

Shifting sands: On India's external trade performance

Before things get better on the trade **front**, they may get worse

Initial estimates for India's external trade performance in May **are** a **harbinger** of even tougher times ahead. The 10.3% decline in goods exports **marks** the fourth **successive** month of **contraction** in **outbound shipments** and the sixth such **occasion** in eight months. May's \$35 billion export value is only 0.8% over April's figure that was a six-month low. **Barring** electronics exports, which grew healthily **year-on-year** as well as **sequentially**, exporters across sectors had a tough month. **Engineering goods** that **make up** over a quarter of India's goods export **basket**, **contracted** for the 11th month **in a row**, while the **employment-intensive** textiles sector **shrank** for the seventh **straight** month. The 30% **decline** in petroleum exports (the seventh contraction in eight months) **may** largely be due to **cooling** global prices that are also affecting other commodities' export values, if not volumes. After a 6.7% rise in 2022-23, goods exports are now down 11.4% over the first two months of this year. The current **estimate** of \$25.3 billion for May's services exports **is** quite **sobering** as well.

A 26.7% **boom** in services exports last year **had** helped **narrow** the **steep** goods **trade and current account deficits amid surging** global prices of commodities such as oil and fertilizers whose imports are **inelastic** for India. The trend **reversal** in that **pace** of growth **began** this March and **has accelerated** to a **critical** point with a **mere** 0.7% rise in global services receipts in May. The global **slowdown** that had clearly **hit** consumer demand for products, now **appears** to be **infecting** the **appetite** for services too. With IT companies **slashing** guidance and **benching** fresh **recruits**, some impact on domestic demand is visible and may **intensify** in coming months. **Core imports** (excluding oil and gems and jewellery) **have** contracted 5.5% **so far** in 2023-24. Overall goods imports are down over 10% through April and May, after surging 16.5% last year to \$714 billion. May's \$57.1 billion import bill was just 6.6% below 2022 levels and almost 14% over April's figure which had been the lowest in 15 months. This has **lifted** the **merchandise** trade deficit to a five-month high of \$22.1 billion. Last month, the Commerce Ministry had expressed hope that demand from key markets may revive from August or September. Now, it believes the trend may improve from July or August. It has again **cited** the World Trade Organization global trade growth upgrade from 1% to 1.7% for 2023. Even if that were to **fructify**, it is **far from** the 2.6% growth averaged in the last 12 years and the **respite** for India may be limited. A '**business as usual**' approach will not **suffice** any more to keep this key growth engine of the economy firing. **[Practice Exercise]**

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

Vocabulary

1. **Shifting sands** (phrase) – used in reference to something that is constantly changing, especially unpredictably.
2. **Front** (noun) – a particular sphere of operation; a particular situation मोर्चा
3. **Initial** (adjective) – First, early, original, primary, preliminary प्रारंभिक
4. **Estimate** (noun) – Guess, appraisal, projection, calculation अनुमान
5. **Harbinger** (noun) – Forerunner, precursor, signal, omen सूचक
6. **Mark** (verb) – Indicate, signify, denote, point out दर्शाना
7. **Successive** (adjective) – Consecutive, following, sequential, successive क्रमिक
8. **Contraction** (noun) – Decrease, reduction, diminution, decline संकुचन
9. **Outbound** (adjective) – Departing, outward-bound, leaving, outgoing प्रस्थान करनेवाला
10. **Shipment** (noun) – Consignment, delivery, freight, cargo भेजा गया सामान
11. **Occasion** (noun) – Event, incident, occurrence, situation अवसर
12. **Barring** (preposition) – Except for, excluding, apart from, aside from छोड़कर
13. **Year-on-year** (adjective) – Annually, yearly, per annum, each year वार्षिक
14. **Sequentially** (adverb) – Consecutively, in sequence, in order, successively क्रमिक रूप से
15. **Make up** (phrasal verb) – Comprise, form, constitute, represent बनाना
16. **Basket** (noun) – Collection, assortment, range, group
17. **Contract** (verb) – Shrink, reduce, diminish, lessen घटना
18. **In a row** (phrase) – Consecutively, successively, sequentially, without a break लगातार
19. **Employment-intensive** (adjective) – Labor-intensive, work-heavy, manpower demanding रोजगार प्रधान
20. **Shrink** (verb) – Contract, diminish, reduce, decline सिकुड़ना
21. **Straight** (adjective) – Unbroken, consecutive, successive, continuous निरंतर
22. **Cool** (verb) – Decrease, reduce, lessen, diminish घटना
23. **Sobering** (adjective) – Serious, grave, solemn, austere गंभीर
24. **Boom** (noun) – Surge, increase, upswing, growth उछाल, तेजी

