

SECTION - D: LOGICAL REASONING

Directions (Q.106-Q.135): Read the passage given below and answer the questions that follow-

Passage (Q.106-Q.111): Air India's deal to buy 470 planes from France's Airbus and the United States' Boeing is important not just because it is the largest biggest purchase by any carrier but also because it has geo-economic and geopolitical ramifications. Tata group chairman N Chandrasekaran said the \$70-billion deal happened at a time when the airliner plans to become "a world-class proposition." The purchase, which beats the previous record of American Airlines' 460-plane deal in 2011, would modernise Air India's fleet and help it to "dramatically" expand its network, he told the media. Air India has retired most of its older planes; it plans to induct the first new aircraft into service by the end of this calendar year. This is the best piece of news about Air India in the last few years. As a public sector carrier, it was beset with a host of problems, from mounting losses to its marginalisation in the business. Privatisation didn't end its woes; in 2022, it recorded its lowest-ever market share—8.7 per cent. In the last few months too, it hit the headlines for wrong reasons—the so-called peegate. The announcement regarding purchase of hundreds of aircraft has not just given a new profile to the airline but also informed the world that the India Story is vibrant and interesting. Also, this enhances the image of corporate India against the backdrop of the controversies over the Adani Group.

Further, the deal brings India closer to the Western camp. US President Joe Biden, French President Emmanuel Macron, and UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak welcomed Air India's deals. Sunak has pointed out that Airbus will manufacture the wings in the UK and A350 aircraft will be powered by Rolls-Royce's XWB engines. He is happy because his country's aerospace industry employs more than 111,000 people. On his part, President Biden noted that the sale of over 200 Boeing aircraft will support over a million jobs in the US and help Air India meet its transportation demands, according to a White House release. The release also highlighted "the strength of the US-India economic partnership." President Macron emphasized not just the economic aspect of the deal but also said that the Air India-Airbus contract "marks a new stage in India and France's strategic partnership." It may be recalled that India is already buying Rafale fighter aircraft from France. The dominant domestic market place IndiGo is also reportedly in the process of buying 500 jets. In fact, Indian carriers are said to be on a shopping spree, intending to buy almost 1,700 aircraft in the next few years. While an imminent boom in the aviation sector is heartening, there are a few things the authorities must ensure. The first and foremost is infrastructure. Airport expansion must be high on the priority list. Generally, our airports are crowded and badly managed. Also, the Government must expedite reforms so that smaller towns also get access to air travel. And, of course, passenger behaviour has to improve.

106. Which of the following metaphorical titles best represents the passage?
- (a) A New Dawn for Air India: The Story of a Phoenix Rising from the Ashes
 - (b) A Sky Full of Opportunities: The Bright Future of India's Aviation Sector
 - (c) The Flight to Western Dominance: India's Strategic Partnership with the West
 - (d) From Peegate to Profit: The Journey of Air India to Record-Breaking Success
107. What specific feature of the Air India deal with Airbus and Boeing has a positive impact on the UK, as mentioned in the passage?
- (a) The fact that Airbus will manufacture the wings in the UK
 - (b) The number of planes being purchased by Air India
 - (c) The engines that will be used in the A350 aircraft
 - (d) The additional jobs that will be created in India's aviation sector

108. Which of the following, if true, would most weaken the author's arguments?
- (a) Air India's purchase of new aircraft will lead to increased air traffic and congestion at airports.
 - (b) Tata group's profits are negatively impacted by the \$70-billion deal.
 - (c) The purchase of new aircraft will have an impact on Air India's market share or reputation.
 - (d) The purchase of hundreds of aircraft by Air India does not represent a positive sign for India's economy.
109. What is the main infrastructure challenge that the authorities must address to ensure the success of the recent aircraft purchase by Indian carriers?
- (a) Improving passenger behavior
 - (b) Accelerating economic reforms
 - (c) Expanding airport facilities
 - (d) Enhancing aircraft manufacturing capabilities
110. Which of the following statements would be most relevant to the passage's discussion of Air India's recent aircraft purchase?
- (a) Air India has launched a new customer loyalty program.
 - (b) The cost of airline tickets has increased due to rising fuel prices.
 - (c) The new aircraft purchased by Air India will modernize its fleet and help it to expand its network.
 - (d) The price of Airbus and Boeing stock has risen in response to Air India's purchase.
111. Which of the following is the author of the passage most likely to agree with?
- (a) India's aviation sector is currently in a state of decline and is unlikely to recover.
 - (b) The purchase of hundreds of aircraft by Air India is a major boost for India's image and economy.
 - (c) The Indian government should focus on developing road and rail infrastructure rather than airports.
 - (d) The purchase of Airbus and Boeing aircraft will have no impact on India's relations with the Western world.

Passage (Q.112-Q.117): Anti-Semitism has become an embarrassment to the political left in many countries in recent years—as U.S. Democrats have discovered in their own ranks. It's a relief, then, to see at least one center-left party in the West tackling this problem head-on, as Britain's Labour Party has this week.

Labour Leader Keir Starmer on Wednesday published a column in the Times of London telling activists with anti-Semitic views that they're not welcome in the party.

"Antisemitism is an evil," he wrote. "Its conspiratorial nature attracts those who would have no truck with any other form of prejudice. Indeed, it can be those who call themselves 'anti-racist' who are most blind to it. . . . That's why my first act as [party] leader was to commit to tearing antisemitism out by the roots, without fear or favor."

Mr. Starmer became Labour leader in 2020 after the party had suffered a humiliating election defeat under former leader Jeremy Corbyn. Mr. Corbyn, his inner circle, and their radical supporters promoted anti-Semitic tropes and turned a blind eye to complaints about abuse directed by their online camp followers at those who objected. Polls suggest this helped cost the party the 2019 election.

Since taking up his position, Mr. Starmer has worked to clean out the stables by replacing top party leaders and sticking to a zero-tolerance message. "The Labour Party I lead today is unrecognizable from 2019," Mr. Starmer wrote in the Times. "There are those who don't like that change, who still refuse to see the reality of what had gone on under the previous leadership. To them I say in all candor: we are never going back. If you don't like it, nobody is forcing you to stay."

To reinforce the point, Mr. Starmer also said this week that Mr. Corbyn will not be allowed to represent Labour as a candidate for Parliament in the next election. Mr. Corbyn remains a lawmaker although he was expelled from Labour's parliamentary caucus in 2020. This will force Mr. Corbyn to run as an independent, which is very difficult in the British system.

Contrast this purge of erstwhile senior party figures with the reluctance that U.S. Democrats have shown about disciplining even junior House members for anti-Semitic comments. Labour's last election defeat is a warning to Democrats that tolerating such prejudice eventually diminishes parties of the left. Mr. Starmer's clean-up job is an example of how to fix it.

112. What was the impact of anti-Semitic views on the Labour Party's 2019 election performance?
- (a) Anti-Semitic views helped the Labour Party win the 2019 election.
 - (b) Anti-Semitic views did not have any impact on the Labour Party's 2019 election performance.
 - (c) Anti-Semitic views contributed to the Labour Party's defeat in the 2019 election.
 - (d) The Labour Party did not have any issues with anti-Semitic views during the 2019 election.
113. Which of the following is supported by the passage?
- (a) Anti-Semitic comments made by junior House members cost the U.S. Democrats the 2019 election.
 - (b) Keir Starmer's leadership has successfully purged all anti-Semitic elements from the British Labour Party.
 - (c) The British Labour Party's last election defeat serves as a warning to Democrats about the dangers of tolerating anti-Semitism.
 - (d) Jeremy Corbyn's supporters are responsible for the British Labour Party's 2020 defeat.
114. Which of the following is the author of the passage most likely to agree with?
- (a) Keir Starmer's approach to addressing anti-Semitism in the Labour Party is a positive step in the right direction.
 - (b) U.S. Democrats have been more successful in tackling anti-Semitism in their ranks than the Labour Party.
 - (c) Keir Starmer's efforts to remove Jeremy Corbyn from the party were unnecessary and divisive.
 - (d) Tolerating anti-Semitism is a necessary sacrifice for the political left to make in order to maintain support.
115. Which of the following, if true, would most strengthen the author's arguments?
- (a) The Democratic Party in the U.S. has publicly acknowledged and taken steps to address instances of anti-Semitism within its ranks.
 - (b) The Labour Party's decision to exclude Jeremy Corbyn from the party has been met with widespread criticism from the British public.
 - (c) A recent poll found that a majority of U.S. voters believe that the Democratic Party does not take the issue of anti-Semitism seriously.
 - (d) A prominent Jewish organization has publicly praised Keir Starmer's efforts to address anti-Semitism in the Labour Party.
116. Which of the following has the author used to support their argument in the passage?
- (a) The author's personal beliefs and values.
 - (b) Historical events that are not directly relevant to the topic at hand.
 - (c) Specific actions taken by Keir Starmer to combat anti-Semitism in the Labour Party.
 - (d) Speculation on the potential consequences of not addressing anti-Semitism.
117. Which of the following is a statement of claim from the passage rather than a statement of fact?
- (a) Keir Starmer is the leader of the British Labour Party.
 - (b) Antisemitism is an evil.
 - (c) Mr. Starmer has worked to clean out the stables by replacing top party leaders.
 - (d) Mr. Corbyn's anti-Semitic views cost Labour the 2019 election.

