

Extended exclusion: On AFSPA in Manipur

With or without **AFSPA**, Centre should not allow Manipur situation to **fester**

Hill areas in Manipur will continue to be under the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA) for another six months from October. The State government has issued a notification to extend the law's **imposition** to the whole State, **barring** the areas falling under 19 police stations in the Imphal valley. The notification maintains the **status quo** on the applicability of the **potent** law that grants **extensive** powers to the armed forces in notified 'disturbed areas' in the use of force. In normal circumstances, **the only question** that may have arisen **is** whether AFSPA is needed any longer. However, **given** the **violent ethnic** conflict since this May between the Meitei and the Kuki communities, the **exclusion** of the Imphal Valley from its **purview** even while extending it elsewhere **comes across** as quite **ironical**. The Army had **sought** its re-imposition in the Valley districts, as it felt that the absence of the law is **hampering** its operations against **insurgent** groups, which may be using the **unrest** to **gain a foothold** in the State. It can be nobody's case that AFSPA should remain or its **ambit** increased; but it is difficult to avoid the question whether, if at all AFSPA is needed for some more time, **areas** that have **witnessed considerable** violence in recent months **should** remain excluded.

Perhaps, the government's logic is that AFSPA is meant only to provide legal protection to forces engaged in **counter-insurgency** operations and not those engaged in law and order duty **amidst** internal conflict. However, the **exclusion** of the valley districts from AFSPA at this stage **is liable** to be **interpreted** as yet another **instance** of the government's **partisan conduct**. One of the reasons for the government maintaining the status quo on the **extent** of the 'disturbed areas' is that a detailed **assessment** of the ground situation **is** not possible at the moment when the security agencies are engaged in maintaining law and order. Further, the notification says the issue of declaring an area as 'disturbed' is quite sensitive and it may **lead to** public **criticism** and **resistance**. The only possible interpretation is that the fear of **displeasing** the majority Meitei seems to be the **core aspect** of the government's policy. **In the backdrop of** the **hostility** of the community towards the Assam Rifles, and the Assam Rifles' **apprehension** that trucks made to **resemble** its vehicles may be used to **commit** offences **in a bid to tarnish** its image, the situation is **rife** with possibilities of further conflict. The Centre should not delay any further a serious initiative to **bring about reconciliation** between the two communities, **lest** the situation fester and **deteriorate**.

[Practice Exercise]

- **Come across** (phrasal verb) – Look, Impress, Appear, Seem, Give an impression प्रतीत होना
- Red/blue coloring of words in the sentence indicates subject verb relationship; where 'red' denotes 'subject' and 'blue' denotes 'verb'.

Vocabulary

1. **AFSPA** (noun) – a Parliamentary act that grants special powers to the Indian Armed Forces and the state and paramilitary forces in areas classified as “disturbed areas”. The objective to implement the AFSPA Act is to maintain law and order in disturbed areas.
2. **Fester** (verb) – Become worse or more intense बदतर होना
3. **Imposition** (noun) – imposing, foisting, levying, forcing, inflicting आरोपण, थोपना
4. **Barring** (preposition) – except for, with the exception of, excepting को छोड़कर
5. **Status quo** (noun) – Existing state of affairs, present situation, current state, वर्तमान स्थिति
6. **Potent** (adjective) – Powerful, strong, forceful, effective, compelling प्रबल
7. **Extensive** (adjective) – Broad, comprehensive, wide-ranging, exhaustive, all-encompassing व्यापक
8. **Given** (preposition) – Considering, taking into account, bearing in mind, granting देखते हुए
9. **Violent** (adjective) – Brutal, fierce, aggressive, ferocious, savage हिंसात्मक
10. **Ethnic** (adjective) – Racial, tribal, cultural, traditional जातीय
11. **Purview** (noun) – Scope, range, reach, extent, ambit दायरा
12. **Ironical** (adjective) – Sarcastic, sardonic, mocking, satirical, cynical विदंबना युक्त
13. **Seek** (verb) – Ask for (something) from someone. मांगना
14. **Hamper** (verb) – Hinder, obstruct, impede, inhibit, restrict बाधित करना
15. **Insurgent** (adjective) – Rebellious, mutinous, revolutionary, radical, revolting विद्रोही
16. **Unrest** (noun) – Turmoil, disturbance, agitation, upheaval, tumult अशांति
17. **Gain a foothold** (phrase) – Establish oneself, find a place, secure a position मज़बूत स्थिति बनाना
18. **Ambit** (noun) – Scope, range, extent, boundary, limit मांगना
19. **Witness** (verb) – Observe, see, watch, note, perceive देखना
20. **Considerable** (adjective) – Significant, substantial, marked, notable, sizeable काफी
21. **Perhaps** (adverb) – Maybe, possibly, conceivably, potentially शायद

