

The Tribune - Grain storage

THE Union Cabinet has approved a Rs 1 lakh crore plan aimed at creating ‘the world’s largest grain storage capacity in the cooperative sector’. The government **intends** to provide modern storage facilities to farmers in their respective blocks through Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS) so that they are able to get a fair price for their **foodgrains**. It’s a cause for concern that the country’s storage capacity is less than half of its foodgrain production. With the **granaries overflowing**, a **portion** of the produce **is exposed** to **pest** attacks and **inclement** weather. The Centre had told the Lok Sabha in December last year that **post-harvest** losses were in the range of 4-6 per cent for cereals and 5-8 per cent for pulses. This is a criminal waste of grains in a country where millions go to sleep every night on an empty stomach. It is also a huge **disincentive** to farmers who **toil** hard to ensure the nation’s food security.

Inadequate and unscientific storage not only damages foodgrains but also makes farmers **resort to distress** sale of their **produce**. It is **laudable** that the government is prioritising food protection along with food production by **establishing** godowns at the PACS level. The plan **envisages** operating these credit societies as **procurement** centres for state agencies or the Food Corporation of India and also as fair price shops for farmers. However, of the 1 lakh PACS in the country, only around 63,000 are in operation. The rest need to be reactivated **at the earliest in order to** maximise the **potential** of these **societies**, which **have** crores of farmers among their members.



With climate change **posing** a major challenge to the **cultivators**, it is **imperative** to minimise post-harvest losses by improving storage facilities **quantitatively** as well as **qualitatively**. Saving every grain must become the **credo** in view of the **variations** in crop production and **productivity**, **triggered** by **heatwaves** and other extreme weather events that are likely to increase in **intensity** and frequency in the years to come. [Practice Exercise]

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

Vocabulary

1. **Intend** (verb) – Mean, aim, propose, plan, anticipate, expect इरादा करना
2. **Foodgrain** (noun) – Cereal, grain, produce, crop, commodity खाद्यान्न
3. **Granary** (noun) – Storehouse, silo, depot, warehouse, barn अनाज कोठी/ खलिहान
4. **Overflow** (verb) – (of a container) be so full that the contents go over the sides. बहुत भरा होना
5. **Expose** (to) (verb) – cause someone to be vulnerable or at risk. का खतरा होना
6. **Pest** (noun) – Vermin, parasite, insect, bug, blight कीट
7. **Inclement** (adjective) – Harsh, severe, extreme, violent, stormy खराब
8. **Post-harvest** (adjective) – After harvesting, post-cultivation, subsequent to harvest फसल कटाई के बाद
9. **Disincentive** (noun) – Deterrent, discouragement, obstacle, hindrance, disinclination असंतोष
10. **Toil** (verb) – Labour, work hard, drudge, strive, struggle कठिनाई से काम करना
11. **Resort** (to) (verb) – Turn to, use, utilize, apply, call on सहारा लेना
12. **Distress sale** (noun) – It occurs when a property, stock, or other asset must be sold quickly. Distress sales often result in a financial loss for the seller who, for reasons of economic duress, must accept a lower price.
13. **Produce** (noun) – Crop, harvest, उपज, पैदावार
14. **Laudable** (adjective) – Praiseworthy, commendable, admirable, meritorious, praisable सराहनीय
15. **Establish** (verb) – Set up, found, inaugurate, create, form स्थापित करना
16. **Envisage** (verb) – Foresee, predict, anticipate, contemplate, imagine कल्पना करना
17. **Procurement** (noun) – Acquisition, obtaining, securing, purchase, buy खरीदना
18. **At the earliest** (phrase) – As soon as possible, without delay, promptly, quickly जल्द से जल्द
19. **In order to** (phrase) – For the purpose of, with the aim of, so as to, with a view to ताकि
20. **Potential** (noun) – Ability, capability, capacity क्षमता
21. **Pose** (verb) – Present, create, produce, give rise to, cause खड़ा करना (खतरा)