Passage (Q.118-Q.123): The gulf between legality and political legitimacy can be quite substantial. The Supreme Court verdict upholding the constitution of a Delimitation Commission for Jammu and Kashmir and the subsequent delimitation exercise is indeed in line with the law, especially the constitutional provisions that empower Parliament to form new States, alter existing ones, and change their status and boundaries, as well as the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019. However, it will be wrong to see it as granting judicial imprimatur to the political import of the redrawing of constituencies in the Union Territory. Most political parties in J&K, which was downgraded to Union Territory status in August 2019, have opposed the Commission's report that added six seats in Jammu division and one in Kashmir division to take the total number of seats to 90. The parties see in the exercise an attempt to weaken the Muslim majority region's political and electoral significance and boost the prospects of parties with a base in Jammu. They consider this as an extension of the project to strip J&K of its status and privileges and repurpose its politics to the advantage of the ruling party. This question of legitimacy can be answered by the outcome of an election, if and when one is held, to the territorial legislature. However, the readjustment of boundaries may by itself cast a shadow on that process too.

The petition that challenged the formation of the Delimitation Commission was a belated one, as it was filed after the panel published its draft order. The Court brushed aside its key contention that the delimitation has been frozen throughout the country until after the first Census held after 2026, noting that Article 170, which deals with this, applies only to States, and not Union Territories. It has also noted that J&K will be governed by its own reorganisation law, which allows the 2011 Census to be the basis for its delimitation, unlike the rest of the country, where the 2001 census was the basis for the last redrawing of constituency boundaries. It also rejected arguments rooted in the idea that some provisions of the Reorganisation Act were not consistent with the Constitution, noting that these provisions had not been specifically challenged. While the Court may be right in upholding the formation of the delimitation panel, the extensions given to it, and its decision based on laws currently assumed to be valid, the impression is inescapable that the people of J&K are being presented with a fait accompli on matters concerning their political destiny, as long as the core question — the validity of the withdrawal of its statehood and special status in 2019 — remains undecided.

118. Which among the following best represents the central message of the author in penning this passage?
- (a) The Supreme Court's verdict on the Delimitation Commission in J&K is a landmark judgement for the political future of the region.
 - (b) The people of J&K are likely to face a challenging political situation due to the delimitation exercise and the redrawing of constituencies in the Union Territory.
 - (c) The formation of the Delimitation Commission for J&K has been met with strong opposition from most political parties in the region.
 - (d) The legal and political legitimacy of the Delimitation Commission's exercise in J&K is subject to debate.
119. What can be inferred from the given passage about the political parties in Jammu and Kashmir?
- (a) They fully support the formation of the Delimitation Commission and the subsequent delimitation exercise.
 - (b) They see the delimitation exercise as a means to empower the Muslim majority region.
 - (c) They believe that the delimitation exercise is an attempt to weaken the political and electoral significance of the Muslim majority region and favor parties with a base in Jammu.
 - (d) They have not expressed any opinion on the Delimitation Commission and the subsequent delimitation exercise.
120. Which of the following could weaken the arguments presented in the given passage?
- (a) A survey indicating that the majority of people in Jammu and Kashmir support the Delimitation Commission's report.
 - (b) A court ruling invalidating the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019.
 - (c) A statement from the ruling party indicating that the delimitation exercise was carried out with the intention of empowering the Muslim majority region.

- (d) The Supreme Court ruling that the delimitation exercise in line with the constitutional provisions that empower Parliament to form new States, alter existing ones, and change their status and boundaries.
121. Which of the following is the author most likely to disagree with?
- (a) The Supreme Court's verdict upholding the formation of the Delimitation Commission for Jammu and Kashmir is necessary to maintain law and order in the Union Territory.
 - (b) Most political parties in J&K are wrong to see the delimitation exercise as an attempt to weaken the Muslim majority region's political and electoral significance.
 - (c) The outcome of an election can provide a definitive answer to the question of legitimacy arising from the readjustment of boundaries.
 - (d) The people of J&K are being presented with a fait accompli on matters concerning their political destiny.
122. In the context of the passage, what role does public opinion play in determining the political legitimacy of the redrawing of constituencies in J&K?
- (a) Public opinion is irrelevant in determining the political legitimacy of the redrawing of constituencies in J&K.
 - (b) Public opinion is the sole determinant of the political legitimacy of the redrawing of constituencies in J&K.
 - (c) Public opinion is a factor in determining the political legitimacy of the redrawing of constituencies in J&K, but not the only factor.
 - (d) The passage does not discuss the role of public opinion in determining the political legitimacy of the redrawing of constituencies in J&K.
123. Which among the following best represents a flaw in the author's arguments?
- (a) The author fails to consider the impact of social media on political discourse in J&K.
 - (b) The author's arguments are too focused on legal technicalities, and fail to take into account the human impact of the redrawing of constituencies in J&K.
 - (c) The author's arguments rely too heavily on anecdotal evidence, and fail to provide sufficient statistical data to support their claims.
 - (d) The passage does not contain any flaws in the author's arguments.

Passage (Q.124-Q.129): On Tuesday, a World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) report occupied center stage at the UN Security Council's first-ever debate on the impact of sea-level rise on global peace. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres cited the document to warn of "a mass exodus of population on a biblical scale". The report — whose release coincided with the landmark UNSC session — adds to the growing corpus of studies that underline the climate vulnerabilities of people living in low-lying areas. But it projects a crisis that's frightful, even by the dire standards of climate reports. More than one in 10 people in the world, including those in megacities like Mumbai, New York, London, Dhaka, Shanghai and Buenos Aires, could face severe turmoil even if global warming is miraculously limited to 1.5 degrees — the Paris climate pact's goal.

The task for policymakers then is to prepare for massive social and economic dislocation. This will require building resilience at several levels. For instance, investing in R&D, infrastructure and warning systems to mitigate the loss of lives and property. Protecting coasts could require engineering, technological and ecological interventions — creating physical barriers, permeable pavements, sopping waters or reviving mangroves. The jury is out on several innovations. Engineering solutions are often criticized because even the most robust protective structures deflect the energy of the waves to other areas. Armored shorelines can also upset the delicate ecological balance of coastal habitats. In recent times, innovations to overcome such deficiencies by combining engineering and ecological approaches have been tried. But a lot of the state-of-the-art green know-how remains out of reach for a majority of the worst affected countries. Technology and fund transfer commitments at UN summits have rarely been in proportion to the gravity of the challenge at hand — in any case, follow-up on even the most sincere commitment has been far from being adequate.

As the WMO has warned, the rising seas are a “threat-multiplier”. The rushing salty waters can aggravate disparities by playing havoc with agrarian systems and ruining the livelihoods of fishing communities. International law may well have to engage with the requirements of people dislocated by the sea, many of them rendered stateless. At the same time, dealing with emergencies, mitigating hardship and preparing people to deal with the vagaries of climate will require political will and action at the level of local governments. In India, this could test the resolve of urban municipalities and civic bodies that have struggled to do justice to their mandate, even in normal times.

