

Razor's edge: On the progress of the southwest monsoon

High heat and low rainfall is threatening agricultural produce

The southwest monsoon **deficit nationwide** has increased from 35% to 43%; the winds' northward advance was **stalled** near Mumbai; and both the U.S. NOAA and the India Meteorological Department (IMD) expect a moderate-to-strong **El Niño** this year. The El Niño **suppresses** the vertical air movement needed for rainclouds to form while a warming Pacific is weakening the trade winds that bring moisture to the subcontinent. The Madden-Julian Oscillation is also in an **unfavourable** phase and the Indian Ocean Dipole currently cannot offer a **buffer**. Further, while northwest India has received 5% more rain than normal, central India and the northeast face deficits of 63% and 43%, respectively. But with two-thirds of the seasonal rainfall **historically** arriving in July and August, the monsoon may still recover and **salvage** the season. Together with **reservoir** storage at 30.4% of capacity, compared with 25.1% during previous El Niño years, there is no reason for alarm yet. However, the **effects** for agriculture **are** more **concerning**. The Agriculture Ministry has already prioritised 111 districts out of 315 **vulnerable** ones based on their **irrigation** coverage. Extreme heat has been reducing farm labour **productivity**. High heat and rain shortfall have **sown anxiety** over the **cardamom** harvest in Idukki, a **fate** that **bodes ill** for other plantation crops in the Western Ghats.

Both the kharif sowing **window** for rice, pulses, and oilseeds and the availability of fertilizers could come under pressure, the latter due to Chinese export **curbs** and tensions in West Asia, **heightening** the risks of lower soil moisture and higher input stress. **Retail food inflation** was 4.2% in April; further deficits will especially threaten vegetables and pulses, **complicating** the monetary policy. The fundamental problem is the way India has built its rural economy around the assumption of reliable rainfall delivery. No **adaptation** strategy can indefinitely **outpace unchecked** warming, so **limiting** future warming should **amount to** reducing the **extent** of **exposure**. The ideal **sustainable** strategies are to switch from **rain-centric** to water-centric organisation, reduce dependence on water-intensive crops, and improve **resilience**. **Pathways** for the first two **have** already been **outlined**. On the last, while the Agriculture Ministry's **extant contingency** plans **reflect** the need for adjustable sowing windows and alternative seed varieties, the principal variable remains implementation **at scale**. Second, the government should consider a new authority to **coordinate** inter-State water use and cropping changes based on extended **El Niño forecasts**, **eliminating** the cropping **governance** currently **fragmented** between the Agriculture and Jal Shakti Ministries, and the IMD. **[Practice Ex.]**

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

Vocabulary

1. **Razor edge** (noun) - a very difficult or dangerous situation with an uncertain outcome नाजुक स्थिति
2. **Deficit nationwide** (noun) - a shortage or lack of something across the entire country राष्ट्रव्यापी कमी
3. **Stale** (verb) - halt, stop, delay, obstruct, check रुक गया
4. **El Niño** (noun) - a climate pattern that involves warming of ocean surface temperatures in the Pacific अल नीनो (जलवायु घटना)
5. **Suppress** (verb) - to prevent the development or action of something दबाना/रोकना
6. **Unfavourable** (adjective) - adverse, disadvantageous, opposing, negative प्रतिकूल
7. **Buffer** (noun) - a shock absorber; something that lessens a negative impact बचाव/सुरक्षा कवच
8. **Historically** (adverb) - in terms of past events; traditionally ऐतिहासिक रूप से
9. **Salvage** (verb) - rescue, save, recover, retrieve, restore बचाना
10. **Reservoir** (noun) - a large natural or artificial lake used as a water supply जलाशय
11. **Concerning** (adjective) - worrying, disturbing, troubling, alarming चिंताजनक
12. **Vulnerable** (adjective) - at risk, exposed, unprotected, susceptible असुरक्षित
13. **Irrigation** (noun) - the artificial application of water to land for agriculture सिंचाई
14. **Productivity** (noun) - efficiency, output, yield, performance उत्पादकता
15. **Sow** (verb) - plant, seed, spread, scatter, initiate बोना/फैलाना
16. **Anxiety** (noun) - worry, concern, apprehension, unease चिंता
17. **Cardamom** (noun) - a spice plant often grown in plantations इलायची
18. **Fate** (noun) - destiny, outcome, fortune, lot भाग्य
19. **Bode ill** (phrase) - to be a sign of future trouble बुरा संकेत होना
20. **Window** (noun) - a specific period of time suitable for an activity अवधि/समय
21. **Curb** (noun) - restriction, limit, restraint, check नियंत्रण/रोक
22. **Heighten** (verb) - increase, intensify, boost, raise, sharpen बढ़ाना
23. **Retail food inflation** (noun) - the rate at which the prices of food items sold to consumers increase खुदरा खाद्य मुद्रास्फीति
24. **Complicate** (verb) - make difficult, intricate, involve, confuse जटिल बनाना
25. **Adaptation** (noun) - adjustment, modification, change, accommodation अनुकूलन
26. **Outpace** (verb) - exceed, surpass, outrun, outstrip से आगे निकल जाना

