

Oil conundrum: On India's energy imports from Russia

India's energy **imports** from Russia seem **driven** by confusion, not strategy

Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MCI) **data** on India's May **crude** imports **show** that receipts from Russia had reached the **pre-sanction** levels of more than 40%, which is also the highest in two years. Though India has **defended** this as commercially **prudent**, its yuan-based payments give China an **edge to internationalise** its currency **at India's expense**, even if it **has no bearing on** the domestic strength of the Indian rupee due to strict capital controls. Oil import **concentration** from a single source, and paying a premium, **is** risky for India, which has long **pursued a diversified** energy strategy. **Moreover**, **sourcing** fuel from the Gulf spot market **amid** evolving **sanctions** **has** its own risks. Secondary sanctions could hit trade channels, **exposing** Indian refiners to severe supply shocks. India's crude **imports** from Russia **surged** in June, while UAE shipments were at record levels as refiners **sought to** secure supplies after the Strait of Hormuz reopened. However, renewed Iran-U.S. **hostilities** have put those flows at risk. And even as Venezuela has emerged as a key supplier, increasing and **unsustainably** high one-country concentration could **weaken** India's **bargaining power**, reduce flexibility, and **erode** its **credibility** as an independent balancing power.

MCI **data highlight** the price impact: Russian imports carried a \$46-per-ton premium. Import value surged 83% amid a 2% fall in volume, likely **diminishing** Indian refiners' **margins** on refined products using Russian crude. While spot purchases have enabled refiners to capture discounts of up to \$10 per barrel on Russian Urals crude relative to **Brent** during some periods, after February this year, **narrowing** discounts, weaker product cracks, and **geopolitical** risks have **moderated** gross refining margins. India must **strike a balance** between having long-term stable contracts with multiple producers, and selectively using the **spot-market** to **mitigate** the **procurement** risks. Until the Russia-Ukraine conflict, nearly 70% of India's crude imports came through long-term contracts, particularly from West Asia. True, India cannot **overlook** the **diplomatic** costs as Russian energy dependence risks sanctions. When Russian crude was cheap because of discounts **on account of** the Ukraine war, India reduced imports under U.S. pressure; now when it is being sold at a premium because of the Iran war, India is moving back to Russian crude. India must expand its strategic petroleum reserves to **cushion** temporary disruptions. Whether it increases or cuts down Russian oil imports, India seems to make decisions that are far removed from any sense of **strategic autonomy**.

[Practice Exercise]

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

Vocabulary

1. **Conundrum** (noun) - puzzle, dilemma, mystery, problem, enigma. पहेली या समस्या
2. **Drive** (verb) - motivate, prompt, impel, influence, force. प्रेरित करना
3. **Crude** (adjective) - raw, unprocessed, unrefined, natural, unpolished. कच्चा (तेल)
4. **Pre-sanction** (adjective) - before the imposition of penalties, pre-restriction. प्रतिबंध-पूर्व
5. **Defend** (verb) - justify, support, shield, protect, uphold. बचाव करना
6. **Prudent** (adjective) - wise, cautious, sensible, judicious, careful. समझदार
7. **Edge** (noun) - advantage, lead, superiority, benefit, head start. बढ़त या लाभ
8. **Internationalise** (verb) - globalise, universalise, expand, spread, distribute. अंतर्राष्ट्रीयकरण करना
9. **At India's expense** (phrase) - to the detriment or disadvantage of india. भारत की कीमत पर
10. **Have a bearing on something** (phrase) - to have an influence or effect on something. प्रभाव डालना
11. **Pursue** (verb) - follow, chase, seek, strive for, attempt. पीछा करना या अपनाना
12. **Diversified** (adjective) - varied, assorted, mixed, manifold, multifaceted. विविध
13. **Moreover** (adverb) - furthermore, additionally, besides, also, beyond that. इसके अतिरिक्त
14. **Amid** (preposition) - among, during, surrounded by, amidst, in the middle of. के बीच
15. **Sanction** (noun) - penalty, restriction, embargo, prohibition, punishment. प्रतिबंध
16. **Expose** (verb) - reveal, endanger, open, display, subject to. उजागर करना या जोखिम में डालना
17. **Surge** (verb) - increase, rise, swell, escalate, jump. तेजी से बढ़ना
18. **Seek** (verb) - attempt, try, search, pursue, aim. प्रयास करना या तलाशना
19. **Hostility** (noun) - conflict, enmity, antagonism, aggression, war. शत्रुता
20. **Unsustainably** (adverb) - excessively, uncontrollably, dangerously, unreasonably, unmaintainably. अस्थिर रूप से
21. **Weaken** (verb) - undermine, diminish, reduce, sap, impair. कमजोर करना
22. **Bargaining power** (noun) - the ability of a party to influence an outcome during negotiations. मोलभाव करने की शक्ति
23. **Erode** (verb) - wear away, diminish, deteriorate, corrode, weaken. धीरे-धीरे नष्ट करना
24. **Credibility** (noun) - reliability, trustworthiness, believability, reputation, honor. विश्वसनीयता
25. **Highlight** (verb) - emphasize, spotlight, stress, underscore, feature. प्रकाश डालना
26. **Diminish** (verb) - reduce, decrease, decline, lessen, shrink. कम करना