124. Which of the following best represents the main idea of the given passage?
- (a) The first-ever debate on the impact of sea-level rise on global peace can't be ignored as policymakers have a task at hand.
 - (b) Policymakers would do well to prepare themselves for massive socio-economic relocation.
 - (c) The WMO's warning on the rising sea-levels should not go unnoticed as the policymakers are left to fend for themselves.
 - (d) More needs to be done in order to protect the world against the declining sea-levels.
125. Which of the following has been assumed by the author in order for his arguments to hold?
- (a) The WMO's warning will be warned by the policymakers or the world would be saved.
 - (b) The document regarding sea-levels cited in the passage is not fabricated by its researchers.
 - (c) There is no way to save the people of the world's megacities from relocating themselves.
 - (d) Engineering solutions cannot play a role in saving the world from the impending sea-level rise.
126. The information in the passage allows which of the following to be inferred, if the information in the passage is correct?
- (a) The urban municipalities and civic bodies are expected to deliver in times of crisis.
 - (b) A mass exodus of population is on the horizon even if efforts are made to counter sea-level rise.
 - (c) The policymakers would have to deliver on several fronts in order to be prepared for the crisis on the horizon.
 - (d) Innovations at present and in future would serve well to prepare for the sea-level rise.
127. Which of the following could strengthen the author's arguments on preparing for the impact of sea-level rise on global peace?
- (a) The construction of physical barriers is sufficient to protect coastal habitats.
 - (b) People living in low-lying areas are not vulnerable to the threat of rising sea levels.
 - (c) UN commitments to transfer technology and funds have been largely effective in proportion to the gravity of the challenge.
 - (d) Political will and action at the level of local governments are not sufficient to deal with emergencies and mitigate hardship.
128. Which one of the given choices reflects the role played by the given statement?
“At the same time, dealing with emergencies, mitigating hardship and preparing people to deal with the vagaries of climate will require political will and action at the level of local governments.”
- (a) The given statement is a fact.
 - (b) The given statement is a judgement.
 - (c) The given statement is an inference.
 - (d) The given statement is a contradictory statement of the author's conclusion.
129. Which of the following is the author most likely to disagree with?
- (a) Policymakers should invest in R&D and infrastructure to mitigate the loss of lives and property.
 - (b) Combining engineering and ecological approaches is the best way to protect coasts.
 - (c) International law may need to address the requirements of people dislocated by the sea.
 - (d) Climate change is a myth and does not pose a threat to humanity.

Passage (Q.130-Q.135): The Union health ministry recently stated that there is a dearth of over 3,000 doctors in Central government hospitals in rural as well as urban areas. Shockingly, some of the prestigious hospitals in the country, including the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi, have vacancies. Further, the shortage is more pronounced among nursing and support staff: there are over 20,000 posts lying vacant in these hospitals. This is disconcerting as it puts a severe strain on the public healthcare delivery, the impact of which can be particularly adverse in the villages where the shortage of medical infrastructure and healthcare staff is considerably acute. For instance, according to the Rural Health Statistics 2021-2022, there is an 80% shortfall in paediatricians and surgeons and more than 70% paucity in physicians, obstetricians and gynaecologists in these areas. Worse, the total staff strength in community health centres, health sub centres and primary health centres — crucial first points of contact in the rural healthcare network — was thinner than even in 2020-21. These twin datasets unveil formidable challenges for the health management system. Some of the consequences are obvious: India's high infant and maternal mortality rates can be attributed to the paucity of medical carers in remote areas. The absence of doctors in the hinterland also puts pressure on hospitals in cities to which patients are usually sent.

The ratio of allopathic doctors to India's population is 1:1445, which is significantly lower than the World Health Organization's prescribed standard of 100 doctors per one lakh people — the Centre's claim of 1:834 is inflated to include Ayush doctors. Districts with poor doctor density are concentrated mostly in Northeast and central India. These regions need special attention. The government has tried to solve the imbalance by increasing the number of medical institutions in the interiors. However, this has not been able to serve its purpose as doctors often prefer urban postings because of professional incentives and better infrastructure even though the stipulations demand that medical students should serve in rural areas for a particular period required by the state government which runs the government medical college. Perhaps a mixture of stringent regulations and appeals to the conscience could make the difference for a community whose members are supposed to honour the spirit of the Hippocratic oath.

130. What is the best representation of the main idea of the passage?

- (a) India's healthcare system is failing due to a lack of medical infrastructure and healthcare staff in both rural and urban areas, with prestigious hospitals like All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi, having vacancies, which is resulting in high infant and maternal mortality rates.
- (b) Despite the government's efforts to increase the number of medical institutions in the interiors, the shortage of medical personnel in India, particularly in rural areas, is putting a severe strain on the public healthcare delivery, with an 80% shortfall in paediatricians and surgeons and more than 70% paucity in physicians, obstetricians, and gynaecologists, which is affecting the healthcare services and leading to high mortality rates.
- (c) The shortage of over 3,000 doctors and more than 20,000 nursing and support staff in Central government hospitals, including prestigious hospitals like All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi, is a matter of concern, which is leading to a severe strain on the public healthcare delivery, particularly in rural areas, and high infant and maternal mortality rates.
- (d) The shortage of medical infrastructure and healthcare staff in India, particularly in rural areas, is a significant challenge for the health management system, resulting in low infant and maternal mortality rates, and although the government has increased the number of medical institutions in the interiors, it has not been able to serve its purpose.

131. Which of the following has been used by the author to support his claims in the passage?

- (a) Personal opinions and anecdotes.
- (b) Statistical data and reports.
- (c) Biased research studies.
- (d) Misleading advertisements.

132. What is the most pressing consequence of the shortage of medical staff in India's Central government hospitals, as stated in the passage?
- (a) Increased pressure on hospitals in urban areas.
 - (b) Low doctor density in Northeast and central India.
 - (c) A high ratio of patients to doctors in rural areas.
 - (d) Lower standards of medical care in prestigious hospitals.
133. Which of the following best describes the role played by the second paragraph in the context of the passage?
- (a) The second paragraph provides a historical background of the healthcare system in India.
 - (b) The second paragraph highlights the deficiencies in medical infrastructure in rural areas.
 - (c) The second paragraph discusses the shortage of nursing and support staff in healthcare institutions.
 - (d) The second paragraph presents statistical data on the shortage of medical staff in rural areas.
134. Which of the following is the author most likely to disagree with?
- (a) The shortage of medical staff in rural and urban hospitals is not a serious issue.
 - (b) The low ratio of doctors to India's population is not an alarming situation.
 - (c) The imbalance in the distribution of medical staff across India is not a cause of concern.
 - (d) The lack of medical staff in the rural areas of India puts pressure on hospitals in cities.
135. How can the shortage of medical staff in rural areas be addressed effectively, according to the author?
- (a) Increasing the number of medical institutions in urban areas to attract more doctors.
 - (b) Providing financial incentives to doctors to work in rural areas.
 - (c) Imposing stricter regulations to ensure that medical students complete their mandatory rural service.
 - (d) Encouraging people in rural areas to seek medical treatment in urban hospitals.

SECTION - D: LOGICAL REASONING

Directions (Q.106-Q.135): Read the passage given below and answer the questions that follow-

Passage(Q.106-Q.111): That the first meeting of the G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors (FMCBG) in Bengaluru could only release a “Chair’s Summary and Outcome Document” instead of a communique owing to a lack of consensus in the wording of the text indicates that the Ukraine war is likely to shadow Delhi’s G20 presidency. Russia and China opposed the paragraphs in the communique that condemned Russia’s war on Ukraine that started a year ago. The summary and outcome document has instead kept the words of the G20 Bali Leader’s Declaration regarding the war. However, the meeting covered a lot of ground on issues relating to international financial architecture, sustainable finance and infrastructure.

The summary note points out that even as the global economic outlook has improved modestly, risks to growth persist. It notes that the continuing persistence of high inflation and tighter global monetary conditions “could worsen debt vulnerabilities” of many economies. The G20 has recognised the need to address the “debt vulnerabilities” of many low and middle income countries. To ensure relief for indebted countries coordination is required between various agencies including multilateral agencies and private creditors. The group is hopeful of a quick conclusion on debt treatment of countries like Zambia, Ethiopia, Ghana and Sri Lanka. Another area where progress is being made is on the contentious issue of crypto currencies. The G20 has welcomed the work by the financial stability board to ensure that the crypto ecosystem is subject to “robust regulation, supervision and oversight to mitigate potential risks to financial stability”. The board is expected to finalise its recommendations by July 2023, following which along with the International Monetary Fund, it will jointly submit a paper on the issue in September. Considering that countries the world over are grappling with issues concerning the crypto ecosystem which range from regulation to oversight, this would perhaps be a step towards developing an international governance architecture.

The Ukraine war has sharpened the geopolitical divide. With the Russia-China axis and the US-Europe bloc pulling in different directions, building a consensus on any big ticket initiative aimed at tackling high inflation and tightening financial conditions in the post pandemic world is not going to be easy. With the G20 foreign ministers set to meet later this week in Delhi, India has its task cut out. The visiting German Chancellor Olaf Scholz hinted as much when he referred to India’s G20 presidency and said, Delhi has “a very responsible task at a difficult point in time”.

106. Which of the following best summarizes the main idea of the passage?

- (a) The G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors met in Bengaluru and released a communique condemning Russia's war on Ukraine.
- (b) The G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors met in Bengaluru and released a summary note highlighting the need to address debt vulnerabilities of low and middle-income countries, progress made on cryptocurrencies, and the difficult task ahead for India's G20 presidency.
- (c) The G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors failed to reach a consensus on any agenda item during their meeting in Bengaluru, including the issue of debt vulnerabilities of low and middle-income countries.
- (d) The G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors met in Bengaluru and released a communique on the issue of debt vulnerabilities of low and middle-income countries, but failed to address the issue of cryptocurrencies.

