

## On mute: On the U.S., geopolitical turmoil, India's response

India's interests can be secured only by **assertion** of its **strategic autonomy**

The new year has brought little change in the geopolitical turmoil **unleashed** by the Trump administration, beginning with the U.S.'s unlawful action in Venezuela, followed by its threats to carry out similar regime-changing operations in South America and **stated** plans to **annex** Greenland. The U.S. Congress is now expected to discuss a new law that **mandates** up to 500% in tariffs on countries purchasing oil or uranium from Russia. The U.S. also **stepped up** its **rhetoric** against Iran for **crackdowns** against protesters, **imposing** more **sanctions** and threatening to attack it. In a social media post, Mr. Trump said that he would **levy** an additional 25% tariff on trade with any country doing business with Iran and the U.S. is pushing India to **wind up** operations at Chabahar port, where India has invested billions of dollars. **In the face of** such aggressive and **unilateral** actions, New Delhi's responses have been muted, when not weak. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has expressed "deep concern" over events in Venezuela, but did not mention the U.S.'s **egregious** action of kidnapping the Venezuelan President and his wife, nor did it refer to the violation of basic **tenets** of international law. No statement has been made on the threats against the other countries (Cuba and Colombia), **presumably** as they are not in India's immediate **vicinity**. On Iran, however, **which is** a close neighbour and **has** a historical relationship with India, the government's reaction has been the most puzzling. It has not commented on the street protests or the U.S.'s threats of strikes and tariffs. The **MEA has**, however, issued travel **advisories** for Iran and Israel and **is** preparing **evacuation** plans for Indian students in Iran. Government officials also say India will reduce its trade with Iran further from current low levels.

The government's **motivations** in not naming the U.S. for its obvious **overreach** **can be** explained. After a **tense** year in **ties** and a failure to **conclude** the India-U.S. Bilateral Trade Agreement, there is some hope of some movement on relations soon. U.S. **Ambassador** to India Sergio Gor **has** painted an **optimistic** future for ties, beginning with the trade agreement and the inclusion of India in the U.S.'s high-technology partnership 'Pax Silica' next month. Officials may argue that little can be gained by speaking up now and risking another **downturn** in ties. However, each new **threat** by the U.S. is hurting ordinary Indians and the Indian economy. Above all, India **stands to** lose economically, reputationally and **in terms of** its other relationships as well, in a year where it hopes to **host** the BRICS+ Summit. The Modi government's **experience** from 2019, when it **gave up** buying Iranian and Venezuelan oil under U.S. pressure **should** be a signal lesson — **appeasement** of a global power, however strong, cannot **ensure** India's interests, only an **assertion** of its strategic autonomy can do that.

**[Practice Exercise]**

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

## Vocabulary

1. **Geopolitical** (adjective) – Relating to politics, especially international relations, influenced by geographical factors भू-राजनीतिक
2. **turmoil** (noun) – instability, unrest, upheaval, turbulence, disorder उथल-पुथल
3. **Strategic** (adjective) – calculated, tactical, planned, deliberate, diplomatic रणनीतिक
4. **Autonomy** (noun) – self-governance, independence, sovereignty, self-rule, freedom स्वायत्तता
5. **Unleash** (verb) – release, vent, trigger, let loose, unshackle शुरू करना
6. **State** (verb) – declare, assert, announce, affirm, voice स्पष्ट रूप से कहना
7. **Annex** (verb) – occupy, seize, take over, appropriate, conquer कब्जा करना
8. **Mandate** (verb) – decree, ordain, command, authorize, enjoin आदेश देना
9. **Step up** (phrasal verb) – to increase the amount, speed, or intensity of something (especially in a proactive way) तेज करना
10. **Rhetoric** (noun) – oratory, bombast, grandiloquence, discourse, hyperbole वाकपटुता
11. **Crackdown** (noun) – suppression, clampdown, repression, quashing, restraint कठोर कार्रवाई
12. **Impose** (verb) – inflict, levy, enforce, foist, dictate थोपना
13. **Sanction** (noun) – penalty, deterrent, embargo, punitive action, restriction प्रतिबंध
14. **Levy** (verb) – impose, charge, tax, exact, collect लगाना
15. **Wind up** (phrasal verb) – to bring something to an end or to conclude a business activity समाप्त करना
16. **In the face of** (phrase) – despite having to deal with a difficult situation or problem के बावजूद या के सामने
17. **Unilateral** (adjective) – one-sided, independent, solitary, monoalient, partisan एकतरफा
18. **Egregious** (adjective) – atrocious, horrific, flagrant, outrageous, scandalous अत्यंत बुरा या भीषण
19. **Tenet** (noun) – principle, belief, doctrine, dogma, precept सिद्धांत या मत
20. **Presumably** (adverb) – supposedly, probably, seemingly, ostensibly, likely संभवतः या अनुमानतः

