

## Cuban sorrow: On U.S. actions on Cuba

The U.S. **asphyxiation** of Cuba **demand**s global **condemnation**

Even as the world is **feeling the pinch** of the **ill-thought-out** and cruel attacks by the United States and its West Asian **loose-cannon ally**, Israel, on Iran, an equally **heinous imperial** act is **under way** in the Caribbean, **drawing** little **attention**. The Trump administration has effectively **blockaded** Cuba's fuel supplies to pressure **regime** change. In actions taken since December 2025, **interdicting** Venezuelan oil shipments, threatening **punitive** tariffs on any country supplying fuel and **detering** Russian diesel and crude oil supplies, the U.S. has **strangled** a petroleum-dependent country, where oil **drives** 83% of power generation. The consequences have been **devastating**. There have been three grid collapses in March 2026, even as garbage is **piling up** in Havana and **other cities**, **perishable food** is rotting, and industry and government offices **have shut**. Donald Trump's actions are criminally illegal by international law. He claims that Cuba is "seeing the end", **boasts** that he will have the "honour" of "taking" Cuba, and has called on the Cuban government to "make a deal before it's too late", without specifying any terms.

The actions against Cuba must be seen against a six-decade long U.S. **embargo** — but what Cubans term a **blockade** — ever since the revolution **nationalised** U.S.-owned enterprises in the early 1960s. The U.S.'s trade **embargo** in 1962 **was** progressively **strengthened** as the Helms-Burton Act of 1996 effectively **conscripted** the global business community into **enforcing** it. **Meanwhile**, Cuba's **designation** as a state sponsor of terrorism — removed by Barack Obama but restored by Mr. Trump and lacking any rational basis — **has cut the country off** from international banking. **That** these **coercive** measures persisted much after the **Cold War reveals** that their true purpose is not U.S. national security, but the **appeasement** of the right-wing Cuban-American community in Florida, led by U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio, son of Cuban émigrés, for whom regime change in Havana **is** a lifelong ambition. Mr. Trump's military **intervention** in Venezuela, including capturing a sitting President and **seizing** control of its oil, **was** itself partly designed to **sever** Cuba's primary fuel lifeline under the doctors-for-fuel arrangement. The pattern is clear: **impunity** in Venezuela **emboldened** the Trump administration to **asphyxiate** Cuba and impunity in Cuba has **accompanied** America's war on Iran. Each unchallenged act of **imperial overreach normalises** the next, threatening not just vulnerable nations in the U.S. **orbit** but also the very framework of international order. **The world**, including India, **must** not remain silent and have the **gumption** to **condemn** these actions and provide **humanitarian** assistance, **under the aegis** of the United Nations, for the people of Cuba.

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

**[Practice Exercise]**

## Vocabulary

1. **Sorrow** (noun) - misery, grief, woe, sadness, heartache शोक/दुःख
2. **Asphyxiation** (noun) - a condition in which the body is deprived of oxygen, leading to difficulty in breathing गला घोटना/दम घोटना
3. **Condemnation** (noun) - censure, denunciation, criticism, reproof, conviction निंदा
4. **Feel the pinch** (phrase) - to experience hardship, especially a lack of money or resources कठिनाई महसूस करना
5. **Ill-thought-out** (adjective) - imprudent, injudicious, misguided, reckless, poorly planned अदूरदर्शी/बिना सोचे-विचारे
6. **Loose-cannon** (noun) - a person who is unpredictable and likely to cause trouble अनियंत्रित/अस्थिर व्यक्ति
7. **Ally** (noun) - partner, associate, colleague, confederate, supporter सहयोगी
8. **Heinous** (adjective) - atrocious, odious, wicked, abominable, monstrous जघन्य/घृणित
9. **Imperial** (adjective) - royal, regal, majestic, sovereign, monarchical शाही/साम्राज्यवादी
10. **Underway** (adjective) - ongoing, happening, progressing, proceeding, active जारी/प्रगति पर
11. **Draw attention** (phrase) - to make people notice something ध्यान आकर्षित करना
12. **Blockade** (verb) - obstruct, seal off, besiege, close, shut up नाकाबंदी करना
13. **Regime** (noun) - a system or government in power, especially one that exercises control शासन
14. **Interdict** (verb) - prohibit, forbid, ban, intercept, bar रोकना/पाबंदी लगाना
15. **Punitive** (adjective) - disciplinary, penal, punishing, corrective, retributive दंडात्मक
16. **Deter** (verb) - discourage, dissuade, daunt, prevent, stop रोकना/हतोत्साहित करना
17. **Strangle** (verb) - choke, stifle, suffocate, throttle, suppress गला घोटना
18. **Drive** (verb) - power, propel, fuel, operate, run संचालित करना
19. **Devastating** (adjective) - destructive, ruinous, catastrophic, disastrous, shattering विनाशकारी
20. **Pile up** (phrasal verb) - to increase in amount or quantity इकट्ठा होना
21. **Perishable food** (noun) - food that decays quickly like meat or vegetables जल्दी खराब होने वाला भोजन
22. **Shut** (verb) - close, seal, fasten, lock, secure बंद करना
23. **Boast** (verb) - brag, crow, gloat, vaunt, swagger डींग मारना
24. **Embargo** (noun) - ban, restriction, prohibition, boycott, stoppage व्यापारिक प्रतिबंध
25. **Blockade** (noun) - siege, obstruction, barrier, closing, barricade नाकाबंदी