27. **Margin** (noun) - profit, difference, gap, surplus, benefit. लाभ का अंतर
28. **Brent** (noun) - a major trading classification of sweet light crude oil. ब्रेंट (कच्चे तेल का मानक)
29. **Narrow** (verb) - decrease, reduce, shrink, contract, lessen. कम होना
30. **Geopolitical** (adjective) - relating to how geography influences politics and international relations. भू-राजनीतिक
31. **Moderate** (verb) - temper, soften, curb, regulate, control. नियंत्रित करना
32. **Strike a balance** (phrase) - to find a compromise between two opposing things. संतुलन बनाना
33. **Spot-market** (noun) - a market where goods are sold for immediate delivery. तत्काल बाजार
34. **Mitigate** (verb) - alleviate, reduce, lessen, ease, diminish. कम करना
35. **Procurement** (noun) - acquisition, purchase, obtaining, collection, sourcing. खरीद या प्राप्ति
36. **Overlook** (verb) - ignore, neglect, miss, disregard, forget. अनदेखा करना
37. **Diplomatic** (adjective) - strategic, tactful, state-level, negotiation-based, political. कूटनीतिक
38. **On account of** (phrase) - because of, due to, owing to, as a result of. के कारण
39. **Cushion** (verb) - protect, buffer, shield, soften, mitigate. सुरक्षा कवच प्रदान करना
40. **Strategic** (adjective) - tactical, calculated, planned, essential, pivotal. रणनीतिक
41. **Autonomy** (noun) - independence, self-rule, sovereignty, freedom, liberty. स्वायत्तता

Summary of the Editorial

1. **Russia became India's largest crude oil supplier in May**, with imports exceeding **40% of total crude imports**, the highest level in the last two years.
2. The government defends these imports as **commercially beneficial**, but the editorial argues that the policy reflects **confusion rather than a well-planned energy strategy**.
3. **Yuan-based payments** for Russian oil indirectly strengthen China's efforts to **internationalise its currency**, even though they do not directly affect the Indian rupee due to capital controls.
4. India's increasing dependence on **a single supplier** contradicts its long-standing policy of maintaining a **diversified energy import basket**.
5. Heavy reliance on one country increases **supply risks**, reduces bargaining power, and makes India's energy security more vulnerable.
6. Buying oil from the **Gulf spot market** amid changing international sanctions also carries risks, particularly the possibility of **secondary sanctions** disrupting trade.
7. In June, India increased imports from both **Russia and the UAE** after the reopening of the **Strait of Hormuz**, as refiners sought to secure supplies.
8. However, **renewed tensions between Iran and the U.S.** have once again threatened oil flows from the Gulf, increasing uncertainty.
9. Although **Venezuela** has emerged as another supplier, replacing one dependency with another is not a sustainable long-term strategy.
10. Excessive dependence on any one supplier could weaken India's **negotiating position, flexibility, and credibility** as an independent global power.
11. According to Commerce Ministry data, **Russian crude carried a premium of \$46 per ton**, making imports more expensive than before.
12. The value of Russian oil imports rose **83% despite a 2% decline in import volume**, reducing the profitability of Indian refiners.
13. Earlier, refiners benefited from large discounts on Russian **Urals crude**, but narrowing discounts, weaker refining margins, and geopolitical uncertainties have reduced those advantages.
14. The editorial recommends that India return to a balanced strategy by combining **long-term supply contracts with multiple producers** and **selective spot-market purchases** to reduce procurement risks.
15. It concludes that India should **expand its strategic petroleum reserves** and make energy import decisions based on **strategic autonomy rather than short-term geopolitical pressures or market fluctuations**.

