

Leaky pipeline: On India and permanent scientific staff

India must ensure it retains the services of **committed** scientists

A recent **report** analysing public funded research and development institutions in India **had** some **pointers** that should **raise an alarm**. In several of the 244 institutions studied, there was a decrease in the number of permanent, scientific staff in 2022-23 compared to the previous year. There were also fewer organisations in 2022-23 compared to the previous year that reported hiring permanent staff. The institutes together had 19,625 contractual staff and 12,042 permanent staff in 2022-23. Not surprisingly, the **slowdown** in hiring was made up by hiring scientific research personnel on short-term contracts. These contractual staff were a 14% rise over 2021-22. **The very fact** that contractual workers exceed permanent staff in scientific institutions **is** a matter of concern. This data emerges from a study **commissioned** by the Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser and the institutions studied, do not include the 'strategic sectors', such as defence, atomic energy and space which consume **the lion's share** of India's research and development expenditure. As a **report** of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Science, Technology and Environment **tabled** in Parliament last month **observed**, nearly three in five of the posts **sanctioned** for scientific personnel at one of India's top institutes for basic science research, the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR), are unfilled. The TIFR is primarily funded by the Department of Atomic Energy. Further, the parliamentary report found that, on average, **one** in four of sanctioned posts at the key atomic energy research institutions and nuclear power plants **was vacant**. Clearly the **rot runs deep**.

On the one hand, the government has announced missions to develop quantum computers and develop foundational **artificial intelligence** models. It has also declared its **intent** to **align** research and development towards industry-specific research. However none of this will **bear fruit** without scientists, particularly young researchers who are engaged full-time, having long careers at institutions doing **cutting-edge** research. The government had once **set up** institutions such as the Indian Institutes of Science Education and Research (IISER) and introduced four-year undergraduate programmes in basic science, **precisely** because the **incentives** then were not strong enough to **retain** potential scientists. India needs to ensure that the **conditions** for research, such as respectable salaries, funds and equipment to do good research, **are** made available more widely. **[Practice Exerc.]**

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

Vocabulary

1. **Leaky pipeline** (noun) – talent drain, attrition, workforce loss, drop-off, career discontinuity वैज्ञानिक या पेशेवर क्षेत्र में लोगों का लगातार बाहर हो जाना
2. **Committed** (adjective) – dedicated, devoted, loyal, faithful, resolute प्रतिबद्ध
3. **Pointer** (noun) – indication, clue, signal, suggestion, sign संकेत
4. **Raise an alarm** (phrase) – alert, warn, caution, signal danger, flag चेतावनी देना
5. **Slowdown** (noun) – decline, deceleration, slump, recession, reduction गिरावट
6. **Commission** (verb) – assign, authorize, appoint, delegate, task सौंपना
7. **The lion's share** (phrase) – majority, bulk, most, main portion, largest part बड़ा भाग
8. **Table** (verb) – present, submit, propose, introduce, lay before प्रस्तुत करना (संसद या बैठक में)
9. **Observe** (verb) – note, remark, state, comment, report उल्लेख करना
10. **Sanctioned** (adjective) – approved, authorized, permitted, allotted, designated स्वीकृत
11. **Vacant** (adjective) – unoccupied, empty, unfilled, open, available खाली
12. **Rot runs deep** (phrase) – serious problems exist, systemic decay, deep-rooted issues गड़बड़ी गहराई तक फैली है
13. **Artificial intelligence** (noun) – the simulation of human intelligence processes by machines, especially computer systems. कृत्रिम बुद्धिमत्ता
14. **Intent** (noun) – purpose, aim, objective, goal, resolution इरादा
15. **Align** (verb) – adjust, coordinate, match, harmonize, bring into line मेल बैठाना
16. **Bear fruit** (phrase) – succeed, yield results, be effective, pay off, come to fruition सफल होना
17. **Cutting-edge** (adjective) – advanced, innovative, state-of-the-art, pioneering, forefront अत्याधुनिक
18. **Set up** (phrasal verb) – establish, found, initiate, launch, build स्थापित करना
19. **Precisely** (adverb) – exactly, accurately, clearly, definitely, particularly सटीक रूप से
20. **Incentive** (noun) – motivation, encouragement, inducement, stimulus, benefit प्रोत्साहन
21. **Retain** (verb) – keep, hold, preserve, maintain, continue बनाए रखना