25. **Narrow** (verb) – Reduce, lessen, decrease, diminish कम करना
26. **Steep** (adjective) – Sharp, drastic, extreme, abrupt, precipitous तीव्र
27. **Trade deficit** (noun) – Trade deficit is said to take place when the imports done by a country exceed that of the exports done by a country in a fiscal year व्यापार घाटा
28. **Current account deficit** (noun) – when the value of a country's imports of goods and services is greater than its exports
29. **Amid** (preposition) – Among, in the middle of, surrounded by, within के बीच
30. **Surging** (adjective) – increasing, rising, escalating तेजी से बढ़ती
31. **Inelastic** (adjective) – (of demand or supply) insensitive to changes in price or income.
32. **Reversal** (noun) – Change in direction, turnaround, about-face, switch पलटाव
33. **Pace** (noun) – Speed, rate, tempo, rhythm गति
34. **Accelerate** (verb) – Speed up, quicken, hasten, expedite तेजी से बढ़ना
35. **Critical** (adjective) – Crucial, vital, pivotal, essential महत्वपूर्ण
36. **Mere** (adjective) – Only, just, purely, simply केवल
37. **Slowdown** (noun) – Deceleration, slump, downturn, drop मंदी
38. **Hit** (verb) – Affect, impact, strike, touch प्रभावित करना
39. **Infect** (verb) – affect, have an effect on, affect, खराब करना
40. **Appetite** (noun) – Desire, craving, longing, yearning इच्छा
41. **Slash** (verb) – Cut, reduce, decrease, lessen घटाना
42. **Benching** (noun) – it refers to the group/section of employees who are currently not working on any projects but remain on the job and getting the salary.
43. **Recruit** (noun) – New member, newcomer, novice, beginner नया सदस्य
44. **Core sector** (noun) – The eight-core sectors of the Indian economy are electricity, steel, refinery products, crude oil, coal, cement, natural gas and fertilizers.
45. **So far** (phrase) – Until now, up to this point, to date, thus far अब तक
46. **Lift** (verb) – Raise, elevate, uplift, boost उठाना
47. **Merchandise** (noun) – Goods, commodities, wares, products माल

48. **Cite** (verb) – Mention, refer to, quote, allude to हवाला देना
49. **Fructify** (verb) – Bear fruit, succeed, prosper, thrive, become fruitful, become productive, become effective सफल होना
50. **Far from** (phrase) – Not at all, nowhere near, a long way from से दूर
51. **Respite** (noun) – Break, interval, pause, relief राहत
52. **Business as usual** (adjective) – Normal operations, routine, a normal state of affairs हमेशा की तरह
53. **Suffice** (verb) – Be enough, be sufficient, be adequate, serve पर्याप्त होना, काफी होना

