

Mapping the way forward: on China and its neighbours

China must show its neighbours the **sensitivity** that it demands of them

A week after the first conversation in many months between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping, India and China appear **nowhere near** coming to any kind of understanding to repair their relations. **On the contrary**, relations this week have faced yet another **storm**, with the two sides **clashing** over China issuing a new map and reports on Thursday suggesting that Mr. Xi may skip the G-20 **Summit** in New Delhi next week. The Chinese Foreign Ministry did not confirm those reports, but it also chose not to deny them. Events this week, **meanwhile**, served a reminder of the currently low levels of trust, with relations **arguably** at their lowest since the **normalisation** of **ties** in the 1980s. On August 28, China issued what it called a “standard map” for 2023, which showed the entire State of Arunachal Pradesh, the Aksai Chin region and the South China Sea as Chinese territory, **drawing** protests from India, Malaysia and the Philippines. Beijing **defended** the map as “routine” and asked India to not “over-interpret” it, after the Ministry of External Affairs **lodged** a strong protest. While it may be true that the map made no new **territorial claims** and **depicted** borders as in previous Chinese maps, it is clear that the **needless issuing** of a new map, **amid** multiple, live territorial disputes, **has** only further **complicated** them. The responses of China’s neighbours make that clear.

When India in 2019 issued a new map **following** the internal **reorganisation** of Jammu and Kashmir and creation of the new Union Territory of Ladakh, Beijing responded with strong statements and **initiated** discussions at the United Nations Security Council, even though that map, too, did not change India’s external boundaries or territorial claims **vis-à-vis** China. **In the view of** some observers, China’s increasingly aggressive **mobilisation** on the Line of Actual Control, **leading to** the on-going crisis that has **plunged** relations to this low level, **was** partly a response to India’s **reiteration** of its claims to Aksai Chin in 2019. In the recent **up-and-down** history of India’s ties with China, summit meetings have offered the platform for the two countries to **dial down** tensions by giving the two leaders the opportunity for high-level interventions, as was the case at the 2017 BRICS Summit following the Doklam **stand-off**. **Regardless of** whether Mr. Xi visits New Delhi next week, the **prospects** of a similar **rapprochement** **remain dim**. Repairing relations will require slowly rebuilding trust on a foundation of greater **mutual** sensitivity. **Indeed**, China would do well to show its neighbours the sensitivity that it demands of them, if it has any **inclination** towards repairing increasingly **fraught** relations.

[Practice Exercise]

- Red/blue coloring of words in the sentence indicates subject verb relationship; where ‘red’ denotes ‘subject’ and ‘blue’ denotes ‘verb’.
- **Indeed** (adverb) – In fact, truly, certainly, unquestionably, no doubt वास्तव में

Vocabulary

1. **Map** (verb) – Chart, plot, plan, record, draw, represent **खाका बनाना**
2. **The way forward** (phrase) – an action, plan etc that seems a good idea because it is likely to lead to success **आगे का रास्ता**
3. **Neighbour** (noun) – adjacent country, nearby country, bordering country, adjoining country **पड़ोसी देश**
4. **Sensitivity** (noun) – Responsiveness, awareness, sympathy, understanding **संवेदनशीलता**
5. **Nowhere near** (phrase) – not nearly.
6. **On the contrary** (phrase) – used to show that you think or feel the opposite of what has just been stated **इसके विपरीत**
7. **Storm** (noun) – a tumultuous reaction; an uproar or controversy **तूफान**
8. **Clash** (verb) – conflict, fight, dispute, quarrel, battle **भिड़ना/ संघर्ष करना**
9. **Summit** (noun) – conference, meeting **शिखर सम्मेलन**
10. **Meanwhile** (adverb) – Simultaneously, Concurrently, At the same time, In the meantime **इसी बीच में**
11. **Serve** (verb) – Act as, function as, work as. **के रूप में कार्य करना**
12. **Arguably** (adverb) – possibly, conceivably, feasibly, plausibly, probably, **यकीनन**
13. **Normalisation** (noun) – standardisation, regularization, balancing, evening out, stabilization, **सामान्यीकरण**
14. **Ties** (noun) – Bond, connection, relation, relationship, association **संबंध**
15. **Draw** (verb) – Get, obtain, take out, derive, gain, take, elicit **खींचना**
16. **Defend** (verb) – speak or write in favour of (an action or person); attempt to justify. **सफाई पेश करना**
17. **Lodge** (verb) – file, submit, present, put forward, register, **दर्ज करना**
18. **Territorial** (adjective) – geographical, regional, zonal, local, district-based, **प्रदेशिक**
19. **Claim** (noun) – assertion, declaration, contention, statement, proclamation, **दावा**
20. **Depict** (verb) – portray, represent, illustrate, describe, render, **चित्रित करना**
21. **Needless** (adjective) – unnecessary, unwarranted, unrequired, redundant, superfluous, **अनावश्यक**
22. **Amid** (preposition) – amongst, among, in the middle of, surrounded by, **के बीच**

