

Bitter victory: On the Asia Cup 2025 final

India's **attitude** to playing sports with Pakistan **makes** no sense

Sport is always **laced with** politics, but rarely does it **lose its character** as it did in cricket's Asia Cup 2025. Under warm Dubai skies, India **reiterated** its **continental dominance**. The **defending champion** **retained** the Asia Cup after Sunday's (September 28, 2025) final **swung** India's **way** when Pakistan **imploded**. The western neighbour was placed at 84 for one in 9.4 overs but then lost nine wickets adding just 62 while the Indian spinners **prevailed**. But India did not have it easy. Chasing 147, its top three were **back in the hut** while the score read a **mere** 20. Pakistan again had a chance but India found new heroes in Tilak Varma, Sanju Samson and Shivam Dube. Tilak's match-winning unbeaten 69 further **highlighted** the rich **vein** of talent **coursing** through India's cricketing heart. India's five-wicket **triumph** with two **deliveries** to **spare** **capped** a fine Asia Cup campaign in which all games were won and **arch-rival** Pakistan was **humbled** thrice. But this was a victory **sullied** by the **antics** of the Indian **squad**. Suryakumar Yadav's men refused to shake hands with their Pakistani **counterparts** all through the championship; an even more **obnoxious trait** was **revealed** when the **victors** refused to accept the trophy from Mohsin Naqvi, the Asian Cricket Council (ACC) president, the Pakistan Cricket Board chief, and also Pakistan Interior Minister. The **scars** of the Pahalgam terror attack and the **angst** over Operation Sindoor **may linger** but this was poor behaviour on the field.

If India **felt strongly** about playing against Pakistan, then the matches should have been skipped. This **lame excuse** of playing the neighbour only in multi-team tournaments, while avoiding **bilateral fixtures**, **does not cut ice**. Broadcast revenues **govern** these strategically placed India-Pakistan **clashes** in all tournaments, conducted by the International Cricket Council or the ACC. India-Pakistan contests always **had an edge** and it was **inevitable** due to Partition-trauma and multiple wars. Still in the 1980s, Dilip Vengsarkar and Javed Miandad would go hard against each other on the **turf** and would have a meal together at night. Punjabi pop, a shared cuisine and even common **expletives** **forged** a bond between players split by the Wagah border. But in these times of **shrill nationalism**, sport has become part of the external noise. **In one fell swoop**, Suryakumar's men and **petulant** Pakistani players have shown that sport can also **burn bridges**. This was unnecessary. While politics **cast a dark shadow on** the tournament, India still has some internal **assessment** to **deal with**. Suryakumar may have made some **smug** remarks in press conferences but he cannot hide his poor form in this tournament. The leader **cumulatively** scored a mere 72. This Indian T20 unit is still a work in progress even as it **seizes** tournaments.

[Practice Exercise]

- Red/blue coloring of words in the sentence indicate subject verb relationship; where 'red' denotes 'subject' and 'blue' denotes 'verb'.
- **Victor** (noun) – a person who defeats an enemy or opponent in a battle, game, or other competition. विजेता

Vocabulary

1. **Bitter** (adjective) – unpleasant, distasteful, acrimonious, resentful, painful कटु
2. **Lace** (with) (verb) – infuse, mix, blend, interweave, suffuse से युक्त होना
3. **Lose one's character** (phrase) – to lose the essential qualities that define something. अपना चरित्र खो देना
4. **Reiterate** (verb) – repeat, restate, reaffirm, emphasize, echo दोहराना
5. **Continental** (adjective) – regional, territorial, mainland, native, indigenous महाद्वीपीय
6. **Dominance** (noun) – supremacy, superiority, ascendancy, command, control प्रभुत्व
7. **Defending champion** (noun) – titleholder, reigning champion, incumbent, title defender, current winner वर्तमान चैंपियन
8. **Retain** (verb) – keep, hold, maintain, preserve, secure बरकरार रखना
9. **Swing someone's way** (phrase) – to turn in someone's favor. किसी के पक्ष में हो जाना
10. **Implode** (verb) – collapse, crumble, disintegrate, fall apart, break down अंदर से टूट जाना
11. **Prevail** (verb) – triumph, win, succeed, dominate, conquer प्रबल होना
12. **Back in the hut** (phrase) – (in cricket) to be out and return to the pavilion; to be dismissed. आउट होकर पवेलियन लौट जाना
13. **Mere** (adjective) – only, just, simple, bare, negligible महज
14. **Highlight** (verb) – emphasize, underscore, spotlight, accentuate, feature ज़ोर देना
15. **Vein** (noun) – streak, strand, thread, style, mode शैली
16. **Course** (verb) – flow, run, rush, surge, gush बहना
17. **Triumph** (noun) – victory, win, success, conquest, achievement जीत
18. **Delivery** (noun) – an act of throwing, bowling, or kicking a ball, especially a cricket ball.
19. **Spare** (verb) – save, leave, reserve, afford, forgo बचा हुआ
20. **Cap** (verb) – top off, crown, complete, finish, conclude समाप्त करना
21. **Arch-rival** (adjective) – main, chief, principal, biggest, sworn कट्टर प्रतिद्वंद्वी
22. **Humble** (verb) – defeat soundly, crush, overwhelm, trounce, subdue शिकस्त देना
23. **Sully** (verb) – tarnish, taint, stain, blemish, dishonour दागदार करना