Summary of the Editorial

1. Initial estimates for India's external trade performance in May suggest potential difficulties in the future.
2. Goods exports declined by 10.3%, the fourth consecutive monthly contraction and the sixth in the past eight months.
3. May's export value was \$35 billion, only a 0.8% increase over April's six-month low.
4. Electronics exports saw healthy growth, but other sectors struggled.
5. Engineering goods, making up over a quarter of India's goods export basket, contracted for the 11th consecutive month.
6. The employment-intensive textiles sector shrank for the seventh straight month.
7. A 30% decline in petroleum exports, the seventh in eight months, might be due to declining global prices affecting export values of other commodities.
8. After a 6.7% rise in goods exports in 2022-23, they are now down 11.4% over the first two months of this year.
9. A 26.7% increase in service exports in 2022 helped narrow the steep goods trade and current account deficits, but growth has since reversed, with a 0.7% rise in global service receipts in May.
10. The global slowdown has impacted demand for products and appears to be affecting the appetite for services as well.
11. IT companies are cutting guidance and benching new hires, indicating a potential impact on domestic demand.
12. Core imports (excluding oil and gems and jewellery) have contracted by 5.5% in 2023-24 so far.
13. The merchandise trade deficit reached a five-month high of \$22.1 billion due to a decline in overall goods imports by over 10% in April and May.
14. The Commerce Ministry is optimistic that demand from key markets will improve by July or August, based on the World Trade Organization's global trade growth upgrade from 1% to 1.7% for 2023.
15. Despite the hopeful projections, the low global trade growth rate compared to the average of the last 12 years suggests that a 'business as usual' approach will not be enough to maintain India's economic growth.

Practice Exercise: SSC Pattern Based

1. **Based on the paragraph, what inference can be made about India's export trends and their potential future trajectory?** [Editorial Page]
 - A. India's export trends indicate a healthy future due to the robust growth in the electronics export sector, which can offset the decline in other sectors.
 - B. India's external trade performance is consistently improving with temporary setbacks, as evidenced by the brief dip in April, followed by an increase in May.
 - C. The current trend in India's external trade performance, specifically the contraction in goods exports and the decline in services exports, suggests that the country could face a challenging period ahead.
 - D. Despite the 10.3% decline in goods exports, India's overall trade performance remains strong because of the strong performance of the electronics export sector
2. **What could be inferred about the impact of global prices on India's export performance?**
 - A. The decline in global prices has boosted India's exports by making them more competitive.
 - B. Global prices have little to no effect on India's exports as they are primarily influenced by domestic factors.
 - C. Rising global prices are the main reason for the contraction in India's exports.
 - D. Cooling global prices might be contributing to the decline in export values of some commodities, like petroleum.
3. **Which of the following statements is INCORRECT based on the information given in the passage?**
 - A. India's goods exports experienced a contraction for the fourth consecutive month, with a 10.3% decrease.
 - B. The value of exports in May was \$35 billion, which was only 0.8% higher than the value in April, marking a six-month low.
 - C. The current estimate for May's services exports stands at \$25.3 billion, indicating a sobering outlook.
 - D. Goods exports have seen an overall increase of 11.4% over the first two months of the year.
4. **Which of the following best describes the state of India's goods trade and current account deficits last year?**
 - A. It increased because of the rise in services exports.
 - B. It decreased due to the decrease in the import of oil and fertilizers.
 - C. It narrowed as a result of a boom in services exports.
 - D. It remained the same because of the global slowdown in consumer demand for products.
5. **Based on the information in the paragraph, which of the following is likely to have an impact on domestic demand?**
 - A. The surging global prices of commodities
 - B. The contraction of core imports by 5.5%
 - C. The guidance and benching of fresh recruits by IT companies
 - D. The upgrade of global trade growth by the World Trade Organization

6. Which of the following statements is **incorrect** based on the given paragraph?
- A. The boom in services exports last year, amounting to 26.7%, was instrumental in narrowing India's steep goods trade and current account deficits.
 - B. The growth of global services receipts significantly slowed down to an increase of only 0.7% in May, following a trend reversal that started in March.
 - C. The Commerce Ministry is optimistic that demand from key markets may recover from August or September, and it has further upgraded the World Trade Organization's global trade growth prediction from 1% to 2.7% for 2023.
 - D. The merchandise trade deficit has grown to a five-month high of \$22.1 billion, driven by a decline in overall goods imports by over 10% through April and May.
7. **What is the tone of the passage?**
- A. Optimistic
 - B. Pessimistic
 - C. Neutral
 - D. Energetic
8. What is a synonym for "**harbinger**" as used in the context of the passage?
- A. Herald
 - B. Mirage
 - C. Enigma
 - D. Obscurity