22. **Cultivator** (noun) – Farmer, Grower, Planter, Husbandman, Tiller किसान
23. **Imperative** (adjective) – Crucial, Vital, Essential, Necessary, Urgent अत्यावश्यक
24. **Quantitatively** (adverb) – Numerically, Statistically, Measurably, Empirically, Computationally मात्रात्मक रूप से
25. **Qualitatively** (adverb) – Comparatively, Relatively, Subjectively, Essentially, Intrinsically गुणात्मक रूप से
26. **Credo** (noun) – Belief, Principle, Doctrine, Tenet, Philosophy सिद्धांत
27. **Variation** (noun) – Difference, Deviation, Divergence, Discrepancy, Fluctuation विविधता
28. **Productivity** (noun) – Efficiency, Output, Yield, Production, Performance उत्पादकता
29. **Trigger** (verb) – Activate, Spark, Initiate, Generate, Provoke प्रेरित करना
30. **Heatwave** (noun) – Hot spell, Heat spell, Heatwave condition, High temperature, Scorching गर्मी की लहर
31. **Intensity** (noun) – Strength, Power, Force, Vigor, Potency तीव्रता
32. **Frequency** (noun) – Recurrence, Regularity, Repetition, Periodicity, Rate आवृत्ति

Summary of the Editorial

1. The Union Cabinet of India has approved a Rs 1 lakh crore plan to create 'the world's largest grain storage capacity in the cooperative sector.'
2. The government's aim is to provide modern storage facilities to farmers via Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS).
3. This initiative is intended to allow farmers to get a fair price for their foodgrains.
4. The country's current storage capacity is less than half of its foodgrain production, a major concern.
5. Excess grain, not being stored properly, is exposed to pest attacks and inclement weather.
6. As of December last year, post-harvest losses were reported to be between 4-6% for cereals and 5-8% for pulses.
7. Such waste of foodgrains is problematic in a country where many citizens are food insecure.
8. The wastage of grains also discourages farmers, who work hard to ensure the nation's food security.
9. Poor storage practices not only cause grain damage but also force farmers into distress sales of their produce.
10. The government's plan to establish godowns at the PACS level is praiseworthy as it prioritizes food protection in addition to food production.
11. The plan includes operating credit societies as procurement centers for state agencies or the Food Corporation of India and as fair price shops for farmers.
12. However, of the 1 lakh PACS in the country, only about 63,000 are operational. The rest need to be reactivated swiftly.
13. The focus should be on minimizing post-harvest losses by improving storage facilities, both in terms of quantity and quality, as climate change poses significant challenges to farming.
14. Each grain must be saved, considering the unpredictable variations in crop production and productivity due to extreme weather events caused by climate change.
15. With heatwaves and other extreme weather events expected to increase in intensity and frequency, this initiative holds increased importance for ensuring food security in the future.

Practice Exercise: SSC Pattern based

1. **What can be inferred from the passage regarding the key issue that the Union Cabinet's plan aims to address?** [Editorial Page]
 - A. Pest control in Indian agriculture.
 - B. Providing modern storage facilities to decrease post-harvest losses.
 - C. Encouraging farmers to produce more foodgrains.
 - D. Decreasing cereal and pulses prices in the market.
2. **Which of the following best summarizes the primary problem highlighted in the passage?**
 - A. The government is spending too much money on grain storage.
 - B. Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS) are failing to provide sufficient support to farmers.
 - C. The country's storage capacity for foodgrains is significantly less than its production, leading to post-harvest losses.
 - D. Farmers are disincentivized from growing grains due to low market prices.
3. **What can be inferred about the role of PACS (Primary Agricultural Credit Societies) in the Indian agricultural ecosystem from the given passage?**
 - A. PACS are solely responsible for food protection in India.
 - B. PACS are exclusively engaged in the procurement of foodgrains for state agencies and the Food Corporation of India.
 - C. PACS are primarily intended to serve as fair price shops for farmers.
 - D. PACS are multi-purpose entities, serving as procurement centers, fair price shops, and storage facilities for foodgrains.
4. **What is the tone of the passage?**
 - A. Pessimistic
 - B. Neutral
 - C. Optimistic
 - D. Critical
5. **What is the main theme of the passage?**
 - A. The negative impacts of climate change on agriculture
 - B. The urgent need for modernizing the agricultural sector
 - C. The necessity for improving grain storage facilities in India
 - D. The efforts to boost the credit availability for farmers
6. **Which of the following words can replace 'inclement' in the passage without changing its meaning?**
 - A. Cozy
 - B. Harsh
 - C. Gentle
 - D. Mild
7. **Which of the following terms could be substituted for 'disincentive' in the context of the passage?**
 - A. Reward