24. **Antics** (noun) – pranks, capers, stunts, mischief, foolery तमाशा
25. **Squad** (noun) – team, group, unit, crew, contingent दल
26. **Counterpart** (noun) – equivalent, opposite number, peer, parallel प्रतिपक्ष
27. **Obnoxious** (adjective) – unpleasant, offensive, disgusting, repulsive, vile घृणित
28. **Trait** (noun) – characteristic, quality, feature, attribute, property विशेषता
29. **Reveal** (verb) – disclose, show, unveil, expose, divulge प्रकट करना
30. **Scar** (noun) – mark, trauma, damage, blemish, injury निशान
31. **Angst** (noun) – anxiety, fear, dread, apprehension, unease तनाव
32. **Linger** (verb) – persist, remain, stay, hang around, endure बना रहना
33. **Feel strongly** (phrase) – to have a powerful or deeply held opinion about something. दृढ़ मत रखना
34. **Lame** (adjective) – weak, feeble, poor, unconvincing, unsatisfactory कमज़ोर
35. **Bilateral** (adjective) – two-party, mutual, joint, reciprocal, between two द्विपक्षीय
36. **Fixture** (noun) – match, game, event, contest, meeting खेल
37. **Cut no ice** (phrase) – to have no influence or effect; to fail to make an impression. कोई असर न होना
38. **Govern** (verb) – control, rule, dictate, regulate, influence नियंत्रित करना
39. **Clash** (noun) – conflict, confrontation, fight, battle, encounter टकराव
40. **Have an edge** (phrase) – to have a slight advantage or a more intense quality. बढ़त होना
41. **Inevitable** (adjective) – unavoidable, inescapable, certain, sure, destined अनिवार्य
42. **Turf** (noun) – field, pitch, ground, territory, domain मैदान
43. **Expletive** (noun) – swear word, oath, curse, profanity, obscenity गाली
44. **Forge** (verb) – build, create, form, develop, establish गढ़ना
45. **Shrill** (adjective) – strident, harsh, piercing, sharp, high-pitched कर्कश
46. **Nationalism** (noun) – patriotism, chauvinism, jingoism, loyalty राष्ट्रवाद
47. **In one fell swoop** (phrase) – all at once, in a single action; suddenly and decisively. एक ही झटके में

48. **Petulant** (adjective) – bad-tempered, sulky, peevish, irritable, moody चिड़चिड़ा
49. **Burn bridges** (phrase) – to destroy one's path, connections, or opportunities, making it impossible to go back. पीछे लौटने का रास्ता तोड़ना
50. **Cast a shadow on** (phrase) – to spoil or create a negative feeling over something. बदनाम करना
51. **Assessment** (noun) – evaluation, appraisal, judgment, analysis, estimation आकलन
52. **Deal with** (phrase) – handle, manage, address, tackle, confront निपटना
53. **Smug** (adjective) – self-satisfied, complacent, superior, conceited, arrogant आत्मसंतुष्ट
54. **Cumulatively** (adverb) – collectively, altogether, combined, in total, overall कुल मिलाकर
55. **Seize** (verb) – grab, capture, take, win, conquer जीत लेना

