

Ranking pitfalls: On the India Rankings 2025

NIRF should help improve both quality and **equity** in higher education

India Rankings (IR) 2025, based on the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF), **held** few surprises. As in previous years, **older public institutions** with a history of academic excellence **dominated** the top spots. Since its **inception** in 2016, **the number of** participating institutions **has** grown significantly, from 3,565 to 14,163, and the scope has **expanded** from four categories to 17, **spanning** a wide range of higher education sectors. However, the ranking **parameters** are still **far from** perfect. Institutions are **evaluated** based on five key parameters: teaching, learning, and resources (30%), research and professional practice (30%), graduation outcomes (20%), **outreach** and **inclusivity** or OI (10%), and **peer perception** (10%). Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan is right in his **scepticism** about the peer perception parameter as this is feedback **gathered** from subject experts and **employers**. It can be **subjective** and **prone to** influence and **prejudice**, as it **relies** more **on** an institution's reputation than its actual **reputability**, **often** to the disadvantage of suburban or **State-run** higher education institutions. As it **accounts for** 10% of the total **weight**, it can **skew** rankings. A review is thus necessary.

As with any global ranking, the NIRF has its own set of **flaws**. While it claims to rely on verifiable **metrics** and third-party **audits** of research, it depends heavily on **bibliometric data** and self-declared inputs from institutions. Of concern is the treatment of the OI parameter. The NIRF booklet on the IR focuses only on outcomes related to regional and gender **diversity**. It **conspicuously omits** data on students who are economically and socially **disadvantaged** and with disabilities, despite these factors each having a 20% weightage within the OI component. **The fact** that OI is not adequately prioritised **is evident**: only Jawaharlal Nehru University and the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi, are among the top 10 institutions with OI scores above 70. This is troubling as access to higher education remains restricted for **marginalised** communities. The NIRF must expand the scope of OI to include institutional **adherence to communal** reservation policies in faculty recruitment. Central institutions continue to **fall short** in filling vacancies for the OBC, SC and ST categories. Such **affirmative action** is crucial for India's progress as an **egalitarian** nation. Also, the IR must become more than just an annual, **ritualistic** event. Its **insights** should be used to **address deep-rooted** issues such as India's regional imbalances; shortage of faculty with doctoral qualifications outside the top 100 institutions; over 58% of management institutions reporting zero research publications, and the need for **legacy** institutions to **mentor emerging** ones. Above all, there must be action against institutions that submit false data. Without **course correction**, the NIRF risks becoming a **mere** ranking platform that allows private institutions to develop themselves as brands, doing little to improve the overall quality and equity in higher education. **[Practice Exercise]**

- Red/blue coloring of words in the sentence indicates subject verb relationship; where 'red' denotes 'subject' and 'blue' denotes 'verb'.
- **Bibliometric** – relating to the use of statistical and mathematical techniques to the analysis of books.

Vocabulary

1. **Pitfall** (noun) – hidden danger, trap, snag, stumbling block, downside छिपा खतरा
2. **Equity** (noun) – fairness, justice, parity, equal access, level playing field समानता
3. **Dominant** (verb) – lead, top, outperform, overshadow, prevail सर्वोच्च होना
4. **Inception** (noun) – beginning, outset, commencement, start, genesis आरम्भ
5. **Expand** (verb) – broaden, widen, extend, enlarge, scale up विस्तार करना
6. **Span** (verb) – cover, extend across, stretch over, bridge, encompass फैला होना
7. **Parameter** (noun) – criterion, measure, benchmark, standard, variable मानदंड
8. **Far from** (phrase) – not at all, nowhere near, hardly, anything but, scarcely बिल्कुल नहीं/से बहुत दूर
9. **Evaluate** (verb) – assess, appraise, gauge, judge, measure मूल्यांकन करना
10. **Outreach** (noun) – community engagement, public reach, extension activity, awareness drive, service delivery जनसंपर्क
11. **Inclusivity** (noun) – inclusion, openness, accessibility, broad participation, diversity-and-inclusion समावेशन
12. **Peer perception** (noun) – a parameter that gauges the overall perception of the institute by the industry, academic peers and the research community. सहकर्मी धारणा
13. **Scepticism** (noun) – doubt, reservation, distrust, incredulity, wariness संशय/संदेह
14. **Gather** (verb) – collect, obtain, solicit, compile, amass इकट्ठा करना
15. **Employer** (noun) – company, firm, organization, hirer, boss नियोक्ता
16. **Subjective** (adjective) – personal, opinion-based, biased, value-laden, interpretive व्यक्तिनिष्ठ
17. **Prone** (to) (adjective) – susceptible to, liable to, vulnerable to, inclined to, apt to आसानी से प्रभावित
18. **Prejudice** (noun) – bias, partiality, discrimination, bigotry, preconceived notion पक्षपात
19. **Rely** (on) (verb) – depend on, count on, bank on, lean on, draw upon निर्भर होना
20. **Reputability** (noun) – credibility, respectability, good standing, trustworthiness, esteem विश्वसनीय साख
21. **Often** (adverb) – frequently, regularly, repeatedly, commonly, many times अक्सर

