

Suspect moves: On changes to reservation policy in Karnataka

Tinkering with reservation quota in **run-up to** elections **appears** political

Statecraft involves management of **competing** demands for **accommodation** and **inclusion**, without **unduly** affecting the interests of any section of society. However, some **rulers**, such as those in Karnataka, **want** to be seen as **discriminating** against a minority group in the hope of **garnering** the support of the majority. The Karnataka government's **decision** to **scrap** the 4% quota for Muslims within the Other Backward Classes (OBC) category and **earmark** an additional 2% each to the **dominant** Vokkaliga and Veerashaiva-Lingayat communities **is** a **divisive gamble** in the expectation of **electoral dividends**. The BJP **regime** has also created four sub-categories to introduce internal reservation for different Dalit communities under the Scheduled Caste (SC) category. The **scrapping** of reservation for Muslims, whose poorer members will now have to compete with the general category for the 10% 'Economically Weaker Sections' quota, **is reminiscent of** the **abrogation** of the 5% quota for Muslims in Maharashtra in 2015. While reservation on the basis of religion alone is **untenable**, it appears that there has been no recommendation from the Karnataka State Backward Classes Commission for the withdrawal of reservation benefits for Muslims. The BJP has **sought** to **portray** the introduction of reservation for Muslims in 1995 as an **instance** of minority **appeasement**.

It is **indeed** true that the Constitution does not allow reservation on the basis of religion alone, and that there have been judicial **verdicts striking down** quotas for Muslims for not being **backed** by a proper study on the **extent** of **backwardness** in the community. However, it is possible to extend reservation benefits to the backward sections among religious minorities identified on the basis of relevant criteria. Some States have been implementing reservation in educational institutions as well as public employment for Muslims by including them in the Backward Classes (BC) list. It is **futile** to **argue** that **large sections** of Muslims **have** reached a level of social and educational **advancement** that will justify their exclusion from the BC category, or that they are not **under-represented** in the services. While Muslim leaders and organisations have opposed the scrapping of the reservation, the **categorisation** of the SC communities **is** also **controversial**. Sections of Dalits are **up in arms against** the **reordering** of the 17% SC quota among different groups. **Major decisions**, such as changing the reservation policy, in the run-up to elections **are** not **merely** suspect, but may **end up stoking unwanted fires**.

[Practice Exercise]

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

Vocabulary

1. **Suspect** (adjective) – Suspicious, questionable, doubtful, uncertain, mistrustful. संदिग्ध
2. **Tinkering** (noun) – Fiddling, meddling, tampering, tweaking, adjusting. चीजों में छेड़छाड़
3. **Run-up to** (noun) – the period of time before a certain event आगामी
4. **Statecraft** (noun) – Diplomacy, politics, governance, leadership, strategy. राजनीति कला
5. **Competing** (adjective) – Competitive, rival, conflicting, opposing, challenging. प्रतिस्पर्धी
6. **Accommodation** (noun) – the providing of what is needed or desired for convenience
7. **Inclusion** (noun) – Integration, assimilation, involvement, incorporation, addition. समावेश
8. **Unduly** (adverb) – Excessively, overly, unnecessarily, immoderately, disproportionately. अनावश्यक रूप से
9. **Discriminating** (adjective) – Prejudicial, discriminatory, biased, selective, unequal. भेदभावपूर्ण
10. **Garner** (verb) – Gather, collect, accumulate, amass, harvest. प्राप्त करना
11. **Scrap** (verb) – Abolish, cancel, discard, remove, eliminate. रद्द करना
12. **Earmark** (verb) – Allocate, designate, reserve, assign, set aside. आवंटित करना
13. **Dominant** (adjective) – Predominant, prevailing, principal, primary. प्रभुत्वपूर्ण
14. **Divisive** (adjective) – Polarizing, splitting, isolating, alienating विभाजनकारी
15. **Gamble** (noun) – Risk, speculation, venture, chance, hazard. जुआ
16. **Electoral dividend** (noun) – Political gain, electoral advantage, benefit, profit, return. चुनावी लाभ
17. **Regime** (noun) – Administration, government, leadership, authority, rulership. शासन व्यवस्था
18. **Scrapping** (noun) – Elimination, abolition, cancellation, removal, रद्दीकरण
19. (be) **reminiscent** (of) (adjective) – Similar, reminiscent, evocative, suggestive, redolent. स्मरणानुसार
20. **Abrogation** (noun) – Annulment, repeal, revocation, cancellation, withdrawal. निरस्तीकरण
21. **Untenable** (adjective) – Unsustainable, unjustifiable, indefensible, illogical. असमर्थनीय
22. **Seek** (verb) – try, attempt, endeavour, strive प्रयास करना