Summary of the Editorial

1. India won the Asia Cup 2025 final in Dubai, defending its continental dominance.
2. Pakistan started strong at 84/1 but collapsed, losing nine wickets for just 62 runs.
3. Indian spinners played a decisive role in triggering Pakistan's batting collapse.
4. India's chase of 147 began poorly, with three top-order wickets falling at just 20 runs.
5. Tilak Varma's unbeaten 69 was the match-winning knock, showcasing young talent.
6. Sanju Samson and Shivam Dube also played key supporting roles in the chase.
7. India won the final by five wickets with two balls to spare, sealing a flawless campaign.
8. Pakistan was beaten three times in the tournament, underlining India's dominance.
9. However, India's victory was marred by unsportsmanlike behaviour.
10. The Indian players refused to shake hands with Pakistani counterparts throughout the tournament.
11. They also refused to accept the trophy from Mohsin Naqvi, ACC President and Pakistan's PCB chief.
12. The editorial criticises this behaviour, linking it to lingering anger over the Pahalgam terror attack and Operation Sindoor.
13. It argues that if India opposes playing Pakistan, it should avoid matches entirely instead of selective participation.
14. The contrast is drawn with the past, when Indo-Pak players competed fiercely but shared camaraderie off the field.
15. The piece concludes that excessive nationalism and political posturing are undermining cricket's spirit, while India's T20 team still has flaws to fix, including captain Suryakumar Yadav's poor form.

Practice Exercise: SSC Pattern Based**[Editorial Page]**

1. **What is the tone of the passage?**
 - A. Celebratory
 - B. Critical
 - C. Neutral
 - D. Humorous
2. **Who played the match-winning innings for India in the Asia Cup 2025 final?**
 - A. Sanju Samson
 - B. Shivam Dube
 - C. Tilak Varma
 - D. Suryakumar Yadav
3. **Why was India's victory described as "sullied" in the passage?**
 - A. Because India struggled to chase the target of 147.
 - B. Because India refused to shake hands with Pakistan players and declined the trophy from ACC president Mohsin Naqvi.
 - C. Because Pakistan lost too many wickets in a short span of overs.
 - D. Because Suryakumar Yadav scored only 72 runs in the tournament.
4. **Which inference best captures the author's stance on India's on-field conduct during the Asia Cup 2025?**
 - A. It undermined the value of the victory despite India's dominance.
 - B. It was justified given the recent terror attack and Operation Sindoor.
 - C. It had no bearing on how the tournament is perceived.
 - D. The ACC President's identity was irrelevant to the controversy.
5. **Direction: For the given Assertion (A) and Reason (R), determine the correct relationship between them. Select your answer from the following**

Assertion (A): The scheduling of India–Pakistan matches in multi-team tournaments is influenced by commercial considerations.

Reason (R): Broadcast revenues drive ICC/ACC to strategically place India–Pakistan clashes.

 - A. Both A and R are true, and R is the correct explanation of A.
 - B. Both A and R are true, but R is not the correct explanation of A.
 - C. A is true, but R is false.
 - D. A is false, but R is true.
6. **Improve the underlined/bold part of the sentence. Choose 'No improvement' as an answer if the sentence is grammatically correct.**

When the engine refused to start, the mechanic advised the driver **to try to push the car down the slope to start it.**

 - A. to try pushing the car down the slope to start it
 - B. trying to push the car down the slope to start it
 - C. try to pushing the car down the slope to start it
 - D. No improvement
7. **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) such as providing universal pre-kindergarten, extending an expanded tax credit for parents, further reducing health-care premiums for those covered under the Obama-era Affordable

Care Act, reducing a waiting list for in-home care, building a million units of low-income housing, and worker training and higher education

B) In what appears to be a rush to the finish line but is in fact the intention to fulfil long-standing policy promises of the Democratic Party, U.S. President Joe Biden sought to push through Congress an omnibus mega-bill seeking \$1.85 trillion for social security and climate change

C) To balance the implied considerable hike in federal public expenditure, the bill proposes to raise revenue via a 15% minimum tax on the reported profits of large corporations, clamping down on profit-shifting by multinationals, tighter enforcement for large corporations and ultra-high net worth individuals, a 1% tax on corporate tax buybacks, an additional 5% tax on incomes exceeding \$10 million a year and

D) While the initiative seemed to be thrust forward on a shorter timeline so that Mr. Biden could speak of his domestic agenda achievements at the G20 meeting in Rome and COP26 in Scotland, the once-in-a-generation bill speaks to issues

E) another 3% tax on incomes above \$25 million, and policies to limit business losses for the very wealthy and a 3.8% Medicare tax on people earning more than \$400,000 a year who did not previously pay that tax

A. DABCE

B. ABCDE

C. CADBE

D. BDACE

8. **Identify the part of speech of the underlined word.**

His only answer was a grunt.