22. **Counter-insurgency** (noun) – Actions taken by a recognized government to defeat insurgents. विद्रोही विरोधी कार्यवली
23. **Amidst** (preposition) – Among, in the middle of, surrounded by के बीच
24. **Liable** (adjective) – Likely, prone, susceptible, predisposed प्रवृत्त
25. **Interpret** (verb) – Explain, elucidate, expound, translate समझाना
26. **Instance** (noun) – Example, case, illustration, occurrence उदाहरण
27. **Partisan** (adjective) – Biased, prejudiced, one-sided, partial पक्षपाती
28. **Conduct** (noun) – Behavior, demeanor, action, performance व्यवहार
29. **Extent** (noun) – Degree, amount, range, scope सीमा, हद
30. **Assessment** (noun) – Evaluation, appraisal, analysis, examination मूल्यांकन
31. **Lead** (to) (verb) – Cause, give rise to, result in, bring about, precipitate वजह बनना
32. **Criticism** (noun) – Censure, condemnation, disapproval, fault-finding, denunciation आलोचना
33. **Resistance** (noun) – Opposition, defiance, dissent, fight, withstand प्रतिरोध
34. **Displease** (verb) – Irritate, annoy, upset, offend, vex नाराज करना
35. **Core** (adjective) – Central, fundamental, basic, essential मूल
36. **Aspect** (noun) – Facet, feature, element, dimension पहलु
37. **In the backdrop of** (phrase) – Against the background of; in the circumstances of के संदर्भ में
38. **Hostility** (noun) – Animosity, antagonism, aggression, unfriendliness शत्रुता
39. **Apprehension** (noun) – Anxiety, worry, fear, concern भय
40. **Resemble** (verb) – Look like, be similar to, be like, mirror मिलता जुलता होना
41. **In a bid to** (phrase) – In an attempt to; in order to कोशिश में
42. **Tarnish** (verb) – Sully, besmirch, damage, stain धब्बा लगाना
43. **Rife** (with) (adjective) – Full of, overflowing with, teeming with, fraught with भरा हुआ
44. **Bring about** (phrasal verb) – Cause, lead to, result in, create, produce उत्पन्न करना
45. **Reconciliation** (noun) – Restoration of harmony, resolution, settlement, compromise सुलह

46. **Lest** (conjunction) – For fear that, in case,
to avoid the risk of ऐसा न हो कि