Comprehension

After the conclusion of two key G20 ministerial meetings, of the Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors (FMCBG) in Bengaluru and Foreign Ministers Meeting (FMM) in Delhi, without _____1_____ over the Ukraine war, diplomats and G20 officials must pause for a stock-taking exercise on the government's strategy for its G20 presidency. The FMCBG is part of the key "Finance track" of the 20 most advanced economies, set up in 1999 to help global economic coordination after the Asian financial crisis. The other, the "Sherpa track", works on the G20's goal setting process. With the experience India gained in Indonesia last year to bridge the Russia-West divide, the challenges for India's presidency, amid dynamic geopolitical changes, should have been clear. In Bengaluru, however, the surprise was when Russia and China refused to accept the language on the Ukraine war that they had agreed to just three months ago. As a result, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman was _____2_____ to issue only a Chair's summary and outcome document, rather than a joint _____3_____. The government also decided to include the paragraphs that Russia and China had objected to, naming them in the document. This is something of a _____4_____, as last year, the Indonesian chair's joint communiqués at the Leader level and FMCBG expressed the sentiments of "many" and "most" countries. After the brinkmanship in Bengaluru, it was ambitious, if not a bit surprising, that the government chose to attempt negotiations for a joint statement for the FMM. Eventually, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar issued a Chairman's summary and outcome documents too, _____5_____ differences over the two Bali paragraphs.

Fill in the blanks with the most appropriate combinations of words

9. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank 1.**
- A. Optics
 - B. Transition
 - C. Consensus
 - D. Implications
10. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank 2.**
- A. Constrained
 - B. Reposition
 - C. Sustained
 - D. Strengthened
11. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank 3.**
- A. Avenue
 - B. Communique
 - C. Outcome
 - D. Complacence
12. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank 4.**
- A. Variant
 - B. Commitment
 - C. Development
 - D. Precedent
13. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank 5.**
- A. Citing
 - B. Underlining
 - C. Timeline
 - D. Conceiving
14. **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.**
- Do you know that it was I/ who has done / this piece of beautiful work / No Error.
- A. Do you know that it was
 - B. who has done
 - C. this piece of beautiful work
 - D. No Error
15. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in the blank**
- The constant noise from the construction site made it difficult for her to _____ on her studies.
- A. concentrate
 - B. congregate
 - C. confiscate
 - D. contemplate
16. **Arrange the following sentences to form a coherent paragraph.**

- P. It was back in 1996 — three years after the Mumbai bomb blasts — that India had proposed a draft document on the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT) at the United Nations, but there has been no implementation so far as the member states are not on the same page over the definition of terrorism and its forms.
- Q. Paying tributes to the martyrs of the Parliament attack on its 19th anniversary on Sunday, Vice-President Venkaiah Naidu made a renewed pitch for the UN Convention. He stated that while many countries across the world endorsed India's stand, there were some which were being unsupportive out of 'narrow geopolitical considerations'.
- R. Though Naidu didn't name any errant country, the allusion was apparently to the likes of China, Pakistan and Turkey.
- S. India has borne the brunt of terrorism in recent decades, having witnessed the Parliament attack in 2001, followed by Mumbai (2008), Pathankot and Uri (both in 2016) and last year's Pulwama carnage.

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

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

- P. This negative trend is alarming and spells a worrisome rise in the burden of a young population prone to disease and early death. It signals huge loopholes in the government's policies targeting malnutrition such as the Integrated Child Development Scheme, the National Nutrition Policy, the Mid-Day Meal Scheme for schoolchildren, and the National Food Security Act 2013.
- Q. Phase one of the National Family Health Survey-5, covering nearly 50 per cent of the population, has thrown up a shocking challenge: tackling the increase in the number of children suffering from malnutrition in most states.
- R. Though the Covid-19 pandemic, which affected the vulnerable groups as the food supply chain was disrupted, has contributed to this setback, it is not the only cause.
- S. The government needs to investigate why despite better monitoring following scams that riddled these well-intentioned schemes, there is a rise in the number of stunted, wasted and underweight kids.

