Clear the path: On SCO Civilisational Dialogue Forum in New Delhi

India should use **multilateral fora** to **advance bilateral** cooperation

While **maintaining** its hard **stance** on **cross-border** terrorism, India has an opportunity to **recognise** that many of its other interests still **merit sustained** cooperation with Pakistan as the latter's climate minister Musadik Masood Malik prepares to attend the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Civilisational Dialogue Forum in New Delhi. India's official **position** since the Pahalgam attack and the **ensuing confrontations** along the border **is** that terrorism and bilateral talks cannot **coexist**. A month later, Prime Minister Narendra Modi signalled that India's relations with Pakistan would remain **subordinate** to its demands on cross-border terrorism by extending the condition to trade and water. South Asia is already one of the least **economically integrated** regions **worldwide**, with intra-regional trade at around 5%, and, as Chatham House has **inferred**, **strained ties** between India and its neighbours have created **diplomatic vacuums** that Beijing has **taken advantage of** through **trilateral** and regional groupings. Now, by inviting all SCO members to the national capital and participating in meetings ahead of the August 2027 Islamabad Summit, New Delhi has shown some **maturity** as a **convening** power. Islamabad is also being **pragmatic** in keeping channels open during its SCO chairmanship by participating in an initiative **championed** by Mr. Modi.

The **pursuit** of regionwide water security **remains** particularly **fluid**, with India **seemingly overlooking** the fact that it is **upstream** of Pakistan and Bangladesh and downstream of China. After India stopped sharing routine **hydrological** data of the Indus river and approved the Chenab-Beas link tunnel project, Mr. Malik **fanned the flames** saying Pakistan would "cut off those hands" **seeking** to restrict its share of the water. Yet China has now restricted the same data **vis-à-vis** the Brahmaputra while it builds the Medog mega-dam in Tibet. India has also **protested** the **proposed** Padma Barrage in Bangladesh, which has been increasing its **alignment** with China, **echoing** India building the Farakka Barrage over East Pakistan's objections in 1961. Climate change is **rendering** cooperation more **essential** to manage the **integrity** of **contested geographies**, the **willingness** of border populations to engage, and the **potential** to generate hydroelectric power. New Delhi should **retreat** from the **notion** that working together on the Indus will be a **concession** to Islamabad and see in the Dialogue an opportunity to **restore** the necessary channels. **Suspending** ties may communicate political resolve but will not **diminish** terrorists' capabilities in the region or improve India's security. It has already **compromised** India's **ambitions** to regional leadership, which require the ability to keep engaging even with difficult neighbours. India should go beyond using multilateral fora to **assert** its national position and start identifying areas where bilateral cooperation **serves** its interests, including with Pakistan. **[Practice Exercise]**