Summary of the Editorial

1. A recent report shows a decline in permanent scientific staff in many of India's public-funded R&D institutions.
2. In 2022–23, fewer organisations reported hiring permanent staff compared to the previous year.
3. Instead, there was a 14% increase in contractual staff, who now outnumber permanent staff.
4. In 2022–23, the institutions had 19,625 contractual staff versus 12,042 permanent staff.
5. The over-reliance on contractual researchers is a serious concern for India's scientific future.
6. The study was commissioned by the Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser and excluded strategic sectors like defence, atomic energy, and space.
7. These strategic sectors consume the majority of India's R&D budget, making the data even more worrying.
8. A Parliamentary Standing Committee found that 60% of scientific posts at TIFR were vacant.
9. TIFR is one of India's top research institutes and is funded by the Department of Atomic Energy.
10. Across atomic energy research institutions and nuclear power plants, 25% of posts are vacant.
11. Despite ambitious plans like quantum computing and AI development, the shortage of full-time scientists threatens their success.
12. India aims to align R&D with industry-specific goals, but such efforts require long-term commitment from researchers.
13. Institutions like IISERs and basic science programs were created to nurture and retain young scientific talent.
14. However, current working conditions—low pay, insufficient funding, and poor infrastructure—push talent away.
15. To achieve its scientific ambitions, India must ensure better incentives, stable careers, and stronger research environments for scientists.

Practice Exercise: SSC Pattern Based

1. **Which of the following data points can be correctly inferred from the passage?**
 - i. The total number of research personnel (contractual + permanent) in the 244 institutions was over 30,000 in 2022-23. [Editorial Page]
 - ii. The number of contractual research staff increased by more than 10% compared to 2021-22.
 - iii. Over 14% of sanctioned scientific posts at TIFR are currently vacant.
 - A. Only i and ii
 - B. Only ii and iii
 - C. Only i and iii
 - D. All i, ii, and iii
2. **Which of the following best completes the sentence in a manner consistent with the author's argument?**

“Despite India’s ambition to pursue cutting-edge scientific missions like quantum computing, these goals may remain unfulfilled unless _____.”

 - i. strategic sectors are prioritised in staffing and funding.
 - ii. more contractual staff are converted to permanent roles with long-term security.
 - iii. systemic hiring gaps and resource shortages in public research institutions are addressed.
 - A. Only i
 - B. Only ii
 - C. Only iii
 - D. ii and iii
3. **What is the tone of the passage?**
 - A. Alarmed and Critical
 - B. Optimistic and Encouraging
 - C. Neutral and Informative
 - D. Humorous and Satirical
4. **What is the main theme of the passage?**
 - A. The success of India’s quantum computing and AI missions
 - B. The decline in permanent scientific staff and its negative impact on research
 - C. The benefits of contractual employment in scientific institutions
 - D. The dominance of strategic sectors in India’s R&D expenditure
5. **Why is the growing number of contractual staff in Indian scientific institutions considered problematic according to the passage?**
 - A. Because they are not allowed to work on sensitive research projects
 - B. Because their temporary nature hinders long-term scientific progress
 - C. Because they receive higher salaries than permanent staff

- D. Because they are replacing strategic sector scientists
6. What is the intended meaning of the idiom "**lion's share**" as used in the sentence:
"... strategic sectors such as defence, atomic energy and space which consume the lion's share of India's research and development expenditure"?
- A. The smallest and most manageable part
B. The equal portion among all sectors
C. The largest and most significant portion
D. A portion reserved for elite institutions
7. **Select the option that rectifies the spelling of the underlined word in the given sentence.**
The children were excited to ride the carusel.
- A. Carousell
B. Carousel
C. Carrousel
D. Karusel
8. **Select the most appropriate option that can substitute the underlined segment without changing its meaning in the given sentence.**
Family planning programs play a crucial role in promoting reproductive health and empowering individuals to make informed choices, contributing to sustainable population growth and a healthier society.
- A. promoting a viable population increase
B. fostering an unbalanced population growth
C. discouraging a sustainable population upswing
D. supporting sustainable population explosion
9. **The given sentence is divided into four segments. Select the option that has the segment with a grammatical error.**
I left my / coat in the / hospital when I / had visit Alex
- A. hospital when I
B. I left my
C. coat in the
D. had visit Alex
10. **Select the sentence that contains a spelling error.**
- A. He has made significant improvement in the last few weeks.
B. They had been disgrantled with the company due to various reasons.
C. Despite his formidable appearance, he possesses a kind heart.
D. We saw a pride of lions nonchalantly roaming in the forest
11. **Change the following sentence into positive degree.**
Yash is not better than Harsh
- A. Yash is as good as Harsh.
B. Yash is not good than Harsh.
C. Yash is best than Harsh.
D. Yash and Harsh both are good

