

Trouble in Punjab: on the factors of religious fanaticism, foreign-aided opportunism and a societal crisis

The governments at the Centre and in the State must **guard** against **separatism**

The police action against **violent separatists** in Punjab **is** a case of **better late than never**. Religious fanaticism in the State has been **raising its ugly head** in recent years, and going out of control in recent months, with open **calls for violence** and threats to state **functionaries** including Union Ministers. On February 23, a **mob overran** a police station and **freed suspects**, which was a complete **breakdown of law and order**. The challenge appears to be **daunting** for the inexperienced Aam Aadmi Party government, and the situation needs more visible **coordination** and action by the Centre and the State. The violent **campaign** in the 1980s for a separate Khalistan, supported by Pakistan, **had pulverised** the State and **claimed** the lives of a **sitting** Prime Minister and thousands of innocents in a **genocidal outrage** targeting the Sikh community. That **trauma** should not be allowed to return and **torment** the community or India. Sikhs are a highly **mobile** and **enterprising** community, now spread around the world, but economic and social **stagnation is taking its toll**. Agriculture is facing a crisis, and **drug abuse is rampant**. **Trouble-makers** are smelling an opportunity to **incite** violence.

A **wound** that is allowed to **fester will sicken** the whole body. The **looming** trouble in Punjab is being **inflamed** by a mix of religious fanaticism, foreign-aided opportunism, and a societal crisis. The **mobilisation** of a section of the Sikh **diaspora** in the United Kingdom, Canada and Australia for the cause of separatism **is** also a worrying sign for India. The Centre has to work with Punjab and foreign governments to **contain** this **malaise**. Violent **tendencies** must be **nipped in the bud** and **proponents** of hate must **pay a price**. Also, there has to be a **conscious** effort to communicate with the Sikh community **at large** to **isolate** the **toxic** elements. To the world and to citizens, the message must be clear that India remains a multireligious and multicultural nation that does not tolerate or require separatism. **A lack of trust** between the farmers of Punjab and the Centre **had derailed** the agriculture laws that **sought** to reform the sector in 2021. A **combination** of strict force against violent elements and trust-building with the general public **should** be **at the heart** of the **rhetoric** and policy of the government. **At any rate**, no rhetoric from any **quarter** should be **encouraged** that causes more **alienation**.

[Practice Exercise]

- Red/blue coloring of words in the sentence indicates subject verb relationship; where 'red' denotes 'subject' and 'blue' denotes 'verb'.

Vocabulary

1. **Fanaticism** (noun) – Zealotry, zeal, extremism, radicalism कट्टरता and become noticeable or problematic. बुरे रूप से उभरना, अपना शैतानी चेहरा दिखाना
2. **Foreign-aided** (adjective) – something that is supported or assisted by a foreign country. विदेशी सहायता
3. **Opportunism** (noun) – expediency, exploitation, self-interest, taking advantage (for personal gain) अवसरवाद
4. **Societal** (adjective) – social, society, communal, community, public सामाजिक
5. **Guard** (verb) – beware of, be alert to, protect, watch over सतर्क/ चौकस रहना
6. **Separatism** (noun) – the support of cultural, ethnic, tribal, religious, racial, governmental, or gender separation from the larger group. अलगाववाद
7. **Violent** (adjective) – Aggressive, brutal, fierce, savage, intense हिंसात्मक
8. **Separatist** (noun) – Dissenter, secessionist, protestor, rebel, separationist अलगाववादी
9. **Better late than ever** (phrase) – Delayed action is better than no action किसी काम को करने में देरी होने पर भी उसे न करने से बेहतर है कि उसे करना
10. **Raise its ugly head** (phrase) – something negative or unpleasant that was previously hidden or subdued but has now emerged
11. **Call for** (phrasal verb) – demand, require, request, ask for, ask मांग करना
12. **Functionary** (noun) – official, bureaucrat, officer, public servant, officeholder अधिकारी
13. **Mob** (noun) – A disorderly crowd of people भीड़
14. **Overrun** (verb) – invade, overpower, swarm, occupy, spread over (in large numbers) धावा बोलना
15. **Free** (verb) – release, liberate, set free, let go मुक्त करना
16. **Suspect** (noun) – a person who is thought to be guilty of a crime संदिग्ध अपराधी
17. **Breakdown** (noun) – Failure, collapse, malfunction, disintegration विफलता
18. **Law and order** (noun) – a situation characterized by respect for and obedience to the rules of a society. कानून-व्यवस्था
19. **Daunting** (adjective) – Intimidating, unnerving, challenging, discouraging, frightening भयानक, खतरनाक
20. **Coordination** (noun) – the act of making all the people involved in a plan or activity work together in an organized way समन्वय