Practice Exercise: SSC Pattern Based

1. **What might be the author's overall purpose for discussing the development from West Asian long-term contracts to the current spot-market mix?** [Editorial page]
 - A. Argue that technology-based price interventions will necessarily increase the gross margins associated with refined oil products.
 - B. Emphasize how shifting procurement models try to maintain economic viability while exposing profound vulnerabilities in strategic autonomy.
 - C. Argue that a transition from long-term bilateral frameworks to a spot-market system is necessary to achieve efficient results.
 - D. emphasize that a decrease in the regulatory role of government can logically solve the inherent shortcomings in oil import concentration.
2. **The author's tone regarding India's current crude oil procurement decisions is best described as?**
 - A. Direct rejection — single-source energy deals do not work in global diplomacy because domestic refiners are financially illiterate.
 - B. Optimistic — commercial interventions and spot-market fluctuations will resolve longstanding energy dependency issues.
 - C. Detachedly descriptive — outlining evolving import concentrations and price dynamics without evaluative judgments.
 - D. Cautiously critical — admitting the temporary benefits of market discounts while pointing out the dangers of eroding strategic autonomy.
3. **What can be reasonably inferred about the relationship between yuan-based payments and the Indian domestic currency structure during the energy trade shifts?**
 - A. Their intensive application triggered a massive international currency realignment while rapidly deteriorating the internal purchasing power of the local currency.
 - B. Their presence advanced the geopolitical standing of a rival currency while leaving the domestic strength of the rupee insulated via tight capital controls.
 - C. Their deployment reduced the overhead margins of corporate refiners while exposing the macroeconomics of the state to structural sovereign debt default.
 - D. Their utilization expanded domestic foreign exchange capabilities while resolving the deep-seated trade imbalances across regional spot markets.
4. **What does the author's discussion of narrowing market discounts and premium prices primarily indicate?**
 - A. Corporate refiners purposefully restrict opportunities to manipulate the global baseline indices of crude oil.
 - B. Procurement strategies are structurally sound but look flawed owing to temporary maritime trade disruptions.
 - C. Heavy single-source dependence has created adverse fiscal impacts that squeeze processing profit margins.
 - D. Macroeconomic instability and geopolitical vulnerabilities due to a lack of strategic petroleum reserves.
5. **What does "strategic autonomy" mean most nearly in the context of the passage?**
 - A. Policies relating to long-term geopolitical and economic independence via balanced procurement frameworks

- B. Outcomes that emphasize the maximization of corporate profit margins in the short term, even if there are uncertain long-term diplomatic consequences
- C. Advancements that are characterized by rapid capacity building without consideration of supply chain integration
- D. Strategies that place emphasis on regional currency internationalization as a principal means of economic transformation
6. **Direction: Rearrange the following sentences (1, 2, 3, 4) to form a meaningful, logical, and coherent passage.**
1. But how often in the past have they not made light of these situations?
 2. India have harped on transition, on a new but not yet exciting phase in this format.
 3. To say that they lost 0-2 to Ireland and were routed 4-0 by England just because Bumrah and Pandya weren't around will be disrespecting the skills and the mettle of those who were in the mix.
 4. Admittedly, they do have a new skipper – Shreyas Iyer wouldn't have imagined in his wildest nightmares that his stint at the top would begin this disastrously – and were without a couple of influential performers in Jasprit Bumrah and Hardik Pandya.
- A. 4-2-1-3
- B. 2-1-4-3
- C. 2-1-4-3
- D. 4-1-3-2
7. **Select the most appropriate SYNONYM of the word "Overdue."**
- A. Mimicked
- B. Delayed
- C. Peculiar
- D. Grandiose
8. **Select the correct spelling of the highlighted word in the following sentence.**
- The punishment was **disproposinate** to the mistake.
- A. disproposinate
- B. disproproshinate
- C. disproposhnate
- D. disproportionate
9. **Select the most appropriate ANTONYM of the word "Ease."**
- A. Exhilarate
- B. Exonerate
- C. Exacerbate
- D. Expostulate
10. **Direction: Rearrange the following sentences (1, 2, 3, 4) to form a meaningful, logical, and coherent passage.**
1. However, through peace treaties with Egypt and Jordan, quiet understandings with Gulf monarchies, and ultimately the Abraham Accords, Israel appeared to have broken out of its strategic ghetto.
 2. For much of its history, Israel sought to escape the isolation that marked Jewish existence in Europe before the creation of the Jewish state.

3. The primary justification for the creation of Israel was that Europeans of Jewish origin persecuted and ghettoised, deserve their own state where they can live like other "normal" nations.
4. One of its goals was to transform Israel from a besieged regional outlier into an increasingly accepted member of the West Asian political order, a goal made very difficult if not impossible because of the expulsion of almost two-thirds of the Palestinian population from the territory that became Israel.
- A. 2-4-1-3
B. 3-2-4-1
C. 3-4-2-1
D. 2-3-4-1
11. **Select the most appropriate SYNONYM of the word "Aspiring."**
- A. Adolescent
B. Ambitious
C. Undergo
D. Outcomes
12. **Select the option that can be used as a one-word substitute for the given group of words.**
A dead body of a human being
- A. Skeleton
B. Cadaver
C. Zombie
D. Carcass
13. **Select the most appropriate MEANING of the idiom "Have deep pockets."**
- A. To possess an abundant reservoir of fiscal capital
B. To repudiate a fallacious doctrine of market equity
C. To obfuscate a systemic deficiency in corporate law
D. To exacerbate a lingering symptom of economic decay
14. **Select the most appropriate ANTONYM of the word "Retain."**
- A. Rejuvenate
B. Recriminate
C. Relinquish
D. Reiterate
15. **Fill in the blank with the correctly spelled word:**
"The hotel can _____ up to 200 guests."
- A. acamodate
B. accomodate
C. accommodate
D. acommodate
16. **Select the correct spelling of the highlighted word in the following sentence.**
Always be mindfull of your responsibilities.
- A. mindfull
B. mindfool
C. mindful
D. mindfule

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

It was being suggested by multiple sources that the operation had been compromised internally.