12. Based on the situation in the given sentence, select the most appropriate idiom for the underlined segment.

Having known to the facts, the manager disregarded the arguments of the customer.

- A. Turned a deaf ear
- B. Bite the Bullet
- C. Turned against
- D. Turned out

13. Select the most appropriate ANTONYM of the given word.

Haste

- A. Quick
- B. Speed
- C. Twist
- D. Delay

14. Select the most appropriate option to fill in the blanks.

If 2023 was ____ year consumers helped stave off a recession with an unexpected surge in spending, many economists _____ 2024 will be the time shoppers finally tighten their belts.

- A. an, thought
- B. a, wanted
- C. a, see
- D. the, predict

15. In the following sentence the underlined part contains an error. Alternatives to the underlined part are given as options. Select the correct alternative.

Playing 'hide-n-seek' is the one of the fond memories of my childhood

- A. more fonder
- B. most fondest
- C. fonder
- D. fondest

16. Select the most appropriate meaning of the given idiom.

Clear as mud

- A. A dirty surrounding
- B. Very easy to understand
- C. Very difficult to understand
- D. A clean surface

17. Select the most appropriate option that can substitute the underlined words in the given sentence.

The walls of the marriage hall were covered by beautiful purple curtains

- A. covered with
- B. covered of
- C. covered upon
- D. covered on

18. Select the grammatically correct sentence

- A. The teacher from an South explained a theory in a detailed manner.
- B. The teacher from a South explained the theory in the detailed manner.
- C. The teacher from the South explained the theory in a detailed manner.
- D. A teacher from South explained the theory in the detailed manners.

19. Select the most appropriate synonym of the given word.

Vigorous

- A. Energetic
- B. Guarded
- C. Furious
- D. Academic

20. Select the most appropriate synonym of the word 'Pamper' from the given sentence.

I always feel that nuclear families always mollycoddle their kids without directing them to the correct path or denying their unrealistic demands

- A. Demands
- B. Nuclear
- C. Path
- D. Mollycoddle

Comprehension:

In the following passage, some words have been deleted. Read the passage carefully and select the most appropriate option to fill in each blank.

We should remember that all religions (1)_____ good conduct in life, the foundation of which should rest on (2)_____. Without the basis of morality, philosophy would remain mere polemics, and religion would be (3)_____ and vain. Nobody can say that he is religious unless he is (4)_____ and unselfish. It is realised that by constant endeavour through thought, word and deed, one could (5)_____ absolute peace of mind

21. Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank number 1.

- A. refrain
- B. depart
- C. preach
- D. abandon

22. Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank number 2.

- A. ethics
- B. boundaries
- C. unconscientiousness
- D. evil

23. Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank number 3.

- A. rational
- B. popular
- C. useful

D. meaningless

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

A. lethargic

B. insensitive

C. truthful

D. grotesque

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

A. Forfeit

B. divide

C. scatter

D. acquire

Answers

1. A 2. D 3. A 4. B 5. B 6. C 7. B 8. A 9. D 10. B 11. A
 12. A 13. D 14. D 15. D 16. C 17. A 18. C 19. A 20. D 21. C 22. A
 23. D 24. C 25. D

[Practice Exercise]

Explanations

1. A) Only i and ii

- i. Correct. $19,625$ (contractual) + $12,042$ (permanent) = $31,667$ total research personnel, which is over $30,000$.
- ii. Correct. Contractual staff rose 14% , which is clearly more than 10% .
- iii. Incorrect. The passage states “nearly three in five” posts are unfilled at TIFR — this suggests it's close to 60% , but not over 14% .

