

Altering status quo: On Jammu and Kashmir and Statehood

Returning to popular rule in J&K and restoring its statehood **ought to** be a priority

The Centre's **stand** that it is unable to **commit** itself to a timeline for **restoration** of Statehood for Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) **is** quite **disappointing**. Four years after the State's status was **downgraded** to that of a Union Territory, all that the Union government can say about it now is that the status as a Union Territory is temporary and that it is taking steps towards making J&K a complete State. When **queried** by the Supreme Court **Bench**, which is **hearing** the challenge to the **abrogation** of J&K's special status under Article 370 of the Constitution, about a timeline for the return of Statehood, the **Solicitor-General** said he was unable to give an exact time period. It is true that the State had faced disturbances for **decades**, but whether it can still be **cited** as the reason for the delay in restoration of statehood is a relevant question to raise. Alongside the President's declaration of Article 370 as **inoperative** and the **application** of the whole of the Constitution to J&K, the State was reorganised into two Union Territories — Jammu and Kashmir, with a Legislative Assembly, and Ladakh, without an Assembly. The Centre favours holding of panchayat and municipal elections as well as **polls** to the Assembly. The Election Commission of India and the State's Election Commission will have to **take a call** soon, as even the **work** of updating the **electoral rolls** **is** said to be nearing completion.

Given the government's **claim** that the situation is quite normal and that terrorism, **infiltration** and incidents of stone-throwing have all **substantially come down**, it is difficult to **account for** any further delay in the holding of elections. However, the **picture** of **normality portrayed** by the government **should** not, and is **unlikely to**, **influence** the **adjudication** of the constitutional issues arising from the manner in which the abrogation of special status was achieved. As the Chief Justice of India, Justice D.Y. Chandrachud, observed during the **proceedings**, the development work the government says it has **undertaken** after August 2019 is not relevant to the constitutional challenge. **Any positive change** brought about by the **administration** in the ground situation **should** be a **pointer** to the need for early elections and the restoration of popular government as well as Statehood, and **should** not be used to **demonstrate** the **correctness** of the government's actions in 2019. **To be fair**, the **hearing** before a Constitution Bench, which has **gone on** for 14 days **so far**, **has** been quite **rigorous** in its focus on the constitutional and historical issues that will **ultimately** determine the **validity** of the manner in which the State's status was altered and its territory reorganised. **[Practice Exercise]**

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

Vocabulary

1. **Alter** (verb) – Change, modify, adjust, vary, amend, revise बदलना
2. **Status quo** (noun) – Existing state, current situation, present circumstances, prevailing condition, present state यथास्थिति
3. **Statehood** (noun) – Condition of being a state, political status, status as a state राज्य का दर्जा
4. **Restore** (verb) – Reinstate, bring back, reestablish, return, rejuvenate पुनः स्थापित करना
5. **Ought to** (modal verb) – Should, must, is expected to होना चाहिए
6. **Stand** (noun) – Stance, viewpoint, position, perspective, attitude दृष्टिकोण/ रुख
7. **Commit** (verb) – Pledge, promise, bind, obligate प्रतिबद्ध करना
8. **Restoration** (noun) – Revival, return, renewal, reestablishment बहाली
9. **Disappointing** (adjective) – Discouraging, disheartening, unsatisfactory, displeasing निराशाजनक
10. **Downgrade** (verb) – Demote, devalue, depreciate, lower in rank अवनति करना
11. **Query** (verb) – Question, inquire, interrogate, ask पूछताछ करना
12. **Bench** (noun) – Panel of judges, tribunal, group of magistrates न्यायिक पीठ
13. **Hear** (verb) – Listen to, give attention to, consider सुनवाई करना
14. **Abrogation** (noun) – Annulment, nullification, invalidation, repeal निरस्तीकरण
15. **Solicitor-General** (noun) – A senior law officer representing the government in a country or state
16. **Decade** (noun) – Period of ten-year period दशक
17. **Cite** (verb) – Refer to, mention, quote, allude to हवाला देना
18. **Inoperative** (adjective) – Non-functioning, not working, ineffective निष्क्रिय
19. **Application** (noun) – Use, employment, utilization, implementation प्रयोग
20. **Poll** (noun) – Vote, election, ballot मतदान
21. **Take a call** (phrase) – Make a decision, decide, come to a conclusion निर्णय लेना
22. **Electoral roll** (noun) – Voter list, registry of voters, voting list मतदाता सूची
23. **Given** (preposition) – Considering, taking into account, keeping in mind देखते हुए

