The Tribune: Pollution crisis

DATA is a great explainer, **reasons** green **think tank** Centre for Science and Environment (CSE), because what we can measure, we can fix. **Quantifying** the problems and indicating where they are, the CSE's report on India's environmental performance **throws up statistics** that are **unnerving**. Though waste treatment and **monitoring** have improved in India, **only 32 per cent** of the over 1,60,000 tonnes of municipal solid waste generated daily in 2020-21 **was** accounted for. The rest usually **ends up choking drains** or is burnt illegally. Air pollution in 2020 is **likely** to have shortened average life expectancy by four years and 11 months. Last year, the country **experienced** extreme weather events on 314 days. Globally, the climate crisis was responsible for 54% of the total internal **displacement** of people in 2022. For India, the figure was nearly 100%.

Observed annually since 1973, the World Environment Day has grown to be one of the largest global platforms for environmental **outreach**. The **call** on June 5 this year **was** to **scale up** action to **resolve** the plastic pollution crisis. According to the United Nations, every year, over 400 million tonnes of plastic is produced **worldwide**, one-third of which is used just once. The CSE report gives a **glimpse** of the **casual** approach on single-use plastics. After the ban last year, the Central Pollution Control Board **rolled out** a mobile application that allows citizens to complain about its illegal sale and use. A **dismal redress** rate has meant a declining number of complaints.

A **report** by the UN Environment Programme **shows** that plastic pollution can be reduced by 80 per cent by 2040 if the global community acts now to reuse, recycle, **reorient** and **diversify**. Consumer pressure **plays a vital role**, but the real action must come from producers, investors, **policymakers** and governments. Only **collective** efforts will work.   **[Practice Exercise]**

- **Experience** (verb) – Feel, face, suffer, undergo, go through झेलना
- Red/blue coloring of words in the sentence indicates subject verb relationship; where 'red' denotes 'subject' and 'blue' denotes 'verb'.

Vocabulary

1. **Reason** (verb) – to form a judgement or an opinion, after thinking about something in a logical way कोई निर्णय करना या राय बनाना (तर्कयुक्त सोच-विचार के बाद)

2. **Think tank** (noun) – a group of experts brought together to provide advice, suggestions and ideas on specific social, political and economic problems or issues विशेषज्ञ समूह

3. **Quantify** (verb) – Count, enumerate, measure, calculate, compute निर्धारित करना, मापना

4. **Throw up** (phrasal verb) – Reveal, present, disclose, exhibit, show खोलना, प्रकट करना

5. **Statistic** (noun) – Data, figure, information, fact, number आंकड़ा

6. **Unnerving** (adjective) – Disconcerting, unsettling, disturbing, alarming, troubling चिंताजनक

7. **Monitoring** (noun) – Supervision, observation, tracking, watch, surveillance निगरानी

8. **Account for** (phrasal verb) – to form the total of something ; comprise, make up, total, represent के लिये उत्तरदयी होना

9. **End up** (phrasal verb) – to reach a particular place or achieve a situation after other activities अंत में होना

10. **Choke** (verb) – Block, obstruct, clog, jam, congest अवरुद्ध करना

11. **Drain** (noun) – Conduit, channel, ditch, gutter, pipe नाली

12. **Likely** (adjective) – Probable, possible, plausible, feasible, apt संभावित

13. **Displacement** (noun) – Movement, relocation, transposition, shift, transfer स्थानांतरण

14. **Observe** (verb) – Celebrate, keep; notice, see, perceive, recognize मनाना

15. **Outreach** (noun) – Extension, reach, scope, range, stretch पहुंच

16. **Call** (noun) – Appeal, request, demand, plea, entreaty अनुरोध

17. **Scale up** (phrasal verb) – Increase, expand, escalate, magnify, augment बढ़ाना

18. **Resolve** (verb) – solve, settle, come to a decision, put an end to समाधान करना