- B. Encouragement
C. Deterrent
D. Incentive
8. According to the passage, which term is the antonym of 'procurement' as used in the context?
A. Production
B. Supply
C. Distribution
D. Disposal
9. The following sentence has been divided into parts. One of them may contain an error. Select the part that contains the error from the given options. If you don't find any error, mark 'No error' as your answer.
The investors were / put off by the dirty / visage of the workshop.
A. visage of the workshop
B. No error
C. put off by the dirty
D. The investors were
10. Select the most appropriate option to fill in the blank.
Some people are in the habit of sharing _____ and bull story on unsuitable occasions.
A. rooster
B. wolf
C. cock
D. fox

Comprehension

The Supreme Court's _____1_____ to the Enforcement Directorate (ED) not to create an atmosphere of fear indicates how much the agency needs to temper its _____2_____ in investigating allegations against political opponents of the current regime. Responding to complaints that the ED is harassing employees of the Excise Department in Chhattisgarh in the name of investigating the money-laundering aspects of an _____3_____ liquor scandal, a Bench has made the _____4_____ point that even a bona fide cause would seem suspect if a law enforcement agency conducted itself in a way that created fear. The observation is both a caution against transgressing the limits of a lawful investigation and a warning against letting a perception gain ground that the agency would go to any lengths to implicate someone. Given that several leaders and Ministers from States ruled by parties other than the BJP _____5_____ been summoned by the ED, or arrested and imprisoned, not many will be surprised at the charges levelled on behalf of the Chhattisgarh government that the agency is running amok and that its officers were threatening State officers, in an alleged bid to implicate the State's Chief Minister, Bhupesh Baghel.

Fill in the blanks with the most appropriate combinations of words

11. Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank 1.
A. Escalation

- B. Exhortation
C. Confrontation
D. Fulmination
12. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank 2.**
A. Potential
B. Zeal
C. Redressal
D. Arrival
13. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank 3.**
A. Concluded
B. Alleged
C. Advanced
D. Concerned
14. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank 4.**
A. Transparent
B. Prevalent
C. Compel
D. Pertinent
15. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank 5.**
A. Has
B. Is
C. Have
D. Are
16. **Arrange the following sentences to form a coherent paragraph.**
P. The 'special relationship' has been under strain for quite some time, and it is not all Kathmandu's doing. However, a deep freeze in ties or a dead-end would be an incorrect reading, and an undesirable proposition.
Q. The territorial issue — the altered map will include Kalapani, Lipulekh and Limpiyadhura areas, which 'lie completely within the territory of India' — drives a new wedge between the two nations.
R. The unanimous approval of a Constitution amendment Bill by Nepal's House of Representatives to change the country's political map would have met with consternation in New Delhi.
S. Allowing it to take a collision course and to spiral into a crisis is a setback for diplomacy.
A. RSPQ B. QRPS C. SQPR D. RQSP
17. **Arrange the following sentences to form a coherent paragraph.**
P. The fact that he has picked India among the potential entrants shows that New Delhi, with its ever-growing clout in the global arena, has a key role to play in the post-pandemic world order. With China resorting to muscle-flexing along the Line of Actual Control, the US sees India as a 'natural' ally.
Q. But India can't expect long-term gains if it is included in this comity of nations solely for the purpose of isolating China. New Delhi should watch its own interests first and insist on

a mutually beneficial as well as sustainable engagement. It is vital for India to be recognised as a significant force not only by the US but also by the other G7 members — UK, France, Germany, Italy, Canada and Japan.

- R. Keen on a bigger league of nations to corner China over the coronavirus crisis, US President Donald Trump wants India, Russia, Australia and South Korea on board the expanded Group of Seven (G7).
 - S. Desperate to put his re-election campaign back on track, Trump is under immense pressure — domestically as well as internationally — to turn the screw on China for its alleged mishandling of the pandemic that has ravaged America.
- A. RSQP B.QPSR C.RSPQ D.SPRQ

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

- P. The Finance Minister, in the significant final tranche of the stimulus package, also announced that MGNREGS works would continue during the monsoon months as well to address the needs of the returning migrants.
 - Q. April and May have seen a 40-50 per cent drop in work enrolment under the scheme, partially due to the lockdown and lack of job opportunities. The government's targeted push is bound to provide succour.
 - R. Excluding the pending dues, spending on the scheme is estimated to be Rs 90,000 crore.
 - S. The Rs 40,000-crore hike in allocation for the rural employment guarantee scheme this fiscal, taking the total allocation to over Rs 1.01 lakh crore, was the need of the hour, promising relief to migrants returning home in their thousands.
- A. SRPQ B.QRSP C.SRPQ D.SPRQ