107. Based on the information in the passage, what can be inferred about the G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors meeting in Bengaluru?
- (a) The meeting achieved consensus on all issues discussed and released a detailed communique.
 - (b) The meeting primarily focused on addressing the debt vulnerabilities of low and middle income countries.
 - (c) The meeting was overshadowed by the Ukraine war and failed to achieve consensus on condemning Russia's actions.
 - (d) The meeting made significant progress towards developing an international governance architecture for crypto currencies.
108. Which of the following statements could weaken the author's argument regarding the importance of the G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors meeting?
- (a) The G20 has hysterically struggled to reach a consensus on global financial issues, making it unlikely that any meaningful progress will be made at future meetings.
 - (b) The global economic outlook has improved modestly, suggesting that the G20 meeting was unnecessary in the first place.
 - (c) While the G20 discussed important issues such as international financial architecture and sustainable finance, it failed to address pressing concerns like income inequality and climate change.
 - (d) The G20's lack of progress on the issue of crypto regulation highlights the group's inability to take decisive action on emerging financial technologies.
109. Which of the following is the author most likely to agree with except?
- (a) The G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors' meeting in Bengaluru covered a lot of ground on issues relating to international financial architecture, sustainable finance and infrastructure.
 - (b) Russia and China opposed the paragraphs in the communique that condemned Russia's war on Ukraine that started a year ago.
 - (c) Building a consensus on any big ticket initiative aimed at tackling high inflation and tightening financial conditions in the post pandemic world is going to be easy.
 - (d) The G20 has recognized the need to address the "debt vulnerabilities" of many low and middle income countries.
110. What is the author's opinion on the impact of the Ukraine war on the G20 presidency of India?
- (a) The Ukraine war will have no impact on the G20 presidency of India.
 - (b) The Ukraine war will overshadow the G20 presidency of India.
 - (c) The Ukraine war will result in a consensus among G20 member nations.
 - (d) The Ukraine war will lead to the cancellation of the G20 meeting in Delhi.
111. Based on the author's arguments, which of the following must necessarily be true, for his arguments to hold?
- (a) The G20 finance ministers and central bank governors had a successful meeting in Bengaluru.
 - (b) The global economic outlook has improved significantly.
 - (c) The crypto ecosystem is not subject to robust regulation and oversight.
 - (d) The Ukraine war has created geopolitical divisions among G20 member nations.

Passage(Q.112-Q.117): The death of Kashmiri Pandit and bank guard Sanjay Sharma at the hands of terrorist gunmen in Pulwama is yet another murder in a series of attacks on the minority community in the Valley. Sharma is the second Pandit to fall to terrorism in the Pulwama area after Janki Nath's death in 1990 at the peak of militancy. While the murder could be a deliberate ploy by terrorists to strike fear into the minority community in the area, it also signals the failure of security agencies to adequately protect the poor residents. The modus operandi of the radical elements who are targeting civilians has always been clear — the attacks are meant to invite state retaliation and repression, in turn fomenting discontent and disaffection to garner more recruits to the cause. On Tuesday, after follow-up operations that resulted in the death of an Army jawan and two militants, security forces have asserted that Sharma's attacker has now been slain. But this does little to mitigate the fear

that has gripped Pandits in the Valley and Pulwama in particular. Last year, militant attacks resulted in the deaths of 29 civilians including three local Pandits, three other Hindus and eight non-local labourers and also caused the migration of 5,500 Pandit employees from the Valley.

All political parties including the separatists such as Hurriyat Conference, besides civil society organisations have condemned the attacks, but the repeated and brazen nature of the killings, at one level, point to a breakdown of relations between the administration and the citizenry, leading to the inability of the administration to anticipate and prevent such attacks. The fact that areas that were relatively safe for the minority community even during the peak of militancy have now become unsafe suggests that the administration must rethink its security-centric policies in the Valley. The Union Territory administration and the Union government have claimed that hard-edged moves such as the dilution of Article 370 and bifurcating the State in 2019 have helped curb militancy and were necessary to bring back normalcy in the Valley. But the repeated attacks on the minority community suggest otherwise — radical sections have sought to utilise the disaffection in the Valley to foment polarisation. Only an effective government by elected representatives of the people of the Valley can do more to rebuild trust between the administration and the citizenry. This will help isolate the radical sections and ease the workload of the security forces in Kashmir. Restoring statehood to Jammu and Kashmir and working towards the conduct of Assembly elections are now a clear imperative.

112. Which of the following could remove the fear from the minds of the minority community in Kashmir? Choose the best answer.
- (a) Increasing the number of security forces in the Valley
 - (b) Restoring statehood to Jammu and Kashmir
 - (c) Deploying more advanced weapons to security forces
 - (d) Sending the minority community out of the Valley
113. Which of the following is the most suitable title for the passage?
- (a) The Broken Trust: The Struggle for Peace in Kashmir
 - (b) The War on Minorities: A Failing Administration in Kashmir
 - (c) The Burden of Security: The Plight of Pandits in Kashmir
 - (d) The Valley of Terror: A Land of No Return for Minorities
114. Which of the following would strengthen the author's argument in the passage?
- (a) The government's efforts to combat terrorism in the region have been successful, resulting in a decrease in the number of attacks on minority communities.
 - (b) Conducting Assembly elections in the region will not help in rebuilding trust between the administration and the citizenry.
 - (c) The government should focus on addressing the root cause of disaffection in the Valley rather than relying solely on security-centric policies.
 - (d) The recent attacks on minority communities in the region are not related to the breakdown of relations between the administration and the citizenry.
115. Which of the following weakens the author's argument that restoring statehood to Jammu and Kashmir and conducting Assembly elections are necessary to isolate radical sections and ease the workload of security forces in Kashmir?
- (a) The Union government has taken various steps to curb militancy and restore normalcy in the Valley.
 - (b) The attacks on the minority community are a deliberate ploy by terrorists to strike fear into them.
 - (c) The security forces have now asserted that Sharma's attacker has been slain, which will restore peace in the Valley.
 - (d) The administration's security-centric policies in the Valley have been successful in curbing militancy.

116. Which of the following has the author used to support their claims in the passage?
- (a) Personal opinions
 - (b) News reports
 - (c) Anecdotes
 - (d) None of the above.
117. Which of the following can be inferred from the passage regarding the situation in Jammu and Kashmir?
- (a) The administration's security policies have successfully eliminated militancy in the region.
 - (b) The killings of civilians and minority communities in the region suggest a breakdown of relations between the administration and the citizenry.
 - (c) Only hard-edged moves like the dilution of Article 370 and bifurcating the state in 2019 can curb militancy in the region.
 - (d) All political parties including separatists have supported the administration's security-centric policies in the region.

Passage(Q.118-Q.123): A pachyderm with a dark, gleaming coat and handsomely proportioned ears is all the news at the Irinjadappilly Sree Krishna Temple in Kerala's Thrissur district. Irinjadappilly Raman, as he is known, is an 800-kilo, 11-foot "robotic elephant", made of an iron frame and rubber coat. He was donated to the temple by People for Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) India along with actor Parvathy Thiruvothu. The temple authorities have welcomed the new addition and at Raman's Nadayiruthal ceremony (in which elephants are dedicated or offered to the deity), reportedly many more people turned up to catch a glimpse of the robot elephant than to pray. For some time, at least, it seems like Raman will be the cynosure of all eyes in and around Irinjadappilly and both the donors and the temple are hoping that his example would encourage other temples around the state to use robot elephants as well.

This may not be so simple. While there is little doubt that captive elephants are all too frequently subjected to abuse — in a statement, PETA expressed the hope that Raman's use will show more temples that it is possible to have "cruelty-free" ceremonies — the state's temples have used the animals for ritual purposes for so long that they're now considered integral to the ceremonies. This is besides the deep emotional resonance that elephants have in a state where their grace and beauty is eulogised in song and poetry, and individual animals are big enough celebrities to have their own fandoms.

In appearance, Raman is surprisingly like the flesh-and-blood originals. But once the novelty wears off, would devotees still be willing to accept blessings from a mechanical elephant? Stricter action against abuse is needed, as is wider dissemination of the message that rituals can and do change over time. Elephants should perhaps be spared the trouble of standing for hours at a time amidst the loud music and crowds at temple ceremonies and festivals.