47. **Deteriorate** (verb) – Worsen, decline,
degenerate, decay बिगड़ना

Summary of the Editorial

1. **AFSPA Continuation in Manipur:** The Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA) continues to be imposed in Manipur's hill areas for an additional six months from October.
2. **State Government's Decision:** This extension is as per the state government's notification, which applies to the entire state, excluding areas under 19 police stations in the Imphal valley.
3. **Status Quo Maintained:** The notification retains the status quo on AFSPA's application, a law granting extensive powers to armed forces in 'disturbed areas'.
4. **Exclusion of Imphal Valley:** The exclusion of the Imphal Valley, amidst ongoing ethnic conflict between the Meitei and the Kuki communities, is notable.
5. **Request for Re-imposition:** The Army sought re-imposition in the Valley districts, citing hampered operations against insurgent groups due to AFSPA's absence.
6. **Question of Necessity:** There is a pressing question regarding whether AFSPA is still necessary, especially in areas experiencing recent violence.
7. **Government's Possible Logic:** The government may believe that AFSPA should protect forces during counter-insurgency operations and not in internal conflicts involving law and order duty.
8. **Perceived Partisan Conduct:** The exclusion of valley districts could be interpreted as the government's partisan behavior.
9. **Security Engagement:** A detailed assessment of the ground situation seems unfeasible currently due to security agencies' engagement in maintaining law and order.
10. **Sensitivity of Declaration:** Declaring an area as 'disturbed' is sensitive and may invoke public criticism and resistance.
11. **Community Displeasure Concerns:** The government's decisions may be influenced by concerns of displeasing the majority Meitei community.
12. **Potential for Conflict:** Given the tensions between the community and the Assam Rifles, there exist conditions conducive to escalating conflicts.
13. **Public Criticism and Resistance:** The government is cautious about the public's reaction to declaring areas as 'disturbed', anticipating criticism and resistance.
14. **Centre's Role:** The Centre needs to promptly initiate serious measures to encourage reconciliation between the conflicting communities.
15. **Need for Resolution:** It is imperative that steps be taken to resolve the situation and ensure it doesn't deteriorate further due to delayed initiatives and unresolved community hostilities.

Practice Exercise: SSC Pattern Based

1. **What is the tone of the following sentence: "The Centre should not delay any further a serious initiative to bring about reconciliation between the two communities, lest the situation fester and deteriorate."?** [Editorial page]
 - A) Apathetic
 - B) Urgent and Cautionary
 - C) Joyful
 - D) Indifferent
2. **What would be an appropriate title for the passage?**
 - A) The Ongoing Struggles in Manipur
 - B) The Benefits of AFSPA in Manipur
 - C) Reconciliation Efforts in Imphal Valley
 - D) A Critique of Government Policies in Manipur
3. **What is the main theme of the passage?**
 - A) The empowerment of the armed forces
 - B) The positive impacts of AFSPA
 - C) The critique of AFSPA's extension and the need for reconciliation
 - D) The resilience of the Meitei and Kuki communities
4. **Which of the following statements is accurate based on the passage?**
 - A) The Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA) has been removed entirely from Manipur.
 - B) The AFSPA has been extended to the whole state of Manipur except for areas under 19 police stations in the Imphal valley.
 - C) The ethnic conflict between the Meitei and the Kuki communities began in the month of October.
 - D) The army wants AFSPA to be removed from the Valley districts.
5. **According to the passage, which of the following statements regarding the government's stance on AFSPA is NOT correct?**
 - A) The government believes AFSPA should provide legal protection to forces in counter-insurgency operations.
 - B) The exclusion of the valley districts from AFSPA may be seen as an instance of the government's impartial behavior.
 - C) The government feels that declaring an area as 'disturbed' is sensitive and might attract public criticism.
 - D) The main concern for the government's policy is to maintain peace between the Meitei and Kuki communities.
6. **Which of the following words can replace 'inclement' without changing its meaning?**
 - A. Cozy
 - B. Harsh
 - C. Gentle
 - D. Mild
7. **Which of the following terms could be substituted for 'disincentive'?**

- A. Reward
- B. Encouragement
- C. Deterrent
- D. Incentive

8. Which term is the antonym of 'procurement'?

- A. Production
- B. Supply
- C. Distribution
- D. Disposal

9. The following sentence has been divided into parts. One of them may contain an error. Select the part that contains the error from the given options. If you don't find any error, mark 'No error' as your answer.

The investors were / put off by the dirty / visage of the workshop.

- A. visage of the workshop
- B. No error
- C. put off by the dirty
- D. The investors were

10. Select the most appropriate option to fill in the blank.

Some people are in the habit of sharing _____ and bull story on unsuitable occasions.

- A. rooster
- B. wolf
- C. cock
- D. fox

Comprehension

The Supreme Court's _____ 1 _____ to the Enforcement Directorate (ED) not to create an atmosphere of fear indicates how much the agency needs to temper its _____ 2 _____ in investigating allegations against political opponents of the current regime. Responding to complaints that the ED is harassing employees of the Excise Department in Chhattisgarh in the name of investigating the money-laundering aspects of an _____ 3 _____ liquor scandal, a Bench has made the _____ 4 _____ point that even a bona fide cause would seem suspect if a law enforcement agency conducted itself in a way that created fear. The observation is both a caution against transgressing the limits of a lawful investigation and a warning against letting a perception gain ground that the agency would go to any lengths to implicate someone. Given that several leaders and Ministers from States ruled by parties other than the BJP _____ 5 _____ been summoned by the ED, or arrested and imprisoned, not many will be surprised at the charges levelled on behalf of the Chhattisgarh government that the agency is running amok and that its officers were threatening State officers, in an alleged bid to implicate the State's Chief Minister, Bhupesh Baghel.