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

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

- P. The situation continues to be delicate, and the apex court's intervention offers a window of opportunity to end the three-week-long stalemate.
- Q. The farmers' right to non-violent protests has been acknowledged, but also the fundamental rights of others to move freely.
- R. A day before, while noting that the talks with farmer groups did not appear to be yielding results, the court had spoken of forming a committee comprising representatives of the government, farmer organisations and other stakeholders to try and resolve the impasse.
- S. The Supreme Court's suggestion to put on hold the implementation of the contentious new farm laws to enable negotiations with the farmers needs serious consideration, despite the Centre's initial submission during the hearing that even this will fail to move the protesters towards any meaningful settlement.

A. SRPQ B. QRSP C. SRQP D. SPRQ

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

- P. Starved of funds in the wake of Covid-induced disruptions, schools for special children in Amritsar are staring at closure.
- Q. This is a sad reflection of governmental apathy during a crisis towards a section of the population that even in normal times needs extra care and attention to get by.
- R. The government funds due to the institutes must be released on priority so that they remain operational and well-oiled for the return of the special students. It will also ensure the welfare of their hard-pressed teachers, and, society in the long run.
- S. The invisibility of children with disabilities in the authorities' plans as they go about trying to restore society to pre-Covid levels is a lacuna that must be addressed forthwith.

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

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

- P. Such false narratives have only widened the trust deficit between the government and the farmers.
- Q. Even as the Centre is reaching out to the protesting farmer unions in a renewed bid to end the stalemate over the farm laws, the blatant use of pressure tactics to weaken or sabotage the agitation has struck a discordant note.
- R. It's apparent that the arhtiyas are being targeted for backing the farmers, with whom they have a time-tested relationship. Some leaders and supporters of the ruling party at the Centre have even said that the commission agents are leading or sponsoring the agitation and that 'real' farmers are nowhere in the picture.
- S. The timing of the income tax raids on the premises of several arhtiyas across Punjab makes it easy to put two and two together. Both the state government and farmers' leaders have alleged that the due process was not followed: the raids were held within days of issuing notices to the suspected defaulters, without waiting for their replies; the local police were not kept in the loop, with the CRPF being deployed to provide security to the I-T officials.

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

Answers

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

Explanations

- Option C is the correct answer. The paragraph indicates that India's goods exports have declined for four successive months and six times in the past eight months. It also mentions that the current estimate for services exports is sobering. Despite the growth in the electronics export sector, other major sectors like engineering goods and textiles are shrinking, suggesting that the overall trade performance might face further difficulties.
- Option D is the correct answer. The paragraph mentions that the 30% decline in petroleum exports could largely be due to cooling global prices, which might be also impacting the export values of other commodities. The other options are not supported by information in the paragraph.
- The correct answer is option D. According to the passage, goods exports have decreased by 11.4% over the first two months of the year, not increased. The other statements are consistent with the information provided in the passage.
- C) It narrowed as a result of a boom in services exports.
The paragraph states that a 26.7% increase in services exports last year helped narrow the steep goods trade and current account deficits, which indicates that the export of services had a positive effect on these deficits.
- C) The guidance and benching of fresh recruits by IT companies.**
The paragraph mentions that IT companies are reducing guidance and benching fresh recruits, which is visible in the domestic demand and may intensify in the coming months. Therefore, these actions by IT companies are likely to have an impact on domestic demand. The other options do not provide a direct link to domestic demand within the text.
- C) The Commerce Ministry is optimistic that demand from key markets may recover from August or September, and it has further upgraded the World Trade Organization's global trade growth prediction from 1% to 2.7% for 2023.**
Statement C is incorrect. While the Commerce Ministry has indeed expressed hope for a recovery in demand from key markets from July or August, it is not the ministry that has upgraded the World Trade Organization's global trade growth prediction for 2023. According to the paragraph, the WTO itself has upgraded the global trade growth from 1% to 1.7%, not 2.7% as mentioned in the statement. The rest of the statements are correct as per the provided paragraph.
- B. Pessimistic
The passage discusses the ongoing and impending challenges faced by India's external trade. The author uses phrases such as "harbinger of even tougher times ahead", "contraction in outbound shipments", "exporters across sectors had a tough month", and "a 'business as usual' approach will not suffice any more to keep this key growth engine of the economy

firing." These phrases and the overall sentiment of the passage suggest a pessimistic or concerned outlook towards India's trade performance.