- A. Multiple sources suggested the operation was compromised internally.
- B. The operation was compromised, multiple sources suggested.
- C. The sources were suggesting an operation compromise.
- D. The operation had compromised multiple internal sources.

18. Choose the correct indirect narration from the options given for the following expression:

Mohan said, "Which car did you purchase yesterday?"

- A. Mohan asked that which car did he purchase yesterday.
- B. Mohan asked which car had he purchase the other day.
- C. Mohan asked which car had he purchased the day before.
- D. Mohan asked which car he had purchased the day before.

19. Choose the correct word to complete the sentence.

He was asked to _____ the meeting.

- A. precede
- B. proceed
- C. preseed
- D. process

20. Identify the incorrect sentence.

- A. Every piece sold here is well-designed and crafted to retain its originality.
- B. Folktales are a kind of stories that get passed on from generation to generation.
- C. The Nilgiris are the most productive mountains at the south and is too famous.
- D. There are not many followers of Gandhiji these days.

Read the cloze passage and answer the following questions:

A few years ago, Nitika Arora, a storyteller and queer ally, hosted a baithak (gathering) in Delhi's Mehrauli Archaeological Park to discuss LGBTQIA+ history in India. Midway through the event, she was taken _____(A) when a woman in her 50s said, "Every time I look at queer people, I feel repulsed." The strong emotion, however, also made the woman cognisant that she must face her prejudices. "I don't know much about queer folks, and the few things I do know are mainstream stereotypes," the Delhi resident explained. "I want to go beyond that and _____(B) them."

Since then, Arora says she has felt a deep sense of purpose to help fight such stereotypes. Today, she leads a number of queer-focused walks and baithaks via Darwesh Heritage Walks, which she co-founded in 2013. She leans into history, literature, and art to bring the community's layered past to the _____(C), through how they intertwine with the many monuments that pepper the cityscape.

The Delhi resident may not have come back for another gathering, but Arora is hopeful that she has been able to help other visitors. Pre-colonial India was not _____(D). The country has a complex, compelling narrative spanning centuries of gender fluidity and queer expression — from third gender representation in the Vedas and Puranas and same-sex desire in the Kama Sutra, to mythological references such as Shikhandi in the Mahabharata (born as a woman but _____(E) a male identity).

21. **Fill in blank (A) with the correct word to complete the phrasal verb meaning "to be shocked or surprised."**
- A. away
 - B. aback
 - C. apart
 - D. over
22. **Choose the most appropriate synonym for the word in (B): (understand).**
- A. comprehend
 - B. confound
 - C. alienate
 - D. obscure
23. **Fill in blank (C) with the correct noun to complete the idiom meaning "to make something prominent or noticeable."**
- A. front
 - B. surface
 - C. fore
 - D. light
24. **Choose the antonym of the word in (D): (strait-laced).**
- A. conservative
 - B. strict
 - C. puritanical
 - D. broad-minded
25. **Fill in blank (E) with the correct past tense verb indicating the adoption of a role or identity.**
- A. assumed
 - B. assumed
 - C. consumed
 - D. rejected

Answers

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

[Practice Exercise]

Explanations

1. B) **Emphasize how shifting procurement models try to maintain economic viability while exposing profound vulnerabilities in strategic autonomy.**

The passage discusses how India previously relied heavily on stable, long-term contracts (nearly 70% from West Asia) but shifted toward a mix containing more spot-market purchases (like discounted Russian crude) to save money and stay economically viable. However, the author argues that this shift has exposed major strategic vulnerabilities: 1.) It created a risky one-country concentration. 2.) It forced India into using yuan-based payments, giving China an advantage at India's expense. 3.) It left India reacting erratically to geopolitical events (e.g., cutting imports under U.S. pressure, then buying at a premium during the Iran crisis). The author explicitly concludes that these shifting decisions are "far removed from any sense of strategic autonomy."

Option A is incorrect: The passage focuses heavily on geopolitical conflicts, currency risks, and refining margins, but it does not argue for or mention "technology-based price interventions" as a tool to increase margins.

Option C is incorrect: The author explicitly warns against relying on the spot market, stating instead that "India must strike a balance between having long-term stable contracts with multiple producers, and selectively using the spot-market..."

Option D is incorrect: The author actually recommends more state-backed strategic cushioning, such as expanding state-managed strategic petroleum reserves, rather than advocating for a decrease in the government's role to solve procurement issues.

2. D) **Cautiously critical — admitting the temporary benefits of market discounts while pointing out the dangers of eroding strategic autonomy.**

The author acknowledges that India's opportunistic buying was initially seen as "commercially prudent" to capture discounts. However, the tone throughout the passage is highly critical of the risks involved. The author uses terms like "risky," "unsustainably high," and warns that India's bargaining power is being weakened. The final sentence delivers a clear, critical evaluation, stating that India's current decisions are "far removed from any sense of strategic autonomy."