23. **Complicate** (verb) – make difficult, confuse, confound, entangle, muddle, जटिल बनाना
24. **Following** (preposition) – after, subsequent to, ensuing, succeeding, के बाद
25. **Reorganisation** (noun) – restructuring, rearrangement, reshuffling, overhaul, पुनर्गठन
26. **Initiate** (verb) – begin, commence, start, launch, institute, आरंभ करना
27. **Vis-à-vis** (preposition) – in relation to, with regard to, compared to, के मुकाबले में
28. **In the view of** (phrase) – in the opinion of, from the standpoint of, as seen by, के विचार में
29. **Mobilisation** (noun) – the act of organizing or preparing something, such as a group of people, for a purpose जुटाव/ जमावड़ा
30. **Lead** (to) (verb) – result in, cause, produce, bring about, give rise to वजह बनना
31. **Plunge** (verb) – dive, fall, drop, plummet, descend, गिरना/घटना
32. **Reiteration** (noun) – repetition, restatement, recapitulation, reassertion, redundancy, पुनरावृत्ति
33. **Up-and-down** (adjective) – fluctuating, variable, inconsistent, unpredictable, unstable, उतार-चढ़ाव वाला
34. **Dial down** (phrasal verb) – reduce, decrease, diminish, lessen, mitigate, घटाना
35. **Stand-off** (noun) – deadlock, stalemate, impasse, deadlock, standstill, गतिरोध
36. **Regardless of** (phrase) – irrespective of, in spite of, no matter what, without considering भले ही
37. **Prospect** (noun) – possibility, likelihood, potential, chance, आशंका
38. **Rapprochement** (noun) – reconciliation, restoration of harmony, improvement in relations, सुधार, नज़दीक आना, मेल-मिलाप
39. **Dim** (adjective) – faint, dull, vague, unclear, धुंधला
40. **Mutual** (adjective) – reciprocal, shared, joint, two-sided, आपसी
41. **Inclination** (noun) – tendency, propensity, predisposition, झुकाव
42. **Fraught** (adjective) – tense, anxious, charged, stressed खराब/ तनावपूर्ण

Summary of the Editorial

1. **Stalled Relations:** A week after PM Modi and President Xi's conversation, India-China relations still remain strained.
2. **Further Strain:** Relations deteriorated after China issued a new map, and Xi potentially skipping the G-20 Summit in New Delhi.
3. **Chinese Ambiguity:** Chinese Foreign Ministry neither confirmed nor denied reports about Xi's potential absence.
4. **Distrust:** The current events depict a deep-seated mistrust, making relations arguably the worst since the 1980s.
5. **Contentious Map:** On August 28, China released its "standard map" for 2023 which included regions like Arunachal Pradesh, Aksai Chin, and the South China Sea as its own.
6. **Global Outcry:** This map drew objections from countries like India, Malaysia, and the Philippines.
7. **Beijing's Stance:** China sees this map as "routine" and urged India not to over-interpret.
8. **Historical Context:** In 2019, India's map post-J&K reorganisation led to a strong reaction from China, although India's map didn't alter its stance on external boundaries concerning China.
9. **LOAC Aggression:** Observers link China's heightened aggression on the Line of Actual Control to India's claims on Aksai Chin in 2019.
10. **Significance of Summits:** Historically, summit meetings have helped reduce India-China tensions, like after the Doklam stand-off in 2017.
11. **Gloomy Prospects:** Despite the upcoming summit, hopes for reconciliation between the two nations seem bleak.
12. **Rebuilding Trust:** The key to mending ties is the slow restoration of trust and heightened mutual sensitivity.
13. **China's Expectations:** China expects sensitivity from its neighbours.
14. **Advice for China:** The editorial suggests that China should exhibit the same sensitivity to its neighbours as it expects from them.
15. **Way Forward:** China must work on repairing the strained relations with its neighbours if it aims for regional stability.