24. **Claim** (noun) – Assertion, declaration, proclamation दावा
25. **Infiltration** (noun) – Invasion, incursion, permeation घुसपैठ.
26. **Substantially** (adverb) – Significantly, considerably, greatly, markedly, notably काफी
27. **Come down** (phrasal verb) – Decrease, decline, reduce, diminish, drop घटना; गिरना
28. **Account for** (phrasal verb) – Constitute, represent, comprise, make up, form के लिये उत्तरदयी होना
29. **Normality** (noun) – Regularity, usualness, ordinariness, normalcy सामान्यता
30. **Portray** (verb) – Depict, describe, represent, picture चित्रित करना
31. **Unlikely** (adjective) – Improbable, doubtful, implausible, not likely असम्भव
32. **Influence** (verb) – Affect, sway, shape, direct प्रभावित करना
33. **Adjudication** (noun) – Judgment, decision, ruling, verdict निर्णय
34. **Proceedings** (noun) – Activities, actions, operations, events कार्यवाही
35. **Undertake** (verb) – Begin, start, embark on, take up प्रारंभ करना
36. **Pointer** (noun) – Indication, sign, signal, hint संकेत
37. **Demonstrate** (verb) – Show, exhibit, display, illustrate; prove, validate, establish, determine दिखाना; साबित करना
38. **Correctness** (noun) – Accuracy, rightness, exactness, truthfulness सटीकता
39. **To be fair** (phrase) – To be honest, in all fairness, justly सच कहूँ तो
40. **Go on** (phrasal verb) – Continue, proceed, carry on जारी रहना
41. **So far** (phrase) – Until now, up to this point, hitherto अब तक
42. **Rigorous** (adjective) – Strict, stern, severe, stringent कठोर/ सख्त
43. **Ultimately** (adverb) – Finally, in the end, eventually अंततः
44. **Validity** (noun) – Legality, authority, legitimacy, authenticity, lawfulness वैधता

Summary of the Editorial

1. The Centre's reluctance to commit to a timeline for restoring Jammu and Kashmir's (J&K) statehood is disappointing.
2. Four years have passed since J&K's status was downgraded to a Union Territory.
3. The Union government states the Union Territory status is temporary and is working towards restoring J&K to a full state.
4. The Supreme Court questioned the Centre about the timeline for statehood restoration.
5. The Solicitor-General couldn't provide an exact timeline.
6. Decades of disturbances in the state is no longer a valid reason to delay restoration.
7. Alongside the inoperativity of Article 370, J&K was split into two Union Territories: J&K with an Assembly, and Ladakh without one.
8. The Centre supports conducting local and Assembly elections in J&K.
9. The Election Commission will need to decide soon, as updating electoral rolls nears completion.
10. The government claims reduced terrorism and increased normality, which should hasten elections.
11. The portrayal of normality by the government shouldn't influence constitutional decisions regarding the abrogation of special status.
12. Chief Justice D.Y. Chandrachud stated that post-2019 developments aren't relevant to the constitutional challenge.
13. Positive changes on the ground suggest the need for early elections and statehood restoration.
14. The government's actions in 2019 shouldn't be justified by these changes.
15. The 14-day hearing by a Constitution Bench focused rigorously on the constitutional and historical implications of the state's changed status and reorganization.