23. **Portray** (verb) – Depict, represent, illustrate, describe. चित्रित करना
24. **Instance** (noun) – Example, case, illustration, occasion, occurrence उदाहरण
25. **Appeasement** (noun) – pacification, conciliation, placation, mollification. संतोषजनक, तुष्टीकरण
26. **Indeed** (adverb) – In fact, truly, certainly, surely, actually. वास्तव में
27. **Verdict** (noun) – Judgment, decision, ruling, decree, finding. फैसला
28. **Strike down** (phrasal verb) – Invalidate, nullify, reject, overthrow, quash. रद्द करना
29. **Back** (verb) – Support, endorse, endorse, back up, reinforce. समर्थन करना
30. **Extent** (noun) – Scope, degree, range, magnitude, level. मात्रा
31. **Backwardness** (noun) – underdevelopment, retardation, delay, lag. पिछड़ापन
32. **Futile** (adjective) – Useless, pointless, fruitless, unproductive, ineffective. व्यर्थ
33. **Argue** (verb) – Debate, discuss, dispute, reason, contend. तर्क करना
34. **Advancement** (noun) – Progress, development, improvement, advancement, upgrade. उन्नयन
35. **Under-represented** (adjective) – If a type of person or thing is under-represented in a group or organization, there are not enough of them in it अधिकांश नहीं हैं
36. **Categorisation** (noun) – Classification, grouping, sorting, organization, arrangement. श्रेणीबद्ध करना
37. **Controversial** (adjective) – Disputed, contentious, debatable, disputable, arguable. विवादास्पद
38. **Up in the arm against** (phrase) – Protest, object, resist, oppose, challenge. विरोध करना, उपद्रव उत्पन्न करना
39. **Reordering** (noun) – Rearrangement, reshuffling, reorganization, readjustment, realignment. अनुक्रमण, व्यवस्था में बदलाव करना
40. **Merely** (adverb) – Only, solely, simply, just, purely केवल, सिर्फ
41. **End up** (phrasal verb) – End in, result in, finish up, conclude, wind up. अंततः पहुँचना
42. **Stoke the fires** (phrase) – Fuel conflict, provoke, inflame, ignite, exacerbate. बढ़ावा देना, भड़काना
43. **Unwanted** (adjective) – Undesirable, unwelcome, uninvited, unwarranted, unnecessary. अनावश्यक, अनचाहा

Summary

1. Karnataka government scraps 4% quota for Muslims in OBC category
2. Additional 2% each earmarked for Vokkaliga and Veerashaiva-Lingayat communities
3. Divisive decision expected to bring electoral dividends
4. Four sub-categories created for internal reservation within SC category
5. Poorer Muslims now must compete within 10% Economically Weaker Sections quota
6. No recommendation from Karnataka State Backward Classes Commission for withdrawal
7. Reservation based on religion alone untenable, but possible for backward sections within religious minorities
8. Some states already implementing reservation for Muslims in BC list
9. Scrapping of Muslim reservation and reordering of SC quota controversial
10. Major decisions in run-up to elections are suspect and may have unintended consequences

