

Spiralling food prices: on rising inflation

Rural households have felt the greatest impact of rising **inflation**

September's retail **inflation**, at 5.54%, an almost two-year high, **marks** the fourth **consecutive** month that price increases have kept **headline CPI** above the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) 4% target. The impact has been particularly **severe** for rural Indians, whose inflation rate reached 6.08%. Rural food inflation rose almost two percentage points between August and September, touching 8.06%. Onion (108.09%), garlic (54.62%) and ginger (62.85%) **drove** the **surge**, even as potato (-11.50%) and tomato (-8.62%) prices remained below year-earlier levels. The festive season ahead will be expensive for rural households already facing the **uncertainties** of a **deficient** monsoon, El Niño-related risks to **harvests** and incomes, and unusually high temperatures. Headline CPI is now just 0.46 percentage points below the RBI's upper tolerance limit of 6%. The **Monetary Policy Committee** raised the **repo rate** by 25 **basis points** to 5.50% in October, ending a pause that began after its previous increase in February 2023. Another **increase** in December cannot **be ruled out** if price pressures continue to **broaden**. Chief among the factors driving inflation since the U.S.-Israeli war on Iran have been fuel, food and transport, **compounded** by a **depreciating** rupee.

The **Indian crude basket**, according to the Petroleum Planning and Analysis Cell, **rose** from \$82.04 a barrel in July to \$116.09 in September — a 41% increase — with economy-wide **implications** for freight, production and distribution. The RBI's special dollar **facility** for oil marketing companies may **ease** spot-market pressure on the rupee, but only temporarily if the **underlying** import dependence and **geopolitical** risks **persist**. The **crucial** subgroup, transport services for goods, recorded inflation of 14.73% in September, up from 14.64% in August. Restaurant and accommodation services inflation has reached 9.36%, while inflation in personal care, social protection and miscellaneous goods and services, which include precious metals, has **moderated** to 13.75%. **Core inflation**, excluding food and fuel but including precious metals, **rose** to 4.6% in September from 4.16% in August, suggesting that price pressures are **broadening**. **Foreign portfolio investors** (FPIs) have pulled a record ₹3.08 trillion (\$32.73 billion) out of Indian equities in the nine months ending September this year, which is almost double that of the whole of CY2025. FPIs have been net sellers in six of the past nine months as they **seek safe havens**, stronger dollar-denominated returns, and bond **yields**. Selling **resumed** in October, **adding to** pressure on the rupee, which **weakened** by about 7% against the dollar over the year to early October, despite RBI **interventions** such as direct dollar sales and attracting foreign-currency inflows. The central bank's latest steps have helped the rupee recover, but cannot **resolve** the **underlying pressures**. With crude prices **elevated**, the rupee **vulnerable** and no clear end to the West Asia conflict, imported inflation is **likely** to continue shaping domestic prices in the months ahead. **[Practice Exercise]**

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

Vocabulary

1. **Spiral** (verb) - escalate, soar, rocket, skyrocket, surge तेज़ी से बढ़ना
2. **Inflation** (noun) - a general rise in prices; the rate at which prices rise मुद्रास्फीति
3. **Mark** (verb) - indicate, signify, denote, represent, distinguish दर्शाना
4. **Consecutive** (adjective) - successive, continuous, sequential, unbroken, uninterrupted लगातार
5. **Headline CPI** (noun) - the total consumer price index measure of inflation including volatile food and energy prices मुख्य उपभोक्ता मूल्य सूचकांक
6. **Severe** (adjective) - acute, grave, critical, serious, harsh गंभीर
7. **Drive** (verb) - propel, push, prompt, stimulate, spur प्रेरित करना या बढ़ाना
8. **Surge** (noun) - rise, escalation, upsurge, boost, jump उछाल
9. **Uncertainty** (noun) - doubt, ambiguity, unpredictability, dubiety, scepticism अनिश्चितता
10. **Deficient** (adjective) - inadequate, insufficient, lacking, scarce, wanting अपर्याप्त
11. **Harvest** (noun) - crop, yield, produce, reaping, gathering फसल
12. **Monetary policy committee** (noun) - a committee of the reserve bank of india responsible for fixing benchmark interest rates मौद्रिक नीति समिति
13. **The repo rate** (noun) - the rate at which the central bank lends money to commercial banks रेपो दर
14. **Basis points** (noun) - a unit of measure used in finance equal to one hundredth of one percentage point आधार अंक
15. **Rule out** (phrasal verb) - to exclude or eliminate the possibility of something खारिज करना
16. **Broaden** (verb) - expand, widen, extend, enlarge, spread विस्तार होना
17. **Compound** (verb) - aggravate, worsen, intensify, amplify, augment बढ़ाना या जटिल करना
18. **Depreciate** (verb) - decline, devalue, diminish, slump, plummet मूल्यहास होना
19. **Indian crude basket** (noun) - a weighted average of oman/dubai sour crude and brent sweet crude representing india's oil imports भारतीय कूड बास्केट
20. **Implication** (noun) - consequence, ramification, repercussion, result, outcome प्रभाव
21. **Underlying** (adjective) - fundamental, basic, primary, foundational, root अंतर्निहित
22. **Geopolitical** (adjective) - strategic, territorial, international, diplomatic, geographic भू-राजनीतिक
23. **Persist** (verb) - continue, endure, remain, linger, persevere बने रहना
24. **Crucial** (adjective) - vital, pivotal, critical, essential, momentous महत्वपूर्ण