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

- P. The Centre's decision to amend the Essential Commodities Act (ECA) is being billed as the 1991 liberalisation moment for Indian agriculture
 - Q. Traders not buying and stocking surplus even during a bumper harvest was often seen as one of the reasons for the vagaries of farm incomes.
 - R. It will allow processors, millers, exporters and traders to hold as much stock of these commodities as they want to. There is a rider that a stock limit can be clamped under exceptional circumstances such as national calamities.
 - S. The marketing reform, announced by the Finance Minister as part of the third tranche of the stimulus package, aims to deregulate cereals, edible oil, oilseeds, pulses, onion and potato.
- A. QRSP B.PSRQ C.QSRP D.PQSR

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

- P. The Allahabad High Court's decision to allow azan during the extant lockdown has provided judicial clarity to a matter that should not have been in the court in the first place.
- Q. Indeed, the right to profess religion is a fundamental right of the citizens of India, and thus, there should have been no impediment to their exercising this right.

- R. Even as it directed the administration not to cause hindrance to this, the High Court added that the use of 'loudspeakers or other sound-amplifying devices could not be said to be an integral part of the religion.'
- S. There is no doubt that the azan is 'an essential and integral part of Islam', as the court observed.

A. QRSP

B.QSRP

C.PSQR

D.PRQS

Answers

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

[Practice Exercise]

Explanations

1. **B) Providing modern storage facilities to decrease post-harvest losses.**

From the passage, it is apparent that the Union Cabinet's plan is primarily aimed at resolving the problem of inadequate storage capacity for foodgrains in the country. It mentions that India's storage capacity is less than half of its foodgrain production, leading to substantial post-harvest losses due to pest attacks and inclement weather. The new plan intends to provide farmers with modern storage facilities to help reduce these losses and ensure they get a fair price for their foodgrains. While pests and pricing may be related issues, they are not the primary concern being addressed according to the passage, thus making option B the correct answer.

2. **C) The country's storage capacity for foodgrains is significantly less than its production, leading to post-harvest losses.**

The passage primarily discusses the problem of a lack of storage capacity for foodgrains in relation to production, causing post-harvest losses. This issue has prompted the Union Cabinet to approve a plan aimed at creating "the world's largest grain storage capacity in the cooperative sector" in order to address this discrepancy and provide fair prices to farmers. Options A, B, and D, while potentially issues in their own right, are not the main problems emphasized in the passage. Although the government's spending (option A) and the role of PACS (option B) are mentioned, they are referenced in the context of solutions, not problems. Similarly, while the passage mentions that the current situation is a "huge disincentive to farmers," it doesn't specify that low market prices (option D) are the cause.

3. The passage suggests that PACS have a multifaceted role in the Indian agricultural system. They are planned to be operated as procurement centers for state agencies or the Food Corporation of India, to serve as fair price shops for farmers, and to be involved in the storage of foodgrains. Therefore, option D is the most accurate inference from the passage. Options A, B, and C only capture parts of the intended role of PACS and thus do not fully represent their function as suggested in the passage.

4. **D) Critical**

The tone of the passage is critical. The author criticizes the current status of grain storage in the country, pointing out the significant post-harvest losses and the insufficient number of active Primary Agricultural Credit Societies. Furthermore, the author refers to the waste of grains as a 'criminal' act, indicating a strong and disapproving sentiment.

5. **C) The necessity for improving grain storage facilities in India**

The main theme of the passage revolves around the issue of grain storage in India. The author discusses the problem of inadequate storage capacity in the country and the losses caused by the same. The passage elaborates on a government plan to establish 'the world's largest grain

storage capacity in the cooperative sector' and the importance of this initiative in preventing post-harvest losses and ensuring fair prices for farmers. Though aspects of modernization and climate change impacts are discussed, they are supporting points to the central theme.

6. B) Harsh

Inclement (adjective) – Harsh, severe, extreme, violent, stormy खराब

'Inclement' is used to describe the weather that is unpleasant, usually because it is wet, stormy, or harsh. Thus, 'harsh' can replace 'inclement' without changing the meaning.