Practice Exercise

1. **What can be inferred from the Karnataka government's decision to scrap the 4% Muslim quota within the OBC category and allocate 2% each to the Vokkaliga and Veerashaiva-Lingayat communities?** [Editorial Page]
 - A. The government wants to promote equality among all communities.
 - B. The government believes that the Muslim community is already well-represented.
 - C. The government aims to gain electoral support from the majority by appearing to discriminate against a minority group.
 - D. The government is trying to address the concerns of the Muslim community.
2. **What is the BJP's stance on the introduction of reservation for Muslims in 1995?**
 - A. They believe it was a necessary step to ensure equal representation.
 - B. They see it as an instance of minority appeasement.
 - C. They think it was a well-thought-out policy to promote social harmony.
 - D. They argue that it was based on solid recommendations from the Karnataka State Backward Classes Commission.
3. **What is the outcome of scrapping the reservation for Muslims in Karnataka?**
 - A. Muslims will now benefit from a separate quota for economically weaker sections.
 - B. Muslims will have to compete with the general category for the 10% 'Economically Weaker Sections' quota.
 - C. Muslims will be given a 5% quota in Maharashtra.
 - D. Muslims will be included in the Backward Classes (BC) list in other states.
4. **What is the controversy surrounding the categorization of SC communities in Karnataka?**
 - A. The SC communities unanimously support the reordering of the 17% SC quota.
 - B. The Karnataka government is trying to appease the SC communities.
 - C. Sections of Dalits are against the reordering of the 17% SC quota among different groups.
 - D. There is no controversy surrounding the categorization of SC communities.
5. **What is the tone of the passage regarding the Karnataka government's decision on the reservation policy?**
 - A. Supportive
 - B. Ambivalent
 - C. Critical
 - D. Neutral
6. **What is the main theme of the passage?**
 - A. The history of reservation policies in India
 - B. The impact of reservation policies on minority groups
 - C. The constitutional basis for reservation policies
 - D. The political motivations behind changes to reservation policies in Karnataka
7. **What is another word for "tinkering" as used in the passage?**

- A. Repairing
 - B. Adjusting
 - C. Destroying
 - D. Ignoring
8. **What is a synonym for "garnering" in the context of the passage?**
- A. Collecting
 - B. Ignoring
 - C. Opposing
 - D. Discouraging
9. **What is an antonym for "inclusion" as used in the passage?**
- A. Equality
 - B. Separation
 - C. Cooperation
 - D. Unity
10. **What does the idiom "stoking unwanted fires" mean in the context of the passage?**
- A. Literally setting fires
 - B. Causing further problems or conflicts
 - C. Making friends with enemies
 - D. Encouraging positive change

Comprehension:

India's goods exports fell for the third time in five months during February. The \$33.8 billion of shipments marked an 8.8% drop from a year ago. In recent times of generally _____1_____ export growth, the only steeper decline was recorded in October 2022. A sharp 29% collapse in oil exports, a 12% fall in chemical shipments and a 10% contraction in engineering goods outflows — accounting for almost half of India's merchandise exports — _____2_____ February's decline. But the effects of faltering global demand went beyond, dragging down 13 more of India's top 30 export items. February's exports are still 7.3% above October's number, but the immediate outlook is reverting to the _____3_____ that prevailed in the last quarter of 2022 — about large parts of the world slipping into recession. Resilient economic data from major markets over the past couple of months had _____4_____ a belief that the world economy may just end up avoiding the worst that was feared in 2023. But the Ides of March _____5_____ those hopes — for now, at least.

Fill in the blanks with the most appropriate combinations of words

11. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank 1.**
- A. Inevitable
 - B. Sequential
 - C. Enduring
 - D. Exuberant

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

- A. Contained
- B. Pulverised
- C. Propelled
- D. Incited

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

- A. Diaspora
- B. Alienation
- C. Gloom
- D. Inaction

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

- A. Infused
- B. Examined
- C. Stalled
- D. Violated

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

- A. Remarked
- B. Concluded
- C. Dispelled
- D. Encouraged

Direction: Spot the grammatical error in any –

16. I had (A)/ a test in mathematics (B)/ today morning. (C)/ No Error (D).

17. A girl must be gracious (A)/ if she wishes (B)/ to be a ballerina (C)/ No Error (D).

18. In a very harsh tone (A)/ he shouted at his servants (B)/ and told them that he does not need their services (C)/ No Error (D).