19. **Worldwide** (adjective) – Global, international, all-embracing, comprehensive, universal विश्वव्यापी

20. **Glimpse** (noun) – Quick look, peek, glance, brief look, sight झलक

21. **Casual** (adjective) – Nonchalant, unconcerned, offhand, uninterested, indifferent उदासीन

22. **Roll out** (phrasal verb) – Introduce, launch, present, unveil, debut शुरुआत करना

23. **Dismal** (adjective) – Depressing, gloomy, dreary, bleak, miserable उदासीन

24. **Redress** (noun) – Rectification, remedy, solution, correction, reparation समाधान, सुधार

25. **Reorient** (verb) – Redirect, alter, change, adjust, modify नयी दिशा देना

26. **Diversify** (verb) – Vary, broaden, branch out, expand, differentiate विविधता बढ़ाना

27. **Play a role** (phrase) – Contribute, participate, be instrumental, partake, involve भूमिका निभाना

28. **Vital** (adjective) – Essential, crucial, critical, key, important आवश्यक

29. **Policymaker** (noun) – Lawmaker, legislator, decision-maker, regulator नीति निर्माता

30. **Collective** (adjective) – Combined, joint, unified, cooperative, communal सामूहिक

Summary of the Editorial

1. The Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) published a report on India's environmental performance, stressing the importance of data in measuring and fixing environmental issues.

2. The report revealed that only 32% of the 160,000 tonnes of municipal solid waste generated daily in India in 2020-21 was treated or monitored.

3. The remaining waste often clogs drains or is illegally burned, causing additional environmental concerns.

4. According to the report, air pollution in 2020 may have reduced the average life expectancy in India by nearly five years.

5. The country experienced extreme weather events on 314 days in the last year.

6. The climate crisis was responsible for 54% of the total internal displacement of people globally in 2022; for India, this figure was almost 100%.

7. World Environment Day, observed annually since 1973, is a major global platform for environmental awareness.

8. The theme for this year's World Environment Day was the need to increase action against plastic pollution.

9. The United Nations reports that over 400 million tonnes of plastic are produced worldwide each year, with a third of this used only once.

10. The CSE report highlighted the lackadaisical attitude towards single-use plastics in India, despite a ban implemented last year.

11. The Central Pollution Control Board's mobile application, which allows citizens to report illegal use and sale of single-use plastics, has seen a decrease in complaints due to a low redress rate.

12. A UN Environment Programme report suggests that plastic pollution can be reduced by 80% by 2040 if the global community starts to reuse, recycle, and diversify plastic production and use.

13. While consumer pressure is crucial, significant changes must come from producers, investors, policymakers, and governments.

14. A collective approach involving all stakeholders is essential for addressing and mitigating environmental issues.

15. The report calls for urgent action in resolving plastic pollution and other environmental challenges.

Practice Exercise: SSC Pattern Based

1. **According to the passage, what inference can be made about India's waste management situation in 2020-21?** [Editorial Page]
   A. About 32% of municipal solid waste generated was treated and monitored.
   B. All of the municipal solid waste generated was properly disposed of.
   C. India had a perfect waste management system with zero waste generation.
   D. The majority of municipal solid waste was recycled into usable products.

2. **Which of the following statements is NOT true according to the CSE's report on India's environmental performance?**
   A. 32% of the over 1,60,000 tonnes of municipal solid waste generated daily in 2020-21 was accounted for.
   B. The climate crisis was responsible for 54% of the total internal displacement of people globally in 2022.
   C. Last year, India experienced extreme weather events on 215 days.
   D. Air pollution in 2020 likely shortened average life expectancy by four years and 11 months

3. **According to the passage, which strategy is likely to help reduce plastic pollution by 80 per cent by 2040?**
   A. Only consumer pressure
   B. Solely banning single-use plastics
   C. Producers, investors, policymakers, and governments acting alone
   D. Collective efforts including reuse, recycle, reorienting and diversifying, and involvement of producers, investors, policymakers, and governments.

