

Express View on restrictions on laptop imports: Licence raj dot com

In the pre-1991 era, Indian governments routinely **relied on repressive** policies such as quotas and higher **tariffs in order to curb** imports. Infosys founder N R Narayana Murthy once famously **recounted** how he had to wait for three years and **undertake** several trips to Delhi to import a computer because of the strict licensing **regime**.

The **adverse consequences** that such policies had on the economy **have** been **well documented**. Despite that, in a move that **harks back to** this **socialist** past, the government of India on Tuesday issued an order requiring licences to import laptops, tablets and other devices with immediate effect. This could **open the door for imposition** of similar licensing requirements in other sectors, increasing the **space** for **bureaucratic discretion**. Such **controls** on economic activities **will** only **diminish** the **vibrancy** of the economy that was **unleashed** after the '91 reforms.

The move is **ostensibly** aimed at promoting domestic manufacturing and curbing imports from China. In 2022-23, **imports** of personal computers, laptops etc **stood** at \$5.3 billion, with China **accounting for an overwhelming** share of these. However, as no warning or time has been given to equipment manufacturers (as per some reports, the government might delay its implementation by at least a month), this decision will **lead to** unnecessary **disruption** in the immediate **term**, create supply shortages and **drive up** prices of equipment. While it may force companies to manufacture in the country **considering** the huge market that India offers, there may be cost disadvantages.

Moreover, it is one thing for the government to adopt policies that **facilitate** the creation of a computer manufacturing **ecosystem** in the country and quite another to use a **sledgehammer** approach to achieve its goals. In a country with a **vibrant** IT services sector, with a government that **envisions** Digital India, and one that has **sought** to encourage the start-up ecosystem, this is an **uncalled-for** decision.

Unfortunately, it is not a **one-off**. The policy **establishment** has in recent years **drawn** inspiration from the country's socialist past far too often. **For instance**, the government has recently banned the exports of rice and **imposed** stock holding limits on pulses. It had also brought spending by credit card under the **liberalised remittance scheme** — now **in abeyance** — which meant that **transactions** via cards outside India **would** attract a higher rate of TCS (tax collected at source). Such moves indicate that even as the rest of the country has travelled well beyond its socialist past, the establishment hasn't, at least not adequately. It still **tends to cling** to the old **playbook**. This **tendency threatens** to **undo** the economic gains that have **accrued** to the country from the **dismantling** of the licence permit raj in the **decade** of the '90s. [\[Practice Exercise\]](#)

- “Red coloring” Denotes ‘subject’ and ‘blue coloring’ denotes ‘verb’.

Vocabulary

1. **Dot come** (noun) – a company that does most of its business on the internet
2. **Era** (noun) – Age, epoch, eon, period, time, युग
3. **Rely** (on) (verb) – Depend on, lean on, trust in, count on, bank on, निर्भर होना
4. **Repressive** (adjective) – Restrictive, inhibitive, limiting, suppressive, constraining, दमनपूर्ण
5. **Tariff** (noun) – Duty, tax, toll, charge, levy, कर
6. **In order to** (phrase) – With the purpose of, for the purpose of, to, so as to, ताकि
7. **Curb** (verb) – Restrain, control, check, limit, नियंत्रित करना
8. **Recount** (verb) – Narrate, tell, relate, describe, सुनाना
9. **Undertake** (verb) – to do or begin to do something, करना
10. **Regime** (noun) – Rule, system, scheme, procedure, method व्यवस्था
11. **Adverse** (adjective) – Unfavorable, negative, detrimental, harmful, विपरीत
12. **Consequence** (noun) – Result, outcome, effect, repercussion, परिणाम
13. **Well-documented** (adjective) – Clearly recorded, widely reported, well recorded, अच्छी तरह से दस्तावेजीकृत
14. **hark back to** (phrase) – To return to or recall a previous time or situation पीछे लौटना
15. **Socialist** (adjective) – Related to socialism, a political and economic theory that advocates for means of production, distribution, and exchange should be owned or regulated by the community as a whole, समाजवादी
16. **Open the door for** (phrase) – Allow for, pave the way for, create opportunities for, मार्ग प्रशस्त करना
17. **Imposition** (noun) – Enforcing, foisting, infliction, थोपना
18. **Space** (noun) – Scope, room, chance, opportunity दायरा
19. **Bureaucratic** (adjective) – Official, administrative, governmental, नौकरशाही
20. **Discretion** (noun) – the freedom to decide what should be done in a particular situation कार्य-स्वतंत्रता
21. **Diminish** (verb) – Reduce, decrease, lessen, घटाना