22. **State-run** (adjective) – government-run, public, state-owned, publicly funded, government-operated सरकारी
23. **Account for** (phrasal verb) – constitute, make up, explain, be responsible for, justify हिस्सा होना
24. **Weight** (noun) – importance, emphasis, significance, clout, consideration महत्व
25. **Skew** (verb) – distort, bias, slant, warp, tilt विकृत/झुका देना
26. **Flaw** (noun) – defect, shortcoming, weakness, blemish, fault खामी/त्रुटि
27. **Metrics** (noun) – measures, indicators, KPIs, benchmarks, yardsticks मापदंड
28. **Audit** (noun) – inspection, review, examination, verification, scrutiny लेखा-जाँच
29. **Diversity** (noun) – variety, heterogeneity, pluralism, multiplicity, breadth विविधता
30. **Conspicuously** (adverb) – noticeably, markedly, strikingly, glaringly, patently स्पष्ट रूप से
31. **Omit** (verb) – leave out, exclude, skip, overlook, drop छोड़ देना
32. **Disadvantaged** (adjective) – underprivileged, deprived, underserved, vulnerable, poorer sections वंचित
33. **Evident** (adjective) – obvious, clear, apparent, manifest, patent स्पष्ट
34. **Marginalised** (adjective) – excluded, sidelined, underrepresented, oppressed, peripheral दरकिनार किया गया
35. **Adherence** (to) (noun) – compliance, observance, conformity, abidance, fidelity पालन
36. **Communal** (adjective) – community-based, group-based, collective, caste/community-linked, population-group-specific सामुदायिक
37. **Fall short** (phrase) – be insufficient, fail to meet, come up short, underperform, miss the mark कम पड़ना
38. **Affirmative action** (noun) – the practice or policy of favouring individuals belonging to groups regarded as disadvantaged or subject to discrimination; positive discrimination.
39. **Egalitarian** (adjective) – equal, equitable, non-hierarchical, classless, equality-oriented समतावादी
40. **Ritualistic** (adjective) – ceremonial, formulaic, routine, mechanical, tokenistic औपचारिक/रूढ़िगत (रिवायती)
41. **Insight** (noun) – understanding, takeaway, discernment, finding, observation अंतर्दृष्टि/सूझ-बूझ
42. **Address** (verb) – tackle, deal with, confront, attend to, remedy समाधान करना

43. **Deep-rooted** (adjective) – entrenched, ingrained, longstanding, chronic, systemic
जड़-जमाया
44. **Legacy** (noun) – heritage, inheritance, bequest, endowment, carryover विरासत
45. **Mentor** (verb) – guide, coach, advise, tutor, shepherd मार्गदर्शन करना
46. **Emerging** (adjective) – nascent, budding, up-and-coming, rising, developing उभरता
47. **Course correction** (noun) – the act of making small changes to a plan or direction to get back on the intended path when one has deviated from it मार्ग-सुधार
48. **Mere** (adjective) – only, just, nothing but, sheer, simple मात्र