27. **Unchecked** (adjective) - uncontrolled, unrestricted, rampant, unbridled
अनियंत्रित
28. **Limit** (verb) - restrict, bound, cap, restrain
सीमित करना
29. **Amount to** (phrasal verb) - to be equivalent to; to lead to के बराबर होना
30. **Extent** (noun) - scope, range, degree, scale, magnitude हद/विस्तार
31. **Exposure** (noun) - vulnerability, risk, contact, susceptibility संपर्क/जोखिम
32. **Sustainable** (adjective) - long-lasting, viable, eco-friendly, maintainable टिकाऊ
33. **Rain-centric** (adjective) - dependent primarily on rainfall वर्षा-केंद्रित
34. **Resilience** (noun) - ability to recover quickly; toughness लचीलापन/सहनशक्ति
35. **Outline** (verb) - describe, summarize, draft, sketch, present रूपरेखा तैयार करना
36. **Extant** (adjective) - existing, surviving, current, present मौजूदा
37. **Contingency** (noun) - backup plan, emergency measure, alternative आकस्मिक योजना
38. **Reflect** (verb) - show, demonstrate, indicate, mirror दर्शाना
39. **At scale** (phrase) - happening in a large or widespread manner बड़े पैमाने पर
40. **Coordinate** (verb) - organize, synchronize, manage, orchestrate समन्वय करना
41. **El Niño forecast** (noun) - predictions regarding the occurrence and intensity of El Niño अल नीनो पूर्वानुमान
42. **Eliminate** (verb) - remove, exclude, eradicate, delete, discard खत्म करना
43. **Cropping** (noun) - the activity of growing crops फसल उगाना
44. **Governance** (noun) - administration, management, authority, regulation शासन/प्रबंधन
45. **Fragmented** (adjective) - broken, divided, partitioned, scattered विभाजित/टुकड़ों में बंटा हुआ

Summary of the Editorial

1. India's southwest monsoon deficit has worsened significantly, increasing from **35% to 43%**, creating concern for agriculture and food production.
2. The monsoon's **northward movement stalled near Mumbai**, delaying rainfall across several regions.
3. Weather agencies including the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and India Meteorological Department expect a **moderate-to-strong El Niño** this year.
4. **El Niño weakens rainfall formation** by suppressing vertical air movement and weakening moisture-carrying trade winds.
5. The **Madden–Julian Oscillation** is currently in an unfavourable phase, reducing chances of rainfall revival.
6. The **Indian Ocean Dipole** is presently unable to offset the negative effects of El Niño.
7. Rainfall distribution remains uneven: **northwest India received excess rain (5%)**, while **central India (63% deficit)** and **northeast India (43% deficit)** remain severely affected.
8. Despite the current deficit, there is still hope because **July and August normally contribute around two-thirds of seasonal monsoon rainfall**.
9. Water reserves provide some relief as **reservoir storage stands at 30.4% capacity**, higher than previous El Niño years.
10. Agriculture is facing greater risk due to **heat stress reducing farm labour productivity**.
11. Plantation crops are already under pressure; for example, **cardamom cultivation in Idukki has been affected by high temperatures and low rainfall**.
12. The **kharif sowing season** for rice, pulses, and oilseeds may suffer because of delayed rains and fertilizer supply challenges.
13. Fertilizer availability could worsen due to **Chinese export restrictions and geopolitical tensions in West Asia**, increasing farming costs.
14. Lower agricultural output may increase **food inflation**, especially for vegetables and pulses, creating challenges for economic and monetary policy.
15. The editorial argues that India must move from a **rainfall-dependent rural model to a water-centred strategy** by:
 - reducing dependence on water-intensive crops,
 - improving climate resilience,
 - implementing flexible sowing plans,
 - and creating a **central authority for inter-State water and cropping coordination** based on long-term climate forecasts.