21. **Pulverise** (verb) – demolish, destroy तहस - नहस करना
22. **Claim** (verb) – Take (of relating to lives) ले लेना
23. **Sitting** (adjective) – (of an MP or other elected representative) current; present मौजूदा
24. **Genocidal** (adjective) – connected with the murder of a large group of people नरसंहार
25. **Outrage** (noun) – Indignation, anger, rage, ire, resentment आक्रोश
26. **Trauma** (noun) – distress, anguish, shock, hurt, suffering घाव, ज़खम, सदमा
27. **Torment** (verb) – trouble, torture, afflict, distress, annoy, bother पीड़ा पहुँचाना/ मुसीबत में डालना
28. **Mobile** (adjective) – able to move or be moved freely or easily. चलती-फिरती
29. **Enterprising** (adjective) – ambitious, resourceful, innovative उद्यमी, प्रेरणाशील
30. **Stagnation** (noun) – a situation where there is little or no economic or social progress; lack of growth or development ठहराव
31. **Take a toll** (phrase) – to have a negative impact on someone or something किसी चीज़ पर नकारात्मक प्रभाव पड़ना
32. **Drug abuse** (noun) – the habitual taking of illegal drugs
33. **Rampant** (adjective) – Uncontrolled, unrestrained, unchecked, unbridled, अनियंत्रित
34. **Trouble-maker** (noun) – agitator, inciter, instigator, stirrer उपद्रवी
35. **Incite** (verb) – ignite, inflame, stimulate, instigate, provoke, excite भड़काना
36. **Wound** (noun) – injury, trauma, lesion, cut, gash घाव
37. **Fester** (verb) – putrefy, decay, rot, deteriorate, worsen घाव पकना
38. **Sicken** (verb) – nauseate, make ill, disgust, repel, unsettle बीमार करना
39. **Looming** (adjective) – to be imminent, often in a threatening way मंडराता
40. **Inflame** (verb) – provoke, incite, agitate, exacerbate उकसाना/भड़काना
41. **Mobilisation** (noun) – the act of organizing or preparing something, such as a group of people, for a purpose जुटाव/ जमावड़ा
42. **Diaspora** (noun) – dispersion, movement, migration, exodus प्रवासी (समुदाय)
43. **Contain** (verb) – restrain, curb, rein in, suppress, repress रोकना

44. **Malaise** (noun) – The problems affecting only a particular group of people or situation that are difficult to explain or identify वर्ग विशेष या स्थिति विशेष को प्रभावित करनेवाली समस्या
45. **Tendency** (noun) – inclination, propensity, likelihood प्रवृत्ति
46. **Nip in the bud** (phrase) – to stop something before it becomes a bigger problem किसी बात को बड़ी समस्या बनने से पहले रोकना
47. **Proponent** (noun) – someone who supports a particular idea or cause समर्थक
48. **Pay a price** (phrase) – to suffer the consequences of someone's actions की कीमत चुकाना
49. **At large** (phrase) – as a whole; in general बड़े पैमाने पर
50. **Isolate** (verb) – separate, segregate, detach, sequester, cut off, set apart अलग करना
51. **Toxic** (adjective) – harmful, noxious, virulent विषैला
52. **Derail** (verb) – obstruct, impede, interfere with, hinder पटरी से उतरना
53. **Seek** (verb) – Try, attempt, endeavour, effort, strive for प्रयास करना
54. **At the heart of** (phrase) – be the most important part of something. मूल तत्व होना
55. **Rhetoric** (noun) – a way of speaking or writing that is intended to impress or influence people but is not always sincere लफ्फाजी, बयानबाजी
56. **At any rate/cost** (phrase) – in any case; anyway किसी भी कीमत पर, किसी भी दशा में
57. **Quarter** (noun) – a person or group of people
58. **Encourage** (verb) – promote, stimulate, support, foster, urge प्रोत्साहित करना
59. **Alienation** (noun) – Estrangement, disaffection, unfriendliness, hostility, isolation, separation अलगाव