4. **According to the passage, which of the following is/are true?**
   i. The World Environment Day is a global platform for environmental outreach.
   ii. The United Nations reports that over 400 million tonnes of plastic are produced worldwide each year.
   iii. The Central Pollution Control Board has developed a mobile application to encourage recycling.
   iv. The UN Environment Programme suggests that plastic pollution could be reduced by 80% by 2040 through collective efforts.
       A. Only i
       B. Only I, ii
       C. Only iv
       D. i, ii, iv

5. Which of the following is a synonym for the word "**dismal**" as used in the passage?
   A. Bright
   B. Cheerful
   C. Depressing
   D. Exciting

6. Which of the following is an antonym for the word "**unnerving**" as used in the passage?
   A. Comforting

    B. Horrifying
    C. Confusing
    D. Neutral

7. **Which of the following best describes the tone of the passage?**
    A. Humorous
    B. Cynical
    C. Informative
    D. Optimistic

8. **What is the main theme of the passage?**
    A. Environmental pollution and solutions
    B. The role of technology in waste management
    C. Evolution of the World Environment Day
    D. The economic impact of climate change

Direction(Q.9 - 10): Find out error, if there is any

9. The teacher (A)/ as well as his students (B)/ all left for the trip (C)/ No Error(D)

10. More you (A)/ think of it, (B)/ the worse it becomes. (C)/ No Error(D)

Comprehension

CONCERNS loomed large on India's neutral _____1_____ over the Russian invasion of Ukraine, for its separation from the US led global market and eventually the _____2_____ on its growth. In contrast, the situation took a reverse gear. India, not only sustained the growth, but is expecting the _____3_____ in the global growth in 2023. According to IMF's World Economic Outlook, global growth was forecast to slow down to 3.2 percent in 2022, from 6 percent in 2021 and slip further to 1.3 percent in 2023. In contrast, India is expected to achieve 7 per cent growth in GDP in 2023, which could be the highest in the world, surpassing China. The factors which affected the global growth _____4_____ inflation and energy crisis, as suggested by Outlook. Global inflation fell prey to the Ukraine war. It rose to 8.8 percent in 2022, from 4.7 percent in 2021. Energy prices rose up to 20 percent within five months of the outbreak of war in February 2022. Among the regions, Europe was the _____5_____ vulnerable to this war.

Fill in the blanks with the most appropriate combinations of words

11. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank 1**.
    A. Accord
    B. Uphold
    C. Stand
    D. Contend

12. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank 2**.
    A. Establish
    B. Backlash
    C. Harsh
    D. Curiosity

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

A. Hegemony

B. Frosty

C. Cruelty

D. Solidarity

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

A. Was

B. Were

C. Are

D. Is

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

A. Least

B. Equally

C. More

D. Most

16. **Arrange the following sentences to form a coherent paragraph.**

P. The visual of Prime Minister Narendra Modi interacting with the chief ministers to prepare an exit strategy with a mask on his face underlined best the dilemma of according priority.

Q. The prolonged lockdown has been an uphill struggle for the citizens, but highlighting its importance, the Union Health Ministry has said the number of coronavirus cases in India would have shot up to 8.2 lakh by April 15 had strict nationwide containment measures not been enforced.

R. The pandemic has spelled problems for both the health of the people and the state of economy because of the complete shutdown.

S. Even before this virtual conference, some states like Odisha, Delhi, Punjab, Rajasthan and Uttarakhand had made their preference clear by extending the curfew till the end of the month. But the pressure of balancing lives and livelihood is telling.

A. QRSP   B.QRPS   C.SQPR   D.PRQS

17. **Arrange the following sentences to form a coherent paragraph.**

P. Many private schools and colleges in Punjab find themselves in a catch-22 situation. The inherently contradictory government orders to the schools and colleges do not quite add up.