22. **Vibrancy** (noun) – Energy, liveliness, vitality, enthusiasm, effervescence
जीवंतता
23. **Unleash** (verb) – Release, set free, let loose, unbridle, allow to run free खोल देना
24. **Ostensibly** (adverb) – Apparently, seemingly, supposedly, allegedly, superficially जाहिर तौर पर
25. **Account for** (phrasal verb) – Comprise, constitute, represent, make up, form बनाना
26. **Overwhelming** (adjective) – very great in amount. अधिकतम
27. **Lead** (to) (verb) – Result in, cause, bring about, produce, create, give rise to वजह बनना
28. **Disruption** (noun) – Interruption, disturbance, breakdown, disarrangement, disorder, विघ्न, व्यवधान
29. **Term** (noun) – Period, span, duration, stint, time frame, अवधि
30. **Drive up** (phrasal verb) – Increase, raise, escalate, boost, amplify बढ़ाना
31. **Considering** (preposition) – Taking into account, bearing in mind, in view of, regarding, ध्यान में रखते हुए
32. **Moreover** (adverb) – Furthermore, additionally, in addition, besides, इसके अलावा
33. **Facilitate** (verb) – Enable, assist, aid, simplify, smooth the way, सुगम बनाना
34. **Ecosystem** (noun) – a group of businesses or business activities that affect each other and work well together पारिस्थितिकी तंत्र
35. **Sledgehammer** (noun) – a forceful or heavy-handed approach; used to describe a way of behaving that is too forceful सशक्त रवैया
36. **Vibrant** (adjective) – Lively, dynamic, energetic, vigorous, जीवंत
37. **Envision** (verb) – Imagine, foresee, predict, anticipate, कल्पना करना
38. **Seek** (verb) – Try, aim, endeavour, attempt, effort कोशिश करना
39. **Uncalled-for** (adjective) – Unnecessary, unjustified, unwarranted, undue, अनावश्यक
40. **One-off** (noun) – It means something that happens or is made or done only once. It is unique and not part of a regular series or sequence. एक बारगी
41. **Establishment** (noun) – System, government, regime, authority संस्थान

42. **Draw** (verb) – Get, obtain, extract, derive, gain लेना
43. **For instance** (phrase) – For example, as an example, such as, उदाहरण के लिए
44. **Impose** (verb) – Enforce, apply, levy, put into effect, थोपना
45. **Liberalised remittance scheme** (noun) – It is a scheme introduced by Reserve Bank of India (RBI) that allows resident individuals to remit a certain amount of money during a financial year to another country for investment and expenditure.
46. **In abeyance** (phrase) – Suspended, in suspension, on hold, unresolved ठंडे बस्ते में रखना, आस्थगित
47. **Tend** (to) (verb) – Be inclined, be likely, have a tendency, झुकाव होना
48. **Cling** (to) (verb) – Hold on tightly to, stick to, adhere to, पर टिके रहना
49. **Playbook** (noun) – It refers to a set of plans or methods that are used in a particular activity. नियम पुस्तिका
50. **Tendency** (noun) – Inclination, tendency, predisposition, propensity, प्रवृत्ति
51. **Threaten** (verb) – Menace, intimidate, endanger, jeopardize, imperil, खतरा में डालना
52. **Undo** (verb) – Nullify, invalidate, counteract, reverse, retract, विपरीत करना, उलट देना
53. **Accrue** (verb) – Accumulate, amass, gather, collect, increase, उपाजित करना
54. **Dismantling** (noun) – Demolition, destruction, disassembly, breakup, tearing down नष्ट करना
55. **Decade** (noun) – Period of Ten years दशक