Fill in the blanks with the most appropriate combinations of words

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

- A. Escalation

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- P. The Allahabad High Court's decision to allow azan during the extant lockdown has provided judicial clarity to a matter that should not have been in the court in the first place.
- Q. Indeed, the right to profess religion is a fundamental right of the citizens of India, and thus, there should have been no impediment to their exercising this right.
- R. Even as it directed the administration not to cause hindrance to this, the High Court added that the use of 'loudspeakers or other sound-amplifying devices could not be said to be an integral part of the religion.'

S. There is no doubt that the azan is 'an essential and integral part of Islam', as the court observed.

A. QRSP

B.QSRP

C.PSQR

D.PRQS

Answers

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

[Practice Exercise]

Explanations

1. B) The tone of the sentence is urgent and cautionary. The author is urging the Centre to take immediate action in bringing about reconciliation between the two communities. There's a warning implied that if the Centre delays any further, the situation could "fester and deteriorate." The use of the word "lest" particularly adds a cautionary tone, indicating the negative consequences of inaction. The sentence calls for urgency in taking action to avoid worsening of the situation.
2. D) The passage primarily critiques the government's decision to extend AFSPA in Manipur, while excluding the Imphal Valley, amidst the ongoing ethnic conflict. The author also implies that the government's actions may be interpreted as partisan and calls for a serious initiative to bring about reconciliation between the conflicting communities.
3. C) The passage critiques the extension of AFSPA in Manipur and highlights the irony and potential partisanship in excluding the Imphal Valley, an area of significant violence. The author suggests that the government's decisions may be influenced by the desire not to displease the majority Meitei. The passage underscores the urgent need for reconciliation between the Meitei and Kuki communities to prevent further deterioration of the situation.
4. B) The passage explicitly mentions that the AFSPA has been extended to the whole state, "barring the areas falling under 19 police stations in the Imphal valley."
5. B) The passage suggests that the exclusion of the valley districts from AFSPA is liable to be interpreted as "yet another instance of the government's partisan conduct," implying that it may be seen as biased or partial, rather than impartial.
6. B) **Harsh**
Inclement (adjective) – Harsh, severe, extreme, violent, stormy खराब
7. C) **Deterrent**
Disincentive (noun) – Deterrent, discouragement, obstacle, hindrance, disinclination असंतोष
8. D) **Disposal**
Procurement (noun) – Acquisition, obtaining, securing, purchase, buy खरीदना
9. No error
10. **Cock and bull story** (phrase) – An unbelievable tale that is intended to deceive; a tall tale. झूठी कहानी, झूठ
11. B) **Exhortation** (noun) – Appeal, urging, call, advice, counsel उपदेश
 The Supreme Court's "exhortation" (or urgent recommendation) to the Enforcement Directorate is the most appropriate choice. This implies that the Supreme Court is urging the ED to act in a certain way.
 - **Escalation** (noun) – Increase, Intensification, Rise, Mounting, Augmentation वृद्धि