Summary of the Editorial

1. India Rankings (IR) 2025 under NIRF showed no surprises, with older public institutions continuing to dominate the top positions.
2. Since 2016, the number of participating institutions has grown from 3,565 to 14,163, with categories expanding from 4 to 17 sectors.
3. Institutions are ranked on five parameters: teaching & learning resources (30%), research & professional practice (30%), graduation outcomes (20%), outreach & inclusivity (10%), and peer perception (10%).
4. Peer perception (10%) is problematic because it relies on subjective feedback from experts and employers, often influenced by reputation rather than actual quality.
5. This subjectivity disadvantages state-run and suburban institutions, making a review of the parameter necessary.
6. Despite claims of objectivity, NIRF rankings depend heavily on bibliometric data and self-declared institutional inputs.
7. The Outreach and Inclusivity (OI) parameter is poorly addressed, focusing only on regional and gender diversity.
8. Data on economically/socially disadvantaged students and those with disabilities is neglected, though each has a 20% weight within OI.
9. Only JNU and AIIMS Delhi scored above 70 in OI among the top 10, showing limited emphasis on inclusivity.
10. Marginalised communities still face barriers in accessing higher education, highlighting weak OI implementation.
11. The NIRF should expand OI to assess adherence to reservation policies in faculty recruitment for OBC, SC, and ST categories.
12. Central institutions still fail to fill many reserved vacancies, undermining affirmative action.
13. NIRF insights should be used to tackle systemic issues: regional imbalances, lack of PhD-qualified faculty, poor research output (58% of management institutes had zero publications).
14. Legacy institutions should mentor emerging institutions to raise overall standards in higher education.
15. Strict action must be taken against institutions that submit false data, otherwise NIRF risks becoming just a branding exercise for private colleges rather than a tool to improve quality and equity.

Practice Exercise: SSC Pattern Based

1. **Why does the editorial argue that the NIRF 'peer perception' parameter needs review?**
A. Because it is subjective feedback from experts/employers that leans on reputation, making it bias-prone and disadvantaging suburban/State-run institutions. [Editorial page]
B. Because it has the highest weight (30%) and overwhelms other metrics.
C. Because it duplicates the research/professional practice metric and double-counts publications.
D. Because it excludes employer input and relies only on student views.
2. **What does the article warn will happen if NIRF does not implement course corrections?**
A. It risks becoming a mere ranking platform that helps private institutions build brands without improving overall quality and equity.
B. It will be abolished by the government in the next cycle.
C. It will automatically eliminate regional imbalances by spotlighting the top 10.
D. It will ensure full compliance with communal reservation in faculty recruitment across central institutions.
3. **What is the overall tone of the passage?**
A. Celebratory and complacent
B. Critical and reform-oriented
C. Detached and purely descriptive
D. Alarmist and sensational
4. **Which statement accurately reflects the passage?**
A. Peer perception has a 30% weight and is collected from alumni and students.
B. The OI parameter already includes comprehensive data on economic disadvantage and disability.
C. Only JNU and AIIMS (New Delhi) feature among the top 10 institutions with OI scores above 70.
D. India Rankings (IR) began in 2019 with four categories.
5. **Fill in the blank with the most appropriate word from the passage.**
While the NIRF claims to rely on verifiable metrics and third-party audits of research, it depends heavily on _____ data and self-declared inputs from institutions.
A. ethnographic
B. bibliometric
C. biometric
D. demographic
6. **Select the option that can be used as a one-word substitute for the given group of words.**
An agreement between governments or politicians to work together to achieve a particular aim
A. Axis
B. Rampage
C. Ceasefire
D. Armistice
7. **Select the best express Synonym of the given highlighted word.**
The marketplace was filled with a deafening **cacophony** of sounds.
A. Melody