Practice Exercise: SSC Pattern Based

[Editorial Page]

1. **The main subject of the passage is:**
 - A. Meteorological drivers of the current subcontinent drought patterns
 - B. Structural vulnerabilities and adaptation strategies in Indian agriculture
 - C. Institutional fragmentation in domestic water and cropping governance
 - D. The escalating threat of global warming on plantation crop harvests
2. **Which of the following statements can be deduced from the above passage?**
 - a. The existing administrative division of agricultural and water management across multiple bodies hampers unified climate adaptation governance.
 - b. Long-term regional climate resilience requires a fundamental shift in agricultural planning away from models predicated on predictable precipitation patterns.
 - A. Both a and b
 - B. only a
 - C. only b
 - D. Neither a nor b
3. **Which of the following adjectives can be used to describe the current state of Indian cropping governance as expressed in the above passage?**
 - a. collaborative, cohesive
 - b. consolidated, synchronized
 - c. disjointed, fragmented
 - A. Only a
 - B. Both b and c
 - C. Only c
 - D. Both a and c
4. **Which of the following statements about the seasonal rainfall trends and metrics is/are false?**
 - (1) Reservoir storage is lagging behind previous El Niño years.
 - (2) The northwest region faces a severe rain deficit of 63%.
 - A. Only 1 and 2 are false
 - B. Only 2 is false
 - C. Only 1 is false
 - D. both 1 and 2 are true
5. **In the clause: "...heightening the risks of lower soil moisture..."**

What grammatical structure is "heightening" a part of?

 - A. A relative clause
 - B. A passive voice
 - C. A participial phrase
 - D. A finite verb in past tense
6. **Rearrange the following sentences to form a meaningful passage:**
 - a. A passport certifies an individual's nationality during international travel.
 - b. The Ministry of External Affairs differentiates travel documents from citizenship records.
 - c. Intensive revision of electoral rolls relies on distinct verification standards.
 - d. Electoral exclusion challenges require specific constitutional proof of citizenship.
 - A. 2-1-3-4

- B. 2-1-4-3
C. 1-2-4-3
D. 2-3-1-4
7. **Rearrange the following sentences to form a meaningful passage:**
- Investigation reports frequently rely on vague official explanations like electrical short-circuits.
 - Achieving the national milestone of a developed country requires robust public safety standards.
 - Unregulated coaching centers proliferate rapidly to meet the massive demand for skills.
 - Commercial establishments operate in unauthorized structures with total disregard for building norms.
- A. 3-1-4-2
B. 3-4-1-2
C. 4-3-1-2
D. 3-4-2-1
8. **Select the most appropriate synonym of the given word:**
CIRCUMSPECT
- Reckless
 - Brash
 - Carefree
 - Cautious
9. **Select the most appropriate antonym of the given word:**
Obdurate
- Callous
 - Yielding
 - Adamant
 - Hardened
10. **Choose the correct meaning of idiom:**
Hand and glove
- Working in rivalry
 - Acting carelessly
 - Very closely associated
 - Openly suspicious
11. **Choose the correct meaning of idiom:**
Currying favour
- Seeking emotional validation
 - Seeking approval through flattery
 - Avoiding direct confrontation
 - Asking for forgiveness subtly
12. **Choose the correct spelling for a word meaning 'concise and forcefully expressive'**
- Pithy
 - Pithey
 - Pithhy
 - Pithie

13. Choose the correct one-word substitution for:

'A place where wild animals are kept'.

- A. Aviary
- B. Sanctuary
- C. Menagerie
- D. Park

14. Choose the correct one-word substitution for:

'A building where dead bodies are kept temporarily'.

- A. Sanctuary
- B. Sepulcher
- C. Crematorium
- D. Mortuary

15. Choose the correct form:

The committee, along with its chairperson, _____ scheduled to meet on Monday.

- A. are
- B. is
- C. were
- D. have been

16. Fill in the blank with the correct tense:

They _____ their objections by the time the committee convened.

- A. raised
- B. have raised
- C. will raise
- D. had raised

17. Find the part of the sentence that contains an error:

Neither of the proposed strategies (1)/ seem to address the core issue (2)/ that the committee identified (3)/ during last month's review. (4)/

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

18. Find the part of the sentence that contains an error:

The team's objective, despite its vagueness, (1)/ were understood by the evaluators (2)/ to focus more on inclusivity (3)/ than on quantifiable metrics. (4)

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

19. Select the sentence containing the homonym of the highlighted word:

The medieval monk copied the **codex** meticulously.