7. C) Deterrent

Disincentive (noun) – Deterrent, discouragement, obstacle, hindrance, disinclination असंतोष

'Disincentive' means something that discourages or dissuades someone from doing something. Therefore, 'deterrent' could be used in place of 'disincentive' as they both denote something that discourages or prevents action.

8. D) Disposal

Procurement (noun) – Acquisition, obtaining, securing, purchase, buy खरीदना

'Procurement' in this context refers to the action of obtaining or procuring something, in this case, the procurement of grain by credit societies. The opposite of obtaining or procuring would be getting rid of, or 'disposal'.

9. No error

Put off (phrasal verb) – cause someone to lose interest or enthusiasm. के होश उड़ना, निराश करना

Visage (noun) – the manifestation, image, or aspect of something छवि

10. **Cock and bull story** (phrase) – An unbelievable tale that is intended to deceive; a tall tale. झूठी कहानी, झूठ

11. **B) Exhortation** (noun) – Appeal, urging, call, advice, counsel उपदेश

The Supreme Court's "exhortation" (or urgent recommendation) to the Enforcement Directorate is the most appropriate choice. This implies that the Supreme Court is urging the ED to act in a certain way.

- **Escalation** (noun) – Increase, Intensification, Rise, Mounting, Augmentation वृद्धि
- **Confrontation** (noun) – Face-off, Encounter, Showdown, Conflict, Standoff सामना
- **Fulmination** (noun) – Denunciation, Criticism, Condemnation, Censure, Attack निन्दा

12. **B) Zeal** (noun) – Passion, enthusiasm, ardor, fervor, fire उत्साह

The word "zeal" refers to great energy or enthusiasm, which in this case is directed towards the investigation of allegations against political opponents. The ED needs to temper or moderate this zeal, according to the Supreme Court.

- **Potential** (noun) – Ability, capability, possibility, promise, capacity, संभाव्य, कार्यक्षम, सामर्थ्य
 - **Arrival** (noun) – Appearance, advent, emergence, coming, entrance आगमन
 - **Redressal** (noun) – Correction, remedy, resolution, rectification, reparation सुधार
13. **B) Alleged** (adjective) – Supposed, assumed, presumed, professed कथित
An "alleged" liquor scandal fits here, because the scandal is not proven; it is claimed but not yet confirmed.
- **Concluded** (adjective) – Finished, Completed, Ended, Finalized, Accomplished समाप्त
 - **Concerned** (adjective) – Involved, related, affected, related to संबंधित
 - **Advanced** (adjective) – Progressive, developed, sophisticated, high-tech, advanced-level, विकसित
14. **D) Pertinent** (adjective) – Relevant, applicable, appropriate, suitable प्रासंगिक
"pertinent" point is one that is relevant or applicable to a particular matter, which is the sense required in this context.
- **Prevalent** (adjective) – Widespread, common, general, predominant प्रचलित
 - **Transparent** (adjective) – Clear, see-through, translucent, lucid पारदर्शी
 - **Compel** (verb) – Force, coerce, make, oblige मजबूर करना
15. **C)** Here, "**leaders and Ministers from States ruled by parties other than the BJP**" is a plural subject, so the verb also needs to be in the plural form. Therefore, "**have**" is the correct option. The options "has", "is", and "are" are not grammatically correct in this context because they do not agree in number with the subject.
16. **D) RQSP**
R: This is a suitable starting sentence as it introduces the main topic of the paragraph, namely the amendment to the constitution by Nepal's House of Representatives to alter the country's political map
Q: This sentence naturally follows from R, providing additional details about the specifics of the territorial dispute caused by the amendment, and thus continuing the narrative introduced in sentence R.
S: Sentence S seems to be the next logical step, because it builds upon the conflict described in sentence Q, by discussing the implications of the conflict escalating further.
P: Finally, sentence P wraps up the paragraph nicely by referring back to the historical relationship between the two nations, and suggesting that it would be undesirable to allow these tensions to irreparably harm this relationship.
17. **C) RSPQ**

R: R sets the context by introducing the topic - US President Donald Trump wanting to include more nations, such as India, Russia, Australia, and South Korea, in an expanded Group of Seven (G7) with the aim of cornering China regarding the coronavirus crisis

S: Sentence S then elaborates on the reason behind this proposal from Trump, i.e., his desperation to put his re-election campaign back on track and the pressure he faces both domestically and internationally to act against China due to its alleged mishandling of the pandemic.