118. Which statement best represents the main idea of the given passage?
- (a) Irinjadappilly Raman is an 800-kilo, 11-foot "robotic elephant" donated to the Irinjadappilly Sree Krishna Temple by PETA India and actor Parvathy Thiruvothu.
 - (b) The state's temples have used live elephants for ritual purposes for so long that they're now considered integral to the ceremonies, despite the frequent abuse they suffer.
 - (c) Raman's Nadayiruthal ceremony drew more people to see the robot elephant than to pray, indicating a shift in attitudes towards the use of live elephants in temple ceremonies.
 - (d) The use of robot elephants in temple ceremonies could potentially reduce the abuse suffered by captive elephants, but there may be difficulty in convincing people to accept blessings from a mechanical elephant.

119. What can be inferred from the passage about the use of robotic elephants in temple ceremonies in Kerala?
- (a) Robotic elephants will completely replace live elephants in temple ceremonies across Kerala.
 - (b) Robotic elephants are a new addition to the temple ceremonies in Kerala and have already gained popularity.
 - (c) The use of robotic elephants is likely to face opposition due to the emotional connection between the people of Kerala and live elephants.
 - (d) The use of robotic elephants will not have any impact on the emotional connection between the people of Kerala and live elephants.
120. Which of the following options can best strengthen the author's argument regarding the use of robot elephants in temples?
- (a) Many people in Kerala hold elephants in high regard and would likely be willing to accept robot elephants as a humane alternative to live elephants.
 - (b) The use of robot elephants in temples could help to reduce the abuse of live elephants and raise awareness about their mistreatment.
 - (c) Robot elephants may be expensive to construct and maintain, but the cost is worth it if it means ending the cruelty towards live elephants.
 - (d) The use of robot elephants is a controversial issue in Kerala, with many temple authorities refusing to consider them as an alternative to live elephants.
121. Which of the following assumptions is made by the author in order for his arguments to hold?
- (a) Devotees are willing to accept blessings from a mechanical elephant.
 - (b) Stricter action against abuse is not needed.
 - (c) Elephants should continue to stand for hours at a time amidst loud music and crowds at temple ceremonies and festivals.
 - (d) Use of robotic elephants might help to eliminate elephant mistreatment; it may face objection due to emotional values attached.
122. Which of the following is not a supporting idea of the passage?
- (a) Captive elephants are often subjected to abuse.
 - (b) The use of robotic elephants could promote cruelty-free ceremonies in temples.
 - (c) Elephants have deep emotional resonance in the state of Kerala.
 - (d) The robotic elephant Raman has handsomely proportioned ears and a dark, gleaming coat.
123. Which of the following is the author of the passage most likely to agree with?
- (a) Temples must stop using real elephants under all conditions in ceremonies and festivals immediately.
 - (b) The use of robotic elephants should be encouraged in all temples in the state of Kerala regardless what people think.
 - (c) Stricter action should be taken against the abuse of captive elephants.
 - (d) The emotional attachment that people in Kerala have towards elephants should be ignored.

Passage(Q.124-Q.129): The inability of the Group of Twenty foreign ministers, who met in Delhi this week, to agree on a final statement was no surprise. Given the current polarised world environment amid the continuing war in Ukraine, expectations from the G20 meeting were not too high. Yet, the fact that the foreign ministers could not agree to reiterate a formulation on Ukraine that they had articulated at the G20 summit in Bali, Indonesia, last November underlines the deepening great power conflict and worsening crisis of multilateralism. The principal reason for the diplomatic failure at Delhi was the decision by Russia to walk away from the Bali consensus and China's decision to support it. As the Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov put it, the Bali Formula was a "thing of the past".

Three months ago, when the Bali summit took place, the Russian invasion of Ukraine was in a disarray as it rapidly lost ground in the areas that it had occupied. Since then Russia has reinforced its defensive lines in Ukraine and is now in the middle of a renewed military offensive. Moscow has also successfully consolidated its expansive strategic partnership with Beijing. President Vladimir Putin appears confident that time is on his side and that a prolonged war would exhaust Ukraine, divide the West and allow Moscow to prevail, if at a massive cost to Russia. Meanwhile, US President Joe Biden has reaffirmed that the US and the West will stand by Ukraine for “as long as it takes”. The diplomatic room for Delhi, which led the effort in Bali to produce a consensus that all sides could live with, had clearly shrunk in the last few weeks.

India, which has the responsibility to lead the G20 at this difficult juncture, is not ready to throw in the towel. It is confident that there is much time before the G20 leaders arrive in Delhi for the September summit. If the ground situation has altered in the few weeks since the Bali summit and led to a dissipation of the consensus, there is no reason to believe the current dynamic situation in Ukraine will remain unchanged in the next few months. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who addressed the G20 foreign ministers, was realistic enough to recognise the profound crisis in multilateralism today. At the same time, though, the PM underlined India’s twin ambitions — to continue the campaign to reform multilateralism and to get the world to take greater cognisance of the challenges faced by the “Global South”. Acknowledging the difficulties in producing a consensus on Ukraine, External Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar pointed to agreement among the foreign ministers on a number of issues of interest to India and the developing world. These include food and energy security, cooperation to counter terrorism, climate change, global health and disaster management. India is right to remain optimistic and committed to a sustained effort to make the G20 summit in September a success.

124. What is the main focus of the article? Choose the best answer.
- (a) The G20 summit held in Delhi was a failure due to disagreements over Ukraine.
 - (b) India is optimistic about achieving consensus on multilateralism despite difficulties.
 - (c) The G20 foreign ministers discussed various issues including food and energy security, counter-terrorism, climate change, global health, and disaster management.
 - (d) Russia and China walked away from the Bali consensus on Ukraine, leading to diplomatic failure at the recent G20 meeting in Delhi.
125. What can be inferred about Russia's strategy towards Ukraine from the information in the passage?
- (a) Russia's military offensive in Ukraine has been successful in occupying more territories.
 - (b) Russia’s confidence about prolonged war in Ukraine would be beneficial for itself even if this costs.
 - (c) Russia has been unable to consolidate its strategic partnership with China due to the ongoing conflict in Ukraine.
 - (d) Russia is interested in reaching a diplomatic agreement with Ukraine to end the ongoing conflict.
126. Which of the following strengthens the author's argument about India's role in leading the G20 at the current juncture?
- (a) India has been a member of the G20 since its inception in 1999.
 - (b) India has successfully dealt with its own domestic challenges of poverty reduction and economic growth.
 - (c) Prime Minister Narendra Modi has frequently engaged with world leaders and attended international forums to discuss global issues.
 - (d) External Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar highlighted that the G20 foreign ministers had agreed on a number of issues of interest to India and the developing world.

127. Which of the following weakens the author's arguments in the passage?
- (a) The G20 foreign ministers should have put more pressure on Russia to abide by the Bali consensus.
 - (b) The worsening crisis of multilateralism is due to India's lack of leadership and inability to bring about consensus.
 - (c) The US and the West will not be able to stand by Ukraine for much longer due to their own internal challenges.
 - (d) The fact that China supported Russia's decision to walk away from the Bali consensus suggests that India's efforts to reform multilateralism may not be successful.
128. Which of the following must necessarily be true based on the author's arguments in the passage?
- (a) The G20 foreign ministers meeting in Delhi this week failed to reach a consensus due to the worsening crisis of multilateralism and the deepening great power conflict.
 - (b) India's twin ambitions are to continue the campaign to reform multilateralism and to get the world to take greater cognisance of the challenges faced by the "Global North".
 - (c) The Russian invasion of Ukraine was in a disarray three months ago when the Bali summit took place.
 - (d) The G20 leaders arriving in Delhi for the September summit will face difficulties in producing a consensus on Ukraine.
129. Which of the following is a statement of fact from the passage rather than a statement of claim?
- (a) Russia's decision to walk away from the Bali Formula contributed to the diplomatic failure at the recent G20 meeting.
 - (b) President Putin is confident that a prolonged war would exhaust Ukraine, divide the West and allow Moscow to prevail.
 - (c) The G20 foreign ministers could not agree to reiterate a formulation on Ukraine that they had articulated at the G20 summit in Bali.
 - (d) India is confident that there is much time before the G20 leaders arrive in Delhi for the September summit.