- A. The scribe placed the codex beside the incunabulum.
- B. The librarian digitized a rare codex from Florence.
- C. The AI engineer optimized the codex for faster computation.
- D. The codex was bound in goatskin vellum.

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

He is **more tall than** his brother

- A. taller to
- B. much taller than
- C. taller than
- D. more taller than

Passage:

In recent times, I seem to have made a (1) _____ shift to watching web series rather than movies. I had liked web series when they became popular with the coming of OTT about a decade ago. But realising the greater time investment they need, especially if they are multiple seasons, I found myself gradually (2) _____. However, in the last few months, given that I'm now self-employed and thus have better control of my time, I have found myself being drawn back.

Some of the reasons for the (3) _____ of web series are easily understandable. You can watch them from the (4) _____ of your home or your palm, compared with a new film that necessitates going to the nearest multiplex. A film in the theatre also comes with the constraint of appointment viewing. A web series is more 'your place, your pace'.

But web series also score for cinematic and artistic reasons. The pacing is better, as the director gets more time to tell (5) _____ story and you to get into it. Some months ago, I watched *Ulajh*, a Hindi film about diplomatic intrigue starring Janhvi Kapoor. While just over two hours' long, I felt out of breath when through with it, especially because of its involved screenplay. Sometime later, I watched *The Railway Men*, on the Bhopal gas tragedy of 1984: a limited series of four episodes, each about an hour long. While I took some time getting into it, I was completely into that period and place once in, and in fact, remained there for a day or so after I finished viewing.

21. Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank number 1.

- A. aleatory
- B. visceral
- C. conscious
- D. subliminal

22. Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank number 2.

- A. give in
- B. weaning off
- C. taken up
- D. carrying on

23. Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank number 3.

- A. impetus
- B. opprobrium
- C. inertia
- D. pull

24. Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank number 4.

- A. propinquity
- B. vicissitude

- C. convenience
 - D. encumbrance
25. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank number 5.**
- A. his
 - B. its
 - C. whose
 - D. their

Answers

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

[\[Practice Exercise\]](#)

Explanations

1. B) **Structural vulnerabilities and adaptation strategies in Indian agriculture**

Line from the passage: "The fundamental problem is the way India has built its rural economy around the assumption of reliable rainfall delivery... The ideal sustainable strategies are to switch from rain-centric to water-centric organisation, reduce dependence on water-intensive crops, and improve resilience." This is correct because it captures the central message of the entire passage. The passage moves from immediate monsoon metrics into a deep evaluation of systemic risks in farming (kharif sowing, input stress, inflation) and dedicates its second half entirely to necessary long-term agricultural survival and adaptation strategies. (Correct)

option A: While the first paragraph describes meteorological drivers, this covers only the opening technical context. It is too narrow to be the main subject, as it ignores the dominant focus on agricultural consequences, economic impacts, and long-term adaptation. (Incorrect)

option C: This option highlights a specific, single solution mentioned at the very end of the passage. It serves as a supporting detail for structural reform rather than the overarching theme of the passage. (Incorrect)

option D: The threat to plantation crops in the Western Ghats is provided merely as a brief, local example to illustrate the wider farming anxieties, making it far too narrow to represent the main idea of the entire passage. (Incorrect)

2. A) **Both a and b**

Statement A: Line from the passage: "...eliminating the cropping governance currently fragmented between the Agriculture and Jal Shakti Ministries, and the IMD." This is correct because the author explicitly notes that cropping governance is "fragmented" among these three distinct bodies, which directly implies that the current administrative split hampers unified, coordinated governance. (Correct)

Statement B: Line from the passage: "The fundamental problem is the way India has built its rural economy around the assumption of reliable rainfall delivery. ... The ideal sustainable strategies are to switch from rain-centric to water-centric organisation..." This is correct because the passage directly identifies dependency on predictable rainfall ("reliable rainfall delivery") as the fundamental problem and explicitly advocates shifting away from it toward "water-centric organisation" for long-term survival. (Correct)

3. C) **Only c**

Line from the passage: "...eliminating the cropping governance currently fragmented between the Agriculture and Jal Shakti Ministries, and the IMD." This is correct. The author explicitly uses the word "fragmented" to describe how management is split between the Agriculture Ministry, Jal Shakti Ministry, and the IMD. "Disjointed" is a perfect, direct synonym for this state of fragmentation. (Correct)

statement a: This is incorrect. The passage describes an environment where responsibilities are split up among separate ministries, which is the exact opposite of a "collaborative" or "cohesive" (unified) system. (Incorrect)

statement b: This is incorrect. The author explicitly calls for a new authority to achieve synchronization precisely because the current framework is not consolidated or synchronized. (Incorrect)