21. **Vicinity** (noun) – proximity, neighborhood, locality, propinquity, adjacency आस-पास या पड़ोस
22. **Advisory** (noun) – notification, bulletin, warning, caution, alert परामर्श
23. **Evacuation** (noun) – withdrawal, removal, clearance, exit, exodus खाली कराना
24. **Overreach** (noun) – excess, immoderation, overextension, overstepping, intrusion अति करना
25. **Tense** (adjective) – strained, fraught, uneasy, stressful, rigid तनावपूर्ण
26. **Tie** (noun) – bond, connection, link, relation, association संबंध
27. **Conclude** (verb) – finish, terminate, settle, finalize, clinch समाप्त करना या निष्कर्ष निकालना
28. **Ambassador** (noun) – diplomat, envoy, emissary, representative, plenipotentiary राजदूत
29. **Optimistic** (adjective) – hopeful, sanguine, buoyant, upbeat, confident आशावादी
30. **Downturn** (noun) – decline, slump, recession, drop, ebb गिरावट
31. **Stand (to)** (verb) – to be in a position where you are likely to experience or achieve something किसी स्थिति में होना (लाभ या हानि की)
32. **In terms of** (phrase) – with regard to the particular aspect or subject being specified के संदर्भ में
33. **Host** (verb) – organize, present, accommodate, hold, arrange मेजबानी करना
34. **Give up** (phrasal verb) – to stop doing or having something; to surrender or abandon त्याग देना या छोड़ देना
35. **Appeasement** (noun) – conciliation, placation, propitiation, mollification, pacification तुष्टीकरण
36. **Assertion** (noun) – declaration, affirmation, contention, proclamation, insistence दृढ़तापूर्वक कहना या दावा

## Summary of the Editorial

1. The global geopolitical instability sparked by the Trump administration continues into the new year.
2. The U.S. has taken controversial actions such as intervening in Venezuela's leadership and threatening other regions.
3. Plans by the U.S. Congress might introduce tariffs of up to 500% on nations buying Russian oil or uranium.
4. The U.S. has intensified rhetoric and sanctions against Iran over protests and threatened military action.
5. A social media announcement by Trump imposed an additional 25% tariff on trade with any country doing business with Iran.
6. The U.S. has pressured India to cease operations at the strategically important Chabahar port in Iran.
7. India's official reaction to these U.S. moves has been muted rather than strongly critical.
8. The Ministry of External Affairs expressed concern about Venezuela but did not condemn U.S. actions or cite violations of international law.
9. New Delhi has remained silent on threats to other countries, likely because they are not in India's immediate strategic neighborhood.
10. On Iran, India has refrained from commenting publicly on the protests or U.S. threats, focusing instead on travel advisories and evacuation plans.
11. Government officials indicate that India plans to further reduce trade with Iran amid these pressures.
12. One reason for India's cautious response may be the desire to improve bilateral ties with the U.S., including a stalled trade agreement and participation in the U.S.-led *Pax Silica* tech partnership.
13. Critics argue that staying silent may harm India's economic and diplomatic interests, especially as it seeks to host the upcoming BRICS+ Summit.
14. The editorial suggests that India's experience in 2019 — when it stopped buying Iranian and Venezuelan oil under U.S. pressure — shows that appeasing a powerful country does not secure national interests.
15. To truly safeguard its interests, India needs to assert its **strategic autonomy** rather than yield to external coercion.

## Practice Exercise: SSC Pattern Based

1. **What is the tone of the passage?**

[Editorial Page]