Summary of the Editorial

1. The Indian government of the pre-1991 era heavily relied on restrictive policies such as quotas and high tariffs to limit imports.
2. A notable example of the stifling effect of this policy was Infosys founder N R Narayana Murthy's three-year wait to import a computer due to a strict licensing regime.
3. Such policies had negative impacts on the economy, a fact that is well documented.
4. However, recently, the Indian government issued a sudden order requiring licenses to import laptops, tablets, and similar devices.
5. This order seems to be a return to the old licensing regime, and it might encourage the introduction of similar licensing requirements in other sectors.
6. The decision, designed to boost domestic manufacturing and reduce imports from China, seems to be out of sync with the economic vibrancy that the post-1991 reforms brought.
7. In the financial year 2022-23, imports of personal computers and laptops stood at \$5.3 billion, with a significant share of these imports originating from China.
8. As no warning or grace period was provided for equipment manufacturers, the decision could cause immediate disruption, supply shortages, and higher equipment prices.
9. While the order might encourage companies to manufacture in India, it may also introduce cost disadvantages.
10. The government's strategy seems heavy-handed, particularly considering the presence of a strong IT services sector and ongoing efforts to foster a start-up ecosystem in the country.
11. This decision is not an isolated incident but part of a concerning pattern, as the government has been re-adopting socialist policies in recent years.
12. Recent instances of such policies include a ban on rice exports, the imposition of stock holding limits on pulses, and an aborted attempt to regulate spending via credit cards.
13. These decisions indicate that the government has not completely moved beyond its socialist past.
14. The continued reliance on these outdated strategies puts at risk the economic gains made after the abolishment of the license permit raj in the '90s.
15. As such, there is an urgent need for the government to reflect on these policies and make sure they align with the contemporary economic reality and future goals of the country.

Practice Exercise: SSC Pattern Based

1. **What is the primary purpose of the author starting the passage with a historical context of import restrictions in India?** [Editorial Page]
 - A. To show how much the Indian economy has grown since the pre-1991 era.
 - B. To highlight the repetitiveness of the government's decisions.
 - C. To underline the hardships faced by N R Narayana Murthy due to import restrictions.
 - D. To stress the damaging effects of restrictive policies on the economy.
2. **According to the passage, what is the author's stance on the new government order requiring licences to import laptops, tablets, and other devices?**
 - A. The author supports the decision as it will boost domestic manufacturing.
 - B. The author is indifferent to the decision, stating it could have both positive and negative impacts.
 - C. The author opposes the decision, believing it will hamper economic vibrancy and cause unnecessary disruptions.
 - D. The author feels that the decision is only targeted towards curbing imports from China.
3. **According to the passage, what is the author's main critique of the government's recent policies?**
 - A. They unnecessarily restrict the start-up ecosystem.
 - B. They signal a return to the country's socialist past.
 - C. They do not facilitate the creation of a computer manufacturing ecosystem.
 - D. They encourage the export of rice and pulses.
4. **Based on the passage, what might be a potential downside to the government's decision to impose licensing requirements on laptop imports?**
 - A. The decision will promote domestic manufacturing.
 - B. It will provide a competitive advantage to local manufacturers.
 - C. The decision will lead to supply shortages and increased equipment prices.
 - D. It will create a computer manufacturing ecosystem in the country.
5. **What is the tone of the passage?**
 - A. Optimistic
 - B. Critical
 - C. Neutral
 - D. Praise
6. **Which of the following statements is/are NOT true as per the passage?**
 - (i) The government has recently required licences to import laptops, tablets and other devices.
 - (ii) The recent licensing requirement is expected to immediately cause disruption and create supply shortages.
 - (iii) The government's move is designed to facilitate the creation of a computer manufacturing ecosystem in the country.
 - (iv) The government has recently banned the exports of rice and imposed stock holding limits on pulses.

- A. Both ii and iv
B. I, ii, iii, iv
C. Only iii
D. Only iv
7. **Based on the passage, which of the following statements would be an accurate inference?**
- A. The licensing requirements for laptops, tablets, and other devices are seen as positive steps towards India's economic growth.
B. The recent order requiring licenses to import laptops and other devices could negatively impact the Indian economy due to potential bureaucratic discretion and disruption of supply.
C. The Indian government's decision to require licenses for imports has received unanimous support from domestic manufacturers.
D. The recent restrictions imposed on laptop imports are solely aimed at blocking Chinese products from entering the Indian market.
8. **In the fourth paragraph of the passage, the term 'sledgehammer approach' most nearly means:**
- A. A strategy of careful deliberation and consideration
B. A method of subtle, gentle persuasion
C. A plan of meticulous detail and precision
D. A tactic of blunt, forceful intervention
9. The following sentence has been split into segments. One of them may contain an error. Identify the segment that contains a grammatical error. If you don't find any error, mark 'No error' as your answer
- How many / eggs were put / into the basket?**
- A. How many
B. eggs were put
C. into the basket
D. No error
10. **Select the most appropriate meaning of the given idiom**
He failed, but he was able to ***draw the right lesson*** from his experience.
- A. To learn a valuable understanding from a situation
B. To create a perfect artwork
C. To be exceedingly lucky
D. To erase past mistakes
E. To narrate a story exactly
11. **Sentences of a paragraph are given below in jumbled order. Arrange the sentences in the correct order to form a meaningful and coherent paragraph**
- P. Finally, it can be termed as the channel for all trade, and what is more important, of all ideas.
Q. It also provides framework to all economic development.