8. A) The term "harbinger" means something that announces or signals the approach of something; a forerunner. "Herald" is a synonym as it carries a similar meaning - to announce or signal a forthcoming event.

9. **Consensus** (noun) – agreement, harmony, accord, unity, unanimity सहमति

In the context, the word consensus refers to a general agreement among the group. Since the passage mentions a lack of agreement over the Ukraine war, it suggests that there was no consensus.

- **Optics** (noun) – perception, appearance, image, impression धारणा
- **Transition** (noun) – shift, changeover, metamorphosis परिवर्तन
- **Implications** (noun) – consequences, results, effects, ramifications प्रभाव

10. **Constrain** (verb) – limit, restrain, confine, restrict, check सीमित करना

This word(constrain) is used to suggest that Nirmala Sitharaman was restricted or limited in her ability to issue a joint communique because of the lack of agreement from Russia and China.

- **Reposition** (verb) – place in a different position; adjust or alter the position of अपने आप को पुनर्स्थापित करना
- **Sustain** (verb) – continue, carry on, keep up, maintain, bolster up. बरकरार रखना
- **Strengthen** (verb) – Reinforce, fortify, bolster, support, enhance मजबूत करना

11. **Communique** (noun) – official communication, press release, bulletin विज्ञप्ति

A communique in this context refers to an official announcement or statement from a government or organization.

- **Avenue** (noun) – approach, strategy, tactic, method मार्ग
- **Outcome** (noun) – Result, consequence, effect, aftermath, end product परिणाम
- **Complacence** (noun) – Self-satisfaction, smugness, self-approval, self-admiration, self-regard आत्मसंतोष

12. **Precedent** (noun) – example, model, case law, paradigm, preceding मिसाल, पूर्व उदाहरण

In this context, a precedent refers to an earlier event or action that is used as a guide or standard in subsequent similar circumstances.

- **Variation** (noun) – Variation, form, version, alternative, modification प्रकार
- **Development** (noun) – Event, happening, occurrence, change, घटनाक्रम
- **Commitment** (noun) – Dedication, devotion, allegiance, loyalty, duty प्रतिबद्धता

13. **Cite** (verb) – refer to, make reference to, mention, allude to हवाला देना

In the given context, "**citing**" refers to mentioning or referring to (the Bali paragraphs) as evidence for or justification of an action or statement.

- **Underline** (verb) – Highlight, Emphasize, Stress, Accentuate, Underscore ज़ोर देना
- **Conceive** (verb) – Imagine, Envisage, Visualize, Think up, Formulate विचार करना
- **Timeline** (noun) – Schedule, Plan, Timetable, Itinerary, Chronology समयरेखा

14. (B) 'has done' के बदले 'did' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि 'that' Clause में verb 'was' Past Tense में है अतः Relative Clause में भी Verb Past Tense में होगा; जैसे— It was Ram, Laxman and Sita who went to the forest.

- 'did' will be used instead of 'has done' because in 'that' clause the verb 'was' is in Past Tense, so in Relative Clause also Verb will be in Past Tense; Like— It was Ram, Laxman and Sita who went to the forest.

15. A) **concentrate**

Explanation: In this context, "concentrate" means to focus one's attention or mental effort on a particular object or activity. It is the most suitable option for the sentence, as the noise is making it difficult for her to focus on her studies. The other options do not fit the context and have different meanings.

16. A) **SPQR**

S: This sentence introduces the issue of terrorism in India, providing a clear context and historical examples

P: This sentence follows up on the first by explaining India's response to the terrorism issue, detailing the proposal of a document to the UN and the reasons for its non-implementation.

Q: This sentence shows a continuation of India's stance, with Vice-President Venkaiah Naidu renewing the push for the UN Convention and offering his views on the support and lack of support from other countries

R: The final sentence provides some implicit details on the countries Naidu may be referring to, adding a conclusion to the narrative.