  - A. Humorous and satirical
  - B. Nostalgic and emotional
  - C. Critical and cautionary
  - D. Indifferent and neutral
2. **What can be reasonably inferred about India's silence on U.S. actions from the passage?**
  - A. India fears harming current diplomatic negotiations
  - B. India distrusts Venezuelan political leadership
  - C. India desires supporting U.S. sanctions strategy
  - D. India prefers non-alignment in global disputes
3. **Why does the passage call India's reaction towards Iran "puzzling"?**
  - A. Iran demands tariffs against Indian goods
  - B. Iran opposes India in major regional affairs
  - C. Iran rejects India's BRICS+ participation
  - D. Iran shares history and proximity with India
4. **Direction: Identify whether the statement is True or False as per the passage.**  
**Statement:**  
 India refrained from publicly criticising the United States due to expectations of improved bilateral relations.
  - A. Statement is fully false
  - B. Statement is fully true
  - C. Statement is partly false
  - D. Statement is partly true
5. **Based on the passage, which option best reflects the implicit causal relationship affecting India's strategic choices?**
  - A. Economic pressure shaped diplomatic silence
  - B. Cultural affinity shaped diplomatic silence
  - C. Domestic politics shaped diplomatic silence
  - D. Military alliances shaped diplomatic silence
6. **The word "egregious" in the passage most nearly means:**
  - A. Flagrant
  - B. Doubtful
  - C. Subtle
  - D. Defensive
7. **Which spelling is correct for a word meaning 'relating to the countryside'?**
  - A. Rurall
  - B. Rurel
  - C. Rural
  - D. Rurrall
8. **Choose the correct meaning of idiom:**  
 Know which way the wind blows
  - A. Determine compass directions
  - B. Predict literal weather

- C. Sense how events or opinion are trending before acting  
D. Forget instructions
- 9. Select the sentence containing the homonym of the highlighted word:**

The monk rested near the cloister's **ambulatory**.  
A. The architect designed the ambulatory around the apse.  
B. The hospital's ambulatory was upgraded with oxygen ports.  
C. The tourist strolled the ambulatory of the cathedral.  
D. The relics were displayed along the gothic ambulatory.

- 10. Fill in the blank with the correctly spelt word.**

The new theory was dismissed as \_\_\_\_\_ by the mainstream scientific community.

- A. prepostrous  
B. preposterous  
C. preposturous  
D. preposteroos

- 11. Rearrange the following sentences to form a meaningful passage:**

1. The shift to renewable energy sources is essential for the future of our planet.
  2. Solar and wind energy are among the most promising alternatives to fossil fuels.
  3. Governments must invest in renewable energy infrastructure.
  4. Energy storage solutions are critical to ensuring a stable energy supply.
- A. 1-2-4-3  
B. 2-3-1-4  
C. 4-1-3-2  
D. 3-1-2-4

- 12. Select the most appropriate antonym of the word "Glaring."**

- A. Obscure  
B. Lucid  
C. Tangible  
D. Explicit

- 13. By the time the audit concludes, the firm \_\_\_ its compliance report**

- A. files  
B. will file  
C. will have filed  
D. had filed

- 14. Find the part of the sentence that contains an error:**

No sooner the results were announced (1)/ than the shareholders (2)/ started questioning the management's (3)/ strategic decisions. (4)/

- A. (1)  
B. (2)  
C. (3)  
D. (4)

- 15. Find the part of the sentence that contains an error:**

The extent to which the minister's statement came under criticism (1)/ reflects not merely public dissatisfaction (2)/ but also that the media has (3)/ increasingly begun scrutinising political rhetoric. (4)

- A. (1)
- B. (2)
- C. (3)
- D. (4)

16. Convert the sentence provided below from its passive voice structure to an active voice structure:

The agreement was found to have been violated despite multiple warnings.

- A. It was found that someone violated the agreement.
- B. Authorities found that the agreement was being violated.
- C. Authorities found the agreement had been violated.
- D. It had been found that the agreement was violated.

17. Choose the most suitable option to replace the highlighted part of the sentence:

He is sleeping when I called him.

- A. has been sleeping
- B. was sleeping when I called
- C. is slept
- D. has slept

18. Select the most appropriate antonym of the word "Severity."

- A. Tranquility
- B. Leniency
- C. Dexterity
- D. Audacity

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

- Unlittered
- A. Reclusive
- B. Illusory
- C. Immaculate
- D. Morbid

20. A sentence is provided in indirect speech. From the four given options, choose the one that most accurately conveys the sentence in its corresponding direct speech.

He mentioned that his team would start the project next week.

- A. He mentioned, "My team will start the project next week."
- B. He mentioned, "My team is starting the project next week."
- C. He mentioned, "My team would be starting the project next week."
- D. He said, "The project shall be started next week."

#### 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.

The two children lost their way in the woods. They had heard tales about a witch residing in are mote corner of \_\_\_\_\_ [A] woods. The witch was notorious for eating children. They became afraid as the sky \_\_\_\_\_ [B] dark. They were getting hungry and tired as well. Soon after, they came across \_\_\_\_\_ [C] old cottage. The chimney of the house was emitting smoke. It started to rain heavily, and they rushed inside the cottage without giving it a second

thought. To \_\_\_\_\_ [D] surprise, they found a \_\_\_\_\_ [E1], \_\_\_\_\_ [E2],  
\_\_\_\_\_ [E3] woman inside the house. She offered them chocolates to eat.