25. **Moderate** (verb) - ease, subside, lessen, diminish, mitigate धीमा पड़ना
26. **Core inflation** (noun) - the measure of inflation that excludes volatile food and energy prices कोर मुद्रास्फीति
27. **Broaden** (verb) - expand, widen, extend, enlarge, spread व्यापक होना
28. **Foreign portfolio investors** (noun) - foreign entities investing in indian financial assets such as stocks and bonds विदेशी पोर्टफोलियो निवेशक
29. **Seek** (verb) - pursue, request, solicit, desire, explore तलाशना
30. **Safe haven** (noun) - an investment expected to retain or increase in value during market turbulence सुरक्षित निवेश विकल्प
31. **Yield** (noun) - return, profit, earnings, revenue, gain लाभ या प्राप्ति
32. **Resume** (verb) - restart, recommence, continue, renew, reopen फिर से शुरू होना
33. **Add to** (phrase) - to increase the amount or level of something में इजाफ़ा करना
34. **Weaken** (verb) - decline, diminish, impair, dilute, undermine कमज़ोर होना
35. **Intervention** (noun) - interference, mediation, arbitrament, intercession, involvement हस्तक्षेप
36. **Resolve** (verb) - settle, solve, rectify, reconcile, fix हल करना
37. **Underlying pressures** (noun) - deep-seated economic strains or baseline stresses अंतर्निहित दबाव
38. **Elevate** (verb) - raise, lift, heighten, boost, hoist ऊंचा होना
39. **Vulnerable** (adjective) - exposed, susceptible, defenseless, fragile, weak संवेदनशील या असुरक्षित
40. **Likely** (adverb) - probably, presumably, doubtlessly, seemingly, possibly संभवतः

Summary of the Editorial

1. **Retail inflation rises:** September's retail inflation reached **5.54%**, an almost two-year high, marking the **fourth consecutive month** above the RBI's 4% target.
2. **Rural India hit harder:** Rural inflation was significantly higher at **6.08%**, showing that rising prices are affecting rural households particularly severely.
3. **Food inflation surges:** Rural food inflation increased by nearly **two percentage points** between August and September, reaching **8.06%**.
4. **Vegetable prices drive inflation:** Sharp increases in **onion (108.09%)**, **ginger (62.85%)**, and **garlic (54.62%)** were major contributors to the food-price surge.
5. **Some vegetables became cheaper:** Despite the overall increase, **potato (-11.50%)** and **tomato (-8.62%)** prices remained below their levels a year earlier.
6. **Rural households face multiple risks:** High food prices come at a difficult time for rural families, who are also dealing with **deficient monsoons**, **El Niño risks** and **unusually high temperatures**.
7. **Inflation nearing RBI's limit:** Headline CPI is only **0.46 percentage points below the RBI's upper tolerance limit of 6%**, increasing concerns about further price pressures.
8. **Repo rate increased:** The Monetary Policy Committee raised the **repo rate by 25 basis points to 5.50%** in October, ending a pause that had continued since February 2023.
9. **Further rate hike possible:** If inflation continues to broaden, another **repo-rate increase in December** cannot be ruled out.
10. **Fuel and geopolitical factors:** Inflationary pressures have been driven by **fuel, food and transport costs**, along with the effects of a **depreciating rupee** and geopolitical tensions.
11. **Crude oil becomes expensive:** The Indian crude basket increased from **\$82.04 per barrel in July to \$116.09 in September**, a **41% rise**, affecting freight, production and distribution costs.
12. **Transport and services inflation remains high:** Transport services for goods recorded **14.73% inflation**, while restaurant and accommodation services inflation reached **9.36%** in September.
13. **Core inflation is broadening:** Core inflation rose from **4.16% to 4.6%**, indicating that inflationary pressures are spreading beyond food and fuel.
14. **Foreign investors add pressure:** FPIs withdrew a record **₹3.08 trillion (\$32.73 billion)** from Indian equities during the first nine months of the year, putting additional pressure on the rupee.
15. **Imported inflation may persist:** The rupee has weakened by about **7% against the dollar**, while crude prices remain elevated and the West Asia conflict continues. Therefore, **imported inflation is likely to remain an important challenge** for India in the coming months.