Practice Exercise: SSC Pattern Based

1. **According to the passage, why does the Centre find it challenging to provide a specific timeline for the restoration of Statehood for Jammu and Kashmir (J&K)?** [Editorial Page]
 - A. The Centre believes that J&K should remain a Union Territory indefinitely.
 - B. The disturbances faced by the State over the past decades makes it challenging to decide.
 - C. The Supreme Court has prohibited the Centre from setting a timeline.
 - D. The electoral rolls are not yet updated for the State.
2. **What has been done in relation to J&K's governance structure following the declaration of Article 370 as inoperative?**
 - A. J&K was divided into three Union Territories, each with a Legislative Assembly.
 - B. J&K was integrated with the neighboring state of Ladakh.
 - C. J&K was reorganised into two Union Territories – one with a Legislative Assembly and the other without.
 - D. Article 370 was replaced with a new article granting J&K additional privileges.
3. **Based on the passage, what is the Chief Justice of India, Justice D.Y. Chandrachud's perspective on the development work undertaken by the government after August 2019 in J&K?**
 - A. It is a significant indication of the government's correctness of actions taken in 2019.
 - B. It is crucial for deciding the constitutional challenges.
 - C. It is irrelevant to the constitutional challenge.
 - D. It plays a primary role in influencing the adjudication of the constitutional issues.
4. **Which of the following statements can be inferred regarding the purpose of the hearing before a Constitution Bench that has lasted for 14 days?**
 - A. To praise the government for the positive change in the ground situation since 2019.
 - B. To scrutinize the validity of the way the State's status was altered and its territory was reorganized.
 - C. To promote the holding of early elections in Jammu and Kashmir.
 - D. To discuss the decline in terrorism and stone-throwing incidents in Jammu and Kashmir.
5. **What is the main theme of the passage?**
 - A. The election process in Jammu and Kashmir
 - B. Restoration of statehood for Jammu and Kashmir
 - C. The effects of Article 370 on Jammu and Kashmir
 - D. The role of the Supreme Court in Jammu and Kashmir's issues
6. **Select the INCORRECTLY spelt word.**
 - A. Adequate
 - B. Precaution
 - C. Cowardise
 - D. Ridiculous
7. **Select the most appropriate ANTONYM of the given word.**
Clear
 - A. Clean

- B. Opaque
C. Mess
D. Untidy
8. **Select the option that expresses the given sentence in passive voice.**
Myra installed the new software on her computer.
A. The new software had installed Myra on her computer.
B. The new software is installed by Myra on her computer.
C. The new software were install by Myra on her computer.
D. The new software was installed by Myra on her computer.
9. **Parts of a sentence are given below in jumbled order. Arrange the parts in the correct order to form a meaningful sentence.**
By quiet efforts to seek a meeting point between differing/ viewpoints of individuals or organisations/ mediation is rarely a spontaneous act;/ more often than not it is preceded
A) Mediation is rarely a spontaneous act; by quiet efforts to seek a meeting point between differing viewpoints of individuals or organisations more often than not it is preceded
B) Mediation is rarely a spontaneous act; more often than not it is preceded by quiet efforts to seek a meeting point between differing viewpoints of individuals or organisations.
C) By quiet efforts to seek a meeting point between differing mediation is rarely a spontaneous act; more often than not it is preceded viewpoints of individuals or organisations
D) More often than not it is preceded by quiet efforts to seek a meeting point between differing mediation is rarely a spontaneous act; viewpoints of individuals or organisations
10. Select the most appropriate meaning of the given idiom
As things stand, I don't think we'll be able to meet the deadline.
A. To get everything organized
B. In the current situation
C. To disagree completely
D. To work very hard

Comprehension

The world of work is changing faster than the workforce. To survive technological developments and automation, workers must upgrade their skills. India surpasses China as the world's most populous country in demographic composition, with a staggering 65 per cent working-age population having an average age of 28 years old. This population has the potential to propel the nation towards remarkable socio-economic progress and has the ability for transformative global impact. To _____1_____ the benefit of demographic advantage, it is ____2____ to equip our working population with employable skills and knowledge that meet the requirements of the globalized labour market. Skill development in educational institutions _____3_____ the critical enabler for improving employment outcomes and higher productivity leading to faster and more sustainable economic growth. There is a significant gap between the skills _____4_____ in educational institutions in India and the skills required for jobs.

Fill in the blanks with the most appropriate combinations of words

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

- A. Reap
- B. Impede
- C. Exacerbate
- D. Entrust

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

- A. Continuous
- B. Imperative
- C. Inaccurate
- D. Apprehensive

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

- A. Is
- B. Are
- C. Was
- D. Were

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

- A. Accomplishment
- B. Estranged
- C. Imparted
- D. Yearning

15. **Select the most appropriate ANTONYM of the underlined word.**

My energy waned to see my college team performing poorly in the match.

- A. Declined
- B. Dimmed
- C. Abated
- D. Grew

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

- P. According to media reports, these names include “two residential areas, five mountain peaks, two rivers, and two other areas”.
- Q. For the third time in recent years, China’s Ministry of Civil Affairs, on April 2, made a provocative move by releasing new names for 11 places in Arunachal Pradesh under the fig leaf of standardising geographical names in “Zangnan” (a phoney term invented by Beijing to claim that Arunachal Pradesh is “South Tibet”).
- R. It had also ‘standardised’ the names of 15 places in 2021, which had similarly included population centres, mountains, rivers, and a mountain pass.
- S. In 2017, China had ‘renamed’ six places that lie in Arunachal Pradesh.
A. QRPS B. QPSR C. PSRQ D. PRQS

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

- P. In both cohorts, most students were from the Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), Other Backward Castes (OBC) and Economically Weaker Sections (EWS). Marginalisation and deprivation are factors but one also finds a wide spectrum of students.