Q. For, their teetering is largely attributed to the non-receipt of Rs 1,850-crore dues under the SC Post Matric Scholarship Scheme from the government for the last four years. Hands tied, the colleges, perhaps, now face the same rap as the 38 private schools in the state that have been slapped notices for seeking fees from students in violation of the government order.

R. They have been instructed to not collect fees from students, and yet ensure that the staff are given their salaries for the period. The government cannot be unaware of the already precarious fiscal condition of the 1,600 unaided private colleges of Punjab, which have not been in a position to pay their staff — numbering one lakh — for the past seven months.

S. The adverse monetary repercussions of the coronavirus-induced lockdown are percolating up to the salaried class too, after the millions of daily wage earners who have lost their livelihood.

A. SQRP   B.QPSR   C.RSPQ   D.SPRQ

18. **Arrange the following sentences to form a coherent paragraph.**

P. Millions of jobless people have no clue where their next meal is coming from. India's GDP forecasts are getting gloomier by the day.

Q. According to one worst-case scenario, the growth rate might dip to a multi-decade low of 1.6 per cent in the ongoing financial year. Under the trying circumstances, the course of action has to be carefully calibrated so that the economy gets a chance to pick up the pieces.

R. The nationwide lockdown is turning out to be a labyrinth of sorts for the Centre and the states — easier to enter than to exit.

S. The move, aimed at preventing community transmission of Covid-19, has proved effective to some extent, but it has also caused large-scale economic disruption. Job losses are rising sharply, aggravating poverty and hunger.

    A. RPQS   B.RSPQ   C.SRQP   D.SPRQ

19. **Arrange the following sentences to form a coherent paragraph.**

P. The lockdown imposed amid the pandemic outbreak has exacerbated their problems, rendering lakhs of them — mostly daily wagers — without means to make ends meet.

Q. In September 2018, the United Nations had commended India for lifting over 27 crore people out of poverty in a decade (2006-16), thereby almost halving its number of 'multidimensional' poor — those who are plagued not only by low wages but also by ill health, poor quality of work and the threat of violence.

R. Now, the country is facing an even bigger challenge on this front. The International Labour Organisation (ILO), a UN body, has stated that about 40 crore people working in India's informal sector, accounting for around 30 per cent of the country's population, are at risk of sinking deeper into poverty due to the coronavirus crisis.

S. About 90 per cent of the total workforce in India is engaged in the informal or unorganised economy, far higher than the global average of roughly 60 per cent. Poor implementation of the Minimum Wages Act, the absence of written job contracts and lack of access to social security benefits make such unregistered workers highly vulnerable to exploitation.

    A. QRSP   B.PSRQ   C.QSRP   D.PQSR

20. **Arrange the following sentences to form a coherent paragraph.**

P. The Supreme Court has asked the Centre to ensure food, water and medicines to thousands of migrant workers intercepted on way to their native places amid the nationwide lockdown to curb the spread of coronavirus.

Q. As the lockdown goes into its maturity period, with the government assuring for now that it would not be extended even as there has been a spike in the number of Covid cases, the worries are set to get pronounced.

R. The lockdown is also about providing for a captive population because of which the essential services have been allowed to function.

S. While checking the movement is imperative to prevent the workers from getting infected, it also has economic implications.

    A. QRSP   B.QSRP   C.PSQR   D.PRQS

Answers

1. A   2.C   3.D   4.D   5. C   6. A   7. C   8.A   9.B   10.A   11.C

12. B   13.A   14.B   15.D   16.B   17.D   18.B   19.A   20.C   **[Practice Exercise]**

Explanations

1. The passage states that "only 32 per cent of the over 1,60,000 tonnes of municipal solid waste generated daily in 2020-21 was accounted for." This indicates that the waste was possibly treated and monitored, as the context implies, but it doesn't suggest the waste was recycled, or that all waste was properly disposed of, or that India had a perfect waste management system. Hence, the correct option is A: About 32% of municipal solid waste generated was treated and monitored

2. **C. Last year, India experienced extreme weather events on 215 days.**
   According to the passage, last year, India experienced extreme weather events on 314 days, not 215 days. All other options are accurately reported in the passage: 32% of the daily generated municipal solid waste was accounted for in 2020-21 (option A), the climate crisis was responsible for 54% of the total internal displacement of people globally in 2022 (option B), and air pollution in 2020 likely shortened average life expectancy by four years and 11 months (option D).