- B. Silence
C. Din
D. Symphony
8. **Select the word which means the same as the group of words underlined in the given sentence**
Due to budget constraints, the management decided to put the expansion project on hold until a more favorable time.
A. Camouflage
B. Shelve
C. Evasion
D. Avoidance
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.**
I prefer / my job / to yours. / No error
A. I prefer
B. my job
C. to yours.
D. No error
10. **Select the most appropriate meaning of the given idiom.**
Through thick and thin
A. To pass through thick and thin air
B. To possess both thick and thin clothes
C. To travel through thick and thin clouds
D. To be supportive in both good and bad times
11. **For the four-sentence (S1 to S4) paragraph below, sentences S1 and S4 are given. From the options P, Q, R and S select the appropriate sentences for S2 and S3, respectively.**
S1) The suicide attack at a Shia mosque in Peshawar, killing at least 62 people, is a grave reminder of Pakistan's growing security challenges after the Taliban's return to power in Afghanistan and the continued persecution that the Shia minority is facing in the Af-Pak region.
P) The Islamic State terrorist organisation, which has carried out a number of suicide attacks in Afghanistan ever since the Taliban captured Kabul in August 2021, has claimed responsibility for the bombing.
Q) If it does not check the widespread anti-Shia narrative and find a way to tackle the security challenges posed by both the TTP and the IS-K,
R) This was the deadliest attack in Pakistan since the 2018 bombing of Quetta, killing 149 people.
S) its borderlands could once again turn to anarchy and sectarian bloodletting.
S4) The IS's sectarian animosity towards the Shias is well-known. In Iraq and Syria, the IS has carried out systematic attacks against the Shias, who they call "rejectionists" of Islam just because they belong to a different branch of the faith.
A. S and R
B. R and P

- C. Q and R
D. P and S
12. **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.**
I tried to read your letter, / but it was so badly written / that I had to leave the attempt. / No error
A. I tried to read your letter,
B. but it was so badly written
C. that I had to leave the attempt.
D. No error
13. **Select the best express Synonym of the given highlighted word.**
The country faced a **runaway** inflation that shook the economy.
A. Balanced
B. Stable
C. Declining
D. Uncontrolled
14. **Select the most appropriate Antonym of the highlighted word in the given sentence.**
The festival celebrates **indigenous** art forms.
A. Foreign
B. Vernacular
C. Native
D. Domestic
15. **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.**
If there a guarantee / then we are prepared / to place a bulk order for your product. / No error
A. If there a guarantee
B. then we are prepared
C. to place a bulk order for your product.
D. No error
16. **Select the most appropriate Antonym of the highlighted word in the given sentence.**
The river current was **rapid** and difficult to cross.
A. Sluggish
B. Expeditious
C. Brisk
D. Swift
17. **Select the most appropriate idiom that can substitute the underlined segment in the given sentence.**
Mary appeared for the test. She was waiting anxiously for the test result.
A. a piece of cake
B. jumping through hoops
C. hitting the nail on the head
D. on pins and needles

18. 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.

I meet him / once a blue moon / so I do not know much about his activities. / No error

- A. I meet him
B. once a blue moon
C. so I do not know much about his activities.
D. No error
19. Some sentences are given below. While the first and the last sentences (1 and 2) are in the correct order, the sentences in between are jumbled up. Arrange the sentences in the correct order to form a meaningful and coherent paragraph.
- 1) India's inflation based on the consumer price index quickened to 6.01% in January, breaching the central bank's upper tolerance limit of 6%.
- A) Oils and fats quickened the fastest at 18.7%.
B) Provisional estimates show the hinterland, with its greater proportion of the country's poor, bore the brunt of rising food prices with rural food price inflation sprinting to 5.18% from December's 3.39%.
C) While the headline number was no surprise given that the RBI had forecast the acceleration, the official data merit scrutiny.
D) Though the RBI had been expected to start normalising its pandemic-era policy stance in February's monetary policy meeting and reaffirm its resolve to contain inflation, the central bank retained the status quo in order to support economic growth.
- 2) Governor Shaktikanta Das has defended the RBI's projection for inflation to slow to 4.5% in FY23 by citing the base effect as the cause for higher headline inflation this fiscal, and predicted that a similar base effect would help enable a downtrend in the coming months.
- A. BACD
B. CBAD
C. DABC
D. ABCD
20. Sentences of a paragraph are given below in jumbled order. Arrange the sentences in the correct order to form a meaningful and coherent paragraph.
- A) This has forced India to match the Chinese deployment, leading to an extraordinary build-up on a scale not seen since 1962.
B) That India and China have agreed to stop sending more troops to the frontline is a welcome step towards hitting pause on the rising tensions along the LAC.
C) The new agreement of September 21, at the sixth round of Corps Commander talks since June, will put a stop to this build-up, that is, if it is implemented sincerely.
D) Indeed, the genesis of the tensions lies in China's large-scale deployment of troops to forward areas in May, and subsequent multiple transgressions in the Galwan Valley, Pangong Lake, Gogra, Hot Springs, and Depsang plains that have violated almost every core tenet of the four border agreements that have helped keep the peace since 1993.
- A. ACBD
B. BDAC
C. ACDB

D. BDCA

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.