- Q. In the 2014-21 septennial, there were 122 cases in various higher education institutions.
- R. During the 2018-23 quinquennial, there were as many as 61 students fading away: in the Indian Institutes of Technology, or IITs (33), the National Institutes of Technology, or NITs (24) and the Indian Institutes of Management (4).
- S. To read newspaper reports about young students ending their lives is disturbing.
- A. RPQS B.RSPQ C.SRQP D.SPRQ
18. **Arrange the following sentences to form a coherent paragraph.**
- P. Despite this, the tree continued to thrive as a symbol of fortitude and hope.
- Q. A huge tamarind tree, more than a century old, stood at the edge of the courtyard of my wife's ancestral home.
- R. A few years ago, it was struck by lightning.
- S. All through the year, the tree bore fruit.
- A. QSPR B.PSRQ C.QSRP D.PQSR
19. **Arrange the following sentences to form a coherent paragraph.**
- P. A book club is the last refuge of the failed author
- Q. When commissioning editors of publishing houses large and small demonstrate
- R. You turn to a group of people, preferably a club, which offers first-aid to wounded egos, providing sometimes sympathy and sometimes tea
- S. Impressive solidarity in the view that your unsung masterpiece is unfit for human consumption, you look around desperately for solace
- A. QSPR B.PSRQ C.QSRP D.PQSR
20. **Arrange the following sentences to form a coherent paragraph.**
- P. In appointing the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and Election Commissioners (ECs) by forming a committee to suggest suitable names to man these constitutional posts
- Q. In a hearing of the 'Sena versus Sena' case, the Court expressed its "serious concern" over the active role being played by Governors in State politics, observing that Governors becoming part of political processes is disconcerting.
- R. Two recent comments of the Supreme Court of India will have direct bearing on the concept of the independence of various constitutional authorities in India
- S. And, earlier, taking an important step in ensuring independence of the Election Commission of India, the Court divested the executive of its sole discretion
- A. QSPR B.RQSP C.QSRP D.PQSR

Answers

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

Explanations

- B) The disturbances faced by the State over the past decades makes it challenging to decide.**
The passage mentions that the State of J&K has faced disturbances for decades. While it doesn't explicitly state that this is the only reason for the delay in restoration, it raises the question of whether these disturbances can still be cited as the reason for the delay.
- C) J&K was reorganised into two Union Territories – one with a Legislative Assembly and the other without.**
The passage clearly states that, following the declaration of Article 370 as inoperative, J&K was reorganised into two Union Territories — Jammu and Kashmir, with a Legislative Assembly, and Ladakh, without an Assembly.
- C) It is irrelevant to the constitutional challenge.**
The passage states that Justice D.Y. Chandrachud observed that the "development work the government says it has undertaken after August 2019 is not relevant to the constitutional challenge." This indicates that he does not consider the development work as significant evidence when addressing the constitutional issues.
- B) To scrutinize the validity of the way the State's status was altered and its territory was reorganized.**
The passage mentions that "the hearing before a Constitution Bench, which has gone on for 14 days so far, has been quite rigorous in its focus on the constitutional and historical issues that will ultimately determine the validity of the manner in which the State's status was altered and its territory reorganised." This suggests that the primary focus of the hearing was to address and scrutinize the alterations made to the State's status and its territory.
- B) Restoration of statehood for Jammu and Kashmir**
The passage primarily revolves around the topic of the return of statehood to Jammu and Kashmir. While the passage does touch upon issues like the effects of Article 370 and the role of the Supreme Court, the overarching theme emphasizes the disappointment with the Centre's stand on restoring statehood, the delay in the process, and the need for the return to popular rule in J&K.
- C) The incorrectly spelt word among the options is 'Cowardise'. The correct spelling is 'Cowardice'. It refers to the lack of bravery or the trait of being easily scared or timid. कायरता, भीतिपूर्ण.**
- B) Clear (adjective) – Transparent, easy to perceive, unambiguous, understandable. स्पष्ट**
Antonym: Opaque (adjective) – Not able to be seen through; not transparent, obscure, non-transparent. अपारदर्शी
 - Clean (adjective) – Free from dirt, marks, or stains, pure, unsoiled. साफ़**