3. **D) Collective efforts including reuse, recycle, reorienting and diversifying, and involvement of producers, investors, policymakers, and governments.**
   The passage suggests that an 80% reduction in plastic pollution by 2040 can be achieved if the global community acts now to reuse, recycle, reorient and diversify. However, this does not solely rest on consumer pressure or banning single-use plastics, nor can it be achieved by just one sector like producers, investors, policymakers, or governments. The solution requires collective efforts from all these sectors. Hence, the correct answer is option D.

4. D) The options i, ii, and iv are all mentioned and are true according to the passage
   iii is incorrect, The Central Pollution Control Board has developed a mobile application to encourage recycling. The passage states that the Central Pollution Control Board has developed a mobile application, but its purpose is to allow citizens to complain about the illegal sale and use of single-use plastics, not to encourage recycling.

5. C) **Depressing**
   'Dismal' refers to something that is causing or showing a complete lack of hope, so the synonym would be 'depressing'.

6. A) **Comforting**
   The passage states that the statistics from the CSE's report on India's environmental performance are "**unnerving**". The word "unnerving" implies causing anxiety or apprehension. Therefore, the antonym (opposite) would be a word implying a lack of anxiety or apprehension, which in this context would be "comforting".

7. C) **Informative**

The passage presents a multitude of facts and data points related to environmental issues, such as waste treatment, air pollution, climate crisis, and plastic pollution. It does not seek to amuse the reader (eliminating A), nor does it express a cynical or negative view (eliminating B). While the passage does suggest possible solutions, it does not focus on the positive, but rather presents the information objectively (eliminating D). Thus, the tone of the passage is informative.

8. **A) Environmental pollution and solutions**

    The passage primarily focuses on various environmental issues, such as waste management, air pollution, climate-induced displacement, and plastic pollution. It presents data on these problems and discusses some potential solutions, including waste treatment, monitoring, collective efforts, and public policy initiatives. Although technology (B), World Environment Day (C), and economic aspects (D) are touched upon, they are not the central theme of the passage. Therefore, the main theme is 'Environmental pollution and solutions'.

9. (B)'as well as' के बदले 'and' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि Part (C) में 'all' का प्रयोग है और as well as का अर्थ 'के अलावे' होता है जबकि 'and' का अर्थ 'और'। चूँकि 'teacher' और 'students' - all (सब) के जाने की बात है, अत: 'The teacher and his students-all ....' का प्रयोग होगा

    • 'and' will be used instead of 'as well as' because 'all' is used in Part (C) and as well as means 'other than' whereas 'and' means ' more' . Since 'teacher' and 'students' - all (all) are passed, so 'The teacher and his students-all ....' will be used.

10. (A)'More you' के पहले 'The' का प्रयोग होगा; अर्थात् 'The more you' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि दो चीजों में समान रूप से वृद्धि या ह्रास दर्शाने के लिए बनावट 'The + Comparative+ Subject+ Verb, the+ Comparative + Subject + Verb' का प्रयोग होता है; जैसे-

    i.   The higher we go, the cooler we feel

    • 'The' shall be used before 'More you'; That is, 'The more you' will be used because the construct 'The + Comparative + Subject + Verb, the + Comparative + Subject + Verb' is used to show equal increase or decrease in two things; As-

        i.   The higher we go, the cooler we feel.