Practice Exercise: SSC Pattern Based

1. **What was the recent cause of tension between India and China as mentioned in the passage?** [Editorial page]
 - A. The signing of a trade deal between India and the USA.
 - B. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Beijing.
 - C. China issuing a new "standard map" for 2023.
 - D. India's decision to join the South China Sea treaty.
2. **What was China's stance regarding the concerns raised over the new map?**
 - A. China admitted its mistake and promised to revise the map.
 - B. China defended the map as "routine" and asked India not to "over-interpret" it.
 - C. China denied issuing any such map.
 - D. China agreed to hold a joint committee meeting with concerned countries.
3. **Why did China initiate discussions at the United Nations Security Council in 2019 related to India's new map?**
 - A. Because India changed its external boundaries affecting China's territory.
 - B. India included parts of China in its new map.
 - C. India reorganised Jammu and Kashmir and created a new Union Territory of Ladakh without changing its external boundaries or territorial claims vis-à-vis China.
 - D. India declined China's invitation to a summit meeting.
4. **What is a key requirement for repairing the relations between India and China as suggested by the passage?**
 - A. Both countries should conduct more summit meetings.
 - B. China should make territorial concessions to India.
 - C. India and China should redefine their external boundaries.
 - D. Both countries need to rebuild trust based on greater mutual sensitivity.
5. **Based on the passage, which of the following statements is TRUE?**
 - A. The recent map issued by China depicted new territorial claims.
 - B. China confirmed President Xi Jinping's attendance at the G-20 Summit in New Delhi.
 - C. India's map in 2019 changed its external boundaries concerning China.
 - D. Summit meetings between India and China have previously provided a platform to reduce tensions.
6. **Consider the following two statements:**

Statement 1: The 2023 "standard map" issued by China showed new territorial claims that had not been seen in previous Chinese maps.

Statement 2: The map India issued in 2019 following the internal reorganisation of Jammu and Kashmir did not change India's external boundaries or territorial claims vis-à-vis China.

 - A. Both Statement 1 and Statement 2 are true.
 - B. Both Statement 1 and Statement 2 are false.
 - C. Statement 1 is true and Statement 2 is false.
 - D. Statement 1 is false and Statement 2 is true.
7. **What is the closest synonym for the word "rapprochement" as used in the passage?**

- A. Deterioration
B. Renewal
C. Reconciliation
D. Estrangement
8. **Select the most appropriate meaning of the given idiom.**
Pass the buck
A. Providing essential services
B. Trying to calm down
C. Blaming another person
D. Saying something unpleasant
9. **Select the most appropriate ANTONYM of the underlined word in the given sentence.**
The lizard's light brown skin acts as camouflage in the desert sand.
A. clothed
B. mask
C. reveal
D. Vanishing
10. **Select the most appropriate meaning of the underlined word in the given sentence.**
We have always been told retaliation is not the key to resolving problems.
A. revenge
B. outcome
C. realization
D. Pamper
11. **Select the most appropriate meaning of the given idiom**
His charismatic speech seemed to cast spells on the audience, making them hang on to his every word.
A. To make clothes
B. To predict future events
C. To enchant or mesmerize
D. To write down
12. **Arrange the following sentences to form a coherent paragraph.**
P. It must go beyond this and provide for, in unequivocal terms, the 'best interests of child' principle in all custody disputes.
Q. It must deny absolute rights of biological parents vis-à-vis adoptive parents.
R. A UCC cannot confine itself to merely changing the rule of the father being the natural guardian.
S. At a time when the government may bring in a Uniform Civil Code (UCC) by holding a special session of Parliament on September 18-22, 2023, there is a need to think beyond polygamy and divorce and other such issues.
A. SPQR B.SRPQ C.PSQR D.PRQS
13. **Arrange the following sentences to form a coherent paragraph.**
P. Though the Jaipur Literature Festival may be at the top