21. **Fill in the blank marked [A] using the most appropriate option.**

- A. those
- B. this
- C. them
- D. that

22. **Fill in the blank marked [B] using the most appropriate option.**

- A. turned
- B. does turn
- C. have turned
- D. were turning

23. **Fill in the blank marked [C] using the most appropriate option**

- A. the
- B. an
- C. no article
- D. a

24. **Fill in the blank marked [D] using the most appropriate option**

- A. their
- B. they're
- C. there are
- D. there

25. **Select the most appropriate option to sequentially fill in the blanks marked [E1], [E2], [E3].**

- A. sweet, old, skinny
- B. sweet, skinny, old
- C. old, skinny, sweet
- D. skinny, old, sweet

## Answers

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

[\[Practice Exercise\]](#)

## Explanations

**1. C) Critical and cautionary**

The passage criticizes U.S. aggressive actions and India's muted responses, while warning that failing to assert strategic autonomy will harm India's interests. This reflects both criticism and caution.

- B. Nostalgic and emotional — No sentiment of longing for the past or emotional recollection is present.  
 A. Humorous and satirical — The tone is serious; no humor, irony, or satire is used.  
 D. Indifferent and neutral — The author clearly expresses concern and evaluation; not neutral or detached.

**2. A) India fears harming current diplomatic negotiations**

The passage states India is hopeful for improvement in ties, including trade negotiations and high-technology partnerships, so it avoids confrontation. This implies fear of damaging ongoing negotiations.

- B incorrect: Passage never states India distrusts Venezuela; silence linked to U.S. pressure.  
 C incorrect: India reducing trade under pressure shows compulsion, not desire.  
 D incorrect: Non-alignment alone doesn't explain specific silence tied to future trade benefits.

**3. D) Iran shares history and proximity with India**

The passage explicitly notes Iran is a close neighbour with a historical relationship, yet India remained publicly silent—hence “puzzling”.

- A incorrect: Passage contains no reference to Iranian tariffs on India.  
 B incorrect: No indication of Iran opposing Indian regional interests.  
 C incorrect: BRICS+ is mentioned in context of India hosting, not Iran rejecting.

**4. B) Statement is fully true**

The passage clearly states that India avoided criticising the U.S. because officials hoped for progress on the trade agreement and high-technology partnership. This makes the statement entirely true.

- A (fully false): Incorrect because the passage directly confirms the reasoning.  
 C (partly false): Incorrect because no contradicting reason is provided in passage.  
 D (partly true): Incorrect because the statement aligns fully, not partially.

**5. A) Economic pressure shaped diplomatic silence**

The passage describes U.S. tariffs, sanctions, oil constraints, and trade leverage affecting India. This shows economic pressure influencing India's muted responses.

- B (Cultural affinity): No cultural referent in policy reasoning  
 C (Domestic politics): Passage never attributes silence to internal politics  
 D (Military alliances): No military alliance is mentioned as causal factor

**6. A) Flagrant**

Egregious = outstandingly bad or shocking. प्रबल

Flagrant = obviously offensive or shockingly bad → same meaning, hence synonym.

- B. Doubtful: relates to uncertainty; not related to severity.  
 C. Subtle: means delicate/understated; opposite of obviousness.  
 D. Defensive: means protective posture; unrelated to moral offensiveness
7. C) The correct spelling of the word meaning relating to the countryside is Rural which means “connected with villages or the countryside” ग्रामीण, देहाती।
8. C) **Know which way the wind blows** (idiom) – Sense how events or opinion are trending before acting : स्थिति या हालात किस दिशा में जा रहे हैं, यह पहले से भांप लेना।
9. B) **The hospital's ambulatory was upgraded with oxygen ports**  
 वाक्य में 'ambulatory' का अर्थ है — मठ या गिरजाघर में स्तंभों से घिरा हुआ गलियारा (a covered walkway around a cloister or apse in church architecture)।  
 अब हमें ऐसा वाक्य चुनना है जिसमें यही शब्द एक दूसरे अर्थ (homonym) में प्रयोग हुआ हो। विकल्प B में 'ambulatory' का अर्थ है — हॉस्पिटल का वह विभाग या यूनिट जहाँ चलने-फिरने वाले (non-bedridden) मरीजों का इलाज होता है, यानी outpatient ward। दोनों में उच्चारण/स्पेलिंग समान है, पर अर्थ पूरी तरह भिन्न — इसलिए यह homonym है।
- In the highlighted sentence, ambulatory means a covered architectural walkway in a cloister or around a church apse.
- In option B, ambulatory means a medical area for patients who can walk (an outpatient section of a hospital).
- Same spelling and pronunciation, but completely different meanings — hence a homonym.
10. B) **preposterous** का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि पूरे संदर्भ में sentence किसी नई theory को “बेतुका/अतार्किक” बताकर खारिज किए जाने की बात कर रहा है। “Preposterous” का सही अर्थ भी “absurd, ridiculous, illogical” होता है। अन्य सभी विकल्पों की spellings गलत हैं। इसलिए "preposterous" सबसे उपयुक्त और सही-spelt विकल्प होगा।
- ‘Preposterous’ should be used because in the entire context, the sentence is referring to a new theory being rejected as “absurd/illogical.” The meaning of “preposterous” aligns with “ridiculous or illogical,” and all other options are incorrectly spelt. Thus, “preposterous” is the most appropriate and correctly spelled choice.