Practice Exercise: SSC Pattern Based

1. **What does the passage suggest regarding the effectiveness of the Reserve Bank of India's foreign exchange interventions?** [Editorial Page]
 - A. They provide temporary respite to spot currency markets without correcting structural import dependence.
 - B. They address the broader geopolitical drivers while leaving retail fuel prices vulnerable to adjustments.
 - C. They contain the domestic crude basket within manageable bands by directly subsidizing marketing firms.
 - D. They primarily serve to align domestic headline CPI with the medium-term 4% target.
2. **What is the author's primary goal in contrasting the price trajectory of onion, garlic, and ginger with that of potato and tomato?**
 - A. To highlight how seasonal vegetable supplies tend to equalize agricultural price indices over time.
 - B. To show that sharp increases in select kitchen staples drove rural food inflation despite moderation in other key items.
 - C. To demonstrate that rural procurement patterns diverge fundamentally from urban headline indicators.
 - D. To argue that price movements in perishable goods are the primary determinant of core inflation readings.
3. **In the context of the passage, the term "safe havens" most nearly refers to:**
 - A. Strategic agricultural stockpiles intended to mitigate domestic harvest uncertainties.
 - B. Stable assets and currencies sought by investors during phases of global volatility.
 - C. Dedicated foreign exchange windows extended by authorities to commercial importers.
 - D. Regulated physical markets designed to protect farming households from price swings.
4. **Select the correct passive voice form of the given sentence from the passage:**
"Foreign portfolio investors have pulled a record ₹3.08 trillion out of Indian equities in the nine months ending September this year."
 - A. A record ₹3.08 trillion was pulled out of Indian equities by foreign portfolio investors in the nine months ending September this year
 - B. A record ₹3.08 trillion had been pulled out of Indian equities by foreign portfolio investors in the nine months ending September this year.
 - C. A record ₹3.08 trillion is being pulled out of Indian equities by foreign portfolio investors in the nine months ending September this year.
 - D. A record ₹3.08 trillion has been pulled out of Indian equities by foreign portfolio investors in the nine months ending September this year.
5. **The tone of the passage is best described as:**
 - A. Cynical and dismissive
 - B. Analytical and sobering
 - C. Cautious and indifferent
 - D. Didactic and celebratory
6. **Select the most appropriate synonym of the word:**
REMONSTRATE
 - A. Celebrate

- B. Protest
C. Rejoice
D. Surrender
7. **Select the most appropriate synonym of the given word: FUTILE**
A. Capable
B. Efficient
C. Ineffective
D. Strong
8. **Select the most appropriate meaning of the given idiom.**
Give someone a cold shoulder
A. To welcome someone warmly
B. To offer someone a cold drink
C. To deliberately ignore or show indifference to someone
D. To give someone a piece of advice coldly
9. **What is the antonym of "Acerbic"?**
A. Sardonic
B. Sharp
C. Scathing
D. Saccharine
10. **Select the most appropriate ANTONYM of the given word.**
CONNOISSEUR
A. Expert
B. Novice
C. Specialist
D. Critic
11. **Select the option that can be used as a one-word substitute for the given group of words.**
The date when both, day and night are of approximately equal length
A. Equinox
B. Equilibrium
C. Equator
D. Equine
12. **Direction: In the following question, the first sentence is given in its correct position, followed by four sentences marked A, B, C, and D. Rearrange the four sentences in the correct order to form a coherent paragraph.**
The contested legacy of Ettayapuram, one of the palayams in southern Tamil Nadu, evokes mixed reactions.
A. Ettappan, the ruler of Ettayapuram, was accused of colluding with the British against Veerapandiya Kattabomman, the Poligar of Panchalankurichi.
B. The zamindari's patronage of art, music, and Tamil has done little to erase this notoriety.
C. For all its contribution to the patronage of music and Tamil, the palayam, also known as a zamindari, remains tainted by its role during the period when the British East India Company was expanding its presence in the region.
D. His name has since become synonymous with betrayal.

- A. A D C B
- B. C B A D
- C. C A D B
- D. B D A C

13. **Fill in the blank with appropriate parts of speech.**

We spent an _____ day at school yesterday

- A. enjoyable
- B. enjoying
- C. enjoyment
- D. enjoyed

14. **Select the correct passive form of the given sentence.**

"They serve food to the guests."

- A. Food is served to the guests by them.
- B. Food was served to the guests.
- C. Food is being served by them.
- D. Food has served by them.

15. **Choose the correct indirect narration of the following statement from the given alternatives:**

Ruby said, "I was driving when you called me yesterday."

- A. Ruby said that she had been driving when he had called her the day before.
- B. Ruby said that she was driving when he had called her the day before.
- C. Ruby said that she had been driving when he called her the day after.
- D. Ruby said that she was driving when he called her the day before.

16. **Direction: In the following question, the first sentence is given in its correct position, followed by four sentences marked A, B, C, and D. Rearrange the four sentences in the correct order to form a coherent paragraph.**

The Pro Vice-Chancellor of the University of Zambia, Mr. Moses Musonda has underlined the need for greater efforts by developing countries in Asia and Africa to develop their information systems to get over the woefully inadequate situation in this field.

- A. The main reason for this situation developing, Mr. Musonda said, could be attributed to the fact that some governments had not recognised the importance of these systems as instruments of economic, social, political, cultural and educational development.
- B. Mr. Musonda said, another reason was that personnel training has not been encouraging since there were very few people who understood or appreciated the importance and implication of developing information systems for the benefit of developing countries.
- C. Equally frightening, he told the delegates, was the paucity of trained and qualified personnel to man these services which made the running of the libraries and information systems poorly co-ordinated.
- D. The state of libraries and information services in Africa — and indeed in developing countries — are appalling, he said, in a closing speech to the six-day standing conference of Eastern, Central and Southern African librarians here yesterday.

- A. D C A B
- B. C D B A
- C. A C B D
- D. B A C D

17. Choose the most suitable preposition from the given options to fill in the blank in the following sentence:

_____ other things, the boy is a talented singer and guitarist.

- A. Among
- B. Along
- C. Across
- D. Between

18. Identify the incorrectly spelt word in the following sentence:

The company announced a beneficial scheme for its employees.