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

Vocabulary

1. **Multilateral** (adjective) - multifaceted, polycentric, international, collaborative, multidimensional बहुपक्षीय
2. **Fora** (noun) - platforms, assemblies, symposiums, conventions, councils मंच
3. **Advance** (verb) - promote, further, propel, foster, expedite आगे बढ़ाना
4. **Bilateral** (adjective) - mutual, reciprocal, cooperative, joint, two-sided द्विपक्षीय
5. **Maintain** (verb) - preserve, uphold, sustain, retain, continue बनाए रखना
6. **Stance** (noun) - posture, standpoint, viewpoint, attitude, position दृष्टिकोण
7. **Cross-border** (adjective) - transnational, international, transboundary, border-crossing, overseas सीमा पार
8. **Recognise** (verb) - acknowledge, concede, admit, perceive, identify पहचानना
9. **Merit** (verb) - deserve, warrant, justify, earn, rate योग्य होना
10. **Sustain** (verb) - prolong, continue, preserve, uphold, retain निरंतर बनाए रखना
11. **Ensue** (verb) - follow, result, succeed, arise, stem परिणामस्वरूप होना
12. **Confrontations** (noun) - clashes, conflicts, encounters, altercations, disputes टकराव
13. **Coexist** (verb) - synchronize, concur, coincide, harmonize, coordinate सह-अस्तित्व में होना
14. **Subordinate** (adjective) - secondary, subservient, dependent, ancillary, lesser अधीन
15. **Economically** (adverb) - financially, fiscally, monetarily, commercially, pecuniarily आर्थिक रूप से
16. **Integrate** (verb) - unify, amalgamate, consolidate, merge, assimilate एकीकृत करना
17. **Worldwide** (adjective) - global, universal, international, ubiquitous, planetary विश्वव्यापी
18. **Infer** (verb) - deduce, conclude, derive, gather, extrapolate निष्कर्ष निकालना
19. **Strain** (verb) - burden, tax, overtax, tension, impair तनावपूर्ण करना
20. **Ties** (noun) - bonds, connections, relationships, links, associations संबंध
21. **Diplomatic** (adjective) - political, tactful, strategic, conciliatory, ambassadorial कूटनीतिक
22. **Vacuums** (noun) - voids, gaps, deficiencies, spaces, absences शून्यता
23. **Take advantage of** (phrase) - to exploit or use a situation for personal benefit फायदा उठाना
24. **Trilateral** (adjective) - tripartite, three-sided, three-way, triangular, threefold त्रिपक्षीय
25. **Maturity** (noun) - wisdom, prudence, responsibility, sagacity, astuteness परिपक्वता
26. **Convene** (verb) - summon, assemble, gather, call, congregate आयोजित करना

27. **Pragmatic** (adjective) - practical, realistic, sensible, rational, utilitarian व्यावहारिक
28. **Champion** (verb) - advocate, promote, defend, support, endorse समर्थन करना
29. **Pursuit** (noun) - quest, search, objective, endeavor, undertaking खोज
30. **Fluid** (adjective) - changeable, fluctuating, shifting, volatile, unsettled परिवर्तनशील
31. **Seemingly** (adverb) - apparently, outwardly, ostensibly, evidently, superficially जाहिरा तौर पर
32. **Overlook** (verb) - ignore, neglect, disregard, miss, omit अनदेखा करना
33. **Upstream** (adjective) - upward, headwater, higher, ascending, upriver धारा के प्रतिकूल
34. **Hydrological** (adjective) - aquatic, watery, hydrographic, oceanic, marine जल विज्ञान संबंधी
35. **Fan the flames** (idiom) - to make a dangerous or tense situation even worse भड़काना
36. **Seek** (verb) - pursue, attempt, strive, aim, endeavor प्रयास करना
37. **Vis-à-vis** (preposition) - in relation to or compared with के संबंध में
38. **Protest** (verb) - object, oppose, dissent, resist, dispute विरोध करना
39. **Propose** (verb) - suggest, pitch, proffer, tender, recommend प्रस्तावित करना
40. **Alignment** (noun) - coalition, affiliation, association, alliance, partnership गठबंधन
41. **Echo** (verb) - repeat, reflect, resonate, reiterate, parallel दोहराना
42. **Render** (verb) - make, cause, leave, generate, produce बनाना
43. **Essential** (adjective) - crucial, vital, imperative, indispensable, necessary आवश्यक
44. **Integrity** (noun) - unity, wholeness, cohesion, intactness, soundness अखंडता
45. **Contest** (verb) - dispute, challenge, oppose, question, debate विवाद करना
46. **Geographies** (noun) - terrains, regions, territories, landscapes, domains भौगोलिक क्षेत्र
47. **Willingness** (noun) - readiness, inclination, eagerness, consent, disposition इच्छा
48. **Potential** (noun) - capability, capacity, possibility, promise, ability क्षमता
49. **Retreat** (verb) - withdraw, recede, backtrack, backpedal, recoil पीछे हटना
50. **Notion** (noun) - idea, belief, concept, perception, thought धारणा
51. **Concession** (noun) - compromise, allowance, yielding, adjustment, grant रियायत
52. **Restore** (verb) - reinstate, reestablish, revive, recover, renew बहाल करना
53. **Suspend** (verb) - halt, pause, freeze, interrupt, postpone निलंबित करना
54. **Diminish** (verb) - reduce, lessen, decrease, weaken, curtail कम करना
55. **Compromise** (verb) - undermine, weaken, jeopardize, prejudice, imperil समझौता करना