- Q. Of the carnival of books, through the year, there are literary festivals in several cities including Mumbai, Kolkata, Bengaluru, Thiruvananthapuram, Bhubaneswar, Dehradun, and Dumka
- R. In India, the literary festival cycle begins at Jaipur, which hosts one of the country's biggest literary events
- S. Literature apart, there is music, art, theatre and a host of other activities, which add to the festive atmosphere
- A. RPQS B.RSPQ C.SRQP D.SPRQ
14. **Arrange the following sentences to form a coherent paragraph.**
- P. With five states going to the polls later this year, the Union Government has slashed the prices of domestic cooking gas by Rs 200 per cylinder
- Q. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has called it 'a gift to crores of my sisters of the country
- R. And benefit the poor and the middle class
- S. On the occasion of Raksha Bandhan', adding that the government will always do everything possible to improve the people's quality of life
- A. QSPR B.PRQS C.QSRP D.PQSR
15. **Arrange the following sentences to form a coherent paragraph.**
- P. Jolted by such incidents in the exam-preparation hub, the local administration has directed coaching institutes to suspend routine tests for two months.
- Q. What's clear is that it is a crisis situation and there are no easy answers.
- R. The death by suicide of two teenagers, who were living in Kota while preparing for the medical entrance test, adds to the grim tally.
- S. How much the hurried order helps is difficult to assess.
- A. RQSP B.PSRQ C.RPSQ D.PQSR
16. **Arrange the following sentences to form a coherent paragraph.**
- P. Neeraj received after his Tokyo triumph in 2021 could have easily gone to his head
- Q. Two years ago, when Neeraj Chopra scripted history by becoming the first Indian Olympic track and field gold medallist, it seemed that he had done enough to rest on his laurels for a lifetime
- R. But the young man retained his focus amid all the distractions and has now become the first Indian to win a gold medal in the World Athletics Championships
- S. In a sporting success-starved country like India, the fame, adulation and money that
- A. QSPR B.PSRQ C.QSRP D.QPSR

Comprehension

Words are like hammers, one can either swing them around recklessly and break stuff or use them to build something _____1_____. In the words of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe "Knowing is not enough; we must apply. Willing is not enough; we must do." Since childhood, we have all been told by our elders to never hurt the person using harsh words and instead be kind and give respect for we will be showered with the same. The power of words is beyond expression, it defines what the person wants to express. Words form an important part of an individual's life. Different people use different words to communicate with their friends and family. They are used to conduct business and to discipline children.

Politicians use words to convince others that they're the best candidate. Words form a huge part of every aspect of our lives. They carry an enormous weight that can either make the other feel good or humiliated. Words do ____2____ energy, evoke emotions and set the tone for back-and-forth conversation. However, words form one of the reasons that one person lives a life of ____3____ while another lives a life of lack. Words can open doorways that hands cannot. They can ____4____ invisible boundaries.

Fill in the blanks with the most appropriate combinations of words

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

- A. Supremacy
- B. Smugness
- C. Common
- D. Worthwhile

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

- A. Break out
- B. Make up
- C. Point out
- D. Give out

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

- A. Assertion
- B. Abundance
- C. Ambitious
- D. Endorse

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

- A. Pin down
- B. Break down
- C. Ramp up
- D. Lie down

Answers

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

[Practice Exercise]

Explanations

1. **C. China issuing a new "standard map" for 2023.**

The passage specifically mentions that a point of contention arose when China issued a new map, showing regions like Arunachal Pradesh, Aksai Chin, and the South China Sea as Chinese territory. This led to protests from countries such as India, Malaysia, and the Philippines.

2. **B. China defended the map as "routine" and asked India not to "over-interpret" it.**

The passage mentions that Beijing defended the issuance of the new map as a "routine" activity and asked India specifically to not "over-interpret" its intentions. It indicates that China was trying to downplay the potential implications of the map amidst the territorial disputes.

3. **C. India reorganised Jammu and Kashmir and created a new Union Territory of Ladakh without changing its external boundaries or territorial claims vis-à-vis China.**

The passage clearly states that even though the new map issued by India in 2019 did not change India's external boundaries or territorial claims with respect to China, Beijing still responded with strong statements and initiated discussions at the United Nations Security Council

4. **D. Both countries need to rebuild trust based on greater mutual sensitivity.**

The passage mentions that "Repairing relations will require slowly rebuilding trust on a foundation of greater mutual sensitivity." It also emphasizes that China should show its neighbours the sensitivity it demands of them to repair the increasingly strained relations.

5. **D) Summit meetings between India and China have previously provided a platform to reduce tensions.**

The passage mentions that "In the recent up-and-down history of India's ties with China, summit meetings have offered the platform for the two countries to dial down tensions by giving the two leaders the opportunity for high-level interventions, as was the case at the 2017 BRICS Summit following the Doklam stand-off." This confirms statement D as true. Statements A, B, and C are false based on the the passage.

6. **D) Statement 1 is false and Statement 2 is true.**

From the passage, it is evident that the map China issued in 2023 made "no new territorial claims and depicted borders as in previous Chinese maps", making Statement 1 false.