Passage(Q.130-Q.135): The National Statistical Office's latest release of GDP data estimates a further deceleration in growth in the October-December 2022 quarter, a slowdown that the government's Chief Economic Adviser (CEA) has attributed largely to an upward revision in the year-earlier period's figures. Gross domestic product is posited to have expanded by 4.4% from the year-earlier quarter, an appreciable deceleration from the 6.3% pace logged in the preceding three months and lagging the 5.2% growth of the October-December 2021 period as well. Gross Value Added (GVA) growth slowed to 4.6%, from the second quarter's 5.5%, as the estimates for manufacturing suggested a continuing contraction (minus 1.1%), albeit narrower than July-September's shrinkage (minus 3.6%). Sequentially too manufacturing appears to have shrunk (minus 2.4%). Growth in three of the five services sectors including the crucial trade, hotels, transport and communications as well as the financial, real estate and professional services categories also slowed sharply from the second quarter, signalling that the pent-up demand seen in the contact-intensive sectors, which had been worst hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, had begun to wane. On the expenditure front, the mainstay private final consumption expenditure lost some momentum with its percentage share of overall GDP easing to 61.6%, from 63% in the year-earlier quarter. That this happened in the traditional festival quarter when consumption spending usually peaks ought to be cause for concern and suggests that the relentless pace of retail inflation is eroding consumptive capacity.

The CEA, however, has suggested that if the year-earlier manufacturing output data used to calculate the year-on-year growth had remained unrevised, the sector would have actually logged an expansion of 3.8%, instead of the 1.1% shrinkage that the NSO estimates show. Similarly, he has asserted that private consumption spending would have logged third-quarter growth of about 6%, instead of 2.1% that the latest NSO release indicates, if the data prior to revision had been used instead. Still, even at 6%, consumption spending growth would lag the second quarter's 8.8% expansion, making it clear that momentum is flagging. Gross fixed capital formation, which reflects investment by businesses in new capacity, contracted sequentially, with its share of GDP slipping to 31.8%, from 34.2% in the July-September period. With global demand weakening considerably and unlikely

to recover over the course of 2023, and the risks from likely unfavourable weather conditions raising uncertainty over farm output in the coming months, policy makers will need to do all they can to buttress domestic demand. That the data revisions have essentially made it that much harder to draw meaningful conclusions, spotlights the challenges to crafting policy solutions, as top central bank officials have frequently pointed out.

130. Which of the following best describes the main message of the passage?
- (a) The Indian economy is experiencing robust growth in all sectors.
 - (b) The Indian government is taking necessary measures to boost the economy.
 - (c) The latest GDP data shows a deceleration in growth in the October-December 2022 quarter.
 - (d) The data revisions have made it easier to draw meaningful conclusions about the Indian economy.
131. Which of the following is NOT an inference that can be drawn from the passage?
- (a) The Indian economy has been negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - (b) The revision of year-earlier data has affected the accuracy of the latest GDP estimates.
 - (c) The festival quarter usually sees an increase in consumption spending.
 - (d) Global demand is likely to recover over the course of 2023.
132. Which of the following options would strengthen the author's argument in the passage?
- (a) The government should focus on increasing taxes to boost GDP growth.
 - (b) The NSO data is unreliable and should not be taken seriously.
 - (c) Policy makers should take measures to increase domestic demand to counter the weakening global demand.
 - (d) The contraction in gross fixed capital formation is temporary and will recover soon.
133. Which of the following can be concluded from the information present in the passage?
- (a) India's manufacturing sector has shown signs of growth in the October-December 2022 quarter.
 - (b) The festival season did not lead to an increase in private consumption expenditure in the year-earlier quarter.
 - (c) Global demand is likely to recover over the course of 2023.
 - (d) The Indian government has announced policy solutions to boost domestic demand.
134. Which of the following best describes the impact of the current economic situation on the retail industry in India?
- (a) The retail industry in India is experiencing a surge in growth due to increased consumer demand.
 - (b) The retail industry in India is stagnant due to low consumer demand and rising inflation.
 - (c) The retail industry in India is expected to recover soon due to government policies aimed at boosting domestic demand.
 - (d) The passage does not provide enough information to determine the impact of the current economic situation on the retail industry.
135. Based on the passage, which of the following statements is true regarding the GDP growth in the October-December 2022 quarter?
- (a) The GDP growth rate increased compared to the same quarter in 2021.
 - (b) The GDP growth rate decreased compared to the previous quarter.
 - (c) The GDP growth rate remained constant compared to the previous quarter.
 - (d) The GDP growth rate increased compared to the previous quarter.

SECTION - D: LOGICAL REASONING

Directions (Q.106-Q.135): Read the passage given below and answer the questions that follow-

Passage (Q.106-Q.111): The Reserve Bank of India's decision to raise its benchmark policy rate yet again, albeit by a smaller quarter percentage point, reflects a welcome resolve in staying committed to ensuring durable price stability. Given that the Monetary Policy Committee's primary mandate is to steer retail inflation towards a 4% target, and that core price gains have stayed stuck above or almost at 6% for 20 months, the rate setting panel voted by a 4-2 majority to continue tightening policy. Governor Shaktikanta Das emphasised the significance of the MPC's unwavering focus on inflation when he noted that medium-term growth prospects would be best strengthened by 'keeping inflation expectations anchored and breaking the persistence of core inflation'. That inflation remains the key risk to the growth outlook, notwithstanding the easing in the headline print for retail price gains over November and December, was stressed by the MPC. The panel pointed to the deflation in vegetable prices in end 2022 and cautioned that this trend could likely dissipate as summer approaches and prices harden. Commodity prices are also expected to see upward pressure globally, given the lifting of most COVID-related restrictions, particularly in China. Specifically, the recent uptrend in Brent futures and the intensifying Ukraine conflict forebodes the possibility that oil costs may well upset the RBI's assumption of an average price of \$95 per barrel for India's crude basket.

The MPC's decision to raise rates by a marginally smaller 25 basis points (bps) this time following its December decision to temper the tightening to 35 bps after three straight half percentage point increases, shows it is cognisant of the growth-retarding challenges that rising credit costs could pose to the ongoing post-pandemic recovery. Still, the fact that the Indian economy has proved more resilient, underpinned by a rebound in domestic demand especially for contact-intensive services and discretionary spending, has provided a degree of comfort to monetary policymakers. This was manifest in their upgrades to the GDP growth forecasts for the first two quarters of the coming fiscal year. While the RBI raised its growth outlook for Q1 FY24 to 7.8%, a sizable 70 bps up from its projection in December, it lifted its Q2 projection by 30 bps to 6.2%. Mr. Das's unequivocal assertion that monetary policy must be "tailored to ensuring a durable disinflation" rightly echoes a recent blogpost by three IMF economists who warned that central banks need to stay resolute as any 'premature loosening' of policy risks a sharp resurgence in price gains that could leave countries susceptible to further shocks. Ultimately, price stability is and must remain the bedrock for a durable economic recovery.

106. Which of the following best describes the main idea of the passage?
- (a) The Indian economy is experiencing a severe downturn and the RBI is taking measures to improve the situation.
 - (b) The RBI is committed to ensuring durable price stability and has raised its benchmark policy rate accordingly.
 - (c) The Monetary Policy Committee is only concerned with short-term growth and is ignoring the risks of inflation.
 - (d) The RBI is facing challenges from rising credit costs and the MPC is struggling to balance growth and price stability.
107. What can be inferred from the passage about the Monetary Policy Committee's (MPC) stance on inflation and growth?
- (a) The MPC is solely focused on growth and ignoring the risks of inflation.
 - (b) The MPC is balancing their focus on both inflation and growth, but is struggling to achieve both goals.
 - (c) The MPC is committed to ensuring durable price stability and is willing to sacrifice short-term growth to achieve this goal.
 - (d) The MPC is uncertain about the relationship between inflation and growth and has not yet formed a clear stance on the issue.

108. Which of the following does the author of the passage seem to agree with the most?
- (a) Inflation control should be the top priority for central banks, even if it means sacrificing short-term growth.
 - (b) Central banks should prioritize short-term growth over inflation control, as high inflation can be addressed later.
 - (c) The relationship between inflation and growth is too complex for central banks to make informed decisions.
 - (d) Central banks should take a hands-off approach to both inflation and growth, as market forces will regulate these factors.
109. What could further bolster the position on the Monetary Policy Committee's recent decision to raise its benchmark policy rate?
- (a) The Indian economy is showing signs of a slowdown.
 - (b) The increase in inflation expectations among the public.
 - (c) The decrease in domestic demand for contact-intensive services.
 - (d) The improvement in the global oil market.
110. Which of the following is true, based on the author's arguments in the passage?
- (a) The Monetary Policy Committee's primary mandate is to steer retail inflation towards a 6% target.
 - (b) The RBI's recent decision to raise its benchmark policy rate will harm the ongoing post-pandemic recovery.
 - (c) The recent easing in the headline print for retail price gains over November and December is the key risk to the growth outlook.
 - (d) Price stability is the bedrock for a durable economic recovery.
111. Which of the following has been used by the author to support his claims in the passage?
- (a) Personal opinions and beliefs.
 - (b) Emotional appeals.
 - (c) Facts and statistics.
 - (d) Anecdotes and experiences.