Option A is incorrect: While the author strongly critiques the decisions, they never claim that domestic refiners are "financially illiterate." In fact, the passage explicitly recognizes that India has defended these moves as "commercially prudent."

Option B is incorrect: The author is far from optimistic; the passage highlights that high concentration is "unsustainably high," weakens India's bargaining power, exposes refiners to "severe supply shocks," and degrades geopolitical credibility.

Option C is incorrect: The passage is filled with sharp evaluative judgments rather than being detached. Words and phrases like "risky," "unsustainably high," "erode its credibility," and "far removed from any sense of strategic autonomy" clearly indicate a strongly evaluated perspective rather than neutral description.

3. B) **Their presence advanced the geopolitical standing of a rival currency while leaving the domestic strength of the rupee insulated via tight capital controls.**

The passage explicitly details this specific interaction: "...its yuan-based payments give China an edge to internationalise its currency at India's expense, even if it has no bearing on the domestic strength of the Indian rupee due to strict capital controls." This directly supports the inference that while the currency choice boosts China's global financial position ("a rival currency"), the internal value ("domestic strength") of the Indian rupee remains protected ("insulated") due to structural banking regulations ("tight capital controls").

Option 1 is incorrect: This directly contradicts the passage, which explicitly states that these payments have "no bearing on the domestic strength of the Indian rupee."

Option 3 is incorrect: While the passage mentions that high crude premiums diminish refiners' margins, it never states or implies that the choice of yuan payments threatens the Indian state with "sovereign debt default."

Option 4 is incorrect: The passage states that the payments happen "at India's expense" and that China accounts for half of India's non-oil trade deficit. The payments do not resolve trade imbalances, nor does the passage claim they expand domestic forex capabilities.

4. C) **Heavy single-source dependence has created adverse fiscal impacts that squeeze processing profit margins.**

The author uses the data on narrowing discounts and premium prices to illustrate the financial penalty of over-relying on a single source (Russia) while abandoning a diversified, stable framework.

The passage explicitly links this single-source concentration to financial strain: It notes that Russian imports carried a \$46-per-ton premium, causing import value to surge 83% despite a drop in actual volume. It directly states that this trend is "likely diminishing Indian refiners' margins" and that recent geopolitical shifts have "moderated gross refining margins" (squeezing processing profits).

Option A is incorrect: The passage mentions that refiners are seeking to secure supplies and react to market discounts/premiums, but it never claims or implies that they are trying to manipulate global baseline oil indices.

Option B is incorrect: The author does not view the current procurement strategy as "structurally sound." Instead, the author actively describes the high one-country concentration as "risky" and "unsustainably high," arguing that it diminishes margins and weakens bargaining power.

Option D is incorrect: While the author advises India to expand its strategic petroleum reserves to cushion disruptions, the discussion of premiums and narrowing discounts specifically highlights the immediate price and margin impact on current oil imports, rather than serving as an indicator of a complete lack of reserves.

5. A) **Policies relating to long-term geopolitical and economic independence via balanced procurement frameworks**

By stating at the end that these actions are "far removed from any sense of strategic autonomy," the author implies that true strategic autonomy requires a state to maintain its long-term independence and balancing power. According to the passage, this is achieved by stabilizing procurement through a balance of diversified, long-term stable contracts alongside selective spot-market usage.

option B: The author describes short-term profit chasing (like capturing temporary discounts) as being contrary to strategic autonomy because it erodes India's long-term diplomatic credibility.

option C: This does not fit the passage's discussion, which focuses on geopolitical balancing and energy security rather than industrial capacity building.

Option D: The passage views currency internationalization (specifically of the Chinese yuan) as a geopolitical drawback for India, not a goal of strategic autonomy.

6. C) 2-4-1-3

Explanation:

- Sentence 2 paragraph की शुरुआत में आया क्योंकि यह team India के 'transition' (बदलाव) के main topic को introduce करता है।
- Sentence 4 Sentence 2 के बाद आया क्योंकि यह transition phase की वर्तमान स्थिति को expand करता है, जिसमें नए skipper (Shreyas Iyer) और प्रमुख खिलाड़ियों (Bumrah and Pandya) की गैरमौजूदगी का जिक्र है।
- Sentence 1 Sentence 4 के बाद आया क्योंकि इसमें इस्तेमाल हुआ phrase "these situations" सीधे तौर पर Sentence 4 में बताई गई प्रमुख खिलाड़ियों की गैरमौजूदगी वाली स्थिति को point करता है।
- Sentence 3 Sentence 1 के बाद आया क्योंकि यह paragraph का conclusion है। यह स्पष्ट करता है कि केवल Bumrah और Pandya की गैरमौजूदगी को करारी हार का excuse बनाना बाकी खिलाड़ियों के talent का अपमान होगा।
 - Sentence 2 starts the passage because it provides the foundational context, introducing the main topic of India's ongoing transition phase in the T20 format.
 - Sentence 4 follows Sentence 2 because it acts as a logical progression, detailing the specific challenges of this transition by mentioning the struggling new skipper and the absence of key players like Bumrah and Pandya.
 - Sentence 1 follows Sentence 4 because the phrase "these situations" serves as a direct grammatical link, specifically referring back to the challenging circumstances (missing key players) detailed in the previous sentence.
 - Sentence 3 concludes the passage as the thematic synthesis, finalizing the argument by stating that blaming the massive defeats solely on the absence of two players disrespects the rest of the squad.