Regarding Statement 2, the map India issued in 2019 "did not change India's external boundaries or territorial claims vis-à-vis China", making it true.

7. **C) In the context of the passage, "rapprochement" refers to the restoration of harmonious relations. Thus, the synonym for "rapprochement" would be "Reconciliation" which means the restoration of friendly relations.**

8. **C) Pass the buck (idiom) – Blaming another person दूसरे पर दोष डालना**

9. C) **Camouflage** (noun) – The use of any combination of materials, coloration, or illumination for concealment, either by making animals or objects hard to see, or by disguising them as something else.

छलावरण लगाना

Antonym: Reveal (verb) – To make (previously unknown or secret information) known to others; to uncover, to show, to display. प्रकट करना

- **Clothed** (verb) – Dressed, covered with clothing. वस्त्रधारी
- **Mask** (noun) – A covering for all or part of the face that protects, hides, or decorates the person wearing it. मुखौटा
- **Vanishing** (verb) – Disappearing suddenly and completely. गायब

10. A) The correct meaning of the underlined word '**retaliation**' in the given sentence is 'revenge'.

11. C) **Cast spells** (phrase) – to enchant or mesmerize: जादू करना या मोहित करना

12. B) **SRPQ**

S: S sets the context of the UCC's potential introduction and the need to address more than just the usual topics (polygamy and divorce)

R: The acronym "UCC" is used, which ties this sentence to sentence S

P: "It" is a pronoun, which refers back to the subject discussed in the previous sentence (i.e., UCC from sentence R). This gives a hint that this sentence should follow R.

This sentence expands on the notion introduced in R about the UCC's limitations.

Q: The theme of "parents" and custody disputes (from P) logically leads into this discussion of rights between biological and adoptive parents.

13. A) **RPQS**

R: Sentence R establishes the context for the entire paragraph by introducing the concept of the literary festival cycle in India. The specific mention of Jaipur sets the stage for further details.

P: Sentence P starts with the word "Though," which indicates a contrast or an exception. After R establishes Jaipur as the beginning of the literary cycle, P introduces the idea that the Jaipur Literature Festival is significant. The word "top" at the end of sentence P also provides a hint that the next sentence will complete this idea.

Q: Sentence Q begins with "Of the carnival of books," which completes the sentence started in P. The word "Of" indicates continuation from the previous statement. Q gives us a broader view of literary festivals in India.

S: After detailing various cities with literary festivals in Q, sentence S provides additional information about what else occurs at these festivals beyond literature. The term "Literature apart" in S clearly indicates a continuation from the theme of literary festivals mentioned in the preceding sentences.

14. D) **PQSR**

P: Sentence P introduces an action taken by the Union Government ("...has slashed the prices of domestic cooking gas...").

Q: Sentence Q provides a reaction to the action described in sentence P. The pronoun "it" in Q refers to the action mentioned in P (i.e., the slashing of gas prices).

S: Sentence S continues the statement made by Narendra Modi in sentence Q. It elaborates on what the Prime Minister said, providing more detail about the "gift" he mentioned.

R: Sentence R can be seen as an extension or a further elaboration of the government's intentions that were mentioned in S.

15. **C) RPSQ**

R: This sentence introduces an incident that acts as the primary topic of discussion in the subsequent sentences. The incident is about the suicides of two teenagers in Kota

P: The phrase "such incidents" refers back to the suicides of the teenagers mentioned in Sentence R.

S: This sentence is a commentary on the action described in Sentence P. The "hurried order" refers to the local administration's direction mentioned in Sentence P to suspend routine tests.

Q: Sentence Q gives a summarizing remark about the entire situation.

16. **A) QSPR**

Q: The sentence introduces Neeraj Chopra and a significant event in his life. "Two years ago" indicates a starting point or origin, giving the reader context about when the event happened.

S: The ending "that" is a connector, suggesting that there is another sentence that provides details about what this "fame, adulation, and money" did or could have done. It prepares the reader for a specific event or situation related to Neeraj's success.

P: The sentence "Neeraj received after his Tokyo triumph in 2021" continues from where S left off and completes the idea that was started in S.

R: The "But" at the beginning of R contrasts with the idea in P. While P suggests that the fame could have distracted Neeraj, R counters that thought by highlighting his focus and a subsequent achievement.