Practice Exercise

[Editorial Page]

1. **What is the current situation in Punjab, as described in the passage?**
 - A. Peaceful and stable
 - B. Facing a drug abuse crisis
 - C. Facing religious fanaticism and violence
 - D. Dealing with economic prosperity
2. **What was the violent campaign in the 1980s in Punjab aiming for?**
 - A. A separate Khalistan
 - B. The inclusion of Punjab in Pakistan
 - C. The imposition of a theocratic government
 - D. The division of Punjab into smaller states
3. **What challenges are currently faced by Punjab's society, as mentioned in the passage?**
 - A. Religious tolerance and agricultural reforms
 - B. Economic growth and social integration
 - C. Agricultural crisis and drug abuse
 - D. Political stability and infrastructure development
4. **What is the role of the Sikh diaspora in the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia concerning Punjab's situation?**
 - A. Providing financial support for development projects
 - B. Mobilizing for the cause of separatism
 - C. Advocating for religious tolerance and unity
 - D. Lobbying for agricultural reforms in Punjab
5. **What should be at the heart of the government's rhetoric and policy to address the situation in Punjab, as suggested in the passage?**
 - A. Encouraging separatist movements
 - B. Focusing solely on agricultural reforms
 - C. Strict force against violent elements and trust-building with the general public
 - D. Ignoring the issues and hoping they resolve themselves
6. **Which of the following best describes the tone of the passage?**
 - A. Optimistic
 - B. Complacent
 - C. Sarcastic
 - D. Concerned
7. **What is the main theme of the passage?**
 - A. The economic challenges faced by the Sikh community
 - B. The need for a multireligious and multicultural nation
 - C. The importance of addressing the violence and separatism in Punjab
 - D. The role of foreign governments in inciting violence in Punjab

8. Which of the following words is a synonym for "daunting" as used in the passage?
- A. Intimidating
 - B. Soothing
 - C. Inviting
 - D. Boring
9. What is a synonym for "stagnation" as it appears in the passage?
- A. Progress
 - B. Standstill
 - C. Increase
 - D. Decline
10. Which word is an antonym for "inflamed" as used in the passage?
- A. Exacerbated
 - B. Intensified
 - C. Calmed
 - D. Worsened
11. What is the meaning of the idiom "nip in the bud" used in the passage?
- A. To encourage growth
 - B. To stop something at an early stage
 - C. To make a small mistake
 - D. To ignore a problem

Direction (Q12 – Q15): Arrange the following sentences to form a coherent paragraph

12. **P)** With fears of a repeat of the 2008 financial crisis gaining traction, central banks across the world have announced a coordinated response — to ensure liquidity via enhanced swap lines — to stabilize the financial system.
- Q)** Another bank has fallen in the midst of the ongoing turmoil in global financial markets.
- R)** Credit Suisse's fall comes only days after the collapse of three banks in the US.
- S)** However, concerns remain that the collapse of these banks is just the "first domino" to fall.
- A. QRSP
 - B. QRPS
 - C. RQSP
 - D. RQPS
13. **P)** The scheme's limited success can be seen from tomato now selling at Rs 7-10 per kg in Karnataka's Kolar and Maharashtra's Junnar wholesale markets, while retailing at Rs 26-27 in not-too-far-away Bengaluru and Pune.
- Q)** In the 2018-19 Union budget, the Narendra Modi government announced a new Operation Greens scheme in tomatoes, onions and potatoes (TOP) similar to the successful Operation Flood programme for milk.