- R. It is the road which determines the site of many cities and the growth and nourishment of all.
- S. The road is one of the great fundamental institutions of mankind
A.SPQR B.QRPS C.SRQP D.PRQS
12. **Sentences of a paragraph are given below in jumbled order. Arrange the sentences in the correct order to form a meaningful and coherent paragraph**
- P. They can help you to decide the right products for you.
Q. Advertisements can be extremely useful if they are honest.
R. Teenagers are especially vulnerable to such advertisements.
S. However, some advertisements may be harmful as they try to befool you
A.RSQP B.QPSR C.RSPQ D.SPRQ
13. **Sentences of a paragraph are given below in jumbled order. Arrange the sentences in the correct order to form a meaningful and coherent paragraph**
- P. Schools are closed for the Christmas and winter break at this time of the year.
Q. Christmas and New Year are the time of the year to celebrate.
R. All over the city, winter carnivals and Christmas bazaars lend fun and warmth in the cold.
S. For the second time in a row, we are likely to see restrained celebrations for fear of the pandemic raising its ugly head again.
A.SRPQ B.QRSP C.QPRS D.SPRQ
14. Select the most appropriate **ANTONYM** of the underlined word.
In the story, the protagonist was known for his **VALOUR** in battle.
A. Bravery
B. Courage
C. Cowardice
D. Heroism
15. **In the following questions, each sentence has 2 blanks. Choose the appropriate set of words for the blanks that best fits in the context of the sentence**
Despite the _____ efforts of the government, the _____ population of endangered species continues to decline, making their survival more precarious.
A. incessant, thriving
B. formidable, dwindling
C. negligible, robust
D. futile, burgeoning

Comprehension

Last Friday, the government increased the returns on some small savings schemes for the first quarter of 2023 by 20 basis points to 110 basis points, or 0.2 to 1.1 percentage points. These will kick _____1_____ for eight of the 12 small savings schemes where small investors park their household surpluses through banks and post offices. A similar selective hike was _____2_____ for the previous quarter too, after a long 27-month pause in small

savings rates, but the range was minimal at 10 to 30 basis points and only applied on five schemes. In the latest review, the highest rate hike of 1.1 percentage points has been granted only for one-, two- and three-year time deposits. For other schemes, the increase is more nominal — 40 basis points for senior citizens and monthly income schemes and just 20 basis points for the National Savings Certificate and Kisan Vikas Patra. Returns on the popular long-term savings _____3_____, the Public Provident Fund (PPF), have been left unchanged at 7.1%, prevailing since April 2020 when they were slashed from 7.9% at the _____4_____ of the pandemic. Neither is there relief for those investing in the Sukanya Samridhi Account Scheme, launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in January 2015 to _____5_____ families to invest in the education of girl children and save for their marriage expenses, under the Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao campaign.

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

- A. off
- B. In
- C. on
- D. at

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

- A. promoted
- B. entailed
- C. seemed
- D. effected

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

- A. avenue
- B. iteration
- C. conception
- D. contestation

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

- A. screening
- B. juncture
- C. onset
- D. Intent

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

- A. avert
- B. presume
- C. craft
- D. encourage

Answers

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

Explanations

1. **D) To stress the damaging effects of restrictive policies on the economy.**

The author begins the passage with the historical context of import restrictions to illustrate the severity and potential damaging effects of such restrictive policies. This sets the stage for their argument against the new licensing requirement for laptop and tablet imports. The hardships faced by N R Narayana Murthy, the growth of the Indian economy, and the repetitiveness of government decisions are all secondary points that support the main idea, but they are not the primary reason the author starts with this context.

2. **C. The author opposes the decision, believing it will hamper economic vibrancy and cause unnecessary disruptions.**

The author criticizes the new import licensing policy for laptops and tablets, referring to it as a "repressive" policy reminiscent of the pre-1991 era. The author believes that such policies had adverse impacts on the economy, suggesting that the new policy might also have negative consequences. The author further argues that this new rule may cause disruptions in the short term, lead to supply shortages, and increase equipment prices. The overall tone of the passage indicates that the author opposes the decision as it could potentially diminish the economy's vibrancy and create unnecessary disruption.