11. A) **1-2-4-3**

- 1 starts the paragraph by stating the main idea—the importance of shifting to renewable energy for the planet's future.
- 2 follows by giving examples of renewable alternatives, such as solar and wind energy, to fossil fuels.
- 4 comes next, explaining that energy storage solutions are necessary to maintain a stable and reliable energy supply.
- 3 concludes the paragraph by emphasizing the role of governments in investing in renewable energy infrastructure.

1 पैराग्राफ की शुरुआत करता है क्योंकि यह मुख्य विचार बताता है—भविष्य के लिए नवीकरणीय ऊर्जा की ओर बदलाव आवश्यक है।

2 इसके बाद आता है जो फॉसिल फ्यूल के विकल्प के रूप में सौर और पवन ऊर्जा जैसे उदाहरण देता है।

4 फिर आता है जो बताता है कि स्थिर ऊर्जा आपूर्ति सुनिश्चित करने के लिए ऊर्जा भंडारण समाधान जरूरी हैं।

3 अंत में आता है जो नवीकरणीय ऊर्जा अवसंरचना में सरकारों के निवेश की आवश्यकता पर ज़ोर देता है।

12. A) **Glaring** (adjective) – Obvious, clearly visible. स्पष्ट

Antonym: **Obscure** – Not clear, hidden. अस्पष्ट

- **Lucid** – Clear expression. स्पष्ट
- **Tangible** – Real/perceptible. ठोस
- **Explicit** – Clearly stated. प्रत्यक्ष

13. C) **will have filed** का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि वाक्य में By the time the audit concludes Future Perfect Tense की मांग करता है। यह दर्शाता है कि ऑडिट खत्म होने से पहले-पहले कंपनी अपनी रिपोर्ट जमा कर चुकी होगी। इसलिए Future Perfect (will have + V3) सबसे उपयुक्त विकल्प है।

The time expression “By the time ...” indicates that one future action will be completed before another future point of time.

To show an action that will be finished before a specific future moment, English uses the Future Perfect Tense.

Structure of Future Perfect:

will have + past participle (V<sup>3</sup>)

Here, filing the compliance report will be completed before the audit concludes.

Other Options Analysis:

files — Simple present does not show prior completion.

will file — Simple future shows intention, not completion before a future time.

had filed — Past perfect is used for past actions, not future reference.

Correct Sentence: By the time the audit concludes, the firm will have filed its compliance report.

14. A) (1) में त्रुटि है क्योंकि No sooner के बाद did (helping verb) का प्रयोग आवश्यक होता है, और Main verb को उसके मूल रूप (base form) में लिखा जाता है। सही संरचना होती है:

No sooner + did + subject + verb (base form) + than...

जैसे— No sooner did he arrive than it started raining.

• In part (1), the error occurs because No sooner requires the auxiliary did, and the main verb must be in its base form. The correct structure is:

No sooner + did + subject + verb (base form) + than...

Like— No sooner did he arrive than it started raining.

15. C) 'has' के बदले 'have' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि media को formal English में plural collective noun माना जाता है। इसलिए verb भी plural होना चाहिए। यहाँ clause में लिखा है “the media has”, जो गलत है; सही रूप होगा “the media have”.

“Media” is the plural form of medium and is treated as a plural collective noun in formal English.

Therefore, it takes a plural verb.

Using “has” (singular) with media is considered incorrect in standard/formal usage, especially in exams.