- A. Announced
- B. Beneficial
- C. Scheme
- D. Employees

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

APOCALYPSE

- A. Catastrophe
- B. Destruction
- C. Calamity
- D. Salvation

20. Select the grammatically correct option to substitute the underlined segment in the given sentence. If there is no need to substitute it, select 'No improvement'.

Having practised all week, she tells the story confidently at the competition yesterday.

- A. told the story confidently
- B. is telling the story confidently
- C. has told the story confidently
- D. No improvement

Complete the passage by filling in the blanks with the most appropriate words.

Over 100 themes and a variety of dolls _____ A _____ (sourced) from Kanchipuram, Cuddalore, Puducherry, Panruti and Mayavaram are displayed _____ B _____ sale at SK Pearls & Craft shop at Town Hall. There is Ashtalakshmi stone finish, Dasavatharam finish, Kumbakarnan in small size, single dolls in traditional finish including Vaaragi, Murugar, Aandal, Karumari, Kamatchi, Renuka Sharadhambal, Dwaraga Krishnar, Meenakshi Kalyanam, Nanganallur Anjaneyar, Ramar Jananam, and more. Among single dolls, there are navadurga, navanarasimhar, cricket set, and girivalam set to name a few. While there, you can also shop for complete kolu doll sets including a collection of cloth-covered wooden stairs _____ C _____ the beautiful dolls are placed in _____ D _____ (hierarchical) order. Brass lotus lamps in varied sizes are also available. The store has handcrafted gifting items and _____ E _____ (imitation) jewellery.

21. Choose the most appropriate synonym for the word in (A): (sourced).

- A. arrogated
- B. divested
- C. rocured
- D. elicited

22. Fill in blank (B) with the correct preposition to complete the phrase.

- A. on
 - B. for
 - C. to
 - D. at
23. **Fill in blank (C) with the correct relative adverb to complete the sentence grammatically.**
- A. which
 - B. whence
 - C. where
 - D. whom
24. **Choose the most appropriate synonym for the word in (D): (hierarchical).**
- A. amorphous
 - B. stratified
 - C. egalitarian
 - D. anomalous
25. **Choose the most appropriate synonym for the word in (E): (imitation).**
- A. veritable
 - B. pristine
 - C. ostensible
 - D. ersatz

Answers

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

[Practice Exercise]

Explanations

1. A) **They provide temporary respite to spot currency markets without correcting structural import dependence.**

passage: "The RBI's special dollar facility for oil marketing companies may ease spot-market pressure on the rupee, but only temporarily if the underlying import dependence and geopolitical risks persist... The central bank's latest steps have helped the rupee recover, but cannot resolve the underlying pressures."----The passage says the RBI's steps, like the special dollar facility and direct dollar sales, helped the rupee recover. But the help is only for a short time, because India still depends heavily on imported oil and the West Asia conflict continues. So the steps give short-term relief and do not fix the root problem. This matches option A. Option B: Incorrect. The option says the RBI's interventions address the broader geopolitical drivers, but the passage says the steps "cannot resolve the underlying pressures" and that geopolitical risks persist, hence incorrect.

Option C: Incorrect. The option says the interventions keep the crude basket within manageable bands by directly subsidizing marketing firms, but the passage says the Indian crude basket rose 41% from \$82.04 to \$116.09 and never calls the dollar facility a subsidy, hence incorrect.

Option D: Incorrect. The option says the interventions mainly aim to bring headline CPI in line with the 4% target, but the passage links the interventions to easing pressure on the rupee, while the rate hike is what addresses inflation, hence incorrect.

2. B) **To show that sharp increases in select kitchen staples drove rural food inflation despite moderation in other key items.**

passage: "Rural food inflation rose almost two percentage points between August and September, touching 8.06%. Onion (108.09%), garlic (54.62%) and ginger (62.85%) drove the surge, even as potato (-11.50%) and tomato (-8.62%) prices remained below year-earlier levels."----The passage says onion, garlic and ginger prices shot up and pushed rural food inflation higher. Potato and tomato prices were still lower than last year. The author sets these side by side to show that a few items caused the surge, even though other items stayed cheap. This matches option B.

Option A: Incorrect. The option says seasonal vegetable supplies tend to equalize price indices over time, but the passage shows the prices moving in opposite directions (onion up 108%, potato down 11.50%) and says nothing about prices evening out, hence incorrect.

Option C: Incorrect. The option says rural procurement patterns differ from urban headline indicators, but the passage never discusses procurement patterns or urban prices, and only compares individual vegetables within rural food inflation, hence incorrect.

Option D: Incorrect. The option says perishable goods are the main driver of core inflation, but the passage says core inflation excludes food and fuel, and it rose to 4.6% because price pressures are broadening, hence incorrect.

3. B) **Stable assets and currencies sought by investors during phases of global volatility.**

passage: "FPIs have been net sellers in six of the past nine months as they seek safe havens, stronger dollar-denominated returns, and bond yields."---The line is about foreign investors (FPIs) pulling money out of Indian equities. They are looking for "safe havens," meaning places where their money is safer and more stable when the world is uncertain, such as strong currencies and secure assets. This matches option B. |

Option A: Incorrect. The option says safe havens are agricultural stockpiles for harvest uncertainty, but the passage uses the term for where FPIs move their money, not for food stocks, hence incorrect.

Option C: Incorrect. The option says safe havens are foreign exchange windows for importers, but the passage mentions the special dollar facility separately for oil companies, while "safe havens" is about investors, hence incorrect.