19. **Select the option that can be used as a one-word substitute for the given group of words/phrase.**

One who attends to the teeth

- A. Bond
- B. Dissimulate
- C. Flounder
- D. Dentist

20. **Select the option that can be used as a one-word substitute for the given group of words/phrase.**

Use of force or threat to make someone angry

- A. Eavesdropper
- B. Coercion
- C. Funambulist
- D. Optimist

21. **Select the option that expresses the given sentence in passive voice.**

Had they not cleared the exam?

- A. Is the exam not been cleared by them?
- B. Have the exam not been cleared by them?
- C. Was the exam not been cleared by them?
- D. Had the exam not been cleared by them?

22. Select the option that expresses the given sentence in active voice.

The evil king was defeated by Gandolf, the savior.

- A. Gandolf, the savior, defeated the evil king.
- B. The savior of Gandolf defeated the evil king.
- C. Gandolf, the savior, had defeated the evil king.
- D. Gandolf, the savior, defeats the evil king.

23. Select the correct indirect form of the given sentence.

She said to me, "The charlatan will be breaking into the safe."

- A. She told me that the charlatan would be breaking into the safe.
- B. She said to me that the charlatan will be breaking in the safe.
- C. She said to me that the charlatan can be breaking into the safe.
- D. She said to me that the charlatan is breaking into the safe

24. Arrange the following sentences to form a coherent paragraph

P. Regardless of the state of the pitch, both cricket-loving nations are bolstering a comprehensive strategic partnership; a relationship based on trust and common values.

Q. Australia's prime minister Anthony Albanese kicked off his maiden four-day visit to India in Ahmedabad, watching the first day of the final test match between the two nations.

R. A day before, the Australian premier was at a function that officially announced that Deakin University would be setting up its international branch campus at GIFT City in Gandhinagar.

S. At the stadium, which had big posters "celebrating 75 years of friendship through cricket", he did a lap of honour with PM Narendra Modi before the match began.

A.QSRP

B. QSPR

C. SQRP

D.SQPR

25. Arrange the following sentences to form a coherent paragraph

P. Amidst this chaos in India's neighbourhood and the larger debt crisis in poor and developing countries, it is a bit surprising that the recent G-20 talks have merely skimmed the surface on creating new debt resolution methods.

Q. the country needs to service an estimated \$7 billion of debt in a few months for which there is no money.

R. Inflation is at 32 per cent; forex reserves at just over \$3 billion can barely cover a month's imports; external debt is over a third of the GDP at about \$125 billion amidst rising interest rates; and

S. Pakistan's economy is on the precipice.

A. SRPQ

B. RSPQ

C. RSQP

D. SRQP

Answers

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

[Practice Exercise]