By 2035, the National Education Policy 2020 aims to raise the Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) for the 18–23 age group from 28.4% to 50%. Assuming that a single, centrally _____(1)_____ blueprint will be sufficient would be a major strategic error in this vast national project. India's future in higher education will be shaped by the many socioeconomic contexts of its States, not just Delhi. The 50% GER target is not a _____(2)_____ incremental change. It is a social change that necessitates the admission of an extra 33 million youth to our universities and colleges. Therefore, policymakers must acknowledge that a uniform strategy will unavoidably fail to _____(3)_____ the profound _____(4)_____ that define our nation. Hence the policy movement forward has to be federated. Compared to a state like Tamil Nadu, which has nearly achieved the national GER target, Bihar, which is only beginning to _____(5)_____, confronts essentially different obstacles.

21. **What should come in the place of 1.**

- A. discretionary
- B. Irksome
- C. optional
- D. mandated

22. **What should come in the place of 2.**

- A. substantial
- B. mere
- C. colossal
- D. scrupulous

23. **What should come in the place of 3.**

- A. addresses
- B. addressed
- C. address
- D. addressing

24. **What should come in the place of 4.**

- A. Uniformities
- B. Disparities
- C. Parities
- D. Caveats

25. **What should come in the place of 5.**

- A. climb
- B. tumble
- C. belay
- D. descend

Answers

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

[Practice Exercise]

Explanations

- A) Because it is subjective feedback from experts/employers that leans on reputation, making it bias-prone and disadvantaging suburban/State-run institutions.
 The passage says peer perception (10%) is subjective, reputation-driven, influence-prone, and can skew rankings—often against suburban/State institutions.
 B: Wrong weight; it is 10%, not 30%.
 C: No duplication with research/professional practice is stated.
 D: Employers are part of the feedback; the issue is subjectivity, not exclusion.
- A) It risks becoming a mere ranking platform that helps private institutions build brands without improving overall quality and equity.
 The concluding warning is that, without action (e.g., fixing OI omissions, auditing data, addressing regional/faculty/research gaps), NIRF may turn into branding rather than improvement.
 B: No abolition is mentioned.
 C: Spotlighting top institutions does not “automatically” fix regional imbalances; the passage urges using insights to address them.
 D: The piece calls for expanding OI to include reservation adherence precisely because current practice falls short; no guarantee of ensured compliance is claimed.
- B) Critical and reform-oriented
 The author faults NIRF/IR 2025 on peer-perception bias, a narrowed OI focus, over-reliance on self-declared/bibliometric data, and urges concrete fixes (expand OI to include reservation compliance, act on false data, mentor emerging institutions, address research gaps).
 A) Not celebrating—it flags skewed weights and missing equity metrics.
 C) Not neutral description—makes evaluative judgments and policy prescriptions.
 D) Not sensational—uses evidence and proposes measured reforms rather than panic.
- C) Only JNU and AIIMS (New Delhi) feature among the top 10 institutions with OI scores above 70.
 The passage states that only Jawaharlal Nehru University and AIIMS, New Delhi, are in the top 10 with OI scores above 70.
 A: Peer perception is 10%, not 30%, and feedback is from subject experts and employers, not alumni/students.
 B: The OI focus omits data on economically/socially disadvantaged students and those with disabilities (despite weightage within OI).
 D: IR started in 2016, not 2019.
- B) **bibliometric**
 The passage explicitly says NIRF depends heavily on bibliometric data alongside self-declared inputs.
 A (ethnographic): Qualitative fieldwork data—not mentioned.
 C (biometric): Refers to physiological identifiers—not relevant here.
 D (demographic): Population characteristics—not the cited basis of dependence