Passage (Q.112-Q.117): India's goods exports, a key driver of its growth impulses and a major job creator, got off to a disappointing start in 2023. Merchandise shipments fell 6.6% year-on-year to \$32.91 billion in January. While this is the second month of contracting exports, the dip is more than double the 3% drop in December 2022 and marks a sharp 13.6% sequential decline. Along with an anticipated post-Christmas cooling off in demand, order books probably took a hit as much from actual slowing of economic activity as buyers' wary assessments about consumer confidence levels, with the new year kicking off amid a pall of gloom and doom on the global economic outlook. Engineering exports fell 10%; pharma products lost momentum as did 14 other products out of India's top 30 export items, including jewellery and textiles. The silver lining is that imports dipped too, bringing the goods trade deficit to a 12-month low of just \$17.75 billion, a far cry from the \$25-odd billion averaged in each of the previous six months and the record \$29.23 billion gap of September 2022. If this trend holds, India's current account deficit for 2022-23 may end up lower than the uncomfortable 3%-plus levels of GDP projected by most agencies.

Yet, the drop in imports during January suggests domestic demand growth is fading. While the year-on-year drop was just 3.6%, the \$50.66 billion import bill for January is the smallest in 18 months and 15.8% lower than December's revised \$60.2 billion figure. Only a part of this stepdown can be ascribed to lower commodity prices as non-oil, non-gold imports have fallen by a sharper 6.7% from January 2022 levels. The Commerce Ministry has argued that India's weaker trade balance this financial year has been driven by the "two-way effect" of a slowing world economy hurting exports and resilient domestic demand shoring up imports. That effect no longer seems to be at work. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has rightly flagged concerns about Indian exporters' prospects this year amid global slowdown fears. Her prescription that exporters keep closer tabs on developments in different markets to avoid being "demotivated" is also spot on. Amid the overall headwinds, trends are diverging in key markets. U.S. retail sales rebounded to grow faster than expected in January while Japan's trade deficit hit a record; more U.K.-based trading businesses now expect an uptick in turnover this March compared

to those that expect a fall, as per a survey by its Statistics office. Industry bodies and the government must work in tandem to tap shrinking opportunities better and help exporters move across this river of uncertainty by feeling the pebbles along the way.

112. Which of the following statements best represents the main idea of the given passage?
- (a) India's merchandise exports fell 6.6% YoY to \$32.91 billion in January, indicating a post-Christmas cooling off in demand and slowing of economic activity.
 - (b) While the drop in imports during January suggests fading domestic demand growth, the decline in non-oil, non-gold imports indicates that the two-way effect of a slowing world economy hurting exports and resilient domestic demand shoring up imports is no longer at work.
 - (c) Industry bodies and the government must work together to tap shrinking opportunities better and help exporters navigate through the uncertain global economic outlook.
 - (d) India's current account deficit for 2022-23 may end up lower than the uncomfortable 3%-plus levels of GDP projected by most agencies as imports have dipped too.
113. What is the author's opinion of Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's concerns about Indian exporters' prospects this year?
- (a) The author disagrees with the Finance Minister's concerns.
 - (b) The author thinks the Finance Minister's concerns are unimportant.
 - (c) The author supports the Finance Minister's concerns.
 - (d) The author is indifferent to the Finance Minister's concerns.
114. What would weaken the author's argument about India's trade balance and its potential impact on the current account deficit?
- (a) A trifling decrease in the number of domestic firms exporting goods.
 - (b) A sharp increase in imports during February.
 - (c) An unexpected rise in global demand for Indian products.
 - (d) An increase in the price of non-oil and non-gold imports
115. Which of the following best represents a flaw, if any, in the author's arguments?
- (a) The author doesn't consider the potential impact of government policies on exports.
 - (b) The author doesn't provide any evidence for the claim that the shrinking trade deficit will improve India's current account deficit.
 - (c) The author assumes that the dip in imports signals a weakening of domestic demand growth, without considering other factors.
 - (d) The author fails to address the potential impact of the pandemic on global economic activity.
116. Which of the following can be concluded from the information in the passage?
- (a) India's goods exports will continue to decline in the coming years due to a global economic slowdown.
 - (b) The decrease in India's imports is entirely due to lower commodity prices.
 - (c) India's current account deficit for 2022-23 is expected to exceed 3% of GDP.
 - (d) India's industry bodies and the government must work together to help exporters navigate through uncertain times.
117. Which of the following is a statement of fact from the passage rather than a statement of claim?
- (a) Merchandise shipments fell 6.6% year-on-year to \$32.91 billion in January.
 - (b) If this trend holds, India's current account deficit for 2022-23 may end up lower than the uncomfortable 3%-plus levels of GDP projected by most agencies.
 - (c) Only a part of this stepdown can be ascribed to lower commodity prices as non-oil, non-gold imports have fallen by a sharper 6.7% from January 2022 levels.
 - (d) Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has rightly flagged concerns about Indian exporters' prospects this year amid global slowdown fears.

Passage (Q.118-Q.123): A key to the success of any welfare programme is the conviction in its implementation. In the 17 years since the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) has been implemented, studies have asserted its net positive impact in the rural areas. From reducing penury through providing off-season employment, and thereby improving household consumption among the invariably poor citizens who avail the scheme, to acting as insurance during monsoon deficient seasons, besides allowing for greater food security through increased productivity helped by the works generated, the scheme continues to be a robust welfare tool. This was even clearer during the pandemic, when thousands of migrant workers who left urban areas due to the lockdowns took up work under the MGNREGS in rural areas where demand for the menial but arduous work peaked. There is of course the case that the scheme has still not transcended into creating more useful assets beyond roads and irrigation canals and requires broad basing and better implementation. But it must be said that the Union government's treatment of the scheme has graduated from a case of lukewarm acceptance of its need because of its popular impact to treating it as a fiscal burden.

Such a reading can be justifiably made if the reduced allocation for the scheme in the Union Budget, from 2.14% of overall outlay in FY23 to 1.33% in FY24, is considered. This was despite implementation in recent years experiencing wage delays and underfunding. This has also depressed demand, with formal requests for work only being a portion of the actual demand. Also, there is much evidence that Aadhaar-based payments have neither reduced corruption nor reduced wage payment delays while creating hurdles for officials and workers during implementation. Union Rural Development Minister Giriraj Singh has now said that the Act should be amended to change the contribution of funds from 100% by the government to a 60-40 split between the Centre and the States in order to make States "more vigilant regarding corruption". But this will only lead to further complications in funding. There has been a shrinking in the States' share of taxes following GST and the financial stresses during the pandemic. States taking up 40% of the funding burden would affect the payment of wages even further. Besides, MGNREGS is a demand-driven programme and salient especially in poorer States and it is incumbent upon the Centre to ensure its robust funding instead of putting the onus on individual States to do so. The government must change its approach towards the MGNREGS by recognising its potential in catering to the poor's right to work.

118. What could be a suitable title for the given passage?
- (a) The government's starved attitude towards MGNREGS
 - (b) MGNREGS, a thorn in the government's side
 - (c) MGNREGS, a silver lining for rural employment
 - (d) MGNREGS, a broken vessel in the making
119. Which of the following statements is not supported by the passage?
- (a) The MGNREGS has been successful in reducing poverty in rural areas.
 - (b) The MGNREGS played a crucial role in providing employment to migrant workers during the pandemic.
 - (c) The reduction in allocation for the MGNREGS in the FY24 Union Budget was due to its fiscal burden on the government.
 - (d) The MGNREGS has been successful in creating useful assets beyond roads and irrigation canals.
120. Which of the following statements best aligns with the author's perspective on the MGNREGS programme?
- (a) "The MGNREGS has proven to be a successful welfare programme, but requires better implementation and funding."
 - (b) "The MGNREGS scheme is a wasteful use of government funds and should be discontinued."
 - (c) "While the MGNREGS has some benefits, it is not an effective tool for reducing poverty and improving rural areas."
 - (d) "The MGNREGS programme is effective in creating valuable assets beyond roads and irrigation canals."

121. Which of the following is the author most likely to disagree with?
- (a) The government should reduce its allocation for the MGNREGS in order to cut down on unnecessary fiscal burden.
 - (b) Aadhaar-based payments have not reduced corruption nor reduced wage payment delays.
 - (c) The MGNREGS needs better implementation in order to create more useful assets beyond roads and irrigation canals.
 - (d) The Centre should ensure robust funding for MGNREGS instead of putting the onus on individual States to do so.
122. Which state of India experienced an increase in demand for MGNREGS work during the pandemic?
- (a) Maharashtra
 - (b) Kerala
 - (c) Tamil Nadu
 - (d) Cannot be determined
123. Which of the following statements is supported in the passage?
- (a) The MGNREGS has not been successful in creating useful assets beyond roads and irrigation canals.
 - (b) The reduced allocation for the MGNREGS in the Union Budget will lead to its success as a welfare programme.
 - (c) Aadhaar-based payments have successfully reduced corruption and wage payment delays in the implementation of the MGNREGS.
 - (d) The implementation of the MGNREGS has positively impacted rural areas in terms of reducing poverty, providing off-season employment, and improving household consumption.

