

Embers in the air: On wildfires in the Nilgiris, Tamil Nadu

Seasonal fires need long-term management, not just **preparedness**

The **Nilgiris district** in Tamil Nadu and the **adjoining** forest **divisions** of Mudumalai, Coimbatore and Erode **have** been **dealing with** wildfires that **escalated** to being a crisis requiring the **assistance** of the Indian Air Force. Even so, the **intense** fires are not **anomalous**, but an **acute manifestation** of a seasonal event. Parsons Valley and Pykara in the Nilgiris have been worst-hit while significant **blazes** were also reported from the Singara and Masinagudi ranges. One major blaze **broke out** in Wenlock Downs and spread rapidly. February to May is fire season in this region, and in April, officials said that high heat and strong winds created a “**conductive** environment”; the wind, **in particular**, carried embers over pre-existing firelines and partly explains why this season has been a **breakout**. Some fires also burnt hotter and for longer in Pykara because of the **accumulated** biomass and **invasive** undergrowth, and took longer to be **doused**. The Nilgiris feature **steep** terrains and limited road access, slowing the movement of crew and equipment to particular spots. This said, most fires also have a human hand. Tribespeople gather wood in the area to make **brooms** — an activity closely **monitored** by officials — and **herders** have also been known to burn dry grassland, forcing grasses to regrow and become **fodder**. The latter together with **discarded** smoking **paraphernalia** are known accidental causes. This year, one blaze entered the Coimbatore division after Kerala forest staff began a controlled burn **allegedly** without coordinating this with Tamil Nadu. Some officials also expressed **suspicion** that **miscreants deliberately set fires** in the Reserve, allegedly over the Forest Department’s failure to **address** tiger-related deaths meaningfully, but local communities are usually the first-responders to these fires.

While none of these causes is new, their **confluence** this year with the hot summer **is** likely to have **stoked** the intense fires. **Indeed**, climate **variability** — rather than climate change alone — **is** also raising the baseline risk. Keeping other causes fixed, a hotter, drier summer automatically **leads to** fires that threaten the **best-laid** plans more. Even this year, authorities had begun planning in March, setting up control rooms and firelines, ensuring animals’ access to water outside human-settled areas, clearing weeds, and **mounting** awareness campaigns. However, many activities that add to the fire risk remain tied to peoples’ **livelihoods** and traditional practices, so they cannot be **eliminated** without suitable alternatives. **Taken together**, **managing** the region’s seasonal fires **is** becoming less about what can be planned for in the short term and more about what can be **factored in** over the long term.

[Practice Exercise]

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

Vocabulary

1. **Ember** (noun) - a small, glowing piece of burning coal or wood that remains after a fire सुलगता हुआ कोयला
2. **Preparedness** (noun) - readiness, alertness, vigilance, precaution, mobility तत्परता
3. **Adjoining** (adjective) - adjacent, neighboring, contiguous, abutting, bordering सटा हुआ/बगल का
4. **Deal with** (phrasal verb) - to handle, manage, or take action about a situation or problem निपटना/सुलझाना
5. **Escalate** (verb) - intensify, heighten, sharpen, deepen, mount तीव्रता बढ़ाना
6. **Assistance** (noun) - aid, succor, support, relief, cooperation सहायता/मदद
7. **Intense** (adjective) - acute, fierce, profound, drastic, severe तीव्र/अत्यधिक
8. **Anomalous** (adjective) - irregular, abnormal, atypical, aberrant, eccentric विसंगत/असामान्य
9. **Acute** (adjective) - sharp, severe, critical, intense, dire गंभीर/तेज
10. **Manifestation** (noun) - display, demonstration, exhibition, revelation, indication अभिव्यक्ति/प्रकटीकरण
11. **Blaze** (noun) - inferno, conflagration, fire, flare, flame भीषण आग
12. **Break out** (phrasal verb) - erupt, flare, start, happen, occur अचानक फैलना
13. **Conducive** (adjective) - favorable, helpful, beneficial, advantageous, instrumental सहायक/अनुकूल
14. **In particular** (phrase) - specifically, especially, expressly, precisely, uniquely विशेष रूप से
15. **Breakout** (noun) - eruption, outburst, flare-up, surge, explosion प्रकोप/विस्फोट
16. **Accumulate** (verb) - amass, collect, gather, stockpile, hoard संचित करना
17. **Invasive** (adjective) - intrusive, encroaching, trespassing, parasitic, infringing आक्रामक/अतिक्रमणकारी
18. **Douse** (verb) - extinguish, quench, smother, snuff, drench बुझाना (आग)
19. **Steep** (adjective) - precipitous, abrupt, sheer, sharp, perpendicular ढालू/खड़ी (चढ़ाई)
20. **Broom** (noun) - a tool with a long handle and bristles, used for sweeping floors, brush झाड़ू
21. **Monitor** (verb) - track, observe, supervise, oversee, scrutinize निगरानी करना
22. **Herder** (noun) - shepherd, herdsman, drover, grazier, rancher चरवाहा
23. **Fodder** (noun) - forage, feed, provender, silage, hay चारा
24. **Discard** (verb) - reject, abandon, discard, jettison, scrap फेंक देना/त्यागना
25. **Paraphernalia** (noun) - means a collection of items or equipment needed for a particular activity सामग्री/साजो-सामान
26. **Allegedly** (adverb) - reportedly, purportedly, supposedly, ostensibly, professedly कथित तौर पर