7. B) **Overdue** (adjective) - delayed, late, behindhand, tardy, unpunctual. (विलंबित)

Synonym: **Delayed** (adjective) – Happening or arriving after the planned, expected, or required time. (देर से हुआ / विलंबित)

- **Mimicked** (adjective): Imitated or copied the actions or speech of someone else closely. (नकल किया हुआ)
- **Peculiar** (adjective): Strange or odd in a way that is unusual or characteristic of someone. (अजीब)
- **Grandiose** (adjective): Impressive and magnificent in appearance or style, especially pretentiously so. (भव्य)

8. D) The correct spelling of 'disproportionate' is **disproportionate** which means "unequal, excessive, out of proportion" अर्थात् "असंतुलित".

9. C) **Ease** (verb) – To make something unpleasant or intense less serious or severe; to facilitate. (कम होना / शांत होना)

Antonym: **Exacerbate** (verb) – To make a problem, bad situation, or negative feeling worse or more intense. (बिगाड़ना / तीव्र करना)

- **Exhilarate** (verb): To make someone feel very happy, animated, or elated. (आनंदित करना)
- **Exonerate** (verb): To absolve someone from blame for a fault or wrongdoing. (दोषमुक्त करना)
- **Expostulate** (verb): To express strong disapproval or disagreement; to reason earnestly with someone. (विरोध करना)

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

Explanation:

- Sentence 3 paragraph की शुरुआत में आएगा क्योंकि यह Israel के creation और उसके historical justification के main topic को पूरी तरह से introduce करता है।
- Sentence 2 Sentence 3 के बाद आएगा क्योंकि यह Israel की history को expand करते हुए बताता है कि कैसे उसने अपने शुरुआती दिनों में isolation से बचने की कोशिश की।
- Sentence 4 Sentence 2 के बाद आएगा क्योंकि इसमें इस्तेमाल हुआ phrase "One of its goals" सीधे तौर पर पिछले वाक्य के 'isolation से बचने' वाले प्रयास को point करता है और उस लक्ष्य को detail में समझाता है।
- Sentence 1 Sentence 4 के बाद आएगा क्योंकि यह paragraph का conclusion है। "However" (हालांकि) के इस्तेमाल के साथ यह स्पष्ट करता है कि Sentence 4 में बताई गई तमाम मुश्किलों के बावजूद Israel ने अंततः अपने strategic ghetto (isolation) को कैसे तोड़ दिया।
 - Sentence 3 starts the passage because it provides the foundational context, introducing the overarching historical justification for the creation of the state of Israel.
 - Sentence 2 follows Sentence 3 because it acts as a logical progression, expanding on the nation's early history and its primary struggle to escape historical isolation.
 - Sentence 4 follows Sentence 2 because the phrase "One of its goals" serves as a direct grammatical link, detailing the specific political objective Israel set to achieve that escape from isolation.
 - Sentence 1 concludes the passage as the thematic synthesis. The transition word "However" contrasts with the difficulties mentioned in Sentence 4, summarizing how Israel eventually succeeded in breaking out of its isolation through various treaties.

11. B) **Aspiring** (adjective) – ambitious, hopeful, striving, eager, goal-oriented. (आकांक्षी)

Synonym: **Ambitious** (adjective) – Having or showing a strong desire and determination to succeed. (महत्वाकांक्षी)

- **Adolescent** (noun): A young person who is developing into an adult. (किशोर)
- **Undergo** (verb): To experience or endure something (typically unpleasant). (से गुजरना)
- **Outcomes** (noun): The results or consequences of an action or process. (परिणाम)