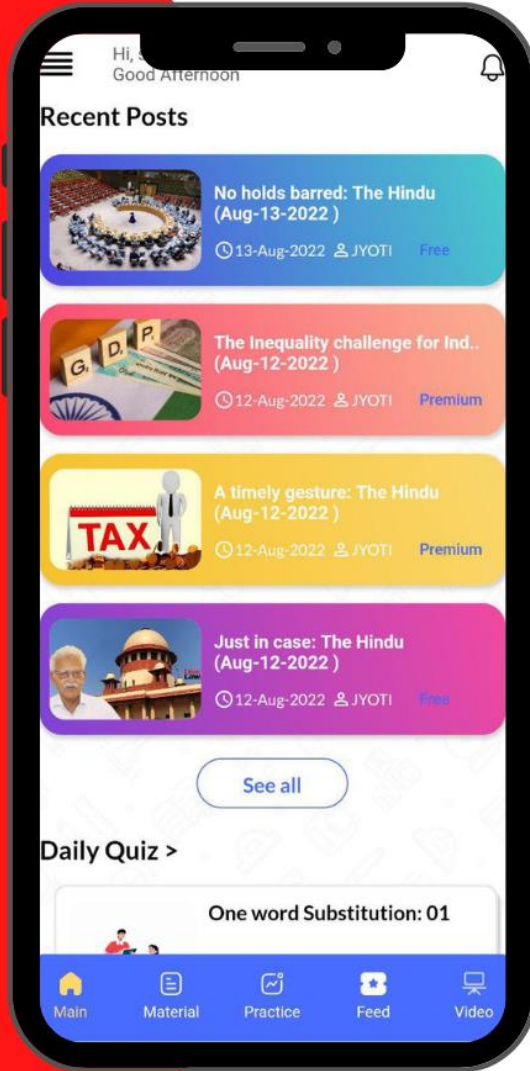
Explanations

1. C. The government aims to gain electoral support from the majority by appearing to discriminate against a minority group.
Explanation: The passage states that Karnataka's rulers want to be seen as discriminating against a minority group, in this case, the Muslim community, in the hope of garnering the support of the majority.
2. B. They see it as an instance of minority appeasement.
Explanation: According to the passage, the BJP has sought to portray the introduction of reservation for Muslims in 1995 as an instance of minority appeasement.
3. B. Muslims will have to compete with the general category for the 10% 'Economically Weaker Sections' quota.
Explanation: The passage states that after the scrapping of reservation for Muslims, their poorer members will have to compete with the general category for the 10% 'Economically Weaker Sections' quota.
4. C. Sections of Dalits are against the reordering of the 17% SC quota among different groups.
Explanation: The passage mentions that the categorization of the SC communities is controversial, as sections of Dalits are up in arms against the reordering of the 17% SC quota among different groups.
5. C) Critical
Explanation: The passage is critical of the Karnataka government's decision to change the reservation policy, referring to it as a "divisive gamble" and stating that such moves in the run-up to elections are "not merely suspect, but may end up stoking unwanted fires."
6. D) The political motivations behind changes to reservation policies in Karnataka
Explanation: The main theme of the passage is the political motivations behind the changes to the reservation policy in Karnataka, with a particular focus on the removal of the Muslim quota and the introduction of sub-categories for different Dalit communities. The passage discusses the potential electoral gains that the Karnataka government may be seeking, as well as the consequences of such decisions.
7. In the context of the passage, "tinkering" refers to making small adjustments or changes. Option B, "adjusting," is a synonym for "tinkering" in this context, so the correct answer is B.
8. In the context of the passage, "garnering" means gathering or collecting support. Option A, "collecting," is a synonym for "garnering," so the correct answer is A.

9. In the context of the passage, "inclusion" refers to the process of accommodating and accepting different groups in society. Option B, "separation," is the opposite of "inclusion," so the correct answer is B.
10. In the context of the passage, "stoking unwanted fires" means causing further problems or conflicts. The passage suggests that making major decisions like changing the reservation policy right before elections might lead to more issues, so the correct answer is B.
11. **Exuberant** (adjective) – a state of high and enthusiastic growth; flourishing, abundant, thriving
विपुलता/ प्रचुरता से (वृद्धि करना)
- **Inevitable** (adjective) – unavoidable, inescapable, bound to happen, sure to happen
अपरिहार्य
 - **Sequential** (adjective) – consecutive, serial, successive, sequent, subsequent आनुक्रमिक
 - **Enduring** (adjective) – lasting over a period of time; durable. स्थायी
12. **Propel** (verb) – prompt, push, drive, force आगे को बढ़ाना, प्रेरित करना
- **Contain** (verb) – Limit, restrict, inhibit, suppress, repress रोकना
 - **Pulverise** (verb) – demolish, destroy तहस – नहस करना
 - **Incite** (verb) – ignite, inflame, stimulate, instigate, provoke, excite भड़काना
13. **Gloom** (noun) – depression, gloominess, melancholy, despondency, dejection निराशा
- **Diaspora** (noun) – dispersion, movement, migration, exodus प्रवासी (समुदाय)
 - **Alienation** (noun) – Estrangement, disaffection, unfriendliness, hostility, isolation, separation अलगाव
 - **Inaction** (noun) – inactivity, passivity, apathy, negligence निष्क्रियता
14. **Infuse** (verb) – instil, breathe, inject, impart, inculcate, introduce, implant, add डालना/पैदा करना
- **Examine** (verb) – investigate, review, scrutinize, inspect जांच करना
 - **Stall** (verb) – obstruct, impede, interfere with, hinder, hamper रोकना
 - **Violate** (verb) – breach, infringe, rape, break, transgress उल्लंघन करना
15. **Dispel** (verb) – Dismiss, disperse; to cause to disappear (hopes) दूर करना
- **Remark** (verb) – comment, say, observe, mention, reflect टिप्पणी करना
 - **Conclude** (verb) – determine, deduce, infer, judge निष्कर्ष निकालना
 - **Encourage** (verb) – promote, stimulate, support, foster, urge प्रोत्साहित करना
16. (C) 'today morning' के बदले 'this morning' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि 'today' का प्रयोग 'आज' के अर्थ में होता है किन्तु 'आज सुबह', 'आज दोपहर', 'आज शाम' के लिए क्रमशः 'this morning', 'this afternoon', 'this evening' का, और आज रात के लिए 'tonight' का प्रयोग होता है।