27. **Suspicion** (noun) - doubt, mistrust, skepticism, distrust, inkling संदेह/शंका
28. **Miscreant** (noun) - culprit, offender, villain, scoundrel, wrongdoer बदमाश/अपराधी
29. **Deliberately** (adverb) - intentionally, purposely, consciously, willfully, knowingly जानबूझकर
30. **Set fire** (phrase) - deliberately cause something to burn आग लगाना
31. **Address** (verb) - tackle, handle, confront, resolve, attend सुलझाना/संबोधित करना
32. **Confluence** (noun) - convergence, junction, meeting, union, confluence संगम/संगम स्थल
33. **Stoke** (verb) - fuel, incite, inflame, trigger, kindle भड़काना/हवा देना
34. **Indeed** (adverb) - truly, certainly, surely, actually, undeniably वास्तव में
35. **Variability** (noun) - volatility, fluctuation, inconsistency, changeability, instability परिवर्तनशीलता
36. **Lead to** (verb) - cause, result, produce, generate, provoke कारण बनना
37. **Best-laid** (adjective) - carefully planned, well-prepared, meticulous, organized, thorough सावधानीपूर्वक नियोजित
38. **Mount** (verb) - organize, launch, initiate, establish, arrange आयोजित करना/शुरू करना
39. **Livelihood** (noun) - subsistence, income, maintenance, sustenance, living आजीविका
40. **Eliminate** (verb) - eradicate, abolish, expunge, obliterate, exterminate हटाना/निकालना
41. **Taken together** (adverb) - combine, aggregate, integrate, unite, merge मिलाकर देखना
42. **Factor in** (phrasal verb) - to consider or include a particular fact शामिल करना

Summary of the Editorial

1. Wildfires in the Nilgiris and nearby forest divisions became severe enough to require Indian Air Force assistance.
2. These fires are not unusual but represent an intensified version of a regular seasonal phenomenon.
3. The most affected areas include Parsons Valley, Pykara, Singara, Masinagudi, and Wenlock Downs.
4. The fire season in this region typically lasts from February to May.
5. High temperatures and strong winds in April created conditions that worsened the fires.
6. Winds carried embers across firelines, causing rapid spread and making control difficult.
7. Accumulated biomass and invasive vegetation caused some fires to burn longer and more intensely.
8. The region's steep terrain and poor road access slowed firefighting efforts.
9. Many fires have human causes, both intentional and accidental.
10. Activities like wood collection by tribal communities and grass burning by herders contribute to fire risks.
11. Careless actions such as discarded smoking materials also trigger fires.
12. Lack of coordination in controlled burning (e.g., between Kerala and Tamil Nadu officials) worsened the situation.
13. There are suspicions of deliberate fires linked to local grievances, though communities often help in firefighting.
14. Climate variability, along with hotter and drier summers, is increasing the overall risk of wildfires.
15. The editorial argues that long-term management strategies are needed, as short-term preparedness alone is insufficient

Practice Exercise: SSC Pattern Based

1. **Which of the following arguments might be inferred from the passage regarding the "breakout" nature of this year's fire season?** [Editorial page]
 - a. Structural preparations like firelines were rendered ineffective due to specific meteorological conditions like high-velocity winds.
 - b. The lack of indigenous involvement in first-response teams led to a significant delay in dousing the flames in steep terrains.
 - c. The intensity of the blaze was exacerbated by a combination of natural biomass accumulation and transboundary management lapses.