A. Noun

B. Adjective

C. Pronoun

D. Determiner

9. **Improve the underlined/bold part of the sentence. Choose 'No improvement' as an answer if the sentence is grammatically correct.**

The strict security arrangements were designed **to prevent the protesters to enter** the restricted area of the assembly.

A. to prevent the protesters from entering

B. to prevent the protesters enter

C. to prevent of the protesters from entering

D. No improvement

10. **Select the most appropriate meaning of the given idiom.**

Dyed in the wool

A. Changing notions because of a fluffy mind

B. Assuming a different colour

C. Adapting to conditions

D. Unchanging and firm in belief and conviction

11. **Select the most appropriate synonym of the given word.**

CAULDRON

A. Kettle

- B. Censor
C. Crucible
D. Treen
12. **Select the most appropriate synonym of the given word.**
INTERPOLATE
A. Extrapolate
B. Abrogate
C. Interpose
D. Perambulate
13. **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) The Centre had earlier projected full-year GDP to contract by 8%. There was a 3.7% growth in fourth-quarter gross value added, with all but two of the economy's eight broad sectors posting expansions.
B) Still, the pandemic's crushing impact over the preceding three quarters meant that only the agriculture, forestry and fishing and the utility services recorded full-year growth.
C) Mining and quarrying and the worst-hit contact-intensive omnibus services category of trade, hotels, transport, communications and broadcasting contracted 5.7% and 2.3%, respectively.
D) GDP expanded by 1.6% in the final quarter of the last fiscal, an acceleration from the 0.5% growth in the preceding three-month period, that marginally softened the extent of the full-year's record contraction to 7.3%.
E) The national income estimates released by the NSO posit an economy that appears to have found some footing in the January-March quarter before the pandemic's second wave hit.
A. EDACB
B. DBAEC
C. CBD AE
D. BADEC
14. **The following sentence has been split into four segments. Identify the segment that contains a grammatical error.**
None of the senior managers in the company / was willing to support the controversial policy change, / and the proposal was eventually rejected / after several heated discussions.
A. None of the senior managers in the company
B. was willing to support the controversial policy change
C. and the proposal was eventually rejected
D. after several heated discussions
15. **Select the most appropriate meaning of the given idiom.**
Listen with half an ear
A. Not pay full attention
B. Being impartial
C. Being imperious
D. Listening with ironic distaste
16. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in the blank.**
Ranikhet is a place of remarkably _____ beauty.

- A. scenery
- B. scenic
- C. scene
- D. scenically

17. **Identify the part of speech of the underlined word.**

Consequently, this poses a threat to agriculture and human health.

- A. Adjective
- B. Adverb
- C. Verb
- D. Noun

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

Working in dim light _____ eye issues such as glaucoma.

- A. contributes
- B. precipitates
- C. eradicates
- D. eliminates

19. **The following sentence has been split into four segments. Identify the segment that contains a grammatical error.**

Not only the management but also the workers / was blamed for the decline in productivity, / since both failed to implement the new quality standards / and neglected the safety protocols issued by the ministry.

- A. Not only the management but also the workers
- B. was blamed for the decline in productivity
- C. since both failed to implement the new quality standards
- D. and neglected the safety protocols issued by the ministry

20. **Sentences of a paragraph are given below in jumbled order. Arrange the sentences in the right order to form a meaningful and coherent paragraph.**

- A. Whichever soonest made a traveller take off his cloak should be accounted the more powerful.
 - B. They agreed to put the point to test.
 - C. A dispute once arose between the wind and the sun to decide which was the stronger of the two.
 - D. The wind began, and blew with all his might and sent a blast, cold and fierce as a storm.
- A. CBAD
 - B. ACDB
 - C. BCDA
 - D. CDBA

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.