2. D (ii and iii)

- i is incorrect: The strategic sectors (defence, atomic energy, space) are excluded from this analysis. The author is concerned with broader public-funded research infrastructure, not focusing on prioritizing strategic sectors.
- ii is correct: The passage criticizes reliance on short-term contracts and emphasizes the need for long-term, full-time scientific careers, which implies transitioning contractual roles to permanent ones.
- iii is correct: The entire argument highlights hiring gaps, vacant posts, and the need for better conditions (salaries, funding, equipment). Addressing these systemic shortages is key to achieving ambitious research goals.

3. A) Alarmed and Critical

The passage raises serious concerns about the lack of permanent scientific staff in India and the increasing reliance on contractual hires. Phrases like “should raise an alarm”, “the rot runs deep”, and “clearly” highlight a concerned and critical tone toward current policies and their consequences.

B: Incorrect because the passage points out problems rather than hopeful developments.

C: Incorrect since the language used is emotionally charged and evaluative, not impartial.

D: Incorrect as the passage is serious in nature and not written to mock or entertain.

4. B) The decline in permanent scientific staff and its negative impact on research

The passage primarily discusses the worrying trend of decreasing permanent scientific staff in Indian research institutions, the rise of contractual hiring, and how this undermines long-term research potential.

A) is incorrect because while the passage mentions AI and quantum missions, it does so to contrast them with the lack of permanent scientists, not to highlight their success.

C) is incorrect because the passage criticizes contractual hiring rather than endorsing it.

D) is incorrect because while strategic sectors are mentioned, the focus is on the broader decline in permanent scientific staffing, not just their funding dominance.

5. B) Because their temporary nature hinders long-term scientific progress

- A. Incorrect: The passage does not mention any restriction on the kind of projects contractual staff can work on.
- B. Correct: The passage clearly states that hiring short-term contractual staff instead of permanent researchers is problematic, as it affects the long-term engagement required for cutting-edge research.
- C. Incorrect: There is no mention in the passage of contractual staff receiving higher salaries.
- D. Incorrect: The strategic sectors (like defence, space) are explicitly excluded from this study, so this option is not relevant.

6. **C) The largest and most significant portion**

The lion's share (phrase) – the largest part of something. बड़ा हिस्सा

"Lion's share" means the greatest portion of something. Here, it shows how a major part of R&D funds go to strategic sectors.

7. B) The correct spelling of the underlined word '**carusel**' is '**carousel**', which means "a merry-go-round, typically found at amusement parks." झूला

8. A) **promoting a viable population increase**

'contributing to sustainable population growth' के बदले 'promoting a viable population increase' का use होगा क्योंकि यह sentence के original अर्थ (positive और sustainable population control) को बनाए रखता है तथा 'viable' और 'increase' शब्द 'sustainable' और 'growth' के synonyms हैं।

• 'promoting a viable population increase' will be used instead of 'contributing to sustainable population growth' because it retains the original meaning (positive and sustainable population control) of the sentence, and the words 'viable' and 'increase' are synonyms of 'sustainable' and 'growth' respectively.

B ("unbalanced growth") contradicts the original meaning.

C ("discouraging... upswing") negates the intended message.

D ("explosion") implies uncontrolled growth, which is opposite to "sustainable."

9. D) 'had visit' के बदले '**had visited**' का use होगा। Past Perfect Tense में 'had' के बाद verb का तीसरा रूप (past participle) होता है। वाक्य का सही रूप होगा "I left my coat in the hospital when I had visited Alex."

'had visit' should be replaced with '**had visited**'. In Past Perfect Tense, the verb is used in its third form (past participle) after 'had'. The correct sentence would be - "I left my coat in the hospital when I had visited Alex."

10. B) They had been **disgruntled** with the company due to various reasons.

The correct spelling of the word is "**disgruntled**", which means "angry or dissatisfied" (गुस्सेल या असंतुष्ट).

11. A) "Yash is as good as Harsh." होगा क्योंकि वाक्य को positive degree में बदलने की आवश्यकता है। Positive degree में तुलना के लिए "as + adjective + as" का use किया जाता है। वाक्य में "not better than" का अर्थ है कि यश और हर्ष समान रूप से अच्छे हैं।

The correct answer is "Yash is as good as Harsh." because the sentence needs to be changed into positive degree. In positive degree comparisons, the structure "as + adjective + as" is used. The phrase "not better than" implies that Yash and Harsh are equally good.