6. A) **Axis** (noun) – An agreement between governments or politicians to work together to achieve a particular aim. संधि
- **Rampage** (noun) – A period of violent and uncontrollable behavior, typically involving a large group of people. उपद्रव
 - **Ceasefire** (noun) – A temporary suspension of fighting, typically one during which peace talks take place; a truce. युद्धविराम
 - **Armistice** (noun) – An agreement made by opposing sides in a war to stop fighting for a certain time; a truce. संघर्षविराम
7. C) **Cacophony** (noun) – din, racket, clamour, babel, discord (कोलाहल)
- Synonym: **Din** (noun) – loud, unpleasant, and prolonged noise (शोर)
 - **Melody** (noun) – sweet musical sound (संगीत)
 - **Silence** (noun) – complete quiet (मौन)
 - **Symphony** (noun) – harmonious music (संगीत रचना)
8. B) **Shelve** (verb) – To decide not to proceed with a project temporarily स्थगित करना
- **Camouflage** (noun) – The act of hiding or disguising something छलावरण
 - **Evasion** (noun) – The act of avoiding something, usually to escape or evade a duty or responsibility टालना
 - **Avoidance** (noun) – The act of keeping away from or not doing something बचाव
9. D) No error, 'prefer A to B' सही pattern है; यहाँ तुलना ठीक है।
- No correction needed: the pattern is 'prefer A to B'.
10. D) **Through thick and thin** (idiom) – To be supportive in both good and bad times अच्छे और बुरे समय में सहायक रहना
11. B) R and P
- R provides a Time Sequence comparison to an attack in 2018 which serves as context to the severity of the recent attack mentioned in S1.
 - P provides the Noun-Pronoun Relationship with S4. In S4, the "IS" (Islamic State) is mentioned with their actions against Shias. Option P directly links the IS to the recent attack, establishing a direct connection.
12. C) 'leave the attempt' की जगह 'give up the attempt'/'abandon the attempt' होगा; collocation में 'give up/abandon an attempt' आता है, 'leave the attempt' स्वीकृत नहीं।
- Replace 'leave the attempt' with 'give up/abandon the attempt'; that's the correct collocation.
13. D) **Runaway** (adjective) – rampant, out-of-control, soaring, galloping, spiralling बेकाबू
- Synonym: **Uncontrolled** (adjective) – not regulated, unchecked (अनियंत्रित)
 - **Balanced** (adjective) – equal, steady (संतुलित)
 - **Stable** (adjective) – firm, steady (स्थिर)
 - **Declining** (adjective) – decreasing, weakening (गिरता हुआ)
14. A) **Indigenous** (adjective) – Native, home-grown, locally made. स्वदेशी
- Antonym: **Foreign** (adjective) – Alien, external, imported, exotic. विदेशी