- 'this morning' will be used instead of 'today morning' because 'today' is used in the sense of 'today' but 'today morning', 'this afternoon', 'today evening' respectively : 'this morning', 'this afternoon', 'this evening', and 'tonight' are used for tonight
17. (D) No error.
18. (C) 'does' के बदले 'did' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि Part (B) में 'shouted' Simple Past में है, और Part (C) में Reporting Verb 'told' भी Past Tense में है। Reporting Verb यदि Past Tense में हो तो Reported Speech में Simple Present के बदले Simple Past Tense का प्रयोग होता है; जैसे-
- i. She said to her servant, 'I do not need your service'. [Direct]
 - ii. She told her servant that she did not need his service. [Indirect]
- 'did' will be used instead of 'does' because in Part (B) 'shouted' is in Simple Past, and in Part (C) the Reporting Verb 'told' is also in Past Tense. If Reporting Verb is in Past Tense, then Simple Past Tense is used instead of Simple Present in Reported Speech;
 - i. She said to her servant, 'I do not need your service'. [Direct]
 - ii. She told her servant that she did not need his service. [indirect]
19. **Dentist** – One who attends to the teeth दांत का डाक्टर
- **Bond** – Agreement or engagement that a person is bound to observe
 - **Dissimulate** – To hide or disguise वेश बदल लेना
 - **Flounder** – To try in water utmost not to drown कीचड़ में तड़फड़ाना
20. **Coercion** – Use of force or threat to make someone angry ज़ोर-ज़बर्दस्ती
- **Eavesdropper** – One who witnesses secretly to private छिपकर बातें सुनने वाला
 - **Funambulist** – One who walks on ropes रस्सी पर चलनेवाला नट
 - **Optimist** – One who looks at the bright side of things आशावादी
21. D. Had the exam not been cleared by them?
22. A. Gandolf, the savior, defeated the evil king.
23. A. She told me that the charlatan would be breaking into the safe.
24. **QSPR**
Australia's prime minister Anthony Albanese kicked off his maiden four-day visit to India in Ahmedabad, watching the first day of the final test match between the two nations. At the stadium, which had big posters "celebrating 75 years of friendship through cricket", he did a lap of honour with PM Narendra Modi before the match began. Regardless of the state of the pitch, both cricket-loving nations are bolstering a comprehensive strategic partnership; a relationship based on trust and common values. A day before, the Australian premier was at a function that officially announced that Deakin University would be setting up its international branch campus at GIFT City in Gandhinagar.
25. **SRQP**
Pakistan's economy is on the precipice. Inflation is at 32 per cent; forex reserves at just over \$3 billion can barely cover a month's imports; external debt is over a third of the GDP at about \$125

billion amidst rising interest rates; and the country needs to service an estimated \$7 billion of debt in a few months for which there is no money. Amidst this chaos in India's neighbourhood and the larger debt crisis in poor and developing countries, it is a bit surprising that the recent G-20 talks have merely skimmed the surface on creating new debt resolution methods.



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