Option D: Incorrect. The option says safe havens are regulated physical markets protecting farmers from price swings, but the passage uses the term in the context of foreign investors selling Indian equities, not farmers or markets, hence incorrect.

4. D) A record ₹3.08 trillion has been pulled out of Indian equities by foreign portfolio investors in the nine months ending September this year.

Active Voice Structure: Subject (Foreign portfolio investors) + have pulled (Present Perfect) + Object (a record ₹3.08 trillion)...

Passive Voice Rules: The object becomes the new subject (A record ₹3.08 trillion). The present perfect tense (have pulled) converts into has/have been + past participle (has been pulled because the amount is singular). The original subject is introduced using "by" (by foreign portfolio investors). Option D is the only choice that accurately maintains the present perfect tense (has been pulled).

Option A: Incorrect. The option says "was pulled," which is simple past, but the original sentence uses present perfect ("have pulled"), hence incorrect.

Option B: Incorrect. The option says "had been pulled," which is past perfect, but the original sentence uses present perfect, so the time meaning is changed, hence incorrect.

Option C: Incorrect. The option says "is being pulled," which is present continuous and shows an action happening right now, but the original sentence shows a completed action over the nine months with a present result, hence incorrect.

5. B) Analytical and sobering

passage: "Headline CPI is now just 0.46 percentage points below the RBI's upper tolerance limit of 6%... The central bank's latest steps have helped the rupee recover, but cannot resolve the underlying pressures. With crude prices elevated, the rupee vulnerable and no clear end to the West Asia conflict, imported inflation is likely to continue shaping domestic prices in the months ahead."-----The author fills the passage with figures (5.54% inflation, 8.06% rural food inflation, a 41% rise in crude, ₹3.08 trillion FPI outflow) and uses them to explain what is happening and why. This is analytical. The ending is serious and gives no promise of quick relief, so the tone is also sobering.

Option A: Incorrect. The option says the tone is cynical and dismissive, but the passage takes the problem seriously, explains it with detailed data and notes where the RBI's steps have helped the rupee recover, hence incorrect.

Option C: Incorrect. The option says the tone is cautious and indifferent, but the passage shows clear concern about rural households and warns that "another increase in December cannot be ruled out," which is not indifference, hence incorrect.

Option D: Incorrect. The option says the tone is didactic and celebratory, but the passage has nothing to celebrate, since it describes a two-year high in inflation, record FPI outflows and a weak rupee, hence incorrect.

6. B) **Remonstrate** (verb) – To make a forcefully reproachful protest. विरोध करना, आपत्ति जताना
Synonym: **Protest** (verb) – To express strong objection. विरोध करना
- **Celebrate** (verb) – To mark a happy occasion. उत्सव मनाना
 - **Rejoice** (verb) – To feel great joy. आनंदित होना
 - **Surrender** (verb) – To give up; yield. आत्मसमर्पण करना
7. C) **Futile** (adjective) – incapable of producing any useful result; pointless. निरर्थक
Synonym: **Ineffective** (adjective) – not producing the desired effect. अप्रभावी
- **Capable** (adjective) – having the ability to do something. सक्षम
 - **Efficient** (adjective) – working productively. कुशल
 - **Strong** (adjective) – having great power. मज़बूत
8. C) To **deliberately ignore or show indifference to someone**
The idiom "give someone a cold shoulder" means to deliberately ignore someone or treat them in an unfriendly way.
"Give someone a cold shoulder" का अर्थ है – किसी को जानबूझकर नज़रअंदाज़ करना, उपेक्षा करना।
जैसे: "उसने झगड़े के बाद उसे cold shoulder दे दिया।"
9. D) **Acerbic** (adjective) – (of speech) Sharp and forthright; harsh, biting. कटु, तीखा
Antonym: **Saccharine** (adjective) – Excessively sweet or sentimental. अत्यधिक मीठा, चाशनी जैसा
- **Sardonic** (adjective) – Grimly mocking. व्यंग्यपूर्ण
 - **Sharp** (adjective) – Harsh and critical. तीखा
 - **Scathing** (adjective) – Witheringly critical. तीव्र आलोचनात्मक
10. B) **Connoisseur** (noun) – An expert with refined judgment, particularly in matters of art, food, or taste. विशेषज्ञ, पारखी
Antonym: **Novice** (noun) – A person who is new to and inexperienced in a field; a beginner. नौसिखिया, शुरुआत करने वाला
- **Expert** (noun) – A person with great skill or knowledge — a synonym of connoisseur. विशेषज्ञ
 - **Specialist** (noun) – A person with expert knowledge in a specific field — a synonym. विशेषज्ञ
 - **Critic** (noun) – A person who judges and evaluates — a synonym, not antonym of connoisseur. आलोचक, समीक्षक
11. A) **Equinox** (noun) – The date when both, day and night are of approximately equal length समरात्रि
- **Equilibrium** (noun) – A state in which opposing forces or influences are balanced. संतुलन

- **Equator** (noun) – An imaginary line drawn around the earth equally distant from both poles, dividing the earth into northern and southern hemispheres and constituting the parallel of latitude 0°. भूमध्यरेखा
- **Equine** (adjective) – Relating to or resembling a horse or horses. अश्व संबंधी

12. C) C A D B

Explanation:

Hindi Explanation:

- Sentence C opening sentence के तुरंत बाद आएगा क्योंकि lead sentence में Ettayapuram की "contested legacy" और मिश्रित प्रतिक्रियाओं का उल्लेख है, और Sentence C उसी legacy के दोनों पहलुओं (music/Tamil patronage बनाम British काल में tainted भूमिका) को broaden करके explain करता है।
- Sentence A Sentence C के बाद आएगा क्योंकि यह Sentence C में बताए गए colonial दौर के कलंक ("tainted by its role") के specific historical कारण को सामने लाता है—एट्टयापुरम के शासक Ettappan पर वीरपांडिया कट्टबोम्मन के खिलाफ अंग्रेजों से सांठगांठ का आरोप लगाना।
- Sentence A और Sentence D एक मजबूत mandatory pair (A-D) बनाते हैं। Sentence A में शासक Ettappan का introduction है, और Sentence D में possessive pronoun phrase "His name" सीधे Ettappan को refer करता है कि उनका नाम विश्वासघात का पर्याय बन गया।
- Sentence B Sentence D के बाद आएगा और paragraph को conclude करेगा क्योंकि demonstrative phrase "this notoriety" सीधे Sentence D में वर्णित बदनामी/विश्वासघात की छवि को point करता है, और यह स्पष्ट करता है कि कला व संगीत का संरक्षण भी इस बदनामी को मिटा नहीं पाया।

English Explanation:

- Sentence C directly follows the introductory sentence by elaborating on the "contested legacy", balancing Ettayapuram's celebrated cultural patronage against its tainted historical reputation under Company rule.
- Sentence A follows Sentence C by pinpointing the specific historical indictment behind that tainted reputation—the ruler Ettappan being accused of colluding with the British against Veerapandiya Kattabomman.
- Sentence D forms an essential mandatory pair with Sentence A (A-D), as the possessive pronoun phrase "His name" refers directly to the ruler Ettappan, noting that his name became synonymous with betrayal.
- Sentence B follows Sentence D to close the paragraph logically, using the demonstrative phrase "this notoriety" to link back to the betrayal stigma in D and concluding that cultural patronage failed to erase that historical stain.

i. A)

13. A) **Enjoyable** का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि पूरे संदर्भ में, sentence किसी दिन के अनुभव का वर्णन कर रहा है। यहाँ "We spent an (_____) day" में blank के लिए ऐसा शब्द चाहिए जो "day" को describe करे, यानी adjective। इसलिए, "enjoyable" सबसे उपयुक्त विकल्प होगा।
'Enjoyable' should be used because in the entire context, the sentence is describing the experience of a day. Here, in "We spent an () day," the blank requires a word that describes "day," i.e., an adjective. Thus, "enjoyable" would be the most appropriate choice.

14. A) 'They serve food to the guests.' का Passive Voice होगा 'Food is served to the guests by them.' क्योंकि यह Simple Present tense में है। Passive rule: Object + is/am/are + V3 + by + Subject.

- Rule: Simple Present Active (Subject + V1 + Object) → Passive: Object + is/am/are + V3 + by + Subject.

B is incorrect – 'Food was served' uses Simple Past tense, not Simple Present.

C is incorrect – 'Food is being served' is Present Continuous passive, not Simple Present.

D is incorrect – 'has served' is grammatically wrong; it should be 'has been served' for Present Perfect passive.

15. A) Direct Speech को Indirect में बदलते समय inverted commas हटाकर 'that' लगाया जाता है।

Reporting Verb 'said' Past में है, इसलिए Past Continuous 'was driving' → Past Perfect

Continuous 'had been driving' और Simple Past 'called' → Past Perfect 'had called' होता है;

'yesterday' → 'the day before'; pronouns: 'I' → 'she', 'you' → 'he', 'me' → 'her'। सही उत्तर:

Ruby said that she had been driving when he had called her the day before. Option C में 'the day after' गलत है, और B व D में tense-change अधूरा है।

To change Direct into Indirect Speech, the inverted commas are removed and 'that' is used. As 'said' is in the past, 'was driving' → 'had been driving' and 'called' → 'had called'; 'yesterday' → 'the day before'; pronouns: 'I' → 'she', 'you' → 'he', 'me' → 'her'. Hence: Ruby said that she had been driving when he had called her the day before. Option C wrongly uses 'the day after', and B and D change the tenses only partly.

16. A) D C A B

Explanation:

Hindi Explanation:

- Sentence D opening sentence के तुरंत बाद आएगा क्योंकि lead sentence में उनके भाषण के मुख्य विषय का उल्लेख है, और Sentence D उस भाषण के specific event और venue को introduce करता है—"in a closing speech to the six-day standing conference... here yesterday"।
- Sentence C Sentence D को follow करेगा और D-C का मजबूत mandatory pair बनाएगा। Sentence D में स्थिति को "appalling" कहने के बाद, Sentence C additive phrase "Equally frightening" और speech tag "he told the delegates" (conference delegates) के साथ personnel की कमी को highlight करता है।
- Sentence A Sentence C के बाद आएगा क्योंकि यह स्थिति के कारणों की चर्चा शुरू करता है, जहाँ primary cause marker "The main reason for this situation developing" का प्रयोग हुआ है।
- Sentence B Sentence A के ठीक बाद आएगा और A-B का unbroken mandatory pair बनाते हुए paragraph को end करेगा। Sentence A में मुख्य कारण बताने के बाद Sentence B sequential marker "another reason was that" के साथ personnel training की समस्या को जोड़ता है।

English Explanation:

- Sentence D directly follows the introductory sentence by anchoring the report to the physical event and venue—his closing speech to the six-day standing conference of African librarians.