A. Only a
B. Only a and c
C. only b
D. Only b and c
2. **Which of the following counterviews regarding the "human hand" in these wildfires can be considered true according to the passage?**
 - a. Traditional livelihood practices and the forest's ecological health are currently in a state of friction that short-term planning cannot easily resolve.
 - b. Intentional arson by local miscreants is the primary driver of wildfires, overshadowing accidental causes like herding or smoking.
 - c. Modern fire-fighting equipment is sufficient for the region, but the terrain's geography acts as a physical barrier to its efficacy.

A. Only a and b
B. Only b and c
C. Only a and c
D. Only a
3. **How would you describe the challenge of managing these wildfires using an idiom, based on the complexities expressed in the passage?**
 - a. A double-edged sword
 - b. An uphill task
 - c. Adding fuel to the fire

A. Only a
B. Only b
C. Only c
D. All a, b and c
4. **"Some fires also burnt hotter and for longer in Pykara because of the accumulated biomass and invasive undergrowth, and took longer to be doused."**
(identify the role of "because of" in this specific sentence structure.)
 - A. Prepositional Phrase
 - B. Conjunction
 - C. Adverb
 - D. Interjection
5. **Which of the following best describes the grammatical structure of the sentence:**

- "The Nilgiris feature steep terrains and limited road access, slowing the movement of crew and equipment to particular spots."?
- Simple sentence
 - Compound sentence
 - Complex sentence
 - Compound-complex sentence
6. **Directions: The sentences given below, when properly sequenced, form a coherent paragraph. Select the most logical order from the given options.**
- Inside, however, is a splendid Edwardian galleried auditorium with gilded rococo plasterwork, hidden like crystals within an unremarkable rock.
 - From the outside, the building appears to be nothing more than a derelict, industrial redbrick block, resembling a former biscuit factory.
 - Despite its crumbling masonry and spray-painted graffiti, a local campaign group is now fighting to save the theatre from further decline and the threat of a wrecking ball.
 - The exterior is marked by decay, with bricked-up entrances, hanging drainpipes, and pigeons nesting in the holes of the roof.
- 2, 4, 1, 3
 - 1, 2, 4, 3
 - 2, 1, 3, 4
 - 4, 2, 1, 3
7. **Selecting from the given alternatives, fill in the blank in the following sentence with the correct phrase with the meaning 'something that someone says either to avoid answering a question clearly or to make someone believe something that is not true'.**
- The manager does not entertain _____. He needs the right answer.
- weaving vocabulary
 - weasel words
 - peevish speech
 - useless babbling
8. **Which of the following idiom given in the alternatives has the meaning?**
- Not attracting attention or remaining unnoticed, often intentionally, by people in general or by specific individuals or authorities.
- On the radar
 - Drop off the radar
 - Under the radar
 - Fall off the radar
9. **From the alternatives given below, select the correct meaning of the idiom.**
- Be under a cloud.
- Eliciting a euphoric feeling
 - To be viewed with suspicion, distrust, or disapproval
 - A sign of impending trouble or danger
 - To be in an especially foul, angry mood
10. **Choose the correctly spelt word from the given options.**
- Equanimity
 - Equanimity

- C. Equanimity
D. Equanimmity
11. **Select the option with the correct spelling that can replace the underlined word in the given sentence. If the spelling in the given sentence is already correct, choose Option "No replacement required".**
Sarah's preference for classical music was evident when she chose Beethoven over any modern artists.
- A. preference
B. prifference
C. prefference
D. No replacement required
12. **Choose the word that is the most appropriate synonym of the word "lament".**
- A. Celebrate
B. Forget
C. Mourn
D. Ignore
13. **Choose the correct synonym for the underlined word.**
He is known to be a generous person who donates often.
- A. Mean
B. Greedy
C. Kind hearted
D. Proud
14. **There are four underlined words in the sentence given below. One of them is misspelt. Choose the option with the misspelt word.**
The opposition demanded accountability, citing falsified data, embezzelment of funds, and corruption in high offices.
- A. accountability
B. falsified
C. embezzelment
D. corruption
15. **Choose the word that is the antonym of Fresh.**
- A. New
B. Crisp
C. Recent
D. Stale
16. **Choose the most suitable one-word substitution for the following.**
A person who is new to a subject or activity.
- A. Expert
B. Novice
C. Veteran
D. Professional
17. **Choose the most suitable one-word substitution for the following.**
The loss or giving up of something as a penalty for wrongdoing.
- A. Forfeiture