Passage (Q.124-Q.129): The Madhya Pradesh Government has ordered the closure of all bar shops, including ‘ahatas’ (the areas attached to liquor shops where drinking is allowed), even though the shops have been allowed to sell liquor. The decision is said to be in response to former MP chief minister Uma Bharti’s demand for a “controlled liquor policy” in the state. One wonders why our politicians are so much worried about our moral health. Why do they love moralising, moral policing, and sanctimoniousness? In an essay, American economist and social theorist Thomas Sowell wrote that “morality is hard and sanctimoniousness is easy.” Political morality is difficult, for it is predicated upon a commitment to and exertion for good governance, prudent public finance, respect for political adversaries, and decency in public life. Moralising and sanctimoniousness, on the other hand, are easy, as one doesn’t have to do anything meaningful; just making a few statements, however deplorable, is enough. Or one can loudly espouse some emotive issue; a politician can claim to be upholding secularism (which is usually a dog whistle for religious appeasement) or guarding the sentiments or morals of a community (by banning or proposing to ban a movie, song, etc.). And politicians of all hues are always eager to save the moral health of the people they claim to represent; this often requires policing—something that our political masters never shy away from.

Prohibition, in some form or the other, is a good choice for them. So, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar proscribed alcohol in April 2016. As per the National Family Health Survey 2019-20, Biharis consumed more alcohol than Maharashtrians. There has been a large number hooch tragedies; the justice system has been burdened unnecessarily; but this has not made him rethink the policy itself, or at least relax it a bit. Self-righteousness, after all, is the sibling of moralisation. And now MP has been infected with the virus of prohibition. Not a full-blown case as yet, but you never know when the viral load becomes critical. Bharti may be seeing a political weapon in her anti-alcohol campaign. After all, she has been in the wilderness for quite some time. She played the most important role in ousting the Congress government under Digvijay Singh in the state in 2003, and yet she herself was removed as chief minister. She became a minister in the Union Cabinet under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, but she lost that office too. MP Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan may see the restriction on liquor as a concession to Bharti; he may even hope that this would placate her. But there is also a possibility of her upping the ante over the issue; she may now fight for complete prohibition. That would be unfortunate, especially because the Hindi-speaking state is trying to emerge as an investment and tourism destination. Moralisers can be more than killjoys; they can hurt development.

124. Which assumption is made by the author for his arguments to hold in the given passage?
- (a) Politicians always prioritize good governance over moralizing.
 - (b) Prohibition policies have no negative impact on development.
 - (c) Moralizing behavior by politicians is often driven by political gain or appeasement.
 - (d) Alcohol consumption is necessary for development.
125. Which option is the best representation of the passage's main idea in brief?
- (a) The Virus of Prohibition surrounding political ambit.
 - (b) The Sanctimoniousness of Politicians as a political gambit.
 - (c) The Killjoys in Politics over alcohol.
 - (d) The Hardship of Political Morality.
126. Which of the following would further support the author's argument in the passage?
- (a) Conduct a survey to determine if citizens believe that politicians should focus on moral issues.
 - (b) Interview a politician who supports prohibition and highlight their arguments.
 - (c) Discuss the negative impact of prohibition on the economy and tourism industry.
 - (d) Provide examples of other states that have implemented successful prohibition policies.
127. Which of the following statements weakens the author's arguments in the passage?
- (a) Prohibition policies have been successful in reducing alcohol consumption in various Indian states.
 - (b) The closure of bars and liquor shops was not an imperative step to protect public health and safety.
 - (c) Politicians who advocate for moral policies not necessarily concerned about the well-being of their constituents.
 - (d) Development and progress in a state can be achieved even if there is no ban on alcohol.
128. Which of the following statements can be validly drawn from the given passage?
- (a) Prohibition is necessary for the moral health of society.
 - (b) Sanctimoniousness in politicians does not prove their genuine concerns.
 - (c) Uma Bharti is against the sale of liquor in Madhya Pradesh.
 - (d) The ban on liquor sales in Bihar has led to a decrease in alcohol consumption.
129. Based on the author's arguments, which of the following must necessarily be true?
- (a) Politicians who impose prohibition policies prioritize the well-being of their constituents.
 - (b) Moralizing and sanctimoniousness are easier than upholding political morality.
 - (c) Uma Bharti's anti-alcohol campaign may lead to complete prohibition in Madhya Pradesh.
 - (d) Prohibition policies have no negative impact on a state's development.

Passage (Q.130-Q.135): Long before the governments of the two countries established warm bilateral relations, a thriving people-to-people connection built a bridge between the United States (US) and India. Travellers and entrepreneurs, students and software professionals, created a melting pot of cultures, languages and sensibilities — one that formed the foundation of a successful Indian-American diaspora. Yet, Covid and its after-effects had a disproportionate impact on these communities as protracted visa delays effectively instituted a travel ban for new tourists and created hassles for students and professionals. As wait times for interviews at an American consulate in India threatened to top 1,000 days at the close of last year, it was clear that this was a wholly avoidable but vexing wrench in an otherwise smooth relationship — one that frittered away public goodwill and threatened to undo, at least in the ordinary person's view, the work put into bolstering ties.

Now, there appears to be some movement. This newspaper reported on Thursday that US officials have outlined unprecedented steps taken to expedite the visa process. Nancy Izzy Jackson, the deputy assistant secretary for the South and Central Asia bureau, said that though visa delays were a global problem, resolving concerns in

India was the highest priority for the US, from the secretary of state Antony Blinken's desk down to the bureau of consular affairs to the mission and consulates. This is welcome but will need to be backed with action. In the past, top US officials, even Mr Blinken, have acknowledged that visa delays were a problem, but movement was slow, especially in the traveller and business visa categories — which encompass two of the highest-demand segments. Such protracted lags hurt the economies of both countries and show the bilateral relationship in poor light. It is in the interest of both countries to work this out at the earliest and offer a reasonable way forward for legal and seamless international travel.

130. Which of the following options best summarizes the main idea of the passage?
- (a) Visa delays caused by Covid-19 have had no impact on the US-India relationship.
 - (b) The US needs to take immediate steps to address visa delays caused by Covid-19 to maintain a smooth and successful relationship with India.
 - (c) The US-India relationship has been unaffected by visa delays caused by Covid-19.
 - (d) Visa delays caused by Covid-19 have only affected Indian-Americans and not the broader US-India relationship.
131. Which of the following options presents a valid inference that can be drawn from the passage?
- (a) The US and India have always had a smooth relationship without any hurdles.
 - (b) The US-India relationship seems to be impacted by visa delays caused by Covid-19.
 - (c) The US has taken no steps to expedite the visa process for Indians.
 - (d) Covid-19 has affected only the Indian-American diaspora and no other communities.
132. Based on the author's arguments, what is the logical course of action for the US to take to improve the US-India relationship?
- (a) Continue with the current visa processing procedures as they are.
 - (b) Focus on expediting visa processing only for Indian students and professionals.
 - (c) Take immediate and effective steps to expedite the visa process for Indian citizens.
 - (d) Impose a travel ban on Indian citizens until Covid-19 is fully under control.
133. Which of the following external pieces of evidence could strengthen the author's argument regarding the need for expediting visas for Indian travellers to the US?
- (a) A study that shows an increase in the number of Indian tourists visiting the US over the last decade.
 - (b) An interview with an American business owner who employs several Indian professionals and has faced difficulties due to visa delays.
 - (c) A report on the economic benefits of increased travel between the US and India.
 - (d) A survey of Indian students and professionals indicating that visa delays have caused them to reconsider their plans to travel to the US.
134. Which of the following options would the author not disagree with EXCEPT?
- (a) The US government has taken unprecedented steps to expedite the visa process in India.
 - (b) The delay in visa processing has had a disproportionate impact on Indian-Americans.
 - (c) Top US officials have acknowledged the problem of visa delays in the past but have been slow to address it.
 - (d) Visa delays have not affected the bilateral relationship between the US and India.
135. Which of the following has been used by the author to support his claims in the passage?
- (a) Personal anecdotes
 - (b) Historical data
 - (c) Statistical evidence
 - (d) Direct quotes