11. **Stand** (noun) – Position, viewpoint, stance, opinion रुख

    Here, the context refers to India's neutral stance regarding the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

    • **Accord** (verb) – to give or grant someone recognition or status देना

    • **Uphold** (verb) – Support, endorse, back up, stand by, sustain, समर्थन करना

    • **Contend** (verb) – Argue, assert, maintain, claim, state, तर्क करना

12. **Backlash** (noun) – Reaction, adverse response, counteraction पलटवार

    The word "backlash" in this context refers to a strong negative reaction or adverse consequences. Given the sentence talks about the potential negative impact on India's growth

due to its separation from the US-led global market following the Russian invasion of Ukraine, "backlash" fits best.

- **Establish** (verb) – Set up, start, begin, initiate स्थापित करना

- **Harsh** (adjective) – Cruel, severe, brutal, stern, tough कठोर

- **Curiosity** (noun) – Interest, Inquisitiveness, Wonder, Fascination, Eagerness जिज्ञासा

13. **Hegemony** (noun) – Dominance, leadership, supremacy, प्राधान्य, नेतृत्व

    "Hegemony" means dominance or leadership by one country or social group over others. In this context, it refers to India potentially achieving the highest growth in the global market.
    - **Frosty** (adjective) – Unfriendly, unsympathetic

    - **Cruelty** (noun) – Brutality, inhumanity, savagery, ruthlessness, क्रूरता

    - **Solidarity** (noun) – Unity, harmony, cohesion, camaraderie, unanimity एकता

14. The sentence is in past tense, and **"the factors"** is a plural subject, so "**were**" is the correct verb form to use here. The other options do not fit grammatically: "was" would be used for a singular subject; "are" and "is" are in present tense, which is inconsistent with the past tense context of the sentence.

15. The context here is that among all regions, Europe was the one that was most vulnerable to the war. Hence, "**most**" is the appropriate word. The other choices do not convey the same meaning: "least" would imply the opposite, i.e., Europe was the least affected region; "equally" would suggest all regions were equally affected, which is not the intent of the sentence; and "more" doesn't work grammatically without a comparison, i.e., "more than what/who?"

16. **B) QRPS**
    Q: First, sentence Q provides a contextual introduction to the situation. It talks about the prolonged lockdown and its importance as explained by the Union Health Ministry.
    R: Sentence R follows naturally from Q, expanding on the issue by discussing the problems that the pandemic has caused, both in terms of health and the economy
    P: Sentence P continues the narrative, introducing a specific event - Prime Minister Narendra Modi's interaction with the chief ministers. This sentence also expands on the dilemmas that have been caused by the pandemic, as previously mentioned in R
    S: Lastly, sentence S gives specifics about how some states have chosen to respond to the situation, thus wrapping up the overall discussion that started with the general lockdown context in Q, problems in R, PM's role in P and specific states' responses in S.

17. **D) SPRQ**
    S: This sentence sets the context of the paragraph, describing the adverse monetary repercussions of the coronavirus-induced lockdown. The mention of the impact on the salaried class and daily wage earners serves as a good starting point, painting a broad picture of the socio-economic environment

P: Sentence P then narrows down the broad context of the COVID-19 impact, from the general salaried class to a specific subset of it: private schools and colleges in Punjab. This sentence introduces the dilemma (catch-22 situation) that these institutions face, caused by contradictory government orders. This also hints at some monetary issues that the schools and colleges are facing, which makes a smooth transition to the next sentence.

R: After introducing the specific problem faced by the private schools and colleges in Punjab, sentence R delves deeper into it. It details the instructions given by the government to the schools and colleges and provides some insight into the financial strain that these instructions are causing. Mentioning that the institutions haven't been able to pay their staff for seven months connects back to the broader theme introduced in S and builds up to the explanation in Q

Q: The final sentence, Q, brings closure to the paragraph by explaining the primary reason for the schools' and colleges' financial strain, linking it to non-receipt of dues from the government under the SC Post Matric Scholarship Scheme. The mention of legal consequences for some private schools also strengthens the argument that the institutions are caught in a difficult situation

18. B.) **RSPQ**

    R: This sentence introduces the situation - a nationwide lockdown due to Covid-19. It sets the stage and gives context to the reader.