56. **Ambitions** (noun) - aspirations, goals, objectives, desires, aims महत्वाकांक्षाएं
57. **Assert** (verb) - declare, affirm, maintain, state, proclaim जोर देकर कहना
58. **Serve** (verb) - benefit, assist, aid, promote, further सेवा करना

Summary of the Editorial

1. **India's diplomatic opportunity:** India can use the SCO forum to improve regional cooperation while maintaining its firm position against cross-border terrorism.
2. **Terrorism and dialogue:** India believes that bilateral talks with Pakistan cannot continue alongside cross-border terrorism.
3. **Conditional relations:** India has linked its relations with Pakistan, including trade and water-sharing, to Pakistan's action against terrorism.
4. **Weak regional integration:** South Asia has very low economic integration, with intra-regional trade accounting for only around 5%.
5. **China's growing influence:** Strained relations between India and its neighbours have created diplomatic gaps that China is exploiting.
6. **SCO's importance:** By inviting SCO members to New Delhi, India has demonstrated maturity as a regional convening power.
7. **Pakistan's pragmatism:** Pakistan's participation in the forum shows its willingness to maintain diplomatic channels during its SCO chairmanship.
8. **Water security concerns:** Water-sharing remains a major regional challenge involving India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and China.
9. **Indus water dispute:** India stopped sharing routine hydrological data with Pakistan and approved the Chenab-Beas link tunnel project.
10. **Pakistan's reaction:** Pakistan's climate minister criticised India's water-related decisions and issued aggressive warnings.
11. **China's water policies:** China has restricted Brahmaputra river data while developing the Medog mega-dam in Tibet.
12. **India-Bangladesh tensions:** India has protested Bangladesh's proposed Padma Barrage, reflecting growing disagreements over shared water resources.
13. **Climate change and cooperation:** Climate change makes regional cooperation essential for water security, hydropower generation and border stability.
14. **Limitations of isolation:** Suspending diplomatic ties may demonstrate political determination but cannot eliminate terrorism or improve India's security.
15. **Way forward:** India should use multilateral platforms like the SCO to identify areas of mutual interest and promote bilateral cooperation, even with difficult neighbours like Pakistan.

Practice Exercise: SSC Pattern Based

1. **What broader geopolitical consequence does the passage attribute to India's strained relations with its South Asian neighbours?** [Editorial page]
   A. Strained bilateral ties have created diplomatic vacuums that Beijing has exploited through trilateral and regional groupings across South Asia.
   B. Suspending bilateral trade and water ties has strengthened New Delhi's regional leadership by isolating Islamabad within the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation.
   C. Restricting cross-border engagement has compelled Bangladesh to cancel the Padma Barrage project and align closely with Indian water policies.
   D. Conditioning multilateral dialogue on counterterrorism demands has elevated South Asian intra-regional trade above competing global economic regions worldwide.
2. **According to the passage, how have both New Delhi and Islamabad demonstrated diplomatic pragmatism ahead of the August 2027 Islamabad Summit?**
   A. New Delhi maintained its hard stance on terrorism, while Islamabad protested the Chenab-Beas link tunnel project before the forum.
   B. New Delhi participated in pre-summit SCO meetings, while Islamabad used its chairmanship to restore routine Indus hydrological data channels.
   C. New Delhi invited all SCO members to a dialogue in the capital, while Islamabad joined an initiative championed by Modi.
   D. New Delhi hosted the Civilisational Dialogue Forum, while Islamabad aligned its regional water security proposals with Beijing's trilateral groupings.
3. **According to the passage, what diplomatic shift did Prime Minister Narendra Modi signal one month after the Pahalgam attack?**
   A. Inviting all Shanghai Cooperation Organisation members to New Delhi ahead of the August 2027 Islamabad Summit
   B. Approving the Chenab-Beas link tunnel project after halting routine hydrological data sharing on the Indus
   C. Protesting Bangladesh's proposed Padma Barrage project as Dhaka increased its strategic alignment with China
   D. Extending India's condition on cross-border terrorism to encompass bilateral trade and water relations with Pakistan
4. **Which phrase best captures the central subject of the passage?**
   A. Subordinating bilateral trade and water relations to cross-border terrorism demands following the Pahalgam border attack
   B. Using multilateral platforms like the SCO to advance India-Pakistan bilateral cooperation on shared regional challenges
   C. Historical parallels between India's nineteen sixty-one Farakka Barrage and Bangladesh's proposed Padma Barrage project
   D. Chatham House's analysis of low South Asian intra-regional trade integration and Chinese trilateral regional groupings
5. **Identify the grammatical function of the phrase "While maintaining its hard stance on cross-border terrorism" in the sentence: "While maintaining its hard stance on cross-border terrorism, India has an opportunity to recognise..." in the first paragraph.**
   A. It is the main subject of the sentence.