- **Confrontation** (noun) – Face-off, Encounter, Showdown, Conflict, Standoff सामना
 - **Fulmination** (noun) – Denunciation, Criticism, Condemnation, Censure, Attack निन्दा
12. **B) Zeal** (noun) – Passion, enthusiasm, ardor, fervor, fire उत्साह
- The word "zeal" refers to great energy or enthusiasm, which in this case is directed towards the investigation of allegations against political opponents. The ED needs to temper or moderate this zeal, according to the Supreme Court.
- **Potential** (noun) – Ability, capability, possibility, promise, capacity, संभाव्य, कार्यक्षम, सामर्थ्य
 - **Arrival** (noun) – Appearance, advent, emergence, coming, entrance आगमन
 - **Redressal** (noun) – Correction, remedy, resolution, rectification, reparation सुधार
13. **B) Alleged** (adjective) – Supposed, assumed, presumed, professed कथित
- An "alleged" liquor scandal fits here, because the scandal is not proven; it is claimed but not yet confirmed.
- **Concluded** (adjective) – Finished, Completed, Ended, Finalized, Accomplished समाप्त
 - **Concerned** (adjective) – Involved, related, affected, related to संबंधित
 - **Advanced** (adjective) – Progressive, developed, sophisticated, high-tech, advanced-level, विकसित
14. **D) Pertinent** (adjective) – Relevant, applicable, appropriate, suitable प्रासंगिक
- "pertinent" point is one that is relevant or applicable to a particular matter, which is the sense required in this context.
- **Prevalent** (adjective) – Widespread, common, general, predominant प्रचलित
 - **Transparent** (adjective) – Clear, see-through, translucent, lucid पारदर्शी
 - **Compel** (verb) – Force, coerce, make, oblige मजबूर करना
15. **C)** Here, "**leaders and Ministers from States ruled by parties other than the BJP**" is a plural subject, so the verb also needs to be in the plural form. Therefore, "**have**" is the correct option. The options "has", "is", and "are" are not grammatically correct in this context because they do not agree in number with the subject.
16. **D) RQSP**
- R:** This is a suitable starting sentence as it introduces the main topic of the paragraph, namely the amendment to the constitution by Nepal's House of Representatives to alter the country's political map
- Q:** This sentence naturally follows from R, providing additional details about the specifics of the territorial dispute caused by the amendment, and thus continuing the narrative introduced in sentence R.

S: Sentence S seems to be the next logical step, because it builds upon the conflict described in sentence Q, by discussing the implications of the conflict escalating further.

P: Finally, sentence P wraps up the paragraph nicely by referring back to the historical relationship between the two nations, and suggesting that it would be undesirable to allow these tensions to irreparably harm this relationship.

17. **C) RSPQ**

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

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

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

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

18. **A) SRPQ**

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

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

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

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

19. **B) PSRQ**

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

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

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

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

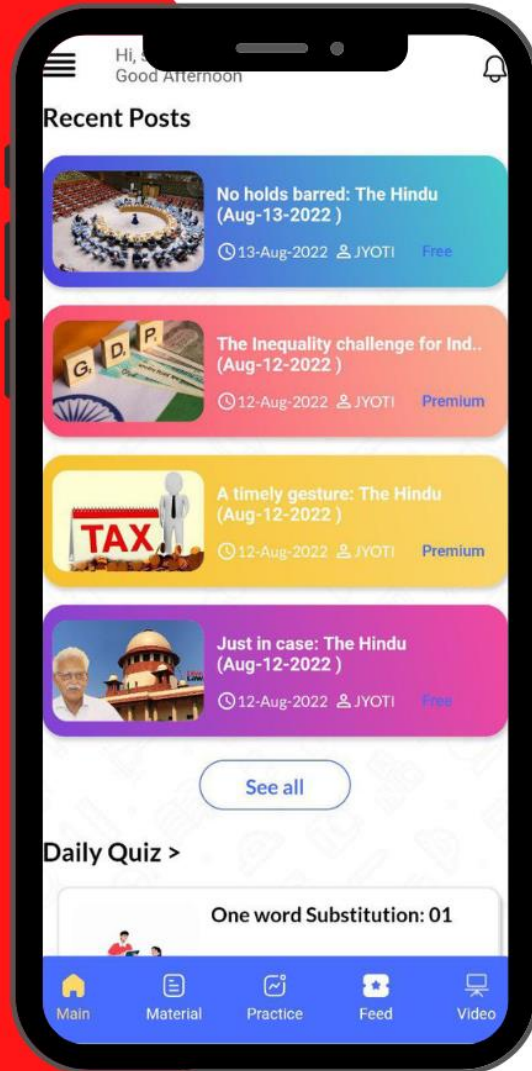
20. **C) PSQR**

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

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

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

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



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