4. A) **1 and 2 are false**

Statement (1): Line from the passage: "Together with reservoir storage at 30.4% of capacity, compared with 25.1% during previous El Niño years..." This statement is false because the current reservoir storage (30.4%) is actually higher than previous El Niño years (25.1%), meaning it is leading, not lagging behind. (False)

Statement (2): Line from the passage: "Further, while northwest India has received 5% more rain than normal, central India and the northeast face deficits of 63% and 43%, respectively." This statement is false because the northwest region actually has an excess (+5%), while it is central India that faces the severe 63% deficit. (False)

5. C) **A participial phrase**

This is correct. The word "heightening" is a present participle acting as an adjective/modifier. It introduces a non-finite participial phrase that modifies the entire preceding clause, functioning to show the direct result or consequence of the main action. (Correct)

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

Sentence 2 comes first because it introduces the primary overarching theme of the passage. It establishes the foundational legal distinction made by the authority (MEA) between two separate broad categories: travel documents and citizenship records.

Sentence 1 follows Sentence 2 because it narrows down and defines the exact scope of the first category mentioned (travel documents/passports), explaining what a passport actually certifies.

Sentence 3 comes next to transition into the second category mentioned in the introduction (citizenship records). It moves the context to a specific domestic process—electoral roll revision—which operates on those separate citizenship standards.

Sentence 4 comes last because it provides the final conclusion to the sequence. It addresses the ultimate legal hurdle one faces (electoral exclusion challenges) when those verification standards from the previous sentence are not met.

- Sentence 2 सबसे पहले आता है क्योंकि यह passage के मुख्य और व्यापक विषय (broad theme) को पेश करता है। यह अथॉरिटी (MEA) द्वारा दो अलग-अलग श्रेणियों—travel documents और citizenship records—के बीच कानूनी अंतर को स्थापित करता है।
- Sentence 1, sentence 2 के बाद आता है क्योंकि यह पहली श्रेणी (travel documents/passport) के दायरे को और स्पष्ट करता है, कि एक पासपोर्ट वास्तव में क्या प्रमाणित करता है।
- Sentence 3 इसके बाद आता है क्योंकि यह शुरुआत में बताई गई दूसरी श्रेणी (citizenship records) की ओर बढ़ता है। यह संदर्भ को एक घरेलू प्रक्रिया—electoral roll revision—पर ले जाता है, जो पूरी तरह से नागरिकता के मानकों पर काम करती है।
- Sentence 4 अंत में आता है क्योंकि यह इस पूरे क्रम का अंतिम logical conclusion देता है। यह सीधे उस कानूनी चुनौती (electoral exclusion challenges) की बात करता है जो तब सामने आती है जब पिछली सेंटेंस में बताए गए वेरिफिकेशन मानक पूरे नहीं होते।

7. B) **3-4-1-2**

Sentence 3 comes first because it introduces the primary background context of the passage. It establishes the booming growth and demand in the educational ecosystem, serving as the starting point.

Sentence 4 follows Sentence 3 by narrowing down to the structural reality of this boom. It moves from the general expansion of the centers to the physical ground reality of how these business spaces ignore safety laws.

Sentence 1 comes next because it addresses the systemic failure when accidents occur in these spaces. After establishing the structural violations, the passage shifts to the weak investigative culture that covers up the root cause of disasters.

Sentence 2 comes last because it provides the final thematic scale and conclusion. It moves from specific local failures to a macro national perspective, linking public safety directly with the nation's development goals.