12. B) **Cadaver** (noun) – a dead human body शव

- **Skeleton** (noun) – The internal framework of bones in a body, typically what remains after decomposition. कंकाल
 - **Zombie** (noun) – A fictional undead being typically depicted as reanimated and mindless. जॉम्बी / मृतजीवी
 - **Carcass** (noun) – The dead body of an animal, especially one slaughtered for food. जानवर का शव / मृत शरीर
13. A) **Have deep pockets** (idiom) – To have a lot of money or extensive financial resources to handle large expenses. (आर्थिक रूप से मजबूत होना)
14. C) **Retain** (verb) – To continue to have something; to keep possession of or maintain in one's control. (बनाए रखना)
Antonym: **Relinquish** (verb) – To voluntarily cease to keep or claim; to give up possession or control of something. (त्यागना / छोड़ना)
- **Rejuvenate** (verb): To make someone or something look or feel younger, fresher, or more lively. (कायाकल्प करना)
 - **Recriminate** (verb): To make counter-accusations against an accuser; to engage in mutual blame. (दोषारोपण करना)
 - **Reiterate** (verb): To say something again or a number of times, typically for emphasis or clarity. (दोहराना)
15. C) **Accommodate** का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि यह शब्द की सही spelling है। “Accommodate” का अर्थ होता है किसी को ठहराने या स्थान देने की व्यवस्था करना। Sentence का अर्थ है कि होटल में 200 मेहमानों तक के ठहरने की व्यवस्था की जा सकती है। इसलिए, “accommodate” सबसे उपयुक्त विकल्प होगा।
- ‘Accommodate’ should be used because it is the correct spelling of the word meaning “to provide space or lodging for someone.” The sentence conveys that the hotel has enough capacity to host up to 200 guests. Thus, “accommodate” would be the most appropriate choice.
16. C) The correct spelling of ‘mindfull’ is ‘mindful’ which means “conscious, careful, or attentive” सचेत.
17. A) **Multiple sources suggested the operation was compromised internally.**
Passive से Active Voice में बदलने के लिए, Passive वाक्य का Subject Active वाक्य का Object बन जाता है। Verb को Passive से Active में बदलते समय सही Tense (Past Continuous) का प्रयोग किया जाता है। Passive वाक्य में “It” Subject है, “was being suggested” Verb (Past Continuous Passive) है, और “by multiple sources” Agent (कर्म करने वाला) है। Passive वाक्य में “that the operation had been compromised internally” Object clause है। Active वाक्य में Agent “Multiple sources” Subject बन गया है, Verb को “were suggesting” (Past Continuous Active) में बदला गया है और Object clause “that the operation had been compromised internally” को उसी रूप में रखा गया है।
- To change from passive to active voice, the agent of the passive sentence becomes the subject of the active sentence.
In the passive sentence, “It” is a dummy subject, while “by multiple sources” shows the real doer.

The verb "was being suggested" (past continuous passive) changes to "were suggesting" (past continuous active), maintaining the tense.

The clause "that the operation had been compromised internally" remains unchanged, as it is the object of the verb.

18. D) **Mohan asked which car he had purchased the day before.**

Direct Speech से Indirect Speech में बदलते समय interrogative sentence के लिए "said" को "asked" में बदला जाता है। Wh-question होने के कारण "which car" यथावत रहता है और question form को statement form में बदला जाता है। Direct Speech में verb "did purchase" Simple Past tense में है, इसलिए Indirect Speech में यह "had purchased" (Past Perfect) बनेगा। साथ ही "yesterday" का परिवर्तन "the day before" में होगा। इसलिए सही sentence होगा — "Mohan asked which car he had purchased the day before."

- To change Direct Speech into Indirect Speech, "said" changes into "asked" for interrogative sentences. Since this is a Wh-question, "which car" remains unchanged, and the question form changes into statement form. In the Direct Speech, "did purchase" is in the Simple Past tense, so it changes into "had purchased" in Indirect Speech. Also, "yesterday" changes into "the day before." Therefore, the correct sentence is — "Mohan asked which car he had purchased the day before."

19. B) **'Proceed'** का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि sentence में meeting को "आगे बढ़ाने" या "जारी रखने" के अर्थ की आवश्यकता है। "Proceed" का अर्थ होता है किसी कार्य को जारी रखना या आगे बढ़ाना। इसलिए, "He was asked to proceed the meeting." सबसे उपयुक्त विकल्प होगा।

- 'Proceed' should be used because the sentence requires a word meaning "to continue" or "to move forward" with the meeting. The word "proceed" conveys this meaning correctly. Thus, "proceed" would be the most appropriate choice.

20. C) 'The Nilgiris are the most productive mountains at the south and is too famous.' गलत है क्योंकि The Nilgiris plural subject है, इसलिए 'is' के बदले 'are' होना चाहिए (और idiomatic रूप से in the south भी बेहतर है); जैसे— The Alps are very famous.

- 'are' will be used instead of 'is' because The Nilgiris is a plural noun, so the verb must also be plural.

21. B) **aback**

Aback is used because it forms the exact standard phrasal verb "taken aback," which means to be completely shocked or surprised by something. Away forms "taken away" (removed), Apart forms "taken apart" (dismantled), and Over forms "taken over" (assume control), none of which fit the context of being surprised by a statement.