- Sentence C forms an essential mandatory pair with Sentence D (D-C), pairing the description of the "appalling" situation with the additive transition "Equally frightening" while referring to the audience via "he told the delegates".
- Sentence A shifts from the overview of the crisis to its structural causes, introducing the primary diagnostic marker "The main reason for this situation developing".

Sentence B follows Sentence A to form a logical mandatory pair (A-B), using the parallel structural marker "another reason was that" to conclude the explanation of the personnel training deficit.

17. A) **Among** का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि "among other things" एक fixed phrase है जिसका अर्थ है "अन्य बातों के साथ-साथ"; जैसे— Among other things, she is an excellent cook. 'Between' दो के लिए आता है, और 'Along' व 'Across' यहाँ अर्थ नहीं देते।
- 'Among' should be used because "among other things" is a fixed phrase meaning "in addition to other things"; Like— Among other things, she is an excellent cook. 'Between' is used for two, and 'Along' and 'Across' do not fit.
18. B) The correct spelling of 'Benefitial' is **Beneficial**, which means "favourable or advantageous" — लाभदायक।
- **Announced** – Correct spelling; meaning made a public statement — घोषणा की।
 - **Scheme** – Correct spelling; meaning a plan or programme — योजना।
 - **Employees** – Correct spelling; meaning people who work for a company — कर्मचारी।
19. D) **Apocalypse** (noun) – A prophetic revelation; a great catastrophe or disaster; the end of the world. कयामत, प्रलय, महाविनाश Antonym: Salvation (noun) – Preservation or deliverance from harm, ruin, or loss; redemption from destruction. उद्धार, मुक्ति, रक्षा
- **Catastrophe** (noun) – A sudden disaster — a synonym of apocalypse, not antonym. आपदा, महाविपत्ति
 - **Destruction** (noun) – The action of causing severe damage — a synonym of apocalypse. विनाश, तबाही
 - **Calamity** (noun) – An event causing great damage — a synonym, not antonym of apocalypse. आपदा, विपत्ति
20. A) 'tells the story confidently' के बदले **'told the story confidently'** का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि वाक्य में 'yesterday' past का निश्चित समय बताता है, इसलिए Simple Past (V2 'told') आएगा; Present Perfect ('has told') के साथ 'yesterday' जैसे निश्चित past time का प्रयोग नहीं होता; जैसे— He won the match yesterday. • 'told the story confidently' will be used instead of 'tells the story confidently' because 'yesterday' indicates a definite past time, requiring the Simple Past (V2 'told'); the Present Perfect ('has told') is not used with a definite past time; Like— He won the match yesterday.
21. C) **procured**
- The passage refers to dolls that are obtained, acquired, or brought from various places like Kanchipuram and Puducherry ("sourced from..."). The question asks for the most appropriate synonym for "sourced". a) arrogated: means to take or claim something without justification. b) divested: means deprived of power, rights, or possessions. c) procured: means obtained or acquired with care or effort, serving as the direct synonym for "sourced." d) elicited: means evoked or drawn out (usually a response).

- यह sentence अलग-अलग शहरों से गुड़ियों को प्राप्त करने या लाने ("sourced") को describe करता है। Question में "sourced" (प्राप्त किया हुआ/लाया गया) का सबसे सटीक synonym पूछा गया है। a) arrogated: इसका meaning बिना अधिकार के हथियाना होता है। b) divested: इसका meaning वंचित करना होता है। c) procured: इसका meaning 'प्राप्त करना या हासिल करना' (obtained/acquired) होता है, जो "sourced" के अर्थ से perfectly match करता है। d) elicited: इसका meaning (प्रतिक्रिया आदि) उगलवाना या निकालना होता है।

22. B) for

The sentence states that the dolls are exhibited at the shop so that customers can buy them (displayed _____ sale). Blank (B) requires the correct preposition to form the standard idiom indicating availability for purchase. a) on: "on sale" usually means available at a reduced or discounted price. b) for: forms the established idiom "for sale", which simply means available or offered to be bought, fitting the context of shop display perfectly. c) to / d) at: are incorrect prepositions for this phrase.

- यह sentence टाउन हॉल की दुकान पर गुड़ियों को बिक्री के लिए प्रदर्शित किए जाने को describe करता है। अंग्रेजी में 'बिक्री के लिए उपलब्ध' होने का अर्थ देने के लिए निश्चित मुहावरेदार अभिव्यक्ति (idiom) "for sale" का प्रयोग किया जाता है। a) on: "on sale" का अर्थ आमतौर पर छूट (discount) पर उपलब्ध होना होता है। b) for: यह मानक expression "for sale" (बिक्री के लिए) को पूर्ण करता है, जो context में perfectly fit होता है। c) to और d) at: इस मुहावरे के साथ गलत हैं।

23. C) where

The sentence describes the physical location (the wooden stairs) upon which the dolls are arranged (wooden stairs _____ the beautiful dolls are placed). Blank (C) requires a relative adverb that denotes a place or location. a) which: is a relative pronoun that would require a preposition here (e.g., on which). b) whence: means 'from where', indicating a source, not a static location. c) where: is the relative adverb of place, functioning correctly as a substitute for 'on which' (stairs where the dolls are placed). d) whom: is used for people.