- Sentence 3 सबसे पहले आता है क्योंकि यह passage का primary background context सेट करता है। यह एजुकेशन और स्किल कोचिंग मार्केट में होने वाली भारी ग्रोथ को दिखाता है, जो कि शुरुआती बिंदु (starting point) है।
 - Sentence 4, sentence 3 के बाद आता है क्योंकि यह इस भारी ग्रोथ की structural reality को दिखाता है। कोचिंग सेंटर्स के फैलने के बाद, यह वाक्य दिखाता है कि ये कमर्शियल सेंटर्स किस तरह बिना बिल्डिंग और सेफ्टी नॉर्म्स के चल रहे हैं।
 - Sentence 1 इसके बाद आता है क्योंकि यह इन जगहों पर होने वाले हादसों के बाद के सिस्टमैटिक फेलियर (systemic failure) को सामने लाता है। स्ट्रक्चरल गड़बड़ियों को बताने के बाद, यह वाक्य लचर इन्वेस्टिगेशन कल्चर (weak investigation culture) पर बात करता है जो हादसों के असली कारणों को छुपा देता है।
 - Sentence 2 अंत में आता है क्योंकि यह पूरे सीकेंस का फाइनल thematic scale और conclusion देता है। लोकल लेवल की कमियों को बताने के बाद, यह मैक्रो नेशनल पर्सपेक्टिव (macro national perspective) पर बात करता है कि देश के डेवलपमेंट के लिए पब्लिक सेफ्टी कितनी जरूरी है।
8. D) **Circumspect** (adjective) – Careful, watchful, prudent, vigilant, considerate सतर्क, सावधान
Synonym: **Cautious** (adjective) – Careful to avoid potential problems or dangers; wary, alert, attentive. सावधान, सोच-समझकर
- **Reckless** (adjective) – Careless, heedless, rash, irresponsible. लापरवाह
 - **Brash** (adjective) – Bold in a rude or hasty way; impudent, tactless. धृष्ट
 - **Carefree** (adjective) – Free from worries or responsibilities; lighthearted, relaxed. बेफिक्र
9. B) **Obdurate** (adjective) – Stubborn, unyielding, inflexible, hardhearted, adamant जिद्दी, हठी
Antonym: **Yielding** (adjective) – Complying or inclined to give way under pressure; flexible, submissive, accommodating. झुकने वाला, विनम्र
- **Callous** (adjective) – Emotionally insensitive, unfeeling, heartless. कठोर
 - **Adamant** (adjective) – Refusing to be persuaded or to change one's mind; firm, resolute. अडिग
 - **Hardened** (adjective) – Made or become tough or unfeeling; insensitive, unfeeling. कठोर हृदय वाला
10. C) **Hand and glove** (idiom) – Very closely associated बहुत घनिष्ठ रूप से जुड़े हुए

11. B) **Currying favour** (idiom) – Seeking approval through flattery चापलूसी के द्वारा अनुग्रह प्राप्त करना
12. A) The correct spelling of 'Pithey' is '**Pithy**' which means "concise and forcefully expressive" संक्षिप्त और प्रभावशाली.
13. C) **Menagerie** (noun) – A place where wild animals are kept जंगली जानवरों को रखने का स्थान
- **Aviary** (noun) – A large enclosure for keeping birds पक्षियों का पिंजरा / पक्षीशाला
 - **Sanctuary** (noun) – A protected place for animals where they are safe from hunting or danger अभयारण्य
 - **Park** (noun) – A large public green area in a town used for recreation पार्क / उद्यान
14. D) **Mortuary** (noun) – A building where dead bodies are kept temporarily शवगृह
- **Sanctuary** (noun) – A place of refuge or safety पवित्र स्थान / आश्रयस्थल
 - **Sepulcher** (noun) – A small room or monument, cut in rock or built of stone, in which a dead person is buried समाधि / कब्र
 - **Crematorium** (noun) – A place where dead bodies are cremated शवदाह गृह
15. B) 'is' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि "The committee" एक collective noun है जो यहाँ एक इकाई (single unit) के रूप में प्रयुक्त हुआ है। "along with its chairperson" एक अतिरिक्त वाक्यांश (parenthetical phrase) है जो मुख्य subject को नहीं बदलता। इसलिए Verb singular रूप में होगा – "is scheduled to meet on Monday."
- 'is' should be used because "The committee" is a collective noun acting as a single unit. The phrase "along with its chairperson" is a parenthetical addition and does not affect the number of the subject. Hence, the verb should be singular – "is scheduled to meet on Monday."
16. D) '**had raised**' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि वाक्य में "by the time the committee convened" यह स्पष्ट करता है कि एक क्रिया (objections उठाना) दूसरी भूतकालीन क्रिया (committee का बैठक करना) से पहले पूरी हो चुकी थी। Past perfect tense ऐसे ही दो past घटनाओं में पहले पूरी हुई घटना को दर्शाने के लिए प्रयोग होता है।
- 'Had raised' should be used because the phrase "by the time the committee convened" indicates that one action (raising objections) was completed before another past action (the committee convened). The past perfect tense is used to show the earlier of two past actions.
17. B) 'seem' के बदले '**seems**' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि 'Neither of the proposed strategies' एक Singular Subject है, इसलिए Verb भी Singular Form में होना चाहिए।
- 'seems' will be used instead of 'seem' because 'Neither of the proposed strategies' is a Singular Subject, so the Verb must also be in Singular Form.
- जैसे— Neither of the answers seems correct to me
18. B) 'were' के बदले '**was**' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि Subject 'objective' Singular है, अतः Verb भी Singular होनी चाहिए।
- 'was' will be used instead of 'were' because the Subject 'objective' is Singular, so the Verb should also be Singular;
19. C) . **The AI engineer optimized the codex for faster computation.**
- वाक्य में 'codex' शब्द का अर्थ है — हाथ से लिखा गया प्राचीन पांडुलिपि (an ancient manuscript book written by hand)।