P: Sentence P moves on to the impact and significance of this move for India, including how it reflects India's growing global influence and its potential role as an ally to the US, especially in light of China's aggression along the Line of Actual Control

Q: Finally, sentence Q offers a cautionary perspective for India, pointing out the need for India to prioritize its own interests and strive for a sustainable and mutually beneficial engagement. It emphasizes that India should seek recognition from all G7 members, not just the US, and that it shouldn't accept inclusion in the group solely for the purpose of isolating China.

18. **A) SRPQ**

S: This sentence introduces the main topic of the paragraph, which is the increase in allocation for the rural employment guarantee scheme, noting that it was the need of the hour. This sets the stage for what follows.

R: This sentence logically follows sentence S, providing additional detail about the amount of spending on the scheme.

P: After setting up the overall context in sentences S and R, this sentence gives specific information about what the government is doing to continue supporting the rural employment guarantee scheme.

Q: This sentence ties everything together by providing a reason for the actions taken by the government. The drop in work enrollment in the scheme during the months of April and May implies a need for the increase in funding and continued support that the Finance Minister announced.

19. **B) PSRQ**

P: This sentence introduces the main topic and sets the context for the rest of the sentences

S: This sentence describes what the amendment to the ECA entails, thereby making it a natural follow-up to the introductory sentence

R: This sentence provides further detail about the implications of the ECA amendment, so it logically follows the description of the amendment in sentence S.

Q: Lastly, this sentence provides an explanation as to why the amendment (and the changes it will bring) was necessary, giving context and purpose to the entire discussion, thus making it a fitting conclusion to the paragraph

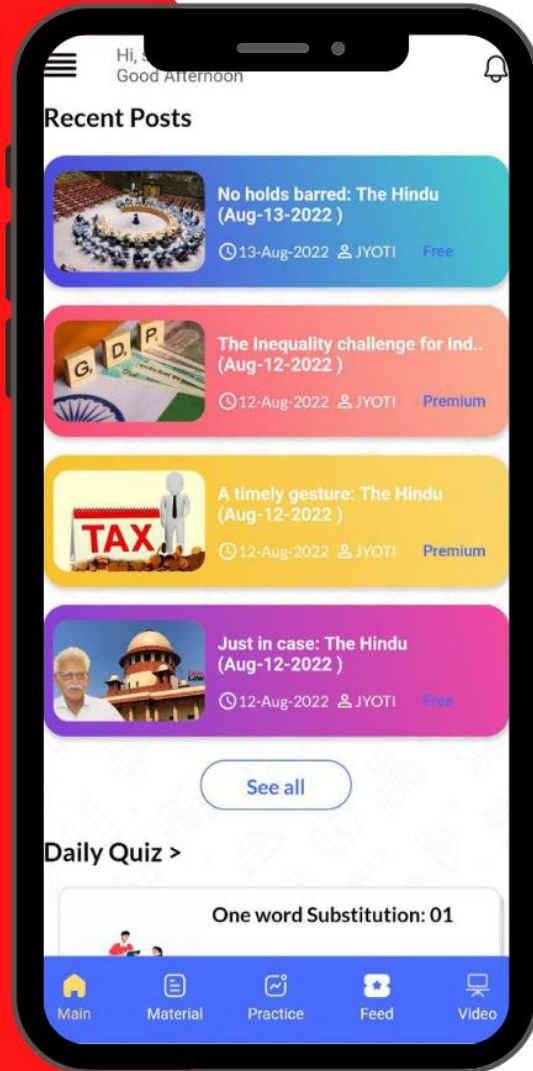
20. **C) PSQR**

P: This is a strong opener that introduces the topic and the issue at hand - the court's decision about the azan during lockdown.

S: This sentence logically follows P as it gives further details about the court's observation on the matter, enhancing our understanding of the issue at hand. It also provides a link to the concept of religious rights which is discussed in the next sentence.

Q: After detailing the court's view on the matter, this sentence broadens the scope of the argument, placing it within the larger context of the fundamental rights of Indian citizens. This helps to set the stage for the final clarification that the court provided.

R: This sentence provides a conclusion to the issue, detailing the court's final decision that while the azan itself is integral to the religion, the use of loudspeakers is not.



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