Supreme Court has indicated that it will not consider socio-economic data collected post-Indra Sawhney for revising reservation limits.

103. Which of the following is a correct expression of the author's opinion as stated in the passage regarding the recent legislative actions for Maratha reservations?

- (a) The Maharashtra government has successfully secured the legal sustainability of Maratha reservations by aligning with central guidelines.
- (b) The repeated attempts to legislate Maratha reservations demonstrate a commitment to addressing historical injustices faced by the community.
- (c) The legislative approach to expanding the Maratha reservation to 72% is viewed by the author as a potentially problematic solution that may face legal challenges.
- (d) The Maharashtra Assembly's actions reflect a broad consensus in Indian society about the necessity and fairness of expanding reservation quotas.

PASSAGE – XXI

In chemistry, there's the idea of an activation cost. This is the threshold of energy you need to surpass to start a chemical reaction. Dynamite, for example, contains a lot of energy. But unless a spark or lit fuse pays the activation cost it won't explode. Life also has activation costs. There are many pursuits that require a minimum threshold of effort to make any improvement at all. Getting over that activation hurdle is often the hardest part.

.....I had a similar experience with activation costs in learning French. I spent nearly five months trying to learn French before I regularly started speaking it with natives. After five months, I was still self-conscious shopping in French. After only a few weeks of obsession, I gave a 15-minute live presentation. The best language advice I got was from my friend, Benny Lewis, who said the first task is to stop speaking English. I wasn't able to maintain a strict no-English commitment, but it helped me become aware of how high the activation threshold was for real growth.

A reader asked me once if I could give some tips on how to become a successful blogger. What was the biggest reason for failure? I thought hard about the question. Obviously being a good writer helps—but I've seen plenty of abysmal writers that get better. Having an interesting story helps too—but the story is shaped once you start writing. Every tip I could think of couldn't be the biggest reason for failure, because I have known people who overcame them. Then I realized the biggest source of failure is simply lacking obsession about it. I know bloggers who were fantastic writers with great content and great stories, but they weren't obsessed about building a successful blog. Without it, success is just luck, with its few obstacles are insurmountable.

Life balance is a nice idea. We want many things in life, so balance is a way of getting all of them. In the long-term I'd like to have great friends, great business, great accomplishments and great experiences. What's the point of becoming successful if you can never enjoy your rewards? But in the short-term, I think life balance is probably bad advice. Maybe a better idea would be oscillating obsessions. Without that intensity, it's easy to wobble back and forth, never sparking the chain reaction of growth.

There are some places where the activation cost of success is low, so like a rusting pipe, you can slowly accumulate improvement. But too often the activation cost is high, without intense focus nothing happens, no matter how long you work at it. My writing ability started out this way. When you've never written regularly before, simply showing up will cause improvement. I can easily see a difference between articles I wrote in 2006 and those in 2008. But soon equilibrium is established. Showing up each time has diminishing returns and the activation cost of improvement is higher. I write less frequently now, in part, because I'd rather invest my effort in writing bursts that allow me to improve, than churning out content.

The price of obsession is focus. If you want to surpass the activation threshold for an activity, especially if you've already drained the easy beginner improvement, you need to make it a priority.

The hardest part about making priorities is that you necessarily have to make something else less important. My burst of fitness improvement was only possible because every other goal—business, school, social life—was downgraded in importance. Had I been trying to aggressively grow my business and fitness and relationships, I wouldn't have succeeded. The only time this split focus approach works is when the activation costs are low enough that they can all be paid at once.

Life doesn't work that way. If a pursuit is extraordinary, it tends to have a high activation cost. That cost is obsession, which is possible only if you are not obsessed about everything else. Telling yourself you should do something is easy. It's fading all the other desires into the background to focus on one obsession that's hard. That's probably why most people never do it.

104. Which of the following does not exhibit an example of 'activation cost' as discussed in the passage?

- (a) Gaining 8 lbs of muscle in four weeks with focussed exercise as compared to maintaining the total strength and weight through consistent efforts put in a year.
- (b) I can succeed in the research on a project that requires complete devotion for at least one year if I do not prioritise growth of my business alongside.
- (c) Ordering a convenient takeaway parcel online, thus settling for a less healthy but easily acquired dinner.
- (d) Committing time and resources in researching on programs and pursuing additional trainings for career advancement.

105. Which of the following is an inference drawn on the information given in the passage?

- (a) If the activation cost is high, hard work for a longer period is required.
- (b) Various goals can be simultaneously achieved if they are prioritised.
- (c) Working hard to achieve success is mandatory but huge successes are a result of more intense focus.
- (d) If the activation cost of success is low you need strong dedication and focus.

106. Which of the following is a conclusion drawn from the sentence, 'Without it, success is just luck, with it few obstacles are insurmountable.'?

- (a) An intense obsession to achieve success will make many challenges yet to be overcome.
- (b) Success, the result of determination and focus, comes by overcoming once seemingly unconquerable impediments.

(c) Obsession to achieve one's target makes one lucky; lack of obsession makes the obstacles surmountable.

(d) One is lucky to be successful, when one works by circumventing the obstacles.

107. The author is most likely to agree with which of the following, except?

(a) When the activation cost of success is low, the improvement in one's work is gradual.

(b) When the activation cost of success is high, it entails intense focus.

(c) When the activation costs are low for multiple works, one can achieve multiple successes simultaneously.