अब हमें ऐसा वाक्य चुनना है जिसमें 'codex' का समान उच्चारण वाला लेकिन अलग अर्थ वाला शब्द (homonym) प्रयोग हुआ हो।

विकल्प C में 'codex' का प्रयोग तकनीकी संदर्भ में कोड या प्रोग्राम (computer code or algorithm system) के रूप में किया गया है।

दोनों का उच्चारण समान है लेकिन अर्थ पूरी तरह भिन्न हैं – एक ऐतिहासिक ग्रंथ है और दूसरा प्रोग्रामिंग सिस्टम। इसलिए यह homonym का उदाहरण है।

- In the highlighted sentence, codex means a handwritten ancient manuscript or bound book of classical or religious texts.
- In option C, codex refers to a programming code or algorithmic system used in artificial intelligence, representing a modern technological sense.
- They are spelled and pronounced the same, but their meanings differ greatly, making them homonyms.

20. C) 'more tall than' के बदले '**taller than**' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि Comparative Degree में 'more' का प्रयोग केवल उन adjectives के साथ होता है जो दो syllables या उससे अधिक के हों, जबकि 'tall' एक monosyllabic adjective है, जिसके साथ '-er' लगाया जाता है; जैसे— He is taller than his brother.

- 'taller than' will be used instead of 'more tall than' because in Comparative Degree, 'more' is used with adjectives having two or more syllables, whereas 'tall' is a one-syllable adjective, so '-er' is added; Like— He is taller than his brother.

21. C) The author describes a deliberate, intentional change in their viewing habits. "(conscious)" means having knowledge of and deliberately doing something. "aleatory" means depending on random chance or luck, which contradicts the intentional nature of the shift. "visceral" means based on deep inward feelings rather than intellect. "subliminal" means affecting someone's mind without them being aware of it, which is the exact opposite of conscious.

In Hindi:

- लेखक अपनी देखने की आदतों में एक जानबूझकर किए गए बदलाव की बात कर रहा है। "(conscious)" का मतलब सोच-समझकर या जानबूझकर किया गया है। "aleatory" का मतलब संयोग (random) पर निर्भर होना है। "visceral" का मतलब बौद्धिक सोच के बजाय गहरी आंतरिक भावना पर आधारित होना है। "subliminal" का मतलब अवचेतन (बिना जाने हुए) है, जो conscious का एकदम उल्टा है।

22. B) The author realized that web series took up too much time, so they started to slowly reduce their habit. "(weaning off)" means to gradually detach someone from a habit or dependency, which pairs perfectly with the word "gradually" in the text. "give in" means to surrender to a temptation (which would mean watching more, not less). "taken up" means to start a new hobby or habit. "carrying on" means to continue an activity, which contradicts the author's realization about the heavy time investment.

In Hindi:

- लेखक को एहसास हुआ कि web series में बहुत ज़्यादा समय लगता है, इसलिए उसने धीरे-धीरे अपनी इस आदत को कम कर दिया। "(weaning off)" का मतलब किसी आदत को धीरे-धीरे (gradually) छोड़ना होता है। "give in" का मतलब किसी प्रलोभन (temptation) के आगे झुक जाना या हार मान लेना है। "taken up" का मतलब कोई नई आदत या शौक शुरू करना है। "carrying on" का मतलब किसी काम को जारी रखना है, जो यहाँ context के खिलाफ है।

23. D) The passage discusses the attractive qualities or the appeal of web series. "(pull)" acts as a noun here, meaning a strong attractive influence or drawing power. "impetus" means a driving force or momentum that makes something happen, but it does not capture the "magnetic attraction" meant here. "opprobrium" means harsh criticism or public disgrace. "inertia" means a tendency to do nothing or to remain unchanged.