- B. Embezzlement
- C. Extradition
- D. Interdiction

18. **Select the correct alternative to fill in the blank with the correct preposition/prepositional phrase in the following sentence.**

Murdering innocent people _____ religion is a heinous crime against God and humanity.

- A. in the name of
- B. with the purpose of
- C. in favor of
- D. by virtue of

19. **Select the correct alternative to fill in the blank with the correct preposition in the following sentence.**

The culprit admitted _____ the charge of robbery against him.

- A. for
- B. against
- C. to
- D. by

20. **Select the correct alternative to fill in the blank with the correct preposition in the following sentence.**

The annoyed lady refrained _____ reprimanding the stranger.

- A. to
- B. against
- C. from
- D. for

Comprehension

The loss of tropical rainforests (1) ___ last year, new satellite data suggests, led by Brazil's efforts to (2) ___ deforestation in the Amazon. Researchers estimate that nearly 43,000 sq km (17,000 sq miles) of old-growth tropical forests were lost globally in 2025 – about the size of Denmark. While it is about a third lower than record losses in 2024, scientists warn that tropical forests - among the Earth's most (3) ___ ecosystems - are still disappearing much faster than a decade ago. There is also concern that a two-pronged attack from climate change and the arrival of the warming El Niño weather pattern later this year could (4) ___ the likelihood and severity of forest fires. The latest figures show that the loss of tropical forests fell by 36% in 2025, according to analysis from the World Resources Institute and the University of Maryland. The data comes with a degree of uncertainty, however, as losses towards the end of one year might only be detected by satellites at the beginning of the next, but scientists are confident (5) ___ the overall trend. The decline last year partly reflects an easing of the unprecedented fires of 2024, helped by cooler La Niña conditions instead of the warmer El Niño. But researchers also point to greater efforts to protect forests in countries such as Brazil, Colombia and Malaysia.

21. **What should come in the place of blank number (1)?**

- A. stagnated
- B. faltering

- C. decelerate
D. slowed
22. **What should come in the place of blank number (2)?**
A. stifle
B. suppress
C. throttle
D. curb
23. **What should come in the place of blank number (3)?**
A. important
B. instrument
C. influential
D. consequential
24. **What should come in the place of blank number (4)?**
A. magnify
B. increase
C. compound
D. escalate
25. **What should come in the place of blank number (5)?**
A. over
B. for
C. about
D. upon

Answers

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

[\[Practice Exercise\]](#)

Explanations

1. B) Only a and c

Statement a (Correct): The passage says strong winds blew fire sparks over the "firelines" (empty paths made to stop fire). This means the wind made the safety plans fail.

Statement b (Incorrect): The passage says local people are the "first-responders" (the first ones to help). So, saying they weren't involved or caused a delay is wrong.

Statement c (Correct): The passage says there was a lot of "dry waste" (biomass) and that a fire started because Kerala and Tamil Nadu did not talk to each other.

2. C) Only a and c

Statement a (Correct): Local people do things like gathering wood for their "livelihood" (to earn money). We can't just stop them unless we give them another way to earn money.

Statement b (Incorrect): Arson (setting fire on purpose) is only a "suspicion" (a guess). The passage says things like smoking and herding are the "known" causes.

Statement c (Correct): The Nilgiris have "steep" (very vertical) hills and "limited roads." This makes it very hard and slow for fire trucks and teams to reach the fire.

3. B) Only b

Statement a (Incorrect): A "double-edged sword" implies something has both favorable and unfavorable consequences; the passage focuses only on the difficulty and crisis of the fires.

Statement b (Correct): "An uphill task" means a very difficult struggle, which fits the passage's description of steep terrain, high heat, and complex social issues.