(d) Many people readily target a project and achieve staggering success in it, by delegating multiple desires to the background.

108. Which of the following statements is most likely to strengthen the author's argument?

(a) The challenge in setting priorities lies in inevitably diminishing the importance of something else too.

(b) Consistency yields diminishing returns, with each subsequent improvement requiring a lower activation cost.

(c) Seeking life balance in the short term would be a better and effective approach to life rather than going to and fro between obsessions.

(d) All of the above.

Section E-Quantitative Techniques

PASSAGE - XXII

Directions (109 - 112): Study the following information and answer the questions below.

Three shopkeepers named Vidhi, Vidhan, and Vidya sold mobile phones of two different brands, Samsung and One Plus, in the month of March. The combined number of mobile phones sold by all three shopkeepers was 2500. Vidhan sold 25% of the total number of mobile phones sold by all three shopkeepers. The ratio of mobile phones sold by Vidhi to Vidya was 7:8 respectively. Vidhi sold Samsung mobile phones which are half the total phones sold by Vidya. The ratio of One Plus mobile phones sold by Vidhi to Samsung mobile phones sold by Vidhan was 25:14 respectively. Vidya sold 14.28% more One Plus mobile phones than the number of Samsung mobile phones sold by Vidhan.

109. Find the sum of total number of One plus mobile phones sold by Vidhi, Vidhan, and Vidya together?

(a) 1140

(b) 1450

(c) 1030

(d) 1270

110. Find the difference between total number of mobile phones sold by Vidhi and Vidhan?

- (a) 250 (b) 240 (c) 450 (d) 420

111. What is the respective ratio of number of Samsung mobile phones sold by Vidhi to that by Vidya?

- (a) 38:25 (b) 52:83 (c) 83:52 (d) 25:38

112. What is the average of number of Samsung mobile phones sold by Vidhi, Vidhan, and Vidya together?

- (a) 510 (b) 490 (c) 450 (d) 380

PASSAGE – XXIII

Directions (113 - 116): Study the following information and answer the questions below.

In a joint family, Vidhan is the eldest member. He has two children named Vidyut and Vidhit. Vidyut is married to Vidhi and they have three children named Vivan, Vidur, and Vidushi. The three children Vivan, Vidur, and Vidushi invested Rs. 2500, Rs. 1500, and Rs. 2200 respectively in a restaurant business. After 5 months, Vivan withdrew $\frac{1}{5}$ th of his investment, while Vidur and Vidushi added Rs. 500 and Rs. 300 respectively to their investments. Similarly, Vidhit is married to Vidya and they have three children named Vidhman, Vidhata, and Vishal. The three children Vidhman, Vidhata, and Vishal invested Rs. 5000, Rs. 3000, and Rs. 4400 respectively in a tour and travels business. After 6 months, Vidhman withdrew $\frac{1}{5}$ th of his investment, while Vidhata and Vishal added Rs. 1000 and Rs. 600 respectively to their investment. Consider that both business runs for one year only.

113. If in restaurant business, the total profit earned by Vivan, Vidur, and Vidushi was Rs. 30600, then find the profit share of Vivan?

- (a) Rs.16000 (b) Rs.10600 (c) Rs.10060 (d) Rs.16060

114. If in tour and travels business, the total profit earned by Vidhman, Vidhata, and Vishal was Rs. 38100, then find the profit share of Vidhata?

- (a) Rs. 10050 (b) Rs. 15000 (c) Rs. 15500 (d) Rs. 10500

115. In restaurant business, find the profit share of Vivan and Vidur together is how much percent more or less than the profit share of Vidur, and Vidushi together?

- (a) 5% (b) 6% (c) 4% (d) can't be determined

116. What is the respective ratio of profit share of Vidhman, Vidhata, and Vishal, in tour and travels business, after one year?

- (a) 45:35:47 (b) 45:53:47 (c) 54:35:47 (d) can't be determined

PASSAGE – XXIV

Directions (117 - 120): Study the following information and answer the questions below.

There are 8 participants participating in a bike race, riding bikes A, B, C, D, E, F, G and H respectively. Following information is about the speeds of bikes. The speed of bike A is in a 4:5 ratio with the speed of bike B. The speed of bike B is $\frac{6}{5}$ of the speed of bike C. The speed of bike D is double the speed of bike C. The speed of bike E is 20% less than the speed of bike D. The ratio of speed of bike E and speed of bike F is 8:11. The speed of bike C is 50 km/hr. The speed of bike G is average of speeds of bike A, B, C, and D, while speed of bike H is LCM of 10, 12 and 15.

117. Find the respective ratio between the speeds of bike A and bike D together and the speeds of bike C and bike H?

- (a) 44:59 (b) 55:74 (c) 74:55 (d) 59:44

118. If bike A starts its journey from point P towards Q at 12 pm. Then at what time will it reach point Q, if distance between P and Q is 240 km?

- (a) 3 pm (b) 2 pm (c) 4 pm (d) 5 pm

119. If bikes B and F compete in a race of 90 km. Find the time taken to complete the race by the slower bike?

- (a) 2.5 hours (b) 1.5 hours (c) 3.5 hours (d) 2 hours

120. The speed of bikes A and B together is how much percent more or less than the speeds of bikes E and F together?

- (a) 43.15% (b) 33.33% (c) 66.65% (d) 28.57%

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