Correct Sentence: The extent to which the minister's statement came under criticism reflects not merely public dissatisfaction but also that the media have increasingly begun scrutinising political rhetoric.

16. C) **Authorities** found the agreement had been violated.

Active से Passive Voice में बदलने के लिए, Passive वाक्य के छिपे हुए doer (agent) को पहचानकर उसे Active वाक्य का Subject बनाया जाता है। Verb को Passive रूप से निकालकर Active रूप में बदलते समय सही Tense का ध्यान रखा जाता है। दिए गए Passive वाक्य "The agreement was found to have been violated" में "the agreement" Object-like position में है और वास्तविक कर्ता (agent) अप्रकट है, जिसे अर्थ के अनुसार "Authorities" माना जाता है।

Passive रूप was found to have been violated Active में बदलकर found the agreement had been violated बना है, जहाँ Subject "Authorities" रखकर वाक्य अर्थपूर्ण बना है।

To change a sentence from Passive to Active Voice:

The agent (doer) of the passive sentence becomes the subject of the active sentence.

The verb is changed from its passive form to the active form, while keeping the same tense and meaning.

In impersonal passive structures ("was found to have..."), the active form usually introduces a general subject like authorities / people / someone.

In this sentence:

"The agreement" → Subject (Passive)

"was found" → Verb (Simple Past Passive)

"to have been violated" → Perfect Infinitive Passive

"despite multiple warnings" → Concessive phrase

After conversion:

"Authorities" → Subject

"found" → Active verb (Simple Past)

"the agreement had been violated" → Object clause (Past Perfect Passive)

"despite multiple warnings" → Concessive phrase

Hence, the correct active sentence is:

Authorities found the agreement had been violated despite multiple warnings.

Correct option: (3)

Other Options Analysis:

Option (1): Still uses impersonal structure ("It was found"), not truly active.

Option (2): Aspect changes to "was being violated" (continuous), meaning changes.

Option (4): Still passive and unnecessarily shifts to Past Perfect.

17. B) 'is sleeping when I called' के बदले 'was sleeping when I called' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि मुख्य Clause 'I called' Past Tense में है, इसलिए साथ चल रही क्रिया को भी Past Continuous में होना चाहिए। Past Continuous (was/were + V-ing) का प्रयोग दो Past घटनाओं में से लंबी चल रही क्रिया दिखाने के लिए किया जाता है। इसलिए सही रूप होगा— He was sleeping when I called him.

Error in the sentence:

"He is sleeping when I called him."

The clause "when I called" is in the simple past tense.

To describe an ongoing action in the past that was interrupted by another past action, English uses the Past Continuous tense.

Past Continuous Structure:

was / were + verb-ing

It shows an action that was already in progress when another action happened.

Here:

Ongoing action → sleeping

Interrupting action → called

Other Options Analysis:

has been sleeping — Present perfect continuous cannot be used with a specific past time like when I called.

is slept — Grammatically incorrect form.

has slept — Present perfect does not match with a definite past event.

Correct Sentence: He was sleeping when I called him.

18. B) **Severity** (noun) – Seriousness, harshness. गंभीरता / कठोरता

Antonym: **Leniency** – Mildness and mercy in judgment. नरमी

- **Tranquility** – Peace. शांति
- **Dexterity** – Skill. निपुणता
- **Audacity** – Boldness. धृष्टता

19. C) **Unlittered** (adjective) – Clean, tidy, free of trash, uncluttered. साफ-सुथरा

Synonym: **Immaculate** (adjective) – Spotless, perfectly clean, pure. एकदम स्वच्छ

- **Reclusive** (adjective) – Avoiding social contact. एकांतप्रिय
- **Illusory** (adjective) – Deceptive, not real. भ्रमात्मक
- **Morbid** (adjective) – Related to disturbing or gloomy subjects. विकृत

20. A) **He mentioned, "My team will start the project next week."**

Active से Passive Voice में बदलने के लिए, Active वाक्य का Object Passive वाक्य का Subject बन जाता है। Verb को Active से Passive में बदलते समय सही Tense का प्रयोग किया जाता है। Active वाक्य में "The research team" Subject है, "is conducting" Verb (Present Continuous) है और "experiments" Object है। Passive में बदलने पर Object "Experiments" Subject बन गया है, Verb को "are being conducted" (Present Continuous Passive) में बदला गया है और "by the research team" के रूप में प्रयोग किया गया है।

To convert Indirect to Direct Speech:

Remove the conjunction "that".

Change pronouns appropriately (his → my).

Reverse the tense back to the original form (would → will).