- R)** The aim was to develop a value chain for reducing extreme price fluctuations in the three basic vegetables, besides enhancing farmers' realisations and improving their share of the consumer rupee.
- S)** Recent protests against low prices by Maharashtra's onion growers have included relay hunger fasts, stoppage of auctions at major mandis and a 200-km march to Mumbai.
- A. QRSP
 - B. QRPS
 - C. RQSP
 - A. RQPS
14. **P:** The "flush" season is October-March when buffaloes and cows normally produce more.
- Q:** Falling global prices have made imports of wheat more feasible, adding to the relative comfort.
- R:** Dairies are struggling to procure milk even for meeting winter and springtime demand during the current flush season.
- S:** Unlike in the case of wheat, dairies are entering the summer with hardly any skimmed milk powder or fat stocks.
- A. PQRS
 - B. QPRS
 - C. PQSR
 - D. QPSR
15. **P.** Moody's Investors Service placed the ratings of six US banks on review for possible downgrades over concerns about the health of regional financial firms.
- Q.** The collapse of Silicon Valley Bank continues to have ripple effects across the financial system.
- R.** US authorities have intervened aggressively in the case of Silicon Valley Bank to limit the risk to the broader financial system.
- S.** The government and regulators have guaranteed that depositors will have access to all their money, even uninsured deposits.
- A. RQPS
 - B. QRPS
 - C. RSPQ
 - D. RQSP

Cloze test

The UIDAI has, however, been _____**1**_____ about the inherent dangers in the _____**2**_____ use of the Aadhaar number or the Aadhaar card by citizens, as evidenced in its series of _____**3**_____ on the issue even before this latest withdrawal notice. There seems to be a contradiction of views within the authority on the issue of potential misuse of the Aadhaar number. On the one hand, in statements advising caution and user _____**4**_____ in revealing

one's Aadhaar number, it is seeking to treat these as sensitive information just like the biometrics provided by citizens to the authority. Yet, on the other, it has sought to universalise the open use of the Aadhaar as an identity document with missionary zeal and has downplayed the risks of doing so. This ambivalence does not help at all. The UIDAI must popularise the use of the masked Aadhaar facility as a start and rethink ways to tighten the scrutiny over how Aadhaar numbers are issued and utilised even as law enforcement agencies _____ 5 _____ on data leaks and websites carrying unmasked Aadhaar-related information.

16. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank 1.**

- A. Ambivalent
- B. Tantamount
- C. Brevity
- D. Abysmal

17. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank 2.**

- A. Consecrate
- B. Indiscriminate
- C. Slandered
- D. Ambivalent

18. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank 3**

- A. Admonish
- B. Unconscionable
- C. Bastions
- D. Flip-flops

19. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank 4**

- A. Peripatetic
- B. Discretion
- C. Rigorous
- D. Intransigent

20. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank 5**

- A. Palpable
- B. Moribund
- C. Crack down
- D. Antithesis

Direction (Q21 – Q25): Spot the grammatical error – if any

- 21. The speaker was (A)/ not only slow (B)/ but also inaudible as well. (C)/ no error(D)
- 22. The crowd surged forward (A)/ to catch a glimpse (B)/ of their favourite leader. (C)/ no error (D)
- 23. There is a distinct possibility (A)/ that he will leave the job (B)/ once the investigation is over. (C)/ no error (D)
- 24. Many a star (A)/ are (B)/ twinkling in the sky. (C)/ no error(D)

25. We discussed the problem (A)/ so thoroughly that (B)/ I found it easy to work it out. (C)/ no error (D)

26.

Answers

1. C 2. A 3. C 4. B 5. C 6. D 7. C 8. A 9. B 10. C 11. B 12. B
 13. B 14. B 15. D 16. A 17. B 18. D 19. B 20. C 21. C 22. D 23. D 24. B
 25. D

[\[Practice Exercise\]](#)