Statement c (Incorrect): as an idiom it means making a bad situation worse through a specific action, which doesn't summarize the overall management challenge.

4. A) Prepositional Phrase

In this sentence, "because of" acts as a prepositional phrase. It connects the reason ("accumulated biomass") to the rest of the sentence. It works just like a single preposition (like "due to") to show a relationship between two things.

(b) Conjunction: A conjunction (like "because") connects two full sentences with subjects and verbs. But "because of" is followed only by a noun ("biomass"), making it a preposition.

(c) Adverb: An adverb usually describes how an action is done (like "quickly"). While it gives a reason, its grammatical category here is a prepositional link.

(d) Interjection: This is a word for sudden feelings (like "Oh!" or "Wow!"). It does not fit the logic of the sentence.

5. A) Simple sentence

This sentence has---"The Nilgiris (subject) feature (verb) steep terrains and limited road access..." This is an independent clause because it has a subject and a finite verb and can stand alone as a complete thought. The part after the comma ("slowing the movement...") is just an extra phrase (a participle phrase) that gives more info; it is not a new sentence. Because there is only one independent clause, it is a Simple sentence.

(b) Compound: A compound sentence needs two full sentences joined by a connector like and, but, or so. Here, "slowing the movement..." cannot stand alone as a sentence.

(c) Complex: A complex sentence needs a dependent clause (usually starting with words like because, although, or which). There is no such clause here.

(d) Compound-complex: This would need at least three separate parts (two main and one dependent). This sentence is much shorter and simpler in structure.

6. A) **2, 4, 1, 3**

Sentence 2, पैराग्राफ की शुरुआत में आएगा क्योंकि यह building का overall introduction देता है और इसके बाहरी स्वरूप (industrial redbrick block) की पहचान करता है।

Sentence 4, Sentence 2 के बाद आएगा क्योंकि यह exterior के decay (विनाश) का elaboration करता है। यह "bricked-up entrances" और "hanging drainpipes" जैसी specific details जोड़ता है।

Sentence 1, Sentence 4 के बाद आएगा क्योंकि यह "however" का उपयोग करके एक contrast पेश करता है। यह बाहर की गंदगी के मुकाबले अंदर के Edwardian auditorium की खूबसूरती को दर्शाता है।

Sentence 3, Sentence 1 के बाद आएगा क्योंकि यह पूरे scenario को एक conclusion की ओर ले जाता है। यह वर्तमान स्थिति और इसे बचाने के लिए चल रहे campaign group के संघर्ष की बात करता है।

- Sentence 2 comes first because it provides the overall introduction of the building and identifies its external appearance as an industrial block.
- Sentence 4 follows 2 because it provides an elaboration of the exterior decay. It adds specific details like "bricked-up entrances" and "pigeons" to support the previous description.
- Sentence 1 follows 4 because it introduces a contrast using "however." it shifts the focus from the ugly exterior to the splendid interior of the auditorium.
- Sentence 3 follows 1 as the conclusion. It summarizes the building's current plight and the local campaign fighting to save it from the wrecking ball.

7. B) **weasel words** का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि इसका अर्थ होता है ऐसे शब्द या वाक्य जो किसी सवाल का स्पष्ट उत्तर देने से बचने के लिए या किसी को भ्रमित करने के लिए बोले जाते हैं। यहाँ sentence में manager ऐसे उत्तरों को पसंद नहीं करता जो साफ़ और सीधे न हों। इसलिए, "weasel words" सबसे उपयुक्त विकल्प है।

- 'weasel words' should be used because it refers to expressions that are intentionally vague or misleading, often used to avoid giving a direct answer or to deceive someone. In the sentence, the manager does not entertain unclear or evasive responses. Thus, "weasel words" would be the most appropriate choice.