17. B) **QPSR**

Q: The opening sentence should be Q because it sets the stage for the issue at hand: an increase in the number of children suffering from malnutrition

P: Next, P should come because it discusses the consequences of the problem identified in Q and criticizes the government's policies that are not effectively addressing malnutrition

S: Then comes S, it follows P naturally because after the critique of the government policies, it suggests that the government needs to investigate the reasons behind the failure of the initiatives meant to tackle the issue.

R: Finally, R is the concluding sentence because it provides additional information on why the situation has gotten worse, adding that the Covid-19 pandemic, which disrupted the food supply chain, played a role in this setback, but it's not the only cause

18. C) **SRQP**

S: This sentence introduces the main topic of discussion: the Supreme Court's proposal.

R: This follows logically from S, providing some background on the actions already taken before the Supreme Court's suggestion was made

Q: This sentence extends the context of the discussion, outlining the complexity of the issue and considering multiple rights at play

P: Lastly, this sentence gives a concluding note about the current situation and the potential impact of the Supreme Court's intervention.

19. D) **PQSR**

P: This sentence sets up the problem by stating the immediate issue - schools for special children in Amritsar are facing a potential closure due to lack of funds.

Q: It extends the problem expressed in sentence P, by critiquing the government's apathy towards this vulnerable section of the population. This is an elaboration of the problem introduced, making it a logical follow-up to sentence P

S: Here, the focus shifts slightly from a critique of the government's approach to highlighting a specific lacuna in their plans – the invisibility of children with disabilities. This sentence acts as a bridge between the problem (lack of funds and governmental apathy) and the proposed solution.

R: This sentence provides the conclusion and the solution to the problem, emphasizing that the government should release the funds to these institutions as a priority.

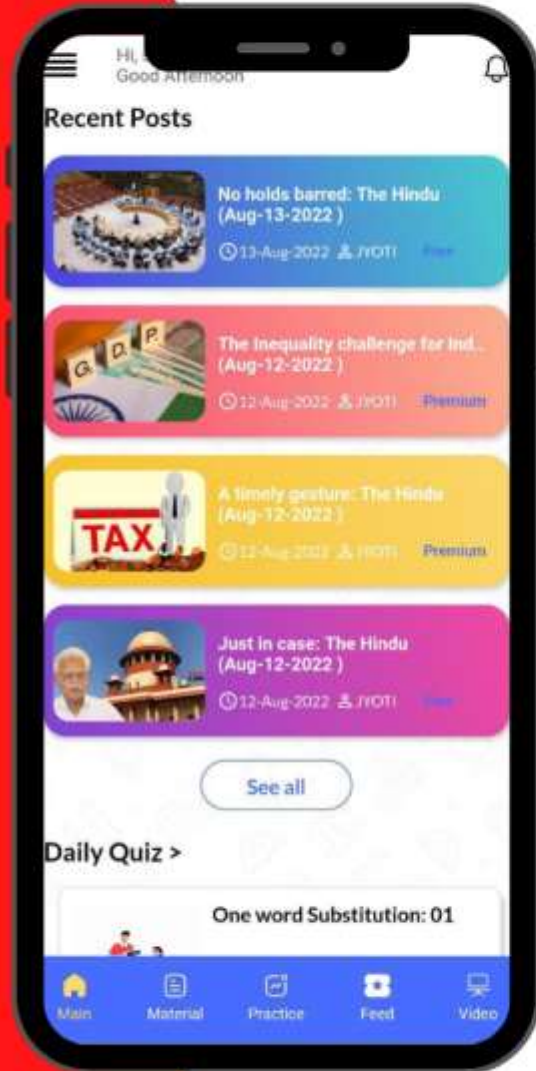
20. B) **QSRP**

Q: Sentence Q sets the context, talking about the Centre's outreach to farmers but also its use of pressure tactics.

S: Sentence S explains one such pressure tactic: the use of income tax raids on the arhtiyas, who are important figures in the farming community.

R: Sentence R further discusses these arhtiyas, suggesting that they are targeted for supporting the farmers and discussing the false narratives around their involvement.

P: Finally, sentence P concludes the paragraph, summarizing the impact of these false narratives on the trust between the government and farmers. Hence, the answer is QSRP.



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