- **Mess** (noun) – A dirty or untidy state of things or of a place, disorder, clutter.
अव्यवस्था
- **Untidy** (adjective) – Not arranged neatly and in order, messy, disorganized. **अस्त-व्यस्त**

8. D) The new software was installed by Myra on her computer.
9. B) Mediation is rarely a spontaneous act; more often than not it is preceded by quiet efforts to seek a meeting point between differing viewpoints of individuals or organisations.
10. B) **As things stand** (phrase) – In the current situation: वर्तमान स्थिति में
11. A) 'Reap' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि "reap" का अर्थ होता है प्राप्त करना. जबकि 'Impede' का अर्थ है रुकावट डालना, 'Exacerbate' का अर्थ है बढ़ाना, और 'Entrust' का अर्थ है सौंपना या भरोसा करना, जो इस context में सही नहीं है।
- 'Reap' should be used because it means to gain, gather or harvest. Whereas, 'Impede' means to hinder or obstruct, 'Exacerbate' means to increase or intensify, and 'Entrust' means to delegate or trust, which don't fit in this context.
12. B) 'Imperative' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि "imperative" का अर्थ होता है अत्यंत आवश्यक या जरूरी। जबकि 'Continuous' का अर्थ है लगातार, 'Inaccurate' का अर्थ है असटीक और 'Apprehensive' का अर्थ है चिंतित, जो इस संदर्भ में सही नहीं है।
- 'Imperative' should be used because it means something that is of vital importance or crucial. Whereas, 'Continuous' means ongoing, 'Inaccurate' means not correct, and 'Apprehensive' means fearful or concerned, which don't fit in this context
13. A) "Skill development" एक singular singular है, इसलिए इसे एक singular verb की जरूरत होती है। "Skill development" के साथ agree verb form "is" है। options B, C और D गलत हैं क्योंकि वे "skill development" के number या tense में सहमत नहीं हैं। "Are" plural verb है, "was" past tense singular है, और "were" past tense plural है। चूंकि passage का context present tense में है और हम "skill development" के बारे में सामान्य अर्थ में बात कर रहे हैं, इसलिए present tense singular form "is" सबसे उपयुक्त है।
- "Skill development" is a singular singular, so it requires a singular verb. The correct verb form that agrees with "skill development" is "is". The options B, C, and D are incorrect because they do not agree in number or tense with the noun "skill development". "Are" is a plural verb, "was" is past tense singular, and "were" is past tense plural. Since the context of the passage is in present tense and we are talking about "skill development" in a general sense, the present tense singular form "is" is the most appropriate.

14. C) 'Imparted' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि "imparted" का अर्थ होता है जानकारी या कौशल प्रदान करना। जबकि 'Accomplishment' का अर्थ है उपलब्धि, 'Estranged' का अर्थ है अलग या पृथक होना, और 'Yearning' का अर्थ है इच्छा या तड़प, जो इस context में सही नहीं है।

'Imparted' should be used because it means to provide knowledge or skills. Whereas, 'Accomplishment' means achievement, 'Estranged' means to be separate or distant, and 'Yearning' implies a strong desire or longing, which don't fit in this context.

15. D) **Waned** (verb) – To decrease in strength, intensity, or size, to diminish, reduce. घटना/ गिरावट होना

Antonym: Grew (verb) – To increase in size, amount, intensity, or quality. बढ़ना

- **Declined** (verb) – To become smaller, fewer, or less; decrease. घटना
- **Dimmed** (verb) – To become less bright, clear, or distinct; fade. मंद होना
- **Abated** (verb) – To become less intense or widespread; subside. कम होना

16. B) QPSR

Q: This sentence serves as an introduction to the topic, establishing that China has, for the third time, renamed places in Arunachal Pradesh.

P: The use of "these names" indicates that this sentence should follow a sentence that introduces the concept of renaming or providing names, which is the action mentioned in the sentence Q. Therefore, P logically comes after Q.

S: This sentence provides historical context on China's renaming activity, but it's specified to be an earlier event (2017). Given the mention of "the third time" in sentence Q, it's logical to present the previous times in a chronological order.

R: The use of "also" and "had similarly" in this sentence indicates a continuation from a previous sentence that described a similar action, which in this case is sentence S. This sentence describes the second renaming event in 2021. Chronologically, it follows the event of 2017 mentioned in sentence S.