- यहाँ Aback का use किया जाएगा क्योंकि यह एक exact standard phrasal verb "taken aback" बनाता है, जिसका meaning पूरी तरह से shocked या surprised होना होता है। Away का use "taken away" (हटा देना) बनाता है, Apart का use "taken apart" (टुकड़ों में खोलना) बनाता है, और Over का use "taken over" (control लेना) बनाता है, जो यहाँ गलत हैं।

22. A) **comprehend**

Comprehend is used because it is a direct synonym for "understand," meaning to mentally grasp the nature or meaning of something completely. Confound means to confuse, Alienate means to make someone feel isolated, and Obscure means to hide or make unclear, all of which are incorrect and oppose the true meaning.

- यहाँ Comprehend का use किया जाएगा क्योंकि यह "understand" का direct synonym है, जिसका meaning किसी चीज़ को अच्छी तरह से समझना होता है। Confound का meaning confuse करना होता है, Alienate का meaning isolate करना (अलग करना) होता है, और Obscure का meaning unclear करना होता है, जो यहाँ गलत हैं।

23. C) **fore**

Fore is used because it forms the exact traditional idiom "bring to the fore," which means to make something prominent, noticeable, or public. While Front, Surface, and Light have similar literal meanings, they do not form this specific fixed idiom perfectly (for example, the correct idiom is "bring to light," not "bring to the light").

- यहाँ Fore का use किया जाएगा क्योंकि यह exact traditional idiom "bring to the fore" बनाता है, जिसका meaning किसी चीज़ को prominent या noticeable बनाना होता है। Front, Surface, और Light का literal meaning मिलता-जुलता हो सकता है, लेकिन वे इस specific fixed phrase के लिए सही fit नहीं बैठते।

24. D) **broad-minded**

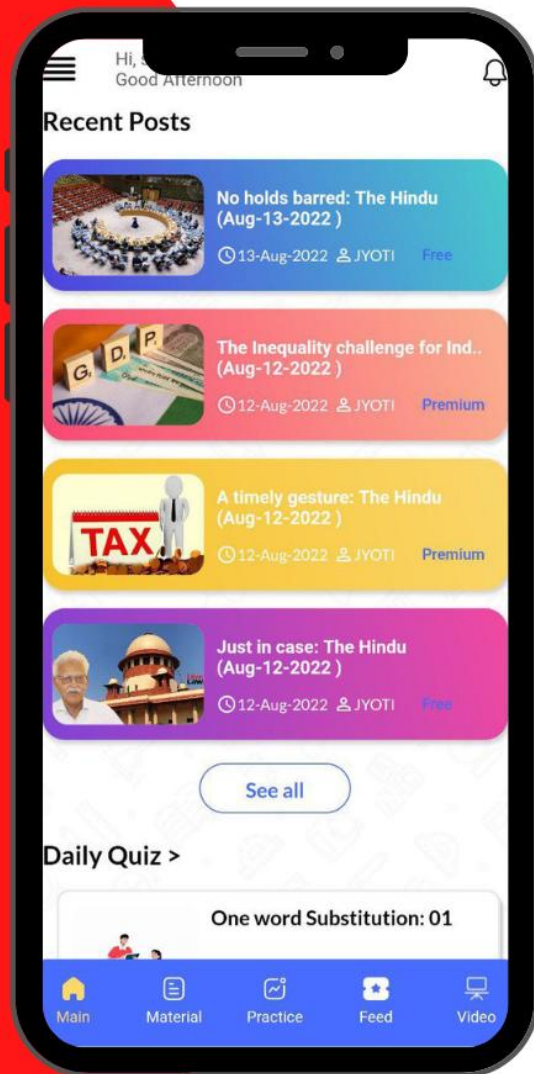
Broad-minded is used because it is the perfect antonym (opposite) for "strait-laced." Strait-laced means having very strict, conservative moral attitudes. Therefore, broad-minded, which means being tolerant and open to different views, is the exact opposite word. Conservative, Strict, and Puritanical are all synonyms of strait-laced, not antonyms.

- यहाँ Broad-minded का use किया जाएगा क्योंकि यह "strait-laced" का perfect antonym (opposite word) है। Strait-laced का meaning बहुत strict और conservative होना होता है। इसलिए, broad-minded (open-minded या tolerant होना) इसका सही opposite है। Conservative, Strict, और Puritanical सभी strait-laced के synonyms हैं, antonyms नहीं।

25. A) **assumed**

Assumed is used because in this context, it means to take on or adopt a role, identity, or form. Shikhandi adopted a male identity, making "assumed" the perfect fit. Presumed means to suppose something is true, Consumed means to eat or use up, and Rejected means to refuse, none of which fit the action of taking on an identity.

- यहाँ Assumed का use किया जाएगा क्योंकि इस context में इसका meaning कोई role या identity अपनाना (take on) होता है। शिखंडी ने male identity को अपनाया था, इसलिए "assumed" एकदम सही है। Presumed का meaning मान लेना (suppose करना) होता है, Consumed का meaning use करना या खाना होता है, और Rejected का meaning refuse करना होता है, जो यहाँ गलत हैं।



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