Keep the time expression unchanged if it still refers to future time.

Use quotation marks with a suitable reporting verb.

In this sentence:

Reporting clause: He mentioned that

Indirect speech: his team would start the project next week

Would start is used in indirect speech due to past reporting verb.

In direct speech, would changes back to will.

Pronoun his changes to my.

Changes made:

Remove "that".

Change would start → will start.

Change his team → my team.

Maintain future time reference next week.

Correct direct speech:

Option 1:

He mentioned, "My team will start the project next week."

21. A) 'Those' का use होगा क्योंकि यह woods (जंगल) के बारे में बात करता है, जो पहले से ही संदर्भ में दिया गया है और 'those' यहाँ plural noun (woods) को संकेत करता है। इस sentence में 'those' उपयुक्त है क्योंकि यह दूरी पर स्थित woods की ओर इशारा कर रहा है। 'This' का use singular के लिए होता है और यह निकटवर्ती वस्तु या विषय को इंगित करता है, जो यहाँ फिट नहीं होता। 'Them' का use pronoun के रूप में होता है और यह किसी object को संदर्भित करता है, जो इस स्थिति में सही नहीं है। 'That' का use singular noun के लिए होता है और यह दूरी पर स्थित एकवचन वस्तु को इंगित करता है, जो यहाँ भी सही नहीं है।

- 'Those' will be used because it refers to "woods," which is plural and already mentioned in the context. 'Those' is appropriate here as it points to woods located at a distance. 'This' is used for singular and nearby objects, which doesn't fit here. 'Them' is a pronoun that refers to an object, which is incorrect in this context. 'That' is used for singular nouns at a distance, making it unsuitable here.

22. A) यहाँ 'turned' का use सही है क्योंकि वाक्य भूतकाल में है और 'dark' का संदर्भ एक घटना को दर्शाता है जो पहले घटित हो चुकी है। 'Turned' एक सरल भूतकाल (simple past) का रूप है, जो वाक्य के समय को सही ढंग से व्यक्त करता है। अन्य विकल्प: 'does turn' वर्तमान काल (present tense) में आता है, जो यहाँ सही नहीं है। 'have turned' वर्तमान पूर्णकाल (present perfect tense) में है, जो भूतकाल की इस घटना को व्यक्त नहीं करता। 'were turning' अधूरा भूतकाल (past continuous tense) का संकेत देता है, जो यहाँ इस घटना की प्रकृति को स्पष्ट नहीं करता है।

- 'Turned' is the correct choice because the sentence is in the past tense, referring to an event that has already occurred. 'Turned' is a simple past form, which appropriately expresses the time of the action. Other options: 'does turn' is in the present tense, which doesn't fit here.
- 'have turned' is in the present perfect tense, which does not indicate the past event correctly.
- 'were turning' suggests past continuous tense, which is inappropriate for this context as it doesn't match the narrative style.

23. B) 'An' का use होगा क्योंकि "an" का प्रयोग उन संज्ञाओं के पहले होता है जो स्वर ध्वनि (vowel sound) से शुरू होती हैं। यहाँ "old cottage" में "old" स्वर ध्वनि से शुरू होता है। 'The' का use तब होता है जब कोई विशेष वस्तु या व्यक्ति की बात हो रही हो, लेकिन यहाँ ऐसा नहीं है। 'No

'article' का use सही नहीं होगा क्योंकि 'old cottage' की बात सामान्य संदर्भ में हो रही है। 'A' का use व्यंजन ध्वनि (consonant sound) से शुरू होने वाले शब्दों के पहले होता है, इसलिए यह यहाँ उपयुक्त नहीं है।

- "An" will be used because "an" is used before nouns starting with a vowel sound. In this case, "old cottage" starts with a vowel sound ("old"). "The" is used when referring to a specific object or person, which is not the case here. "No article" is incorrect as "old cottage" is being referred to in a general context. "A" is used before words beginning with a consonant sound, so it is not appropriate here.