17. C) SRQP

S: The introductory tone of "To read newspaper reports about young students ending their lives is disturbing" sets the stage for the content that will follow. This is most likely the first sentence because it introduces the subject of students ending their lives.

R: Mentions a specific time period, "During the 2018-23 quinquennial," and gives specific data on where these incidents took place.

Q: Mentions another specific time period, "In the 2014-21 septennial," but this time period is before the one mentioned in Sentence R, so Q should precede R.

P: Sentence P starts with "In both cohorts", which refers to the two time periods mentioned in Q and R. So, P should come after both Q and R.

18. C) QSRP

A huge tamarind tree, more than a century old, stood at the edge of the courtyard of my wife's ancestral home. All through the year, the tree bore fruit. A few years ago, it was struck by lightning. Despite this, the tree continued to thrive as a symbol of fortitude and hope.

19. **D) PQSR**

P: It makes a clear declaration about a book club. This makes it a strong candidate for the starting sentence.

Q: The sentence Q begins with "When commissioning editors of publishing houses..." which sets up a conditional situation, but the situation isn't concluded within that sentence. It needs another sentence to give the outcome of this "when" situation.

S: Sentence Q sets up a scenario about editors of publishing houses having a certain view, but what that view is, isn't clarified. Sentence S follows up on this by describing the view in detail, "Impressive solidarity in the view that your unsung masterpiece is unfit for human consumption...". The word "Impressive solidarity" in S links directly to "commissioning editors of publishing houses large and small" in Q.

R: The word "You" in R and S establishes a noun-pronoun relationship, making it clear that the same person (the author) is being discussed. Moreover, S ends with the author looking for solace, and R provides the solution to that search – turning to a club.

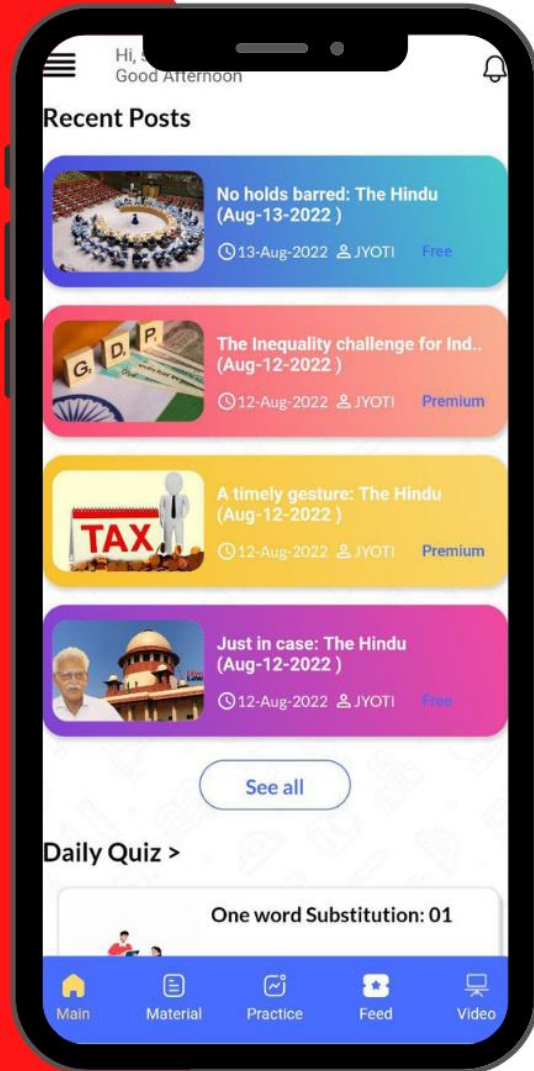
20. **B) RQSP**

R: This sentence sets the context and theme of the paragraph, which is about the recent comments made by the Supreme Court of India that will affect the independence of various constitutional authorities.

Q: Q gives us the first example or illustration of the Supreme Court's comments mentioned in R. The mention of the "Court" in Q refers to the "Supreme Court of India" from R.

S: The beginning of S with "And, earlier," indicates a Time Sequence, referring to a prior event or action related to the topic. Since Q had already introduced one action by the Court, S logically follows Q as it is providing another instance of the Supreme Court's actions concerning the independence of constitutional authorities.

P: After stating in S that the Court took a step towards ensuring the independence of the Election Commission, P goes into detail about what that step was.



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