Autumn in the U.S. always brings back to me beautiful memories of Dasara and the excitement that filled those festive days. Growing up back home, the celebrations were more than just rituals — they were about community, tradition, and the simple joys that made childhood so special. With goodie bags in hand, we children would _____(1)_____ with friends, carefully

planning the order of houses to visit, _____(2)_____ to discover the surprises waiting for us at each doorstep. I _____(3)_____ remember passing by my music teacher's house, where she would call out my name and _____(4)_____ that I sing the Carnatic songs I had been practising _____(5)_____ weeks. Every home we visited carried that same expectation — a song, a prayer, or a verse before receiving the goodies and sundal (varieties of cooked lentils). It was never about just collecting treats; it was about sharing our voices, carrying forward tradition, and feeling a sense of belonging.

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

- A. set back
- B. set out
- C. set apart
- D. set aside

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

- A. eager
- B. reluctant
- C. indolent
- D. laconic

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

- A. loyally
- B. remorsefully
- C. sedulously
- D. vividly

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

- A. concede
- B. yield
- C. servile
- D. insist

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

- A. since
- B. from
- C. during
- D. for

Answers

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

[\[Practice Exercise\]](#)

Explanations

1. B) Critical

The author strongly criticizes the Indian team's unsporting behaviour (refusing handshakes, rejecting the trophy) despite their cricketing success. The tone is not merely reporting but judging.

A) Celebratory (Incorrect): Although India's victory is mentioned, the focus is not on celebration but on the negative aspects that marred the win.

C) Neutral (Incorrect): The passage is not detached; it is opinionated and judgmental.

D) Humorous (Incorrect): No attempt at humor or lightheartedness is present; the article discusses serious issues of politics and sportsmanship.

2. C) Tilak Varma

The passage clearly mentions that "Tilak's match-winning unbeaten 69 further highlighted the rich vein of talent coursing through India's cricketing heart." Hence, Tilak Varma was the match-winner.

A) Sanju Samson: He contributed but did not play the defining innings.

B) Shivam Dube: He also supported the chase but was not the match-winner.

D) Suryakumar Yadav: He was criticized for poor form, not praised for performance.

3. B) Because India refused to shake hands with Pakistan players and declined the trophy from ACC president Mohsin Naqvi.

The passage states, "But this was a victory sullied by the antics of the Indian squad.

Suryakumar Yadav's men refused to shake hands ... and refused to accept the trophy from Mohsin Naqvi." This directly explains why the win was considered tainted.

A) India struggled in the chase: True, but it doesn't explain the word "sullied" (moral/behavioral taint).

C) Pakistan's collapse: This was a cricketing factor, not related to sullied victory.

D) Suryakumar's poor form: This was an individual performance issue, not the reason for the sullied win.

4. A) It undermined the value of the victory despite India's dominance.

The passage says the "victory [was] sullied" and calls the behaviour "poor," showing the win's sheen was diminished by conduct like refusing handshakes and the trophy from Mohsin Naqvi.

B: The passage mentions the attack/angst but explicitly labels the behaviour "poor," so not justified.

C: Directly contradicted by "victory sullied" and "dark shadow," so it did affect perception.

D: The identity (Naqvi: ACC President & Pakistan minister) is central to why refusing the trophy was "obnoxious," so it's relevant.

5. A) Both A and R are true, and R is the correct explanation of A.

The passage states: "Broadcast revenues govern these strategically placed India-Pakistan clashes in all tournaments... conducted by the ICC or the ACC," which both confirms A and explains it (R).

B: R does explain A; eliminating B.

C: R is explicitly true in the passage, so C cannot hold.

D: If A were false, R couldn't simultaneously validate A's claim; the passage supports both.

6. A) 'try to push' के बदले 'try pushing' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि यहाँ आशय "experiment" (प्रयोग करके देखना) का है, न कि "attempt" का। "Try to do" = प्रयास करना, "Try doing" = प्रयोग करना।

जैसे— Try adding some sugar to the tea. (experiment)

'to try pushing' will be used instead of 'to try to push' because in this context, the meaning is "experiment with pushing the car," not "make an effort."

Like— Try pressing the reset button if the device doesn't work.

7. D) **BDACE**

B: It introduces the main subject, which is "U.S. President Joe Biden" and his attempt to push through an "omnibus mega-bill." This seems like a natural introduction to the paragraph since it establishes the main theme.

D: "While the initiative seemed..." This sentence provides context on why Biden wants to push the bill quickly (to showcase at the G20 meeting and COP26). The phrase "the once-in-a-generation bill speaks to issues" indicates that it will be followed by the details of the issues the bill speaks to.