26. **Nationalise** (verb) - to take control of a private industry by the government  
राष्ट्रीयकरण करना
27. **Strengthen** (verb) - reinforce, fortify, bolster, harden, toughen मजबूत करना
28. **Conscript** (verb) - recruit, enlist, draft, mobilize, enroll अनिवार्य रूप से भर्ती करना
29. **Enforce** (verb) - implement, execute, apply, impose, administer लागू करना
30. **Meanwhile** (adverb) - meantime, simultaneously, concurrently, incidentally, betweentimes इसी बीच
31. **Cut off** (phrasal verb) - to disconnect or isolate someone or something अलग-थलग करना
32. **Coercive** (adjective) - forceful, compulsory, bullying, insistent, high-pressure दमनकारी/बाध्यकारी
33. **Cold War** (noun) - the state of political hostility between soviet countries and the us-led western powers शीत युद्ध
34. **Appeasement** (noun) - the act of giving in to demands to avoid conflict तुष्टीकरण
35. **Seize** (verb) - grab, capture, snatch, take, grasp ज़ब्त करना/पकड़ना
36. **Sever** (verb) - cut, disconnect, detach, separate, split काटना/अलग करना
37. **Impunity** (noun) - freedom from punishment or consequences for wrongdoing दंडमुक्ति
38. **Embolden** (verb) - encourage, hearten, nerve, strengthen, animate प्रोत्साहित करना
39. **Asphyxiate** (verb) - to cause someone to be deprived of oxygen, leading to difficulty in breathing दम घोंटना
40. **Accompany** (verb) - escort, follow, attend, join, conduct साथ होना
41. **Overreach** (noun) - excess, exaggeration, immoderation, overextension, overstepping अपनी सीमा से बाहर जाना
42. **Normalise** (verb) - standardize, regularize, stabilize, formalize, equate सामान्य बनाना
43. **Orbit** (noun) - sphere of influence, range, scope, ambit, arena प्रभाव क्षेत्र
44. **Gumption** (noun) - initiative, resourcefulness, courage, enterprise, shrewdness साहस/तर्कशक्ति
45. **Condemn** (verb) - censure, denounce, criticize, decry, reprehend निंदा करना
46. **Humanitarian** (adjective) - compassionate, benevolent, charitable, humane, altruistic मानवीय/परोपकारी
47. **Under the aegis of** (phrase) - with the protection or support of a particular organization के तत्वावधान में

## Summary of the Editorial

1. The editorial criticizes the **United States**, especially Donald Trump, for imposing a **fuel blockade on Cuba**.
2. It compares this action with U.S. involvement in conflicts like those in **West Asia**, suggesting a pattern of aggressive foreign policy.
3. Since late 2025, the U.S. has **blocked Cuba's fuel supply**, including oil shipments from **Venezuela and Russia**.
4. The blockade aims to **force regime change** in Cuba by creating economic and social pressure.
5. Cuba is heavily dependent on oil, with **about 80%+ of electricity generation relying on petroleum**, making the blockade devastating.
6. As a result, Cuba has faced **major power grid failures and nationwide blackouts**.
7. Daily life has been severely disrupted:
  - Garbage is piling up
  - Food is rotting
  - Offices and industries are shut
8. The editorial calls these actions "**illegal under international law**" and morally unjustifiable.
9. Trump's rhetoric about "taking Cuba" and forcing a deal is seen as **imperialistic and coercive**.
10. The crisis is rooted in a **long history of U.S. hostility**, including the **1962 embargo** and later laws like the **Helms-Burton Act (1996)**.
11. Cuba's designation as a **state sponsor of terrorism** has further isolated it from global banking systems.
12. The editorial argues that U.S. policy is driven not by security concerns but by **domestic political interests**, especially Cuban-American groups in Florida.
13. U.S. actions in **Venezuela** (cutting off oil supplies) were strategically used to weaken Cuba further.
14. The article warns that **unchecked U.S. actions normalize imperial overreach**, threatening global order and sovereignty.
15. It concludes by urging the **international community, including India**, to:
  - Condemn U.S. actions
  - Provide **humanitarian aid through the United Nations**

### Practice Exercise: SSC Pattern Based

1. **According to the passage, what is the primary reason the U.S. has targeted Cuba's fuel supplies since December 2025?** [Editorial Page]
  - A. To help the Cuban government modernize its outdated power generation infrastructure.
  - B. To pressure a regime change by effectively strangling the petroleum-dependent nation.
  - C. To ensure that Venezuelan oil shipments are redirected to the United Nations' relief.
  - D. To protect international banking systems from the influence of the Cuban revolution.
2. **Consider the following statements based on the passage:**
  - 1) Oil drives approximately 83% of Cuba's power generation, making the country highly vulnerable to fuel interdiction.
  - 2) The designation of Cuba as a state sponsor of terrorism was originally introduced by Barack Obama and maintained by Donald Trump.
  - 3) The author suggests that the true purpose of the coercive measures is the appeasement of a specific political community in Florida.
  - 4) Marco Rubio, the U.S. Secretary of State, is described as a key figure advocating for regime change in Havana.
  - A. Only 1 and 2 are correct
  - B. Only 2 and 3 are correct
  - C. Only 1, 3, and 4 are correct
  - D. All are correct
3. **What was the specific impact of the fuel blockade on Cuba's domestic situation in March 2026?**
  - A. The Cuban government successfully nationalized all U.S.-owned enterprises in Havana.
  - B. The country experienced three grid collapses and the shutting of government offices.
  - C. International banking was restored due to the "doctors-for-fuel" arrangement.
  - D. The Helms-Burton Act was repealed to allow for the free trade of Russian diesel.
4. **How does the author link the U.S. actions in Venezuela to the situation in Cuba?**
  - A. Venezuela provided the U.S. with the military intelligence needed to capture the Cuban President.
  - B. The U.S. intervention in Venezuela was partly intended to sever the fuel lifeline to Cuba.
  - C. Cuba and Venezuela have signed a new treaty to dismantle all Russian crude oil supplies.
  - D. The blockade of Cuba was a direct retaliation for Venezuela's support of the war on Iran.
5. **Which of the following best describes the Tone of the passage?**
  - A. Objective and Balanced
  - B. Commendatory and Hopeful
  - C. Critical and Condemnatory
  - D. Analytical and Indifferent
6. **Directions: Given below are six sentences taken from an article. The first and the last sentences are numbered S1 and S6 and are placed in the first and last positions respectively. The other four sentences between them are jumbled up and are numbered A, B, C, and D. Rearrange the jumbled sentences in a logical sequence.**

S1. Somewhere between the Strait of Hormuz and the screens of Bloomberg terminals around the world, the standard laws of cause and effect appear to have been suspended regarding the ongoing conflict.

- A. This "maximalist" 15-point plan was essentially a harsh ultimatum, accompanied by a threat that the US would "just keep bombing" if it wasn't accepted.
- B. Unsurprisingly, Tehran's response to these steep demands appeared to be a resounding no, as they instead demanded absolute sovereignty over the critical shipping lanes.
- C. The US president recently soft-launched his latest peace talks, offering few details or proof that anyone in the opposing regime was actually willing to listen to him.
- D. Logically, such a gaping rift in negotiating positions should cause panic; yet, financial markets surprisingly rallied and crude oil prices actually fell.
- S6. Consequently, analysts can only chalk up this bizarre market optimism to the US president's unique ability to will oil traders to trust his plan to wrap up the Middle East conflict.
- A. CBAD
- B. ACDB
- C. CABD
- D. DBCA
7. **Identify the part of the sentence that contains a grammatical error.**
- a. The board B. In a rare moment of complete agreement C. were unanimous in its decision D. to fire the CEO, which came as a surprise.
- A. The board,
- B. In a rare moment of complete agreement
- C. were unanimous in its decision
- D. to fire the CEO, which came as a surprise.
8. **Identify the part of the sentence that contains a grammatical error.**
- a. Despite of B. his low score in the test, C. he was able to pass D. the course.
- A. Despite of
- B. his low score in the test,
- C. he was able to pass
- D. the course
9. **Fill in the blank with the most appropriate preposition:**
- The teacher divided the students \_\_\_\_\_ four groups for the activity.
- A. in
- B. among
- C. into
- D. between
10. **Fill in the blank with the most appropriate preposition:**
- The poet reflects \_\_\_\_\_ the impermanence of beauty and the inevitability of decay.
- A. on
- B. over
- C. under
- D. until
11. **Select the most appropriate synonym of the word: Bellicose**
- A. Peaceful
- B. Amiable
- C. Warlike

- D. Timid
12. **Select the most appropriate synonym of the word: INTEGRITY**
- A. Corruption
  - B. Honesty
  - C. Negligence
  - D. Greed
13. **Choose the correct meaning of the idiom: In dribs and drabs**
- A. In large quantities
  - B. In a continuous flow
  - C. In small, irregular amounts
  - D. In an unorganized manner
14. **Select the most appropriate antonym of the word: Minute**
- A. Enormous
  - B. Tiny
  - C. Small
  - D. Insignificant
15. **Select the most appropriate antonym of the word: Extinguished**
- A. Ignited
  - B. Stopped
  - C. Quenched
  - D. Burnt
16. **Choose the correct one-word substitute for:**  
A person who denies the existence of God
- A. Atheist
  - B. Agnostic
  - C. Deist
  - D. Pantheist
17. **Which sentence contains a misspelled word?**
- A. Many believed the new millennium would bring great change, but some felt embarrassed when their predictions failed.
  - B. He didn't want to embarrass himself at the start of the new millenium.
  - C. The celebration of the millennium was truly unforgettable, though it did embarrass a few politicians.
  - D. She didn't expect the event to embarrass her during the millennium gala.
18. **Choose the most suitable option to replace the highlighted part of the sentence:**  
All the water in the bottles is over and you have to refill them.
- A. All the water in the bottles are over and you have to refill it.
  - B. All the water in the bottles is over and you had to refill it.
  - C. All the water in the bottles are over and you has to refill it.
  - D. All of the water in the bottles is over and you have to refill it.
19. **Choose the most suitable option to replace the highlighted part of the sentence:**  
Three hours is the duration of the exam.
- A. Three hour are the duration of the exam.
  - B. Three hours are the duration of the exam.

- C. Three hours is the duration of the exam.  
D. Three hours were the duration of the exam.
20. **Which of the following pairs of homonyms can be used to fill in the blanks most suitably?**  
The new medication did not \_\_\_\_\_ the patient's symptoms as expected, so the doctor questioned its overall \_\_\_\_\_.
- A. alter, altar  
B. altar, alter  
C. effect, affect  
D. affect, effect

**Comprehension**

People could see the thunderstorm, but they couldn't see what was going on inside it. Trillions of pollen particles, (1) \_\_\_ up into the clouds as the storm formed, were now being (2) \_\_\_ by rain, lightning and humidity into ever-smaller fragments – then (3) \_\_\_ down to Earth for people to (4)\_\_\_ them in. It was around 18:00 on 21 November 2016 when the air in Melbourne, Australia, (5) \_\_\_ deadly. Emergency service phone lines lit up, people struggling to breathe began flooding into hospitals, and there was so much demand for ambulances that the vehicles were unable to reach patients stuck at home. Emergency rooms saw eight times as many people turning up with breathing problems as they would normally expect. Nearly 10 times as many people with asthma were admitted to hospital.

21. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank (1).**
- A. exhaled  
B. sucked  
C. inhaled  
D. pump
22. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank (2).**
- A. diluted  
B. dismantle  
C. splintered  
D. digests
23. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank (3).**
- A. cast off  
B. cast aside  
C. cast about  
D. cast back
24. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank (4).**
- A. breathe  
B. inhale  
C. breadth  
D. breath
25. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank (5).**
- A. rendered  
B. morphology  
C. culminated  
D. turned



## Answers

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

[Practice Exercise]

## Explanations

- B) To pressure a regime change by effectively strangling the petroleum-dependent nation.**  
 The passage states the administration has "effectively blockaded Cuba's fuel supplies to pressure regime change" and "strangled a petroleum-dependent country."  
 others are incorrect: (A) is the opposite of the author's claim of destruction; (C) is a misreading of the interdiction of oil; (D) is not mentioned as a reason for the fuel blockade.
- C) Only 1, 3, and 4 are correct**  
 Statement 1: Correct Line from Passage: "...the U.S. has strangled a petroleum-dependent country, where oil drives 83% of power generation."  
 Statement 2: Incorrect because Passage states : "Meanwhile, Cuba's designation as a state sponsor of terrorism — removed by Barack Obama but restored by Mr. Trump..."  
 Statement 3: Correct Line from Passage: "...their true purpose is not U.S. national security, but the appeasement of the right-wing Cuban-American community in Florida..."  
 Statement 4: Correct Line from Passage: "...led by U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio... for whom regime change in Havana is a lifelong ambition."
- B)The country experienced three grid collapses and the shutting of government offices.**  
 The passage lists several consequences in March 2026: "three grid collapses," "garbage is piling up," and "industry and government offices have shut."  
 others are incorrect: (A) happened in the 1960s; (C) and (D) are contradictions of the "blockade" described in the passage.
- B) The U.S. intervention in Venezuela was partly intended to sever the fuel lifeline to Cuba.**  
 The passage states the intervention in Venezuela was "itself partly designed to sever Cuba's primary fuel lifeline under the doctors-for-fuel arrangement."  
 others are incorrect: (A) is not in the passage; (C) is a misinterpretation of the fuel relationship; (D) reverses the timeline (impunity in Venezuela emboldened actions in Cuba).
- C) Critical and Condemnatory**  
 The author uses strong, judgmental language such as "heinous imperial act," "criminally illegal," "asphyxiate Cuba," and "unhinged bully." This clearly shows a critical and Condemnatory stance against U.S. policies. "Condemnatory" Meaning: Expressing strong disapproval; censuring or blaming someone for a "heinous" or "criminal" act.  
 others are incorrect: (A) and (D) imply a lack of bias, which is not present here; (B) is incorrect as the author is describing a "devastating" and "cruel" situation.
- B) Correct Sequence: S1-C-A-B-D-S6**  
 Sentence C, S1 के तुरंत बाद आएगा क्योंकि S1 में जो "ongoing conflict" और "cause and effect" के सस्पेंड होने की बात की गई है, Sentence C उसका context set करता है। यह बताता है कि US President ने हाल ही में "peace talks" (शांति वार्ता) शुरू की है, हालाँकि सामने वाला सुनने को तैयार नहीं है।  
 Sentence A, Sentence C के बाद आएगा क्योंकि "This 'maximalist' 15-point plan" सीधे तौर पर Sentence C में बताई गई "peace talks" को refer करता है। यह बताता है कि वह शांति वार्ता असल में

एक "ultimatum" (अंतिम चेतावनी) थी जिसमें धमकी दी गई थी कि अगर बात नहीं मानी गई तो बमबारी जारी रहेगी।

Sentence B, Sentence A के बाद आएगा क्योंकि "these steep demands" (ये भारी मांगें) सीधे तौर पर Sentence A में दिए गए "ultimatum" और 15-point plan को refer करता है। यह बताता है कि इस अल्टीमेटम पर Tehran का क्या जवाब (response) था—उन्होंने साफ 'ना' कह दिया और अपनी अलग मांगें रख दीं।

Sentence D, Sentence B के बाद आएगा और S6 से पहले एक मजबूत link बनाएगा। "such a gaping rift in negotiating positions" (बातचीत के रुख में इतनी बड़ी दरार) सीधे तौर पर Sentence A (US की मांग) और Sentence B (Tehran की 'ना') के बीच के अंतर को refer करता है। यह बताता है कि इस दरार के बावजूद मार्केट क्रैश होने की बजाय "rallied" (ऊपर गया) और तेल सस्ता हो गया।

S6 आखिर में आएगा क्योंकि "this bizarre market optimism" (बाज़ार का यह अजीब आशावाद) सीधे तौर पर Sentence D में बताए गए market rally और गिरते तेल के दामों को refer करता है। यह paragraph को conclude करता है कि इस बिना सिर-पैर के मार्केट रिएक्शन को सिर्फ President के प्रभाव से ही समझाया जा सकता है।

Correct Sequence: S1-C-A-B-D-S6

- Sentence C follows S1 immediately. While S1 establishes the broader theme that the normal "laws of cause and effect" seem to be suspended regarding the ongoing conflict, Sentence C introduces the specific event that triggered this: the US President launching new "peace talks" without any proof that the other side was listening.
- Sentence A comes next because the phrase "This 'maximalist' 15-point plan" directly refers back to the "peace talks" introduced in Sentence C. It clarifies that these talks were not really negotiations, but rather a harsh "ultimatum" and a threat to keep bombing.
- Sentence B follows because the phrase "these steep demands" points directly back to the 15-point plan and the ultimatum detailed in Sentence A. It provides the immediate reaction to those demands, which was Tehran's "resounding no" and their counter-demand for sovereignty.
- Sentence D comes next and forms a strong link with S6. The phrase "such a gaping rift in negotiating positions" perfectly summarizes the massive disconnect between the US ultimatum (Sentence A) and Tehran's flat rejection (Sentence B). It then explains the illogical result: instead of panicking, financial markets "rallied" and crude oil prices fell.
- Sentence S6 concludes the paragraph perfectly because the phrase "this bizarre market optimism" directly references the rallying markets and falling oil prices described in Sentence D. It brings the paragraph full circle, explaining that analysts can only attribute this illogical market behavior to the President's influence.

7. C) **"were unanimous in its decision"** की जगह **"was unanimous in its decision"** होगा क्योंकि **"the board"** Singular Collective Noun है और यहाँ एक इकाई के रूप में कार्य कर रहा है, इसलिए Singular Verb **"was"** का प्रयोग उचित है।

- “was” will be used instead of “were” because “the board” is a Singular Collective Noun acting as one unit, so the verb must also be Singular. Hence, “was unanimous in its decision” is grammatically correct.
8. A) "Despite of" के स्थान पर केवल "Despite" का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि Despite अपने आप में एक Preposition है और इसके बाद “of” नहीं आता।
- ✓ सही रूप: Despite his low score in the test, he was able to pass the course.
    - Instead of ‘Despite of’, only ‘Despite’ is used because ‘Despite’ itself functions as a preposition and does not take ‘of’ afterwards.
  - ✓ Correct form: Despite his low score in the test, he was able to pass the course.
9. C) 'into' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि किसी समूह को कई भागों/गुणों में बाँटने के लिए English में हमेशा divide + into का प्रयोग किया जाता है – जैसे divide into parts/groups/sections।
- 'into' should be used because when someone or something is divided to form separate groups or parts, the correct preposition in English is into. Here, the students are being divided into four groups, which makes option C the most appropriate choice.
10. A) 'on' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि किसी विषय पर चिंतन/मनन/विचार व्यक्त करने के लिए English में reflect on प्रयोग किया जाता है। यहाँ poet beauty की impermanence और decay की inevitability पर विचार कर रहा है, इसलिए on सबसे सही विकल्प है।
- 'on' should be used because the verb reflect when used to mean think deeply or contemplate, takes the preposition on. The poet is reflecting on the impermanence of beauty and the inevitability of decay. Hence, option A is the correct choice.
11. C) **Bellicose** (adjective) – aggressive, hostile, combative, belligerent, inclined to fight लड़ाकू / युद्धप्रिय
- Synonym: **Warlike** (adjective) – militant, aggressive, martial, combative युद्धप्रिय / आक्रामक
- **Peaceful** (adjective) – calm, tranquil, non-violent, harmonious शांतिप्रिय
  - **Amiable** (adjective) – friendly, pleasant, good-natured मिलनसार
  - **Timid** (adjective) – shy, fearful, lacking courage डरपोक
12. B) **Integrity** (noun) – honesty, moral uprightness, righteousness, ethical behavior, fairness नैतिकता / ईमानदारी
- Synonym: **Honesty** (noun) – truthfulness, sincerity, fairness, uprightness ईमानदारी
- **Corruption** (noun) – dishonesty, bribery, fraud, misconduct भ्रष्टाचार
  - **Negligence** (noun) – carelessness, inattention, disregard लापरवाही
  - **Greed** (noun) – avarice, hunger for wealth, selfish desire लालच
13. C) **In dribs and drabs** (idiom) -In small, irregular amounts थोड़ा-थोड़ा करके / अनियमित रूप से थोड़ा आना
14. A) **Minute** (adjective) – very small, tiny, diminutive, miniature बहुत छोटा / सूक्ष्म

Antonym: **Enormous** (adjective) – very large, huge, massive, gigantic बहुत बड़ा

- **Tiny** (adjective) – very small, minute, little छोटा
- **Small** (adjective) – little, minor, minute छोटा
- **Insignificant** (adjective) – unimportant, trivial, negligible महत्वहीन

15. A) **Extinguished** (verb) – puts out, quenches, suppresses, douses बुझाना / समाप्त करना

Antonym: **Ignited** (verb) – set on fire, lit, kindled, started burning जलाना / आग लगाना

- **Stopped** (verb) – ceased, halted, ended रोकना
- **Quenched** (verb) – extinguished, doused, suppressed बुझाना
- **Burnt** (verb/adjective) – charred, scorched, fired जला हुआ

16. A) **Atheist** (noun) – a person who denies the existence of God ईश्वर के अस्तित्व से इनकार करने वाला

- **Agnostic** (noun) – a person who believes nothing can be known about God ईश्वर के बारे में निश्चित ज्ञान असंभव मानने वाला
- **Deist** (noun) – believes God created the universe but does not intervene ब्रह्मा-सृष्टि में विश्वास लेकिन हस्तक्षेप नहीं
- **Pantheist** (noun) – believes God is identical with the universe सर्वेश्वरवादी

17. B) **He didn't want to embarrass himself at the start of the new millenium.**

The misspelled word is millenium; the correct spelling is millennium, which means “a period of a thousand years” सहस्राब्दी / हजार वर्ष.

18. D) **'All of the water in the bottles is over and you have to refill it'** सही होगा क्योंकि water uncountable noun है और uncountable nouns के साथ singular verb 'is' प्रयुक्त होता है। साथ ही 'have to' subject you के साथ grammatically सही है।

- Option D is correct because 'water' is an uncountable noun, so it takes the singular verb 'is'. Also, 'have to' is the correct form with the subject 'you'.

19. C) **Three hours is the duration of the exam** सही होगा क्योंकि यहाँ three hours को एक fixed period of time की तरह treat किया गया है और ऐसे cases में singular verb (is) का प्रयोग होता है।

- English Explanation:

When an expression of time like three hours refers to a single block/amount of time, it is treated as a singular unit, therefore is is grammatically correct.

20. D) **Affect, effect'** का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि पहले blank में verb चाहिए जिसका अर्थ है “to

influence/प्रभाव डालना”, और दूसरे blank में noun चाहिए जिसका अर्थ है “result/परिणाम”।

Sentence में कहा गया है कि दवा ने लक्षणों पर अपेक्षित प्रभाव नहीं डाला (did not affect), इसलिए डॉक्टर ने उसके कुल परिणाम/प्रभाव (overall effect) पर सवाल उठाया। इस प्रकार verb + noun का संयोजन अर्थ और grammar दोनों दृष्टि से उपयुक्त है।

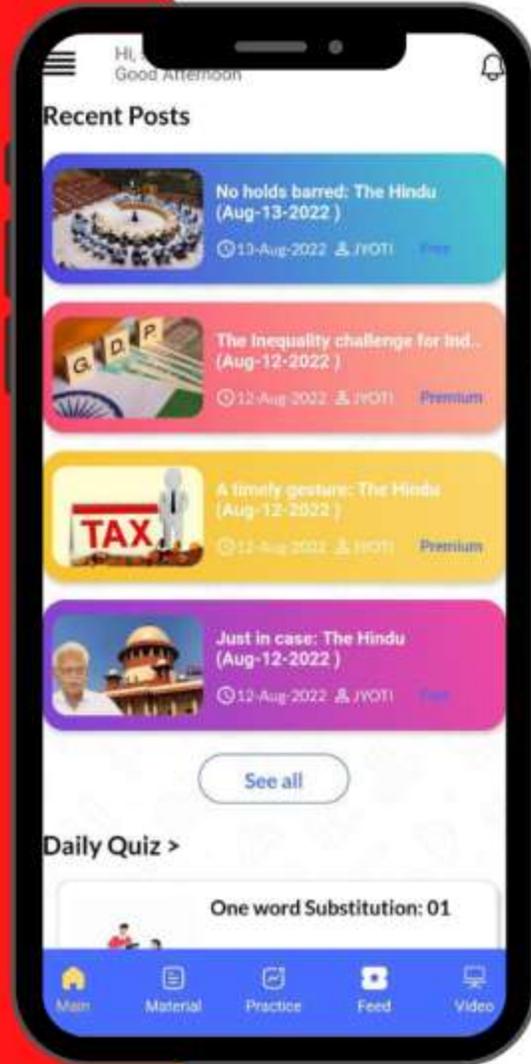
- 'Affect, effect' should be used because the first blank requires a verb meaning "to influence", and the second blank requires a noun meaning "result or outcome". The sentence states that the medication did not influence the symptoms (did not affect), leading the doctor to question its overall result (overall effect). Hence, the verb + noun pairing makes correct contextual and grammatical sense.
21. B) **sucked**] सही है क्योंकि "sucked up" एक आम English phrase है जिसका इस्तेमाल किसी चीज़ को बहुत ताकत से ऊपर खींचने (pull upward) के लिए होता है (जैसे वैक्यूम क्लीनर या तूफान खींचता है)। तूफान ने पराग कणों (pollen) को तेज़ी से बादलों में खींच लिया। inhaled और exhaled का इस्तेमाल इंसानों या जानवरों के सांस लेने और छोड़ने के लिए होता है। pump present tense में है, जबकि यहाँ past tense की ज़रूरत है।
- [sucked] is correct because "sucked up" is a common English phrase used to describe something being pulled upward with great force (like a vacuum or a powerful storm draft). The storm powerfully pulled the pollen up into the clouds. inhaled and exhaled are actions done by living creatures (breathing in and out), not by storms. pump is a present-tense verb, which breaks the past-tense grammar of the sentence (it would need to be "pumped").
22. C) **splintered**] सही है क्योंकि इसका मतलब किसी चीज़ का टूटकर बहुत छोटे-छोटे टुकड़ों (fragments) में बंट जाना होता है। पैराग्राफ में भी साफ़ लिखा है कि कण "ever-smaller fragments" (छोटे टुकड़ों) में टूट गए थे। diluted का मतलब पानी मिलाकर किसी तरल (liquid) को पतला करना होता है। digests present tense है जिसका मतलब खाना पचाना होता है। dismantle का मतलब किसी मशीन या ढांचे के पुर्जे अलग करना होता है।
- [splintered] is correct because it is a verb meaning to break into small, sharp fragments. The passage explicitly says the pollen was broken "into ever-smaller fragments," making "splintered" the perfect match. diluted means to make a liquid thinner or weaker by adding water. digests is a present-tense verb meaning to break down food in the stomach. dismantle means to take a machine or structure apart piece by piece.
23. D) **cast back**] सही है क्योंकि इसका मतलब किसी चीज़ को वापस उसी दिशा में फेंकना (throw back) होता है जहाँ से वह आई थी। पराग कण पहले ऊपर गए, और फिर तूफान ने उन्हें वापस धरती पर नीचे फेंक (cast back) दिया। cast off का मतलब किसी बेकार चीज़ को फेंकना या नाव की रस्सी खोलना होता है। cast aside का मतलब किसी चीज़ को किनारे करना या ठुकराना होता है। cast about का मतलब घबराहट में कुछ खोजना होता है।
- [cast back] is correct because it means to throw or send something back in the direction it came from. The pollen was sucked up, and then the storm threw it (cast it) back down to Earth. cast off is a phrasal verb meaning to discard something unwanted or to untie a boat. cast aside means to reject or throw something away. cast about means to look around anxiously for something.
24. A) **breathe**] सही है क्योंकि यह एक verb है जिसका मतलब सांस लेना होता है। इसके साथ वाक्य में आगे दिया गया 'in' बिल्कुल सही बैठता है ("breathe in" यानी अंदर सांस लेना)। inhale का मतलब भी

सांस अंदर लेना होता है, लेकिन इसके बाद 'in' नहीं लगाया जाता (सिर्फ 'inhale them' होता है), इसलिए यह ग्रांमर के हिसाब से गलत है। breath एक noun है (सांस)। breadth का मतलब चौड़ाई होता है।

- [breathe] is correct because it is the verb form of taking air into the lungs, and it pairs perfectly with the word "in" later in the sentence ("breathe them in"). inhale also means to breathe in, but it is grammatically incorrect here because it does not take the preposition "in" after it (you just "inhale them", not "inhale them in"). breath is a noun (the air you take in). breadth is a noun meaning the physical width of something.

25. D) [turned] सही है क्योंकि यहाँ इसका मतलब किसी नई स्थिति में बदल जाना या हो जाना (become) है। मेलबर्न की हवा बदलकर जानलेवा हो गई थी (turned deadly)। rendered का मतलब भी कोई स्थिति पैदा करना होता है, लेकिन इसके तुरंत बाद उस चीज़ का नाम आना चाहिए जिस पर असर हुआ हो (जैसे rendered the air deadly), इसलिए यह यहाँ ग्रांमर के हिसाब से गलत है। morphology एक noun है जिसका मतलब जीव-जंतुओं या शब्दों के रूप-आकार का अध्ययन होता है। culminated का मतलब अपने चरम (climax) या सबसे ऊंचे बिंदु पर पहुँचना होता है।

- [turned] is correct because in this context, it is a verb meaning to change or become a certain state or condition. The air in Melbourne changed and became (turned) deadly. rendered means to cause to be or become, but it requires an object directly after the verb (e.g., the storm rendered the air deadly), so it fails grammatically here. morphology is a noun referring to the study of the forms of things (in biology or language). culminated means to reach a climax or point of highest development.



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