B. It is a concessive participial phrase modifying the clause.
C. It is a finite independent clause stating a result.
D. It is a direct object of the main verb.

6. **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.**
An artist has set a record for the world's largest soil painting as he bids to raise awareness of how important the material is.
A. The artwork was created to raise awareness of the movement's call for soil regeneration to be prioritised at the 31st UN Climate Change Conference (COP).
B. Save Soil is pushing for improvement of soil health around the world and works with governments to shape policies on the subject.
C. The UK-based Official Record Breakers has verified that organisation Save Soil had surpassed the previous best of 59,458 sq cm (about 64 sq ft), with the new painting measuring 61,000 sq cm (about 65 sq ft).
D. Phil Lambert, who lives in Cardiff, used four types of soil and an upcycled wooden frame and canvas supplied by Oxford Wood Recycling.
   A. D-C-A-B
   B. C-D-B-A
   C. C-D-A-B
   D. D-B-A-C
7. **Direction: In the following question, the passage is split into five parts and named A, B, C, D, and E. Rearrange these five parts to form a meaningful, logical, and coherent paragraph.**
A. A casual scroll through LinkedIn on any given day could easily reveal the paranoia prevalent among desk-job employees.
B. By March 2026, its net headcount was reduced by a staggering 23,000 in an economy already struggling to create opportunities for its growing population.
C. One apparent manifestation of this paranoia is countless social media posts by engineers, tech experts, and IT professionals showcasing certificates in machine learning, agentic AI, applied generative AI engineering, cybersecurity, and cloud computing, etc., paid for from personal savings and earned by burning the midnight oil.
D. In July 2025, Tata Consultancy Services said it would cut about 12,000 jobs, roughly 2% of its workforce.
E. As per Aon's salary survey, the rate of attrition in India climbed to 18% in 2026 from 16.2% in 2025, and total global layoffs counted about 1.22 lakh in the tech space alone.
   A. D-E-B-A-C
   B. D-B-E-A-C
   C. B-D-E-A-C
   D. D-B-A-E-C
8. **Select the most appropriate SYNONYM of the given word.**
CONJECTURE
   A. Confirm
   B. Prove
   C. Speculate

D. Verify

9. **Select the most appropriate SYNONYM of the given word.**
   RECRIMINATION
   A. Praise
   B. Accusation
   C. Compliment
   D. Forgiveness
10. **Select the option that shows the grammatically and lexically correct form of the idiom meaning "to speak with absolute candour, describing something completely truthfully and directly, even if it is unpleasant."**
   A. To call a spade a spade
   B. To call a shovel a shovel
   C. To call a clover a clover
   D. To call a trowel a trowel
11. **Select the most appropriate idiom that can substitute the underlined segment in the given sentence.**
   The constant noise from the construction site next door is starting to **make me extremely angry**.
   A. driving me blind
   B. bringing me round
   C. drive me up the wall
   D. shove me under the table
12. **Select the most appropriate ANTONYM of the given word.**
   Unconvincing
   A. Credible
   B. Implausible
   C. Tenuous
   D. Flimsy
13. **Select the most appropriate ANTONYM of the given word.**
   Efficient
   A. Skilled
   B. Dynamic
   C. Inept
   D. Prompt
14. **Choose the one which can be substituted for the given sentence.**
   A detailed list of items in a library is called a:
   A. Catalogue
   B. Index
   C. Diary
   D. Almanac
15. **Which part of the following sentence contains a spelling error?**
   The scientist (1) proposed a plausible (2) yet controvertial (3) theory about dark matter (4).
   A. (3)
   B. (1)