12. A) **Turned a deaf ear** (idiom) – disregarded and arguments (अनसुनी करना)

13. D) **Haste** (noun) – The act of doing something quickly, sometimes with urgency or lack of care. तेज़ी, शीघ्रता

Antonym: **Delay** (noun) – The act of postponing or slowing down, a period of waiting or deferring an action. विलंब, देरी

- **Quick** (adjective) – Done or occurring with great speed; fast. तेज़
- **Speed** (noun) – The rate at which someone or something moves or operates. गति
- **Twist** (verb/noun) – To bend or turn into a particular shape; an act of turning something. मोड़ना, मोड़

14. D) 'The predict' का Use होगा क्योंकि "the" का उपयोग एक विशेष (specific) वर्ष के संदर्भ में किया गया है, जो "2023" है। sentence में "2023" को पहले ही स्पष्ट रूप से संदर्भित किया गया है, इसलिए 'the' सही उत्तर है। जबकि 'An' और 'A' अनिश्चित (non-specific) चीजों के लिए उपयोग किए जाते हैं, जो इस वाक्य में फिट नहीं होता। 'Predict' का use होगा क्योंकि यह भविष्य (future) की ओर इशारा करता है। वाक्य का दूसरा भाग यह दर्शाता है कि अर्थशास्त्री अनुमान लगा रहे हैं कि 2024 में क्या होगा, इसलिए 'predict' उपयुक्त है। 'Thought' भूतकाल (past tense) में है, जबकि यहाँ भविष्य की बात की जा रही है। 'Wanted' इच्छा का संकेत देता है, जो संदर्भ में सही नहीं है। 'See' वर्तमान (present tense) में है, जो इस संदर्भ में फिट नहीं होता।

'The predict' will be used because it refers to a specific year, "2023," already mentioned in the sentence. It specifies "2023," making 'the' correct. 'An' and 'A' are used for non-specific references, which do not suit this context. 'Predict' will be used as it refers to a forecast about the future, aligning with the idea that economists are speculating about 2024. 'Thought' is in the past tense, but the sentence discusses future speculation. 'Wanted' indicates desire, which is irrelevant here. 'See' is in the present tense and does not fit the context of prediction about 2024

15. D) 'fond' का Superlative Degree '**fonddest**' का use होगा क्योंकि वाक्य में 'the one of' दिया गया है। 'The one of' के बाद हमेशा Superlative Degree का use होता है; जैसे— This is the one of the most beautiful paintings I have ever seen.

'**Fonddest**' will be used instead of 'fond' because the sentence contains 'the one of,' and after 'the one of,' a superlative degree is always used; like— This is the one of the most beautiful paintings I have ever seen.

16. C) **Clear as mud** (idiom) – Very difficult to understand बहुत कठिन समझना

17. A) '**covered by**' के स्थान पर '**covered with**' का use किया जाएगा क्योंकि जब किसी वस्तु को किसी अन्य वस्तु से ढका गया हो या उसकी सतह पर कोई सामग्री हो, तो 'covered with' का उपयोग सही होता है।

'covered by' should be replaced with '**covered with**' because when something is physically covered or wrapped with another material, 'covered with' is the correct phrase to use.

18. C) **The teacher from the South explained the theory in a detailed manner.**

'South' एक निश्चित स्थान है, इसलिए इसके पहले 'the' का use सही है। 'theory' को 'a theory' की बजाय 'the theory' कहना सही है क्योंकि यह एक विशिष्ट सिद्धांत को इंगित करता है। 'a detailed manner' व्याकरण और अर्थ दोनों दृष्टि से सही है।

The article "A" is less appropriate than "The" because the teacher being referred to is specific. The absence of the article "the" before "South" makes the phrase incorrect; "South" is a specific region requiring the definite article "the." The phrase "in the detailed manners" is grammatically incorrect; "manner" should be singular, and "a detailed manner" is the correct form.