In Hindi:

- Passage में web series के आकर्षण (appeal) की बात हो रही है। "(pull)" का इस्तेमाल यहाँ noun की तरह हुआ है, जिसका मतलब अपनी तरफ खींचने वाली शक्ति या आकर्षण है। "impetus" का मतलब किसी काम को शुरू करने की प्रेरणा (driving force) है, आकर्षण नहीं। "opprobrium" का मतलब कड़ी निंदा या अपमान है। "inertia" का मतलब बदलाव का विरोध करना या निष्क्रिय (inactive) रहना है।

24. C) The context describes the ease and comfort of watching shows from home or a mobile device instead of travelling to a theatre. "(convenience)" refers to the state of being able to proceed with something with little effort or difficulty. "propinquity" means physical closeness or proximity, which doesn't capture the broader meaning of ease and comfort highlighted here. "vicissitude" means an unwelcome or unpleasant change in circumstances. "encumbrance" means a burden or impediment, which is the exact opposite of the author's point.

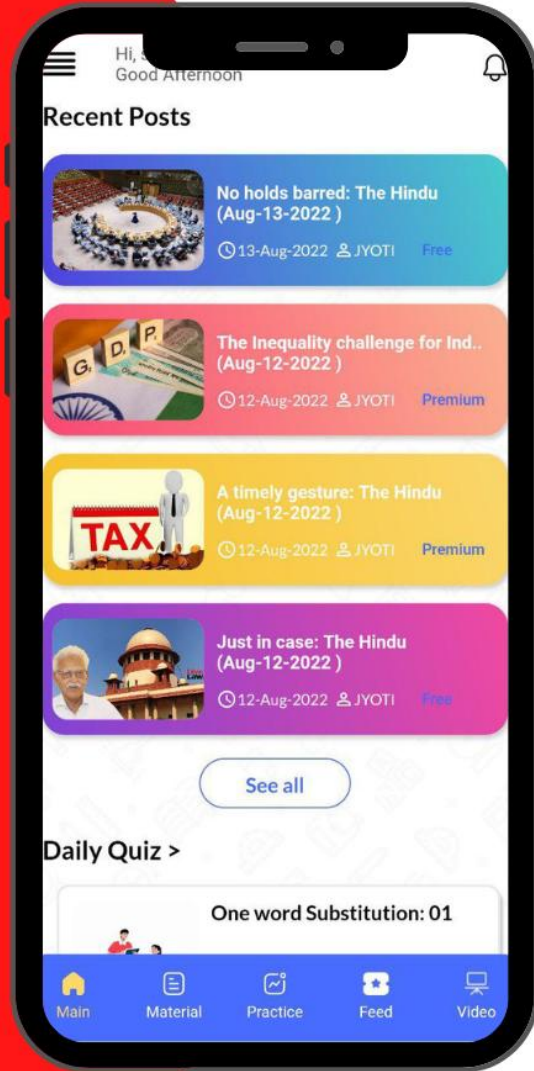
In Hindi:

- Context घर से या मोबाइल से शोज़ देखने की आसानी (ease) को बता रहा है। "(convenience)" का मतलब सुविधा या आसानी है। "propinquity" का मतलब शारीरिक नज़दीकी (closeness) है, यह सुविधा (comfort) के भाव को नहीं दर्शाता। "vicissitude" का मतलब परिस्थितियों में बुरा बदलाव है। "encumbrance" का मतलब कोई बोझ या रुकावट (burden) है, जो context के बिल्कुल उल्टा है।

25. D) The blank requires a possessive pronoun referring back to the singular noun "the director". "(their)" is grammatically correct and widely used as a singular, gender-neutral pronoun when the gender of the person (the director) is unspecified. "his" assumes the director is male, which is grammatically restrictive. "its" is strictly for inanimate objects or animals. "whose" is a relative pronoun that would completely break the grammatical structure of the sentence.

In Hindi:

- यहाँ "the director" के लिए एक possessive pronoun की ज़रूरत है। "(their)" यहाँ gender-neutral singular pronoun के रूप में बिल्कुल सही है (जब gender पता न हो)। "his" का इस्तेमाल यह मान लेता है कि director पुरुष है। "its" का इस्तेमाल निर्जीव चीज़ों (objects) के लिए होता है। "whose" एक relative pronoun है जो यहाँ sentence के structure को गलत कर देगा।



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