C. (2)
D. (4)

16. **Select the option that expresses the given sentence in reported speech.**
He said, "I must stay with her as her condition is critical."
A. He said he would stay with her as her condition is critical.
B. He said that he has to stay with her as her condition has been critical.
C. He said that he would have to stay with her as her condition was critical.
D. He said he must stay with her as her condition were critical.

17. **Directions: Select the correct option**
Given the proliferation of misinformation, it becomes all the more imperative to ___ sources before dissemination.
A. ameliorate
B. fabricate
C. corroborate
D. incriminate

18. **Select the most appropriate option that can substitute the underlined segment in the given sentence.**
Nobody knew Ramesh was coming to see us. He arrived **<u>suddenly</u>**
A. angrily
B. safely
C. unexpectedly
D. happily

19. **Directions: Find the part of the sentence that contains an error**
She wore a stunning red silk long scarf that complemented her traditional attire during the award ceremony at the convention centre.
A. She wore a stunning red silk long scarf
B. that complemented her traditional attire
C. during the award ceremony
D. at the convention centre.

20. **Select the option that expresses the given sentence in passive voice.**
Neena will visit Greece in May.
A. Greece had been visited by Neena in May.
B. Greece has been visited by Neena in May.
C. Greece will be visited by Neena in May.
D. Greece will visit Neena in May.

Directions: Complete the following passage by filling in the blanks with the most appropriate words or phrases from the options given below.

It is difficult to say or write anything about India's first Prime Minister that has not already been said or written. What he comes across as when looked at through the prism of his intelligence chief is, (A)___, a dimension of his working life that has not been adequately commented upon.

For almost the entire duration of his Prime Ministership, Jawaharlal Nehru's intelligence chief was the (B)___ Bhola Nath Mullik who served as Director, Intelligence Bureau (DIB) from 1950 till shortly after Nehru's demise. The Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW) had not yet come

into existence then and the DIB was the last word on all matters pertaining to intelligence and security.

An officer of the Indian Police, Mullik joined the Intelligence Bureau (IB) in 1948 and was appointed DIB two years later. Prior to joining the IB, he had worked in Bihar. In 1934, Jawaharlal Nehru had visited Bihar to see for himself the progress of rehabilitation work in the wake of a massive earthquake that had devastated the State.

Mullik, then Assistant Superintendent of Police in Madhubani, Darbhanga, had attempted to (C)___ Nehru of the reconstruction efforts undertaken by the police. Under the mistaken impression that the police were trying to mount surveillance on him, Nehru fired off an angry missive to which Mullik took umbrage and made up his mind never to approach Nehru again. Soon after Mullik joined the IB, a report prepared by him on the plight of the minorities in East Pakistan was questioned by the Prime Minister, who cast aspersions on the professionalism of those who had prepared the report, thus further embittering Mullik. Upon taking over as DIB, Mullik was advised by Sardar Patel to (D)___ the Prime Minister.

(E)___, Mullik did so. His very first interaction with the Prime Minister, at his courteous and expansive best, completely transformed Mullik, all his pent-up resentment melting away. Mullik was impressed by the fact that Nehru wanted the intelligence supplied to him to be unbiased and unprejudiced. On his part, Mullik found he greatly benefited from the wide horizon of the Prime Minister's thinking as compared to his own narrower plane.

21. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank (A).**
    A. likewise
    B. therefore
    C. moreover
    D. however
22. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank (B).**
    A. redoubtable
    B. inconsequential
    C. obsequious
    D. pusillanimous
23. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank (C).**
    A. relieve
    B. brief
    C. apprise
    D. deprive
24. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank (D).**
    A. call on
    B. call for
    C. call off
    D. call forth
25. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank (E).**
    A. Having left no option
    B. Left with no option
    C. To leave with no option
    D. Leaving with no option

Answers

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

Explanations

1. **A) Strained bilateral ties have created diplomatic vacuums that Beijing has exploited through trilateral and regional groupings across South Asia.**
   passage: "South Asia is already one of the least economically integrated regions worldwide, with intra-regional trade at around 5%, and, as Chatham House has inferred, strained ties between India and its neighbours have created diplomatic vacuums that Beijing has taken advantage of through trilateral and regional groupings."----The passage says that because India's ties with its neighbours are strained, gaps (diplomatic vacuums) have opened up in the region. China has used these gaps to build influence through trilateral and regional groupings. Option A says exactly this, so it is correct.
   - Option B: Incorrect. The option says suspending ties has strengthened India's leadership by isolating Pakistan in the SCO, but the passage says the opposite. It says suspending ties "has already compromised India's ambitions to regional leadership," and it notes Pakistan is taking part in the SCO initiative, so it is not isolated.
   - Option C: Incorrect. The option says Bangladesh cancelled the Padma Barrage and aligned with Indian water policies, but the passage says India has protested the proposed barrage, and that Bangladesh has been increasing its alignment with China. No cancellation is mentioned.
   - Option D: Incorrect. The option says conditioning dialogue on counterterrorism raised South Asian trade above other regions, but the passage says South Asia is one of the least economically integrated regions, with intra-regional trade at only around 5%.
2. **C) New Delhi invited all SCO members to a dialogue in the capital, while Islamabad joined an initiative championed by Modi.**
   passage: "Now, by inviting all SCO members to the national capital and participating in meetings ahead of the August 2027 Islamabad Summit, New Delhi has shown some maturity as a convening power. Islamabad is also being pragmatic in keeping channels open during its SCO chairmanship by participating in an initiative championed by Mr. Modi."-----The passage names one pragmatic step for each side. New Delhi invited all SCO members to the capital and joined the pre-summit meetings. Islamabad kept channels open by taking part in the SCO Civilisational Dialogue Forum, an initiative championed by Modi. Option C says exactly this, so it is correct.
   - Option A: Incorrect. The option says Islamabad protested the Chenab-Beas link tunnel project as its pragmatic step, but the passage only says Pakistan's climate minister made a harsh remark ("cut off those hands") after India approved the tunnel. That is hostile rhetoric, not pragmatism. Also, India's hard stance on terrorism is not described as pragmatism.
   - Option B: Incorrect. The option says Islamabad used its chairmanship to restore Indus hydrological data channels, but the passage says India stopped sharing this data and

nothing says it was restored. Pakistan's pragmatism is about joining the Modi-led initiative.

- Option D: Incorrect. The option says Islamabad aligned its water proposals with Beijing's trilateral groupings, but the passage never says this. It mentions Beijing's groupings only as a way China took advantage of diplomatic vacuums, and it does not link them to Pakistan's pragmatism.