17. D) 'Worthwhile' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि "worthwhile" का अर्थ होता है किसी चीज को महत्वपूर्ण और मूल्यवान बनाना। जबकि 'Supremacy' का अर्थ है प्रधानता या श्रेष्ठता, 'Smugness' का अर्थ है आत्म-संतुष्टता, और 'Common' का अर्थ है सामान्य या साधारण, जो इस context में सही नहीं है।

- 'Worthwhile' should be used because it implies making something valuable or significant. Whereas, 'Supremacy' means superiority or dominance, 'Smugness' implies self-satisfaction, and 'Common' means ordinary or usual, which don't fit in this context

18. D) 'Give out' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि "give out" का अर्थ होता है प्रकट करना या उत्सर्जन करना। यहां पर शब्दों की उर्जा की बात की जा रही है, जो अन्य विकल्पों से ज्यादा उपयुक्त है। 'Break out' का अर्थ होता है अचानक प्रकट होना, 'Make up' का अर्थ है बनाना या तैयार करना, और 'Point out' का अर्थ है सूचित करना, जो इस context में सही नहीं हैं।

- 'Give out' should be used because it means to emit or to release. In this context, the energy of words is being discussed, which fits better with 'give out' than with the other options.

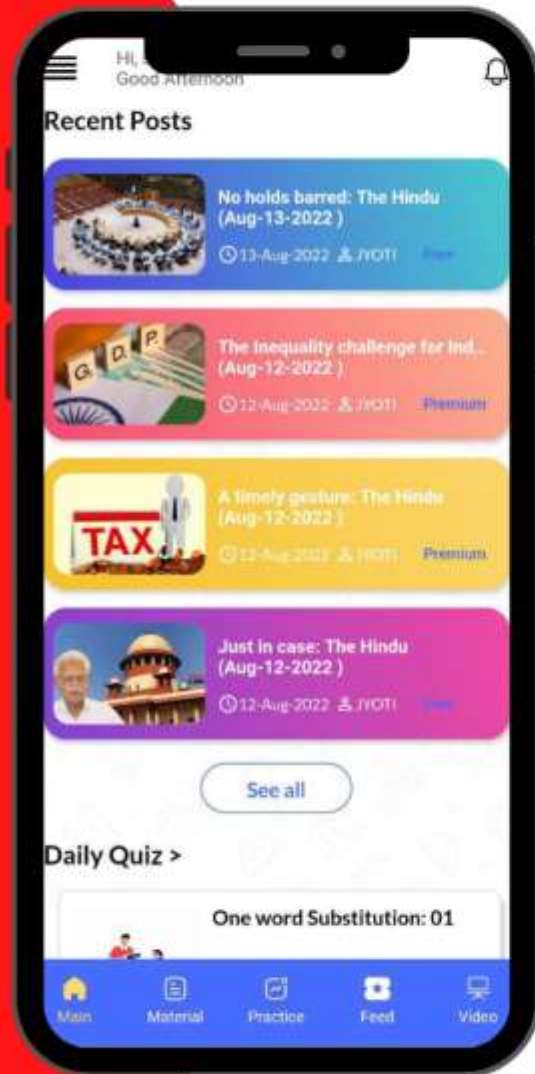
'Break out' means to suddenly appear, 'Make up' means to construct or prepare, and 'Point out' means to indicate, which don't fit in this context.

19. B) 'Abundance' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि "abundance" का अर्थ होता है अधिकता या प्रचुरता। यह उस जीवन की प्रचुरता को दर्शाता है जो शब्दों के सही उपयोग से प्राप्त होती है। 'Assertion' का अर्थ है स्थिरता या दावा करना, 'Ambitious' का अर्थ है महत्वाकांक्षी होना, और 'Endorse' का अर्थ है समर्थन करना, जो इस context में सही नहीं है।

➤ 'Abundance' should be used because it represents a plentiful or rich life, indicating the positive outcome of using words correctly. Whereas, 'Assertion' means firmness or claiming, 'Ambitious' means having a strong desire for success, and 'Endorse' means to support, which don't fit in this context.

20. B) 'Break down' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि "break down" का अर्थ होता है तोड़ देना या पार पार करना। यह अनदृष्ट बाधाओं को दूर करने के context में उपयुक्त है। 'Pin down' का अर्थ है ठोस तरीके से निर्धारित करना, 'Ramp up' का अर्थ है वृद्धि करना, और 'Lie down' का अर्थ है लेट जाना, जो इस context में सही नहीं है।

• 'Break down' should be used because it means to overcome or to surpass. It's apt in the context of overcoming invisible boundaries. 'Pin down' means to define in a definitive manner, 'Ramp up' means to increase, and 'Lie down' means to recline, which don't fit in this context.



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