- यह sentence कपड़े से ढकी लकड़ी की सीढ़ियों को describe करता है, जिस स्थान या जगह पर उन गुड़ियों को रखा जाता है। स्थान (place) का बोध कराने के लिए relative adverb की आवश्यकता है। a) which: इसके साथ preposition की जरूरत होती (जैसे- on which)। b) whence: इसका अर्थ 'जहाँ से' होता है। c) where: यह स्थान दर्शाने वाला relative adverb (जहाँ/जिस पर) है, जो "stairs where the dolls are placed" की संरचना में grammatically perfectly fit होता है। d) whom: यह व्यक्तियों के लिए आता है।

24. B) stratified

The passage describes the traditional arrangement of Kolu dolls, which are placed in ascending or descending tiers according to rank or level ("hierarchical order"). The question asks for the synonym of "hierarchical" (meaning arranged in order of rank, grade, or class). a) amorphous: means without a clearly defined shape or form. b) stratified: means arranged or classified in layers, tiers, or social classes, serving as the closest synonym for a tiered, hierarchical arrangement. c) egalitarian: means believing in the principle that all people are equal (antonym). d) anomalous: means deviating from what is standard or normal.

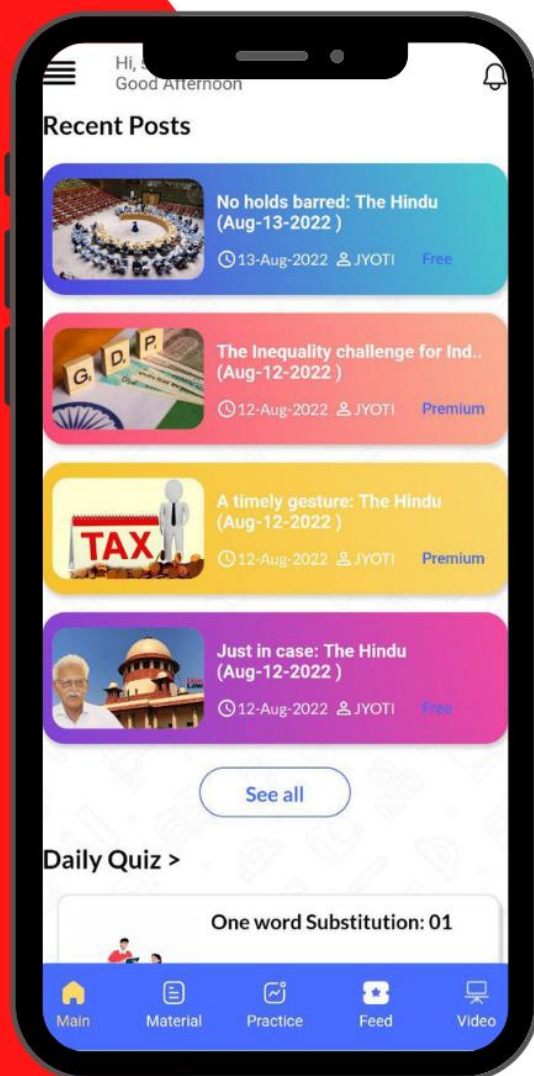
- यह sentence गुड़ियों को सीढ़ियों पर उनके स्तर, पद या पदानुक्रम ("hierarchical") के अनुसार सजाने की प्रथा को describe करता है। Question में "hierarchical" (पदानुक्रमित/स्तरों में बँटा

हुआ) का सबसे सटीक synonym पूछा गया है। a) amorphous: इसका meaning आकारहीन होता है। b) stratified: इसका meaning 'स्तरो, परतों या श्रेणियों में व्यवस्थित' (arranged in tiers/layers) होता है, जो "hierarchical" के अर्थ से closely match करता है। c) egalitarian: इसका meaning समतावादी (antonym) होता है। d) anomalous: इसका meaning असंगत या नियम-विरुद्ध होता है।

25. D) **ersatz**

The sentence mentions that the store sells artificial or artificial substitute jewelry ("imitation jewellery"). The question asks for the synonym of "imitation" (meaning a thing intended to simulate or copy something else, usually artificial). a) veritable: means true or genuine (antonym). b) pristine: means in its original condition; unspoiled. c) ostensible: means stated or appearing to be true, but not necessarily so. d) ersatz: means made or used as a substitute, typically an inferior or artificial one, for something else (e.g., ersatz coffee, ersatz jewelry), serving as the exact high-register synonym for "imitation."

- यह sentence दुकान में हस्तनिर्मित उपहारों के साथ-साथ कृत्रिम या नकली आभूषणों ("imitation jewellery") के उपलब्ध होने को describe करता है। Question में "imitation" (कृत्रिम/नकली/विकल्प) का सबसे सटीक synonym पूछा गया है। a) veritable: इसका meaning असली या वास्तविक (antonym) होता है। b) pristine: इसका meaning प्राचीन या अछूता होता है। c) ostensible: इसका meaning दिखावटी या खयाली होता है। d) ersatz: इसका meaning 'किसी चीज़ का कृत्रिम या नकली विकल्प' (artificial substitute) होता है, जो "imitation" के अर्थ से perfectly match करता है।



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