3. **B) They signal a return to the country's socialist past.**

The author criticizes the government's recent actions like restrictions on laptop imports, banning the exports of rice, imposing stock holding limits on pulses, and modifying credit card usage, stating that they resemble practices from the country's socialist past. The author indicates these decisions are not adequately suited to the contemporary context and might hamper the economic gains from the deregulation era of the '90s. Thus, option B correctly represents the author's main critique. Options A, C, and D do not encapsulate the main critique or are contrary to the points mentioned in the passage.

4. **C. The decision will lead to supply shortages and increased equipment prices.**

The passage states that the government's sudden decision, which did not provide manufacturers any warning or preparation time, could create supply shortages and increase prices of equipment.

5. **B. Critical**

The passage critiques the government's decision to require licenses for importing laptops and other devices, referencing the negative economic impacts of such policies in the past and suggesting that the decision could lead to undesirable outcomes.

6. Option C (only iii) is the correct answer as it is not true according to the passage. The government's move is primarily aimed at promoting domestic manufacturing and curbing imports, particularly from China, not specifically facilitating the creation of a computer

manufacturing ecosystem in the country. The passage actually criticizes the government's decision as using a "sledgehammer approach" to achieve its goals, suggesting it is not a well-thought-out strategy for developing such an ecosystem. The other options (i, ii, iv) are all accurately reflected in the passage.

7. **B) The recent order requiring licenses to import laptops and other devices could negatively impact the Indian economy due to potential bureaucratic discretion and disruption of supply.**

The passage suggests that the new import licensing requirements for laptops and similar devices can lead to bureaucratic discretion, potential supply shortages, and increased equipment prices. It is inferred that these outcomes might harm the Indian economy. The passage does not provide enough information to support options A, C, and D, which makes option B the most accurate inference.

8. **D) A tactic of blunt, forceful intervention**

In the context of the passage, the term 'sledgehammer approach (सशक्त रवैया)' is used to describe the government's strategy of adopting severe, often extreme, measures to achieve its goals. This metaphor denotes forceful action without subtlety or careful planning. So, among the given options, D is the most accurate meaning of 'sledgehammer approach'. The other options describe methods that are more careful, subtle, or precise, which are opposite of what a 'sledgehammer approach' implies.

9. **D) No Error.**

10. A) **Draw the right lesson** (phrase) – to learn a valuable understanding from a situation: सही सबक निकालना - स्थिति से मूल्यवान समझना

11. **C) SRQP**

S: The sentence S introduces the concept - the road as a significant human institution. This sentence naturally comes first because it sets the topic.

R: The sentence R follows S because it provides additional detail about the role of roads in determining city locations and general growth. The pronoun 'it' refers to 'the road' mentioned in S.

Q: Next is Q, it continues to expand on the functions of the road introduced in S and elaborated in R. Again, 'it' here refers back to 'the road'.

P: The sentence P is last because it starts with 'Finally,' which indicates a conclusion or summary. It also utilizes the 'it' pronoun, referring back to the 'road' topic.

12. **B) QPSR**

Q-P: In sentence Q, the term "advertisements" is introduced, and in the subsequent sentence P, the pronoun "they" is used to refer to these advertisements. Hence, QP forms a logical pair.

S: Next, the sentence S. "However, some advertisements may be harmful as they try to befool you" is the next logical sentence after P. This sentence uses "however" to contrast the positive aspect of advertisements presented in sentence P. So, the order becomes QPS. R: Lastly, we have sentence R. "Teenagers are especially vulnerable to such advertisements." This sentence refers back to the harmful advertisements mentioned in sentence S, using the pronoun "such." It's a fitting conclusion to the paragraph.

13. C) **QPRS**

Q: The first clue is the noun-pronoun relationship. Sentences Q and P both refer to the same period of time "this time of the year", but Q introduces the concept, making it the more logical starting point.

P: The second clue is a time sequence. After introducing the general idea of celebrating during this time of the year in Q and P, R provides a more specific image of how the celebration is happening throughout the city.