8. C) **Under the radar** – idiom meaning not attracting attention; remaining unnoticed or undetected, often intentionally. किसी की नज़र से बाहर / चुपचाप।

- **On the radar** – means being noticed, observed, or considered; attracting attention – opposite of the given definition. ध्यान में / नज़र में।
- **Drop off the radar** – means to suddenly disappear from attention or stop being in contact with others, usually unintentionally. अचानक गायब हो जाना।

- **Fall off the radar** – similar to “drop off the radar”; means to lose contact or fade from public notice without a deliberate effort to go undetected. संपर्क से गायब हो जाना।
9. B) Be under a cloud – idiom meaning to be in a state of disgrace; to be viewed with suspicion, distrust, or disapproval by others. संदेह / अविश्वास में होना।
10. B) The correct spelling is ‘Equanimity’, which means mental calmness and composure, especially in difficult situations. समता / मनःशांति।
11. D) ‘preference’ का spelling पहले से सही है; यह शब्द “prefer” से बना है और इसका अर्थ है किसी चीज़ को दूसरे के मुकाबले अधिक पसंद करना। प्राथमिकता। No replacement is required.
12. C) **Lament** (verb/noun) – to feel or express deep grief or sorrow; to mourn. शोक करना / विलाप करना।
 Synonym: **Mourn** (verb) – to feel or show sorrow for something lost or for someone who has died. शोक मनाना।
- **Celebrate** (verb) – to mark a happy occasion with festivities; opposite in meaning to lament. उत्सव मनाना।
 - **Forget** (verb) – to fail to remember; unrelated to expressing grief or sorrow. भूलना।
 - **Ignore** (verb) – to deliberately pay no attention to; unrelated to mourning or lamenting. अनदेखा करना।
13. C) **Generous** (adjective) – willing to give more than expected; liberal in giving. उदार / दानशील।
 Synonym: **Kind hearted** (adjective) – having a kind and sympathetic nature; generous in spirit. दयालु / उदार हृदय।
- **Mean** (adjective) – unwilling to give or share; miserly – opposite in meaning to generous. कंजूस / मतलबी।
 - **Greedy** (adjective) – having an excessive desire for wealth or possessions; opposite in spirit to generous. लालची।
 - **Proud** (adjective) – feeling satisfaction about one’s achievements; unrelated to the meaning of generous. गर्वित।
14. C) The correct spelling of ‘embezzlement’ is ‘**embezzlement**’, which means the fraudulent appropriation of funds or property entrusted to one’s care. ग़बन।
15. D) **Fresh** (adjective) – recently made or obtained; not stale, decayed, or processed. ताज़ा।
 Antonym: **Stale** (adjective) – no longer fresh; having lost its original quality. बासी / पुराना।
- **New** (adjective) – recently created or produced; a near-synonym of fresh, not its antonym. नया।
 - **Crisp** (adjective) – fresh and firm; also a near-synonym of fresh, not its antonym. कुरकुरा / ताज़ा।
 - **Recent** (adjective) – having happened not long ago; related in meaning to fresh, not its antonym. हाल का।

16. B) **Novice** – a person who is new to a subject, activity, or skill; a beginner. नौसिखिया। This directly matches the given definition.
- **Expert** – a person with extensive knowledge or skill in a particular field; the opposite of a novice. विशेषज्ञ।
 - **Veteran** – a person who has long experience in a particular field; also the opposite of a novice. अनुभवी।
 - **Professional** – a person engaged in a specified activity as a main paid occupation; implies experience and skill, not newness. पेशेवर।
17. A) **Forfeiture** – the loss or giving up of property, rights, or privileges as a penalty for a wrongdoing or breach of obligation. जब्ती / ज़ब्ती। This directly matches the given definition.
- **Embezzlement** – the fraudulent appropriation of funds or property entrusted to one's care; refers to theft, not penalty-based loss. गबन।
 - **Extradition** – the action of handing over a person accused of a crime to the jurisdiction of another country or state. प्रत्यर्पण।
 - **Interdiction** – the action of prohibiting or forbidding something; an official order to stop or seize something. प्रतिबंध / रोक।
18. A) **in the name of** का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि "in the name of religion" एक fixed expression है जिसका अर्थ है धर्म की आड़ में या धर्म का बहाना लेकर; जैसे –
Murdering innocent people in the name of religion is a heinous crime against God and humanity.
- 'in the name of' should be used because this fixed prepositional phrase means "using something as a justification or pretext," which perfectly fits the context of committing crimes under the guise of religion.
19. C) **'to'** का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि "admit to" एक सही collocation है जिसका अर्थ है किसी बात को स्वीकार करना; जैसे –
The culprit admitted to the charge of robbery against him.
- 'to' should be used because "admit to" is the correct collocation in English when acknowledging guilt or accepting a charge; "admit to something" means to confess or acknowledge it.
20. C) **'from'** का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि "refrain from" एक सही collocation है जिसका अर्थ है किसी कार्य से स्वयं को रोकना; जैसे –
The annoyed lady refrained from reprimanding the stranger.
- 'from' should be used because "refrain from" is the standard and fixed collocation in English meaning to stop oneself from doing something.
21. D) **slowed** सही है क्योंकि यह past tense है और इसका मतलब किसी चीज़ की रफ़्तार कम होना है। decelerate (base verb) और faltering (-ing form) ग्रामर के हिसाब से पूरी तरह गलत हैं क्योंकि घटना पिछले साल ("last year") की है, इसलिए past tense चाहिए। stagnated का मतलब किसी चीज़ का पूरी तरह रुक जाना या सड़ जाना है।