A: Provides the details of what the bill seeks to address, which is a continuation from D. It lists various policy areas that the bill touches upon.

C: Starts with "To balance the implied considerable hike..." which means this is a counter or a balancing argument to the aforementioned policies. The use of "To balance" indicates that some measures or policies have been introduced before this that would lead to a hike in public expenditure.

E: This continues the list of policies from C on how the government plans to raise revenue.

8. B) **Adjective**

only is limiting the noun "answer," so it functions as an attributive adjective (a limiter). यह "answer" को सीमित करता है, इसलिए विशेषण।

9. A) 'prevent ... to enter' के बदले 'prevent ... from entering' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि verbs जैसे Prevent/Prohibit/Restrain/Dissuade के बाद structure होता है: verb + object + from + V-ing।

जैसे— They prevented him from leaving.

- 'from entering' will be used instead of 'to enter' because the correct structure after 'prevent' is: prevent + object + from + V-ing.

Like— The guard prevented the child from crossing the road.

10. D) **Dyed in the wool** (idiom) – Unchanging and firm in belief and conviction दृढ़ और अडिग विश्वास वाला

11. A) **Cauldron** (noun) – A large metal pot used for boiling or cooking over a fire; boiler. बड़ा लोहे का भगोना/देगा।

Synonym: Kettle (noun) – A metal pot for boiling liquids. पानी उबालने/पकाने की केतली/बर्तन।

- **Censer** (noun) – A container in which incense is burned. धूपदान।

- **Crucible** (noun) – A heat-resistant container for melting substances; also a severe test. धातु गलाने की पात्र; कठोर परीक्षा।
 - **Treen** (noun) – Small wooden household articles. लकड़ी के घरेलू बर्तन/सामान।
12. C) **Interpolate** (verb) – To insert something between other parts or elements; to interject material into a text or conversation; to estimate a value between known data points. बीच में जोड़ना/घुसाना; पाठ में सामग्री जोड़ना; मध्य मान निकालना।
- Synonym: Interpose** (verb) – To place or insert between; to interject. बीच में रखना/डालना; बीच-बचाव करना।
- **Extrapolate** (verb) – To infer or estimate by extending beyond known data. ज्ञात आँकड़ों के बाहर अनुमान लगाना।
 - **Abrogate** (verb) – To repeal or abolish formally. औपचारिक रूप से रद्द करना/समाप्त करना।
 - **Perambulate** (verb) – To walk through or about; to stroll. टहलना/घूमना।
13. A) **EDACB**
- E -> Refers to the national income estimates released by the NSO that suggests the economy found some footing before the pandemic's second wave. This provides an introduction.
- D -> This speaks about the GDP growth in the final quarter, softening the contraction to 7.3%. This gives a detailed overview of the economy's position at the end of the fiscal year.
- A -> Mentions the Centre's projection about the GDP contraction and how the actual results differed.
- C -> Goes into detail about specific sectors that faced contraction.
- B -> Closes by addressing the overall impact of the pandemic on most sectors, with only a few showing growth.
14. B) 'was willing' के बदले **'were willing'** होना चाहिए क्योंकि subject None of the senior managers plural है।
Rule: None of + plural noun → verb can be singular or plural (plural preferred in exams).
✓ None of the players were absent.
Correct sentence:
None of the senior managers in the company were willing to support the controversial policy change...
15. A) **Listen with half an ear** (idiom) – Not pay full attention पूरी तरह ध्यान न देना
16. B) 'scenic' सही है क्योंकि "scenic beauty" fixed collocation है। 'scenery/scene/scenically' व्याकरण/कोलोकेशन के लिहाज़ से सही नहीं।
- 'scenic beauty' is a fixed collocation; the others don't fit grammatically or collocationally.
17. B) It's a sentence adverb showing result/impact (therefore/so). क्रिया/वाक्य को modify करता है—परिणाम सूचित करता है।

18. B) 'precipitates' का use किया जाएगा क्योंकि यह क्रिया सीधे कारण बनने (bring about/cause) का अर्थ देती है। 'Contributes' के साथ 'to' चाहिए (contributes to), और 'eradicates/eliminates' विपरीत अर्थ देते हैं—समस्या को खत्म करना।

- 'Precipitates' fits because it means "causes/brings about" directly. 'Contributes' needs the preposition 'to', and 'eradicates/eliminates' mean to remove the issue, which is opposite in sense here.