3. **D) Extending India's condition on cross-border terrorism to encompass bilateral trade and water relations with Pakistan**
   passage: "India's official position since the Pahalgam attack and the ensuing confrontations along the border is that terrorism and bilateral talks cannot coexist. A month later, Prime Minister Narendra Modi signalled that India's relations with Pakistan would remain subordinate to its demands on cross-border terrorism by extending the condition to trade and water."----The passage says that first India's position was that terrorism and talks cannot go together. A month later, Modi widened this condition so that it also covered trade and water. Option D says exactly this, so it is correct.
   - Option A: Incorrect. The option says the shift was inviting SCO members to New Delhi, but the passage mentions this as something India is doing "now," with the Dialogue Forum. It is not what Modi signalled one month after the Pahalgam attack.
   - Option B: Incorrect. The option says the shift was approving the Chenab-Beas tunnel after halting data sharing. The passage mentions these as later actions that provoked the Pakistani minister's remark. It does not say Modi signalled this one month after the attack.
   - Option C: Incorrect. The option says the shift was protesting the Padma Barrage, but the passage says India protested the barrage in Bangladesh as a separate matter about water in the east. It is not linked to Modi's signal on Pakistan one month after Pahalgam.
4. **B) Using multilateral platforms like the SCO to advance India-Pakistan bilateral cooperation on shared regional challenges.**
   passage: "India should go beyond using multilateral fora to assert its national position and start identifying areas where bilateral cooperation serves its interests, including with Pakistan." The title says the same: "India should use multilateral fora to advance bilateral cooperation."----The passage opens with the SCO Civilisational Dialogue Forum in New Delhi as a chance to keep engaging with Pakistan. It then explains why cooperation matters, especially on water and climate, and ends by urging India to use such forums to build bilateral cooperation. Option B captures this whole argument, so it is correct.
   - Option A: Incorrect. The option says the subject is subordinating trade and water ties to terrorism demands, but the passage mentions this only as India's current position, which the author criticises. It is the background, not the central subject.
   - Option C: Incorrect. The option says the subject is the Farakka and Padma Barrage parallel, but the passage mentions this in one sentence as a small example. It is not the main idea.
   - Option D: Incorrect. The option says the subject is Chatham House's analysis of low trade and Chinese groupings, but the passage uses this only as supporting evidence of the cost of strained ties. It is a minor point, not the main subject.

5. **B) It is a concessive participial phrase modifying the clause.**
   Line: “While maintaining its hard stance on cross-border terrorism, India has an opportunity to recognise that many of its other interests still merit sustained cooperation with Pakistan...”
   The phrase begins with “While” and then the -ing form “maintaining.” It has no subject and no finite verb of its own, so it is a phrase and not a clause. It is a participial phrase. “While” shows contrast: India keeps its hard stance, yet it still has an opportunity to cooperate. This contrast is what “concessive” means. The phrase gives background to the main clause “India has an opportunity to recognise...” and so it modifies that clause. Option B says exactly this, so it is correct.
   - Option A: Incorrect. The option says it is the main subject, but the subject of the sentence is “India” (with the verb “has”). The phrase only adds information before the subject.
   - Option C: Incorrect. The option says it is a finite independent clause stating a result, but it has no subject and no finite verb, and it cannot stand alone as a sentence. It also shows contrast, not result.
   - Option D: Incorrect. The option says it is the direct object of the main verb, but the main verb “has” takes “an opportunity” as its object. The phrase sits at the start of the sentence and is not acted on by any verb.
6. C) **C-D-A-B**
   Explanation:
   Hindi Explanation:
   Sentence C दिए गए पहले वाक्य (Opening Sentence) के तुरंत बाद आएगा और Opening-C का सीधा record-verification link बनाएगा। पहले वाक्य में विश्व रिकॉर्ड बनाने के दावे के तुरंत बाद Sentence C उस रिकॉर्ड की आधिकारिक पुष्टि करता है कि UK-based Official Record Breakers ने सत्यापित किया है कि Save Soil संगठन ने 59,458 sq cm के पिछले रिकॉर्ड को पीछे छोड़ते हुए 61,000 sq cm की नई पेंटिंग बनाई है।
   Sentence D Sentence C को follow करेगा और C-D का creation-details link बनाएगा। नई पेंटिंग के आकार के उल्लेख के बाद Sentence D उस कलाकार (Phil Lambert) का परिचय देता है और बताता है कि उन्होंने पेंटिंग बनाने के लिए चार प्रकार की मिट्टी और Oxford Wood Recycling द्वारा आपूर्ति किए गए अपसाइकल्ड लकड़ी के फ्रेम और कैनवास का उपयोग किया।
   Sentence A Sentence D के ठीक बाद आएगा और D-A का purpose-explanation pair बनाएगा। कलाकृति के निर्माण की विधि के बाद Sentence A "The artwork was created..." के माध्यम