19. A) **Vigorous** (adjective): Strong, healthy, and full of energy; robust, forceful. उत्साही, ताकतवर, जोशपूर्ण

Synonym: Energetic (adjective) – Showing or involving great activity or vitality; lively, dynamic, vigorous. ऊर्जावान, जोशीला

- **Guarded** (adjective) – Cautious, restrained, reserved, careful. सावधान, सतर्क
- **Furious** (adjective) – Extremely angry; intense, fierce, wild. क्रोधित, उग्र
- **Academic** (adjective) – Relating to education, scholarly, intellectual. शैक्षणिक, विद्वत्पूर्ण

20. D) **Pamper** (verb): To treat someone with excessive indulgence, care, or attention, often spoiling them. अत्यधिक ध्यान और प्यार देना, लाड़-प्यार करना।

Synonym: **Mollycoddle** (verb) – To overprotect or indulge someone excessively. लाड़-प्यार करना।

- **Demands** (noun): Meaning: A strong request, need, or requirement. मांग।
- **Nuclear** (adjective): Relating to the nucleus or a family unit consisting of parents and children. परमाणु या माता-पिता और बच्चों का परिवार।
- **Path** (noun): Meaning: A way or track designed for walking or a course of action. रास्ता या मार्ग।

21. C) 'Preach' का अर्थ है उपदेश देना या किसी चीज़ को प्रोत्साहित करना। sentence में mention है कि सभी धर्म जीवन में अच्छे आचरण का समर्थन करते हैं, इसलिए "preach" यहां सही option है। **Refrain** (संयम रखना) का मतलब है खुद को रोकना, जो इस संदर्भ में फिट नहीं बैठता। **Depart** (छोड़ना) का मतलब है छोड़कर जाना, जो यहां के अर्थ से मेल नहीं खाता। **Abandon** (त्यागना) का मतलब है पूरी तरह से त्याग देना, जो धर्म के अच्छे आचरण को बढ़ावा देने के उद्देश्य के विपरीत है।

Preach perfectly fits the context of the sentence because it describes the act of promoting good conduct, aligning with the role of religions. Other options fail contextually and grammatically. **Refrain** This means to stop oneself from doing something. It does not fit the context of teaching or promoting good conduct. **Depart** This means to leave or move away, which does not align with the context of religions advocating good behavior. **Abandon** This means to give up or leave something entirely. It contradicts the intended meaning, as religions do not abandon good conduct but advocate for it.

22. A) **Ethics** का अर्थ है नैतिकता या नैतिक सिद्धांत, जो अच्छे आचरण की नींव के लिए उपयुक्त है। passage में कहा गया है कि जीवन में अच्छे आचरण का आधार नैतिकता पर आधारित होना चाहिए। इसलिए, 'ethics' contextually और grammatically सही विकल्प है। **Boundaries** का अर्थ है सीमाएं या परिधि। यह नैतिकता या आचरण की नींव के संदर्भ में सही नहीं है। **'Unconscientiousness'** का अर्थ है बेपरवाही या नैतिकता की कमी। यह शब्द अच्छे आचरण के लिए विपरीत है और इसलिए गलत है। **'Evil'** का अर्थ है बुराई या अनैतिकता। यह अच्छे आचरण के आधार के लिए बिल्कुल भी उपयुक्त नहीं है।

'Ethics' means moral principles, which are the foundation of good conduct in life. The passage emphasizes that the basis of good conduct should rest on morality, making 'ethics' the most suitable choice. **Boundaries** means limits or edges, which do not align with the context of the passage discussing morality. **'Unconscientiousness'** refers to a lack of morality or carelessness,

which is opposite to the concept of a foundation for good conduct. Evil' implies immorality or wickedness, which cannot be the basis for good conduct.

23. D) **Meaningless**" का use होगा क्योंकि "Meaningless" का अर्थ है "बिना किसी महत्व या उद्देश्य के।" वाक्य में बताया गया है कि नैतिकता के बिना धर्म महत्वहीन और निरर्थक हो जाएगा। यह संदर्भ में सही बैठता है क्योंकि यहां धर्म की नैतिकता पर निर्भरता पर जोर दिया गया है। 'Rational', जिसका अर्थ है तार्किक, यहां सही नहीं है क्योंकि वाक्य धर्म की तर्कसंगतता पर चर्चा नहीं कर रहा है। 'Popular', जिसका अर्थ है लोकप्रिय, यहां फिट नहीं बैठता क्योंकि यह धर्म की लोकप्रियता पर चर्चा नहीं कर रहा है। 'Useful', जिसका अर्थ है उपयोगी, भी गलत है क्योंकि वाक्य धर्म की उपयोगिता के बजाय इसके महत्व की बात कर रहा है।

Meaningless' will be used because it means "without importance or purpose." The sentence emphasizes that without morality as its foundation, religion would lose its essence and become insignificant, making "Meaningless" appropriate. 'Rational' means logical or reasonable, which is not discussed in the sentence. 'Popular' means widely liked or accepted, but the sentence focuses on significance, not popularity. 'Useful' implies practicality, which does not fit because the context is about meaning, not utility.