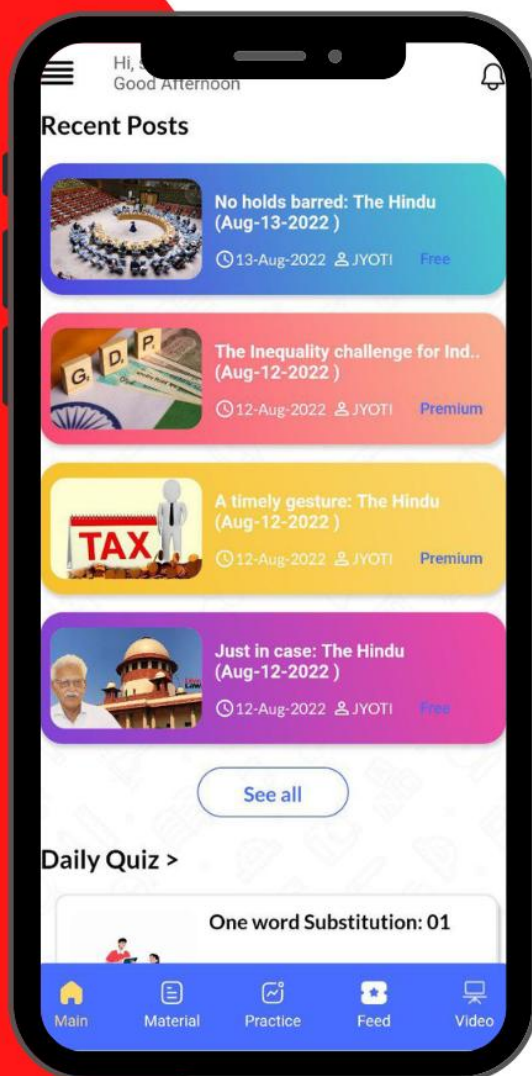
- **Vernacular** (adjective) – Local language or style, colloquial. स्थानीय
 - **Native** (adjective) – Belonging naturally to a place, original. मूल निवासी
 - **Domestic** (adjective) – Relating to home or internal affairs. घरेलू
15. A) 'there' के बाद 'is' जोड़ा जाएगा क्योंकि existential संरचना में सही रूप 'there is/are' होता है; conditional clause में सामान्य सत्य के लिए Simple Present आता है।
Insert 'is' after 'there' → correct existential “there is”; Simple Present fits the if-clause.
16. A) **Rapid** (adjective) – Fast, quick, speedy, brisk. तेज़
- Antonym: **Sluggish** (adjective) – Slow-moving, lethargic, inactive, torpid. सुस्त
 - **Expeditious** (adjective) – Efficient, prompt, speedy. शीघ्र
 - **Brisk** (adjective) – Energetic, quick, lively. फुर्तीला
 - **Swift** (adjective) – Moving very quickly, fleet, rapid. तीव्र
17. D) **On pins and needles** – Waiting anxiously किसी परिणाम या घटना का बेसब्री और बेचैनी से इंतजार करना।
18. B) 'once a blue moon' के बदले 'once in a blue moon' होगा क्योंकि यह fixed idiom है जिसका अर्थ “बहुत कम/कभी-कभार” होता है।
- Use the fixed idiom 'once in a blue moon' (= very rarely).
19. B) **CBAD**
C -> Sentence C logically follows the 1st sentence by diving deeper into the reaction to the inflation number.
B -> Sentence B gives more details on how inflation impacted different sections of the country.
A -> Sentence A provides specifics about what commodities (oils and fats) contributed the most to the inflation.
D -> Sentence D talks about the RBI's response to the inflation scenario
20. B) **BDAC**
- B. This seems like a statement that describes a decision or resolution between India and China. It doesn't follow from another statement, making it a potential starting sentence.
 - D. This sentence provides a background to why the tension exists. It could logically follow the first sentence to give the reader an understanding of why the decision in Sentence B was made.
 - The word "This" refers to China's actions described in Sentence D. So, A should follow D.
 - C. This sentence talks about a new agreement that aims to stop the build-up mentioned in Sentence A. Thus, C follows A.
21. D) '**mandated**' का use होगा क्योंकि "centrally mandated blueprint" में past-participle adjective (mandated) संज्ञा blueprint को विशेषित करता है और अर्थ देता है कि यह खाका “केंद्र द्वारा अनिवार्य/निर्दिष्ट” है—नीति-संदर्भ में यही स्वाभाविक व व्याकरणतः सही संयोजन है। जबकि discretionary/optional के साथ “centrally” का संयोजन अप्राकृतिक लगता है और आशय (केंद्र से अनिवार्य निर्देश) खो जाता है; irksome (कष्टदायक) भावसूचक विशेषण है, किसी नीतिगत खाके के लिए उपयुक्त नहीं।