19. B) 'was blamed' गलत है क्योंकि verb को nearer subject (the workers — plural) से agree करना चाहिए। सही होगा — were blamed.

- "Was blamed" is wrong because in not only ... but also constructions, the verb agrees with the nearer subject. Here the nearer subject is the workers (plural), so it should be were blamed.

20. A) **CBAD**

C starts the sentence with the subject "A dispute", which introduces the main topic of the paragraph—the conflict between the wind and the sun.

B follows C as it logically connects with the verb "agreed", explaining how the wind and the sun decided to resolve their dispute. This establishes a clear cause-effect relationship: A dispute arose → They agreed to test it.

A comes next as it introduces the condition ("Whichever soonest made a traveller take off his cloak") that determines the winner, setting up the challenge between the wind and the sun.

D concludes the paragraph by describing the wind's action ("blew with all his might"), which follows naturally after the condition is set in A.

In Hindi:

- C sentence की शुरुआत करता है, क्योंकि यह subject "A dispute" को introduce करता है, जो paragraph का main topic है—हवा और सूरज के बीच विवाद।
- B, C के बाद आता है क्योंकि यह verb "agreed" को जोड़ता है, जो बताता है कि हवा और सूरज ने अपने विवाद को कैसे सुलझाने का फैसला किया। यह एक clear cause-effect relationship बनाता है: विवाद हुआ → उन्होंने इसे test करने का फैसला किया।
- A, B के बाद आता है क्योंकि यह condition ("जो पहले यात्री का cloak उतार देगा") set करता है, जिससे हवा और सूरज के बीच चुनौती स्पष्ट होती है।
- D paragraph को conclude करता है, क्योंकि यह हवा की action ("जोर से बहना") describe करता है, जो A में set की गई condition के बाद naturally आता है।

21. B) 'Set out' का use होगा क्योंकि "set out" का अर्थ होता है यात्रा या योजना शुरू करना।

Sentence में कहा गया है कि बच्चे अपने दोस्तों के साथ निकलते थे और घरों का क्रम प्लान करते थे, इसलिए यहाँ "set out" सही बैठता है। जबकि 'Set back' का अर्थ है पीछे हटाना या देरी करना, 'Set apart' का अर्थ है अलग करना, और 'Set aside' का अर्थ है अलग रखना या रिज़र्व करना — ये सब इस context में फिट नहीं होते।

- 'Set out' will be used because it means to begin a journey or start an activity with a purpose. The sentence shows that the children started off with friends, planning the order of houses to visit, so 'set out' is the grammatically and contextually correct choice. Whereas, 'Set back' means to delay, 'Set apart' means to separate, and 'Set

aside' means to reserve or keep for later — none of which match the intended meaning here.

22. A) **Eager** का use होगा क्योंकि "eager" का अर्थ है उत्सुक या उत्साहित होकर प्रतीक्षा करना।

Sentence में बच्चों का उत्साह दिखाया गया है कि वे हर दरवाज़े पर मिलने वाले सरप्राइज़ जानने के लिए बेसब्र थे। इसलिए यहाँ 'eager' सही बैठता है। जबकि 'reluctant' का अर्थ है अनिच्छुक होना, 'indolent' का अर्थ है आलसी होना, और 'laconic' का अर्थ है कम शब्दों में बोलना। ये सभी context में उत्साह व्यक्त नहीं करते, इसलिए गलत हैं।

- **'Eager'** will be used because it means keen or enthusiastic anticipation. The sentence shows children's excitement to discover surprises at each doorstep, so "eager" fits correctly. Whereas 'reluctant' means unwilling, 'indolent' means lazy, and 'laconic' means using very few words. These do not express excitement in this context, hence incorrect.

23. D) **Vividly** का use होगा क्योंकि "vividly" का अर्थ है किसी बात को बहुत स्पष्ट और जीवंत रूप से याद करना।

sentence में लिखा है कि I _____ remember passing by my music teacher's house..., यहाँ context यादों की गहराई और स्पष्टता का है, इसलिए 'vividly' सही है। जबकि 'Loyally' का अर्थ है वफादारी से, 'Remorsefully' का अर्थ है पछतावे के साथ, और 'Sedulously' का अर्थ है परिश्रम से, जो इस context में सही नहीं है।

- **'Vividly'** will be used because it means to recall something clearly and with lifelike detail. The sentence says I vividly remember passing by my music teacher's house..., which shows clarity and intensity of memory. Whereas, 'Loyally' means with faithfulness, 'Remorsefully' means with regret, and 'Sedulously' means with diligence, none of which fit this context.