Explanations

- c) Facing religious fanaticism and violence
Explanation: The passage discusses the rise of religious fanaticism in Punjab, with increasing threats to state functionaries and open calls for violence.
- a) A separate Khalistan
Explanation: The passage mentions the violent campaign in the 1980s that aimed for a separate Khalistan, which was supported by Pakistan
- c) Agricultural crisis and drug abuse
Explanation: The passage highlights that Punjab's society is currently facing challenges like agricultural crisis and rampant drug abuse.
- b) Mobilizing for the cause of separatism
Explanation: The passage states that a section of the Sikh diaspora in the UK, Canada, and Australia is mobilizing for the cause of separatism, which is a worrying sign for India.
- c) Strict force against violent elements and trust-building with the general public
Explanation: The passage suggests that a combination of strict force against violent elements and trust-building with the general public should be at the heart of the government's rhetoric and policy to address the situation in Punjab.
- D. Concerned
Explanation: The passage expresses concern about the situation in Punjab, mentioning religious fanaticism, the breakdown of law and order, and the potential for further violence. The author emphasizes the importance of addressing these issues and preventing a return to past traumas.
- C. The importance of addressing the violence and separatism in Punjab
Explanation: The passage primarily focuses on the growing violence and separatism in Punjab, with religious fanaticism, foreign-aided opportunism, and a societal crisis contributing to the issue. The author emphasizes the need for coordinated action by the Centre, State, and foreign governments to address the situation and ensure that India remains a multireligious and multicultural nation.
- In the passage, the challenge faced by the inexperienced Aam Aadmi Party government is described as "daunting." The word "daunting" means intimidating, overwhelming, or discouraging, which makes option A the correct answer.
- The passage mentions that "economic and social stagnation is taking its toll" on the Sikh community. "Stagnation" means a period of little or no growth, development, or progress, making option B the correct answer.

10. The passage states that "the looming trouble in Punjab is being inflamed by a mix of religious fanaticism, foreign-aided opportunism, and a societal crisis." The word "inflamed" means to intensify, worsen, or provoke. The antonym would be to calm, making option C the correct answer.

11. The passage states that "violent tendencies must be nipped in the bud." The idiom "nip in the bud" means to stop something at an early stage before it can develop or become a bigger problem. Therefore, option B is the correct answer.

12. **QRPS**

The paragraph talks about the recent fall of Credit Suisse in the midst of the ongoing turmoil in global financial markets, which has raised concerns of a repeat of the 2008 financial crisis. The paragraph starts with sentence Q, which introduces the topic of Credit Suisse's fall. Sentence R provides additional information about the recent collapse of three banks in the US, which adds to the concerns. Sentence P then talks about the coordinated response of central banks across the world to stabilize the financial system, which is a significant step to prevent the contagion. Sentence S concludes the paragraph by stating that despite these measures, there are concerns that the collapse of these banks may trigger a series of events leading to further financial instability.

13. **QRPS**

The paragraph is about the Operation Greens scheme launched by the Modi government to reduce price fluctuations in tomatoes, onions and potatoes. Sentence Q introduces the topic of the paragraph and sentence R explains the aim of the scheme. Sentence P talks about the limited success of the scheme in reducing price fluctuations in tomatoes. Sentence S talks about the recent protests by onion growers against low prices, which indicates that the scheme has not been very successful in achieving its goals. Therefore, the correct order of the sentences is Q-R-P-S.

14. **QPRS**

The paragraph discusses the difference in the impact of falling global prices on wheat and milk production. Sentence Q talks about the relative comfort in the wheat market due to lower prices. Sentence P explains the flush season for milk production and the surplus that is converted into skimmed milk powder, butter, and ghee. Sentence R talks about dairies struggling to procure milk even for meeting the demand during the current flush season. Sentence S highlights the contrast between the situation in the wheat market and the milk market, where dairies are entering the summer with a shortage of skimmed milk powder or fat stocks..