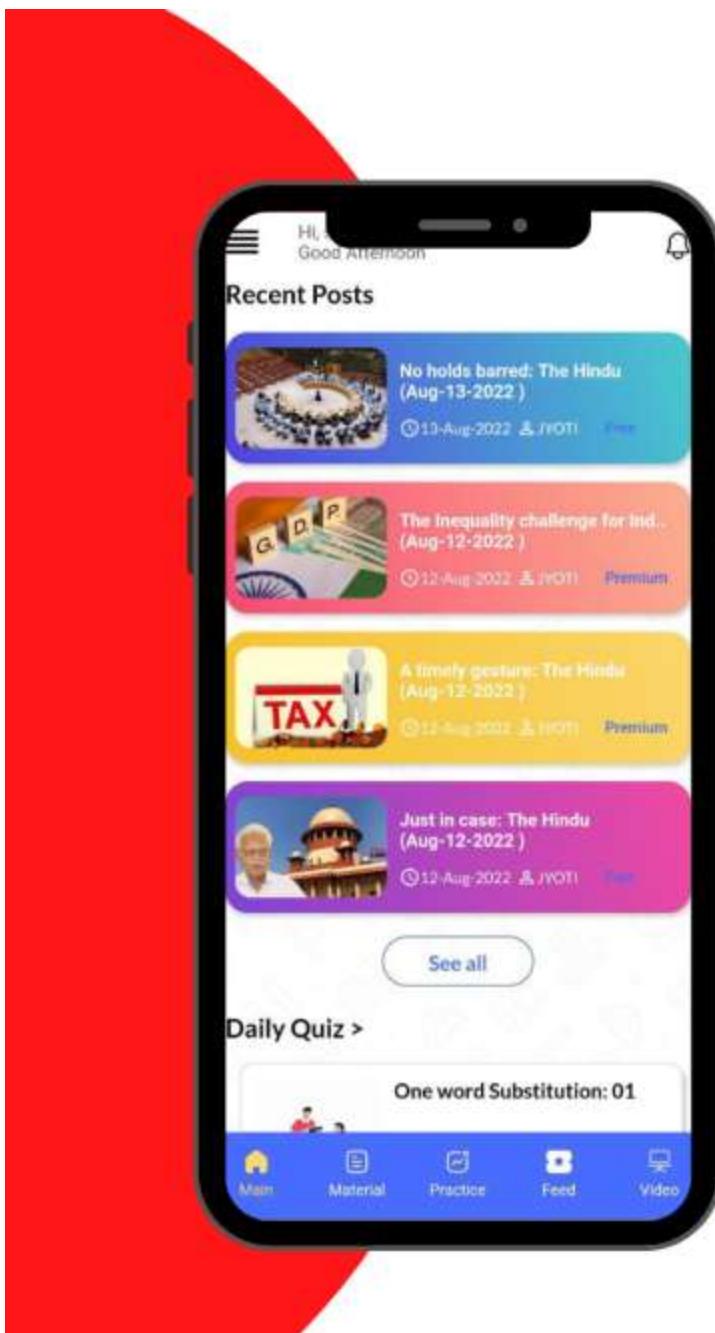
24. A) 'Their' का use सही होगा क्योंकि 'their' एक possessive pronoun है, जो यहाँ आश्वर्य (surprise) को बच्चों का बताने के लिए उपयुक्त है। यह वाक्य उनके आश्वर्य को व्यक्त कर रहा है कि उन्हें घर के अंदर महिला मिली। जबकि: 'They're' का अर्थ है 'They are', जो यहाँ संदर्भ में फिट नहीं बैठता। 'There are' का मतलब है "वहाँ हैं," जो इस वाक्य के लिए सही नहीं है। 'There' का use किसी स्थान को दर्शाने के लिए किया जाता है, लेकिन यहाँ ऐसा संदर्भ नहीं है।

- The correct option is 'their' because it is a possessive pronoun that appropriately describes the surprise belonging to the children. The sentence indicates their astonishment at finding a woman inside the house. 'They're' means 'They are', which does not fit in this context.

'There are' means "exist," which is irrelevant in this context. 'There' is used to indicate a place but does not fit grammatically or contextually here.

25. B) 'Sweet, skinny, old' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि पूरे संदर्भ में, महिला को पहले मीठे स्वभाव के रूप में पेश किया गया है, जो बच्चों को चॉकलेट देती है, इसलिए 'sweet' शब्द पहले आना चाहिए। फिर, उसकी शारीरिक बनावट 'skinny' के रूप में वर्णित है और अंत में उसकी आयु को 'old' द्वारा दर्शाया गया है। इसलिए 'sweet, skinny, old' सही उत्तर है जो उसकी स्वभाव, शारीरिक बनावट और उम्र को क्रमशः दर्शाता है।

- 'Sweet, skinny, old' should be used because in the entire context, the woman is first introduced as having a sweet demeanor, offering chocolates to the children, hence 'sweet' should come first. Then, her physical appearance is described as 'skinny' followed by her age depicted by 'old'. Therefore, 'sweet, skinny, old' is the correct answer, reflecting her demeanor, physical appearance, and age sequentially.



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