- **'mandated'** will be used because it means “required/ordered by authority,” and the collocation “centrally mandated blueprint” is grammatically sound (past participle adjective modifying blueprint) and context-appropriate for policy. Whereas, discretionary (left to choice) and optional (not required) clash with “centrally” and the intended sense of compulsion; irksome (annoying) is a subjective descriptor and doesn’t logically describe a policy blueprint here.
22. B) **'mere'** का use होगा क्योंकि "not a mere incremental change" एक स्वीकृत कोलोकेशन है, जहाँ 'mere' का अर्थ “मात्र/केवल” होता है; वाक्य बताता है कि 50% GER लक्ष्य सिर्फ छोटा-मोटा बढ़ाव नहीं बल्कि सामाजिक परिवर्तन है, इसलिए 'mere' सही है। जबकि 'substantial' का अर्थ “काफी/महत्वपूर्ण” है (यहाँ बात “केवल” का खंडन है), 'colossal' “विराट/अत्यधिक बड़ा” है जो 'incremental change' से टकराता है, और 'scrupulous' “अति-सावधानी/नैतिक सतर्क” का भाव देता है, जो 'change' के प्रकार के लिए उपयुक्त नहीं।
- **'mere'** will be used because "not a mere incremental change" is a standard, grammatically correct collocation where 'mere' (attributive adjective) means “only/just,” fitting the idea that the 50% GER target is more than a small step—it’s a social shift. Whereas 'substantial' means significant (the sentence negates “only,” not asserts significance), 'colossal' means huge (clashes with 'incremental'), and 'scrupulous' means morally careful, which doesn’t aptly modify the noun 'change' here.
23. C) **'address'** का use होगा क्योंकि "fail to" के बाद हमेशा verb का base form आता है; वाक्य बताता है कि एक uniform strategy हमारे राष्ट्र को परिभाषित करने वाले गहन ____ को संबोधित/सामना करने में विफल होगी, इसलिए 'address' सही है। जबकि 'addresses' third-person singular present है, 'addressed' past/past participle है, और 'addressing' gerund/participle है—ये रूप यहाँ "to" के बाद नहीं आते, इसलिए गलत हैं।
- **'address'** will be used because after "fail to" we need the base form (bare infinitive). The sentence means a uniform strategy will fail to address the profound ____ that define the nation, so 'address' fits. Whereas 'addresses' is third-person singular present, 'addressed' is past/past participle, and 'addressing' is a gerund/participle—these forms are not used after "to" here, so they are incorrect.
24. B) **'Disparities'** का use होगा क्योंकि "disparities" का अर्थ है गहरे अंतर/असमानताएँ, जो राज्यों की सामाजिक-आर्थिक विविधताओं को दर्शाता है। यहाँ “profound ____ that define our nation” में plural noun चाहिए और “profound disparities” स्वाभाविक collocation है। जबकि 'Uniformities' का अर्थ समानताएँ है (जो तर्क के विपरीत है), 'Parities' समानता/बराबरी को दर्शाता है (अक्सर uncountable 'parity' के रूप में), और 'Caveats' का अर्थ चेतावनी/अपवाद है—ये संदर्भ से मेल नहीं खाते।
- **'Disparities'** will be used because it means significant differences/inequalities, matching the context of diverse state realities and the natural collocation “profound disparities.” Grammatically, a plural noun suits the relative clause “that define our nation.” Whereas, 'Uniformities' means samenesses (opposite idea), 'Parities' denotes

equality (typically as uncountable “parity”), and 'Caveats' are warnings—semantically misfitting here

25. A) '**Climb**' का use होगा क्योंकि "climb" का अर्थ होता है ऊपर की ओर बढ़ना/धीरे-धीरे प्रगति करना। sentence में बिहार “is only beginning to climb” (यानी GER/भागीदारी बढ़ने की शुरुआत) दर्शाता है, इसलिए 'climb' यहाँ सही है। जबकि 'Tumble' का अर्थ है गिर पड़ना/धड़ाम से गिरना, 'Belay' एक mountaineering term है (रस्सी को बाँधकर सुरक्षा देना) जो यहाँ अप्रासंगिक है, और 'Descend' का अर्थ है नीचे उतरना—ये सभी प्रगति के भाव से मेल नहीं खाते। साथ ही “beginning to + base verb” के नियम के अनुसार “to climb” व्याकरणतः सही है।

- '**Climb**' will be used because it means to move upward/advance, matching the idea that Bihar is only beginning to improve toward the GER target. Whereas, 'Tumble' means to fall suddenly, 'Belay' is a technical climbing term (to secure a rope) and contextually irrelevant, and 'Descend' means to go down—none fit the sense of progress. Grammatically, after “beginning to” we need the base verb; “to climb” satisfies this, while others are semantically incorrect here.



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