15. **RQSP**

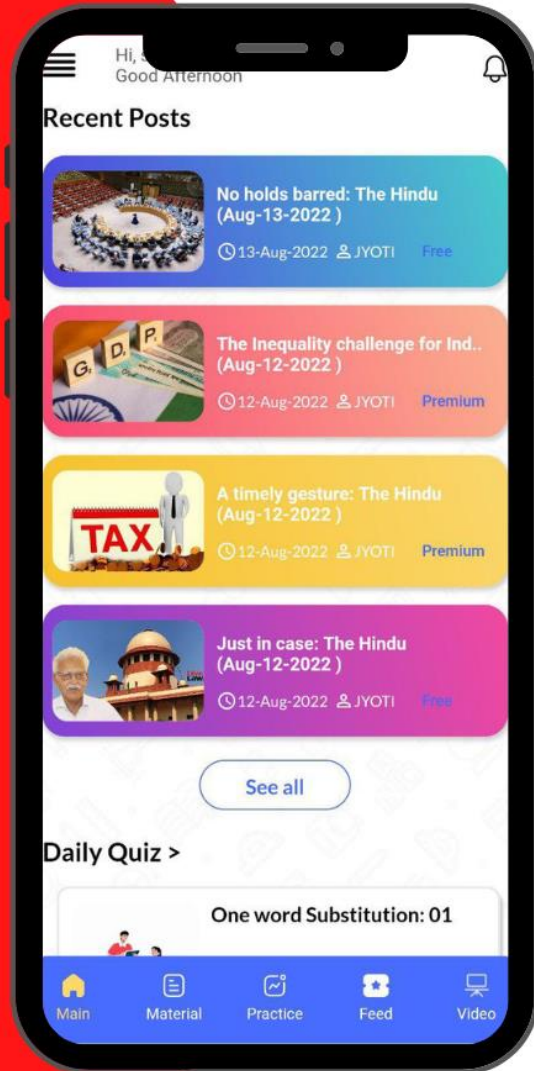
This paragraph discusses the aftermath of the collapse of Silicon Valley Bank (SVB) and the steps taken by US authorities to limit the risk to the broader financial system. The paragraph begins with sentence R, which states that US authorities have intervened aggressively in the case of SVB to limit the risk to the broader financial system. The next sentence, Q, highlights

that the collapse of SVB has had ripple effects across the financial system. Sentence S provides further details about the steps taken by the government and regulators to guarantee access to depositors' money. Finally, sentence P talks about the possible downgrades of ratings of six US banks by Moody's Investors Service over concerns about the health of regional financial firms.

16. **Ambivalent** (adjective) – equivocal, uncertain, unsure, doubtful, indecisive अस्पष्ट
- **Tantamount** (adjective) – Equivalent to समान
 - **Brevity** (noun) – A briefness संक्षिप्तता
 - **Abysmal** (adjective) – Extremely hopeless or wretched; bottomless अथाह, अति-गहन
17. **Indiscriminate** (adjective) – haphazard, random, unsystematic, unmethodical अंधाधुंध
- **Ambivalent** (adjective) – Undecided; neutral; wishy-washy दुविधा में पड़ा हुआ, अनिर्णीत
 - **Consecrate** (verb) – To make or declare sacred पवित्र, प्रतिष्ठित
 - **Slander** (verb) – To speak badly about someone publicly; to defame; to spread malicious rumor बदनामी
18. **Flip-flop** (noun) – An abrupt reversal of policy.
- **Admonish** (verb) – To scold gently; to warn डाँटना, चेताना
 - **Unconscionable** (adjective) – Not controlled by conscience; unscrupulous बेशरम
 - **Bastion** (noun) – Stronghold; fortress; fortified place गढ़
19. **Discretion** (noun) – choice, option, judgement, preference विवेक, निर्णय
- **Peripatetic** (adjective) – Wandering; travelling continually itinerant पथिक
 - **Rigorous** (adjective) – Strict; harsh; severe कड़ा; कठोर
 - **Intransigent** (adjective) – Uncompromising; stubborn सैद्धांतिक
20. **Crack down on** (phrasal verb) – get tough on, take severe measures against पर कड़ी कार्यवाही करना
- **Palpable** (adjective) – Capable of being touched; obvious; tangible स्पर्शनीय
 - **Moribund** (adjective) – Dying मरणासन्न
 - **Antithesis** (adjective) – The direct opposite विलोम, प्रतिपक्ष
21. (C) 'as well' का प्रयोग superfluous(अनावश्यक) है और इसे हटाना पड़ेगा क्योंकि 'not only' के साथ 'but also' का प्रयोग होता है।
22. (D) No error.
23. (D) No error.
24. (B) 'are' के बदले 'is' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि 'many a/an के साथ singular countable noun का प्रयोग होता है तथा singular verb का; जैसे-
- i. Many a book is lying there.

ii. Many an apple is to be bought.

25. (D) No error.



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