24. D) **Insist** का use होगा क्योंकि "insist" का अर्थ है किसी बात पर ज़ोर देना या आग्रह करना।

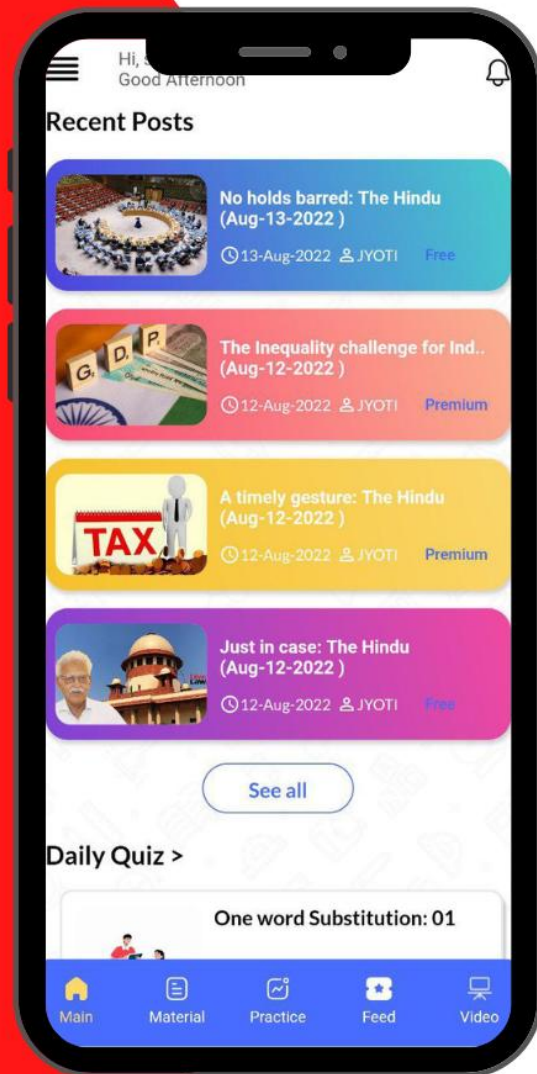
sentence में लिखा है कि music teacher बच्चे को नाम लेकर बुलाती थी और ज़ोर देती थी कि वह Carnatic गाने गाए, इसलिए 'insist' यहाँ बिल्कुल सही है। जबकि 'Concede' का अर्थ है मान लेना या झुक जाना, 'Yield' का अर्थ है हार मान लेना या रास्ता देना, और 'Servile' adjective है जिसका अर्थ है दासवत या अत्यधिक विनम्र होना—ये तीनों context और grammar दोनों में fit नहीं होते।

- **'Insist'** will be used because it means to strongly demand or urge something. The sentence says the music teacher called out the child's name and insisted that he sing Carnatic songs, which makes perfect sense here. Whereas, 'Concede' means to admit or give in, 'Yield' means to surrender or give way, and 'Servile' is an adjective meaning overly submissive — none of these grammatically or contextually fit.

25. D) **For** का use होगा क्योंकि "for" का अर्थ होता है किसी duration (समयावधि) को दर्शाना।

sentence में mention किया गया है कि "I had been practising for weeks", यानी कई हफ्तों से लगातार अभ्यास चल रहा था, इसलिए 'for' यहाँ सही है। जबकि 'Since' किसी specific starting point (जैसे since Monday) के साथ प्रयोग होता है, 'From' भी starting point दिखाता है पर duration वाले continuous tense में उपयुक्त नहीं है, और 'During' किसी घटना/समय के भीतर को दर्शाता है (जैसे during holidays), इसलिए ये context में सही नहीं हैं।

- **'For'** will be used because it denotes a duration of time. The sentence says "I had been practising for weeks," which clearly shows the action continued over a period. Whereas, 'Since' refers to a specific starting point (e.g., since Monday), 'From' also shows a starting point but doesn't fit with the continuous duration here, and 'During' indicates within an event/time (e.g., during holidays), which doesn't fit this context.



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