    S: This sentence details the effects of the lockdown described in sentence R, making it a logical next step in the progression of ideas.

    P: This sentence elaborates on the economic disruption and job loss mentioned in sentence S, and introduces a new concept: the decline in India's GDP forecasts.

    Q: Finally, this sentence further expands on the GDP decline mentioned in sentence P and suggests a careful response to the crisis. This is a natural closing sentence as it indicates a need for action and implies a future direction

19. **A) QRSP**

    Q: Q provides the backdrop and introduces the situation where India was commended for reducing poverty

    R: R presents a new challenge, how the coronavirus crisis could affect India's progress in poverty reduction, particularly in the informal sector.

    S: S elaborates on the nature of the informal sector and why it is vulnerable, which builds on the challenge presented in R

    P: P provides a specific instance, the pandemic-induced lockdown, to illustrate how the vulnerability of the informal sector translates into hardship for its worker

    In conclusion, QRSP offers a logical progression from the past situation to the present challenge, then explains why this challenge is significant, and finally provides a specific real-world example of the problem
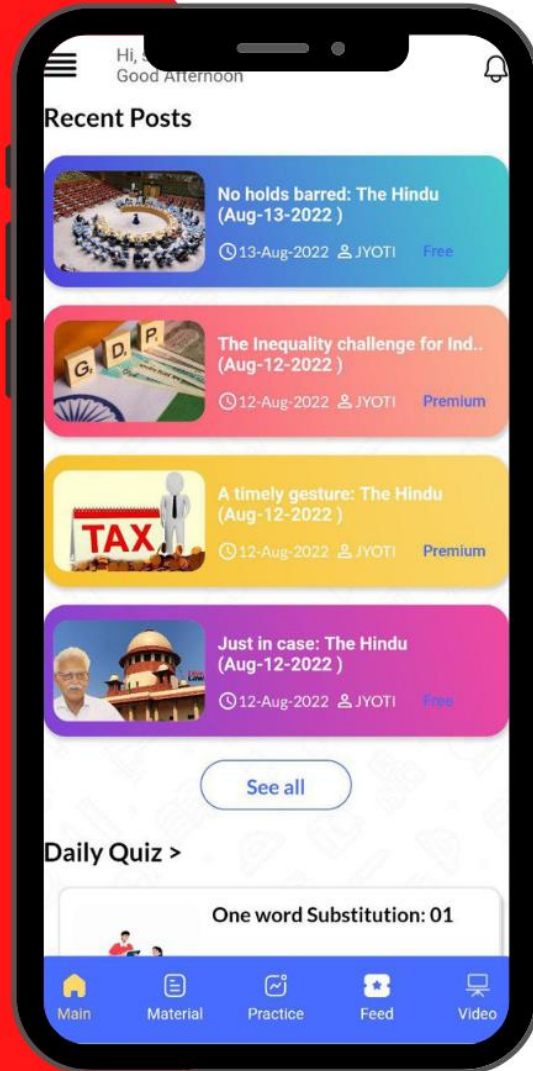
20. C) **PSQR**

P: This sentence provides a good starting point as it sets the context and introduces the main subject of the paragraph - the Supreme Court's instructions to the Centre to aid migrant workers amid the nationwide lockdown.

S: Following sentence P, this sentence (S) explains the rationale behind the Supreme Court's instructions, emphasizing the need to balance between preventing the spread of the virus and addressing the economic implications of the lockdown

Q: This sentence (Q) gives more detail about the current situation, building on the issues mentioned in sentence S, particularly noting the government's assurance of the lockdown not extending and the ensuing concerns due to the spike in Covid cases.

R: Lastly, sentence R provides a conclusion that wraps up the topic by elaborating on the necessity of the lockdown, explaining its purpose beyond preventing disease spread and its effect on essential services.