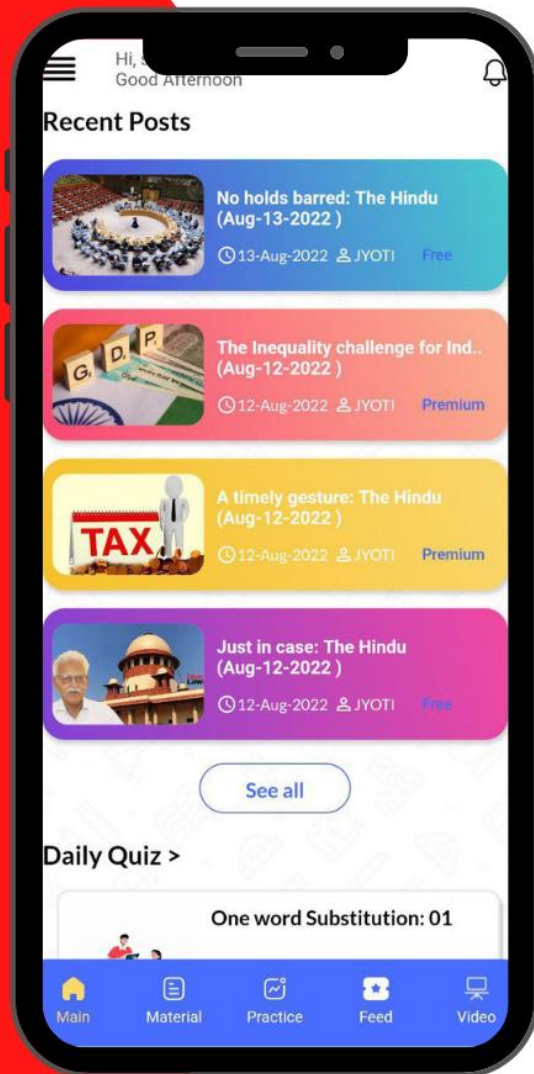
24. C) **'Truthful'** का use होगा क्योंकि sentence में धार्मिकता की बात हो रही है और यह बताया गया है कि कोई भी व्यक्ति तब तक धार्मिक नहीं हो सकता जब तक वह ईमानदार (truthful) और निस्वार्थ (unselfish) न हो। 'Lethargic' (आलसी), 'Insensitive' (असंवेदनशील), और 'Grotesque' (विचित्र या विकृत) का इस context में कोई अर्थ नहीं बनता क्योंकि ये धार्मिकता या सद्गुणों से संबंधित नहीं हैं।

'Truthful' is correct because the sentence talks about religiosity and states that no one can be considered religious unless they are truthful and unselfish. 'Lethargic' (lazy), 'Insensitive' (unfeeling), and 'Grotesque' (distorted or bizarre) are irrelevant in this context as they do not relate to religious or moral virtues.

25. D) **Acquire**' का use होगा क्योंकि sentence में mention है कि निरंतर प्रयास के माध्यम से कोई absolute peace of mind प्राप्त कर सकता है। यहाँ "acquire" शब्द का अर्थ है "प्राप्त करना," जो इस संदर्भ में एक सकारात्मक और उचित विकल्प है। 'Forfeit' (खो देना) गलत है क्योंकि यह "प्राप्त करना" के विपरीत है। 'Divide' (विभाजित करना) और 'Scatter' (छितराना) का अर्थ भी इस संदर्भ में फिट नहीं बैठता क्योंकि ये "शांति" के संदर्भ में उपयोग नहीं किए जा सकते।

'Acquire' is the correct choice because the sentence explains that through constant endeavour, one can "acquire absolute peace of mind." The word "acquire" means "to obtain

or achieve," which fits perfectly with the context as it implies gaining peace of mind through persistent effort. Forfeit' (to lose) is incorrect as it is the opposite of acquiring. 'Divide' (to separate) and 'Scatter' (to disperse) do not fit in this context as they cannot be associated with "peace of mind."



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