R: Finally, the sequence logically ends with S, because it introduces a contrasting idea and a potential change to the celebrations for the second time, which could only logically occur after the festive mood has been established by Q, P, and R

S: For the second time in a row, we are likely to see restrained celebrations for fear of the pandemic raising its ugly head again. So, QPRS is the correct sequence

14. C) **Cowardice**

A. **Bravery** (noun) – Courage, valour, gallantry, daring, साहस

B. **Courage** (noun) – Bravery, fortitude, intrepidity, fearlessness, बहादुरी

C. **Cowardice** (noun) – Fearfulness, timidity, pusillanimity, spinelessness, कायरता

D. **Heroism** (noun) – Valor, gallantry, chivalry, daring, वीरता

15. B. **formidable, dwindling**

Option B is the correct answer because it appropriately fills the blanks in the context of the sentence. "Formidable" suggests that the efforts are impressive in scale or scope which is relevant for the context as it's about the government's effort to save the endangered species. "Dwindling" refers to the reduction in numbers over time, which is apt in this context as it's about the decreasing population of endangered species.

- Formidable का सुझाव है कि प्रयासों की scale or scope प्रभावी है जो context के लिए relevant है क्योंकि यह सरकार के endangered species को बचाने के प्रयास के बारे में है। dwindling का संदर्भ होता है समय के साथ संख्याओं में कमी, जो इस context में उचित है क्योंकि यह लुप्तप्राय प्रजातियों की घटती population के बारे में है।

16. B) **Kick in** (phrasal verb) – Come into effect or operation लागू होना

17. D) **Effect** (verb) – To implement, bring about अमल में लाना

- **Promote** (verb) – encourage, advance, support, foster, boost बढ़ावा देना
- **Entail** (verb) – involve, necessitate, require, demand शामिल होना
- **Seem** (verb) – appear, look, sound, feel, appear to be प्रतीत होना

18. **A) Avenue** (noun) – method, approach, course of action मार्ग, वीथि

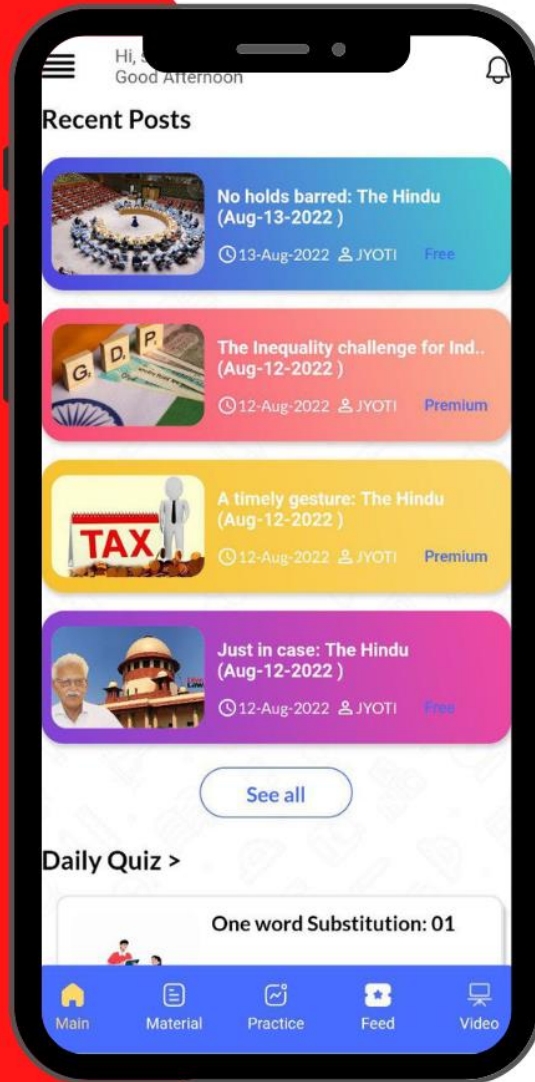
- **Iteration** (noun) – Repetition, restatement, reiteration, recapitulation पुनरावृत्ति
- **Conception** (noun) – idea, concept, notion, perception, thought अवधारणा
- **Contestation** (noun) – contention, disputation, argument प्रतिस्पर्धा

19. **C) Onset** (noun) –start, commencement, beginning शुरुआत

- **Screening** (noun) – Inspection, testing, diagnosis, checking जाँच
- **Juncture** (noun) – Stage, crisis, interval, moment, point in time मोड़ /समय
- **Intent** (noun) – intention or purpose इरादा

20. **D) Encourage** (verb) –promote, stimulate, support, foster, urge प्रोत्साहित करना

- **Avert** (verb) – prevent, avoid, ward off, stave off, deflect टालना
- **Presume** (verb) – Believe, assume, guess, deduce, imagine, suppose, postulate अनुमान करना, मानना
- **Craft** (verb) – Make, create, construct, produce, manufacture तैयार करना/ बनाना



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