- slowed is correct. It is in the past tense and perfectly describes a reduction in the rate of loss. decelerate (present/base verb) and faltering (-ing form) are grammatically invalid for an event that happened "last year". stagnated implies a complete halt or rotting, which doesn't fit the context.
22. D) **curb** सही है क्योंकि इसका मतलब किसी नुकसानदायक चीज़ (जैसे पेड़ों की कटाई) पर लगाम लगाना या उसे कंट्रोल करना होता है। stifle का मतलब किसी का दम घोटना या किसी की आवाज़ दबाना होता है। suppress का मतलब ताकत से किसी विद्रोह (rebellion) को कुचलना होता है। throttle का मतलब गला घोटना या इंजन की स्पीड रोकना होता है।
- curb is correct. It specifically means to restrain or keep something undesirable (like deforestation) in check. stifle means to suffocate or crush creativity. suppress implies forcibly putting an end to something using authority. throttle means to physically choke someone or restrict an engine.
23. A) **important** सही है क्योंकि यह जंगलों की अहमियत बताने के लिए सबसे सीधा और सटीक adjective है। instrument ग्रामर के हिसाब से गलत है; यह एक noun (संज्ञा) है, जबकि यहाँ adjective की ज़रूरत है। consequential का मतलब 'बड़े नतीजों वाला' होता है (जैसे कोई फैसला), और influential का इस्तेमाल प्रभावशाली लोगों या विचारों के लिए होता है।
- important is correct because it broadly and accurately describes the high ecological value of the rainforests. instrument is grammatically invalid because it is a noun, not an adjective. consequential refers to actions or events with major outcomes. influential is used for people or ideas that change behavior.
24. B) **increase** सही है क्योंकि इसका इस्तेमाल किसी चीज़ की 'संभावना' (likelihood) को बढ़ाने के लिए किया जाता है। escalate का मतलब विवाद या तनाव का और ज़्यादा गंभीर हो जाना होता है। compound का मतलब किसी बुरी स्थिति को बिगाड़ना होता है, लेकिन आप समस्या को compound करते हैं, उसकी 'संभावना' को नहीं। magnify का मतलब किसी चीज़ को बड़ा करके दिखाना होता है।
- increase is correct because it is the grammatically standard verb used to make a mathematical probability ("likelihood") higher. escalate is used for abstract situations or conflicts becoming more serious. compound means to make a bad situation worse, but grammatically it takes the problem itself as the object, not the "likelihood" of it. magnify means to make something physically look larger.
25. D) **about** सही है क्योंकि जब आप किसी सामान्य विषय या ट्रेंड (trend) को लेकर आश्वस्त (confident) होते हैं, तो 'confident about' का इस्तेमाल होता है। for एक गलत विकल्प है; 'confident for' का इस्तेमाल आमतौर पर किसी व्यक्ति के भविष्य के लिए होता है (जैसे 'confident for his future'), लेकिन पूरे trend के लिए 'about' ज़्यादा सटीक है। over और upon ग्रामर के हिसाब से यहाँ बिल्कुल गलत हैं।
- about is correct because it is the proper preposition to pair with "confident" when referring to a general topic or broad trend for is incorrect here; "confident for" is generally used when expressing hope for a person's future, whereas "about" fits a general data observation. over and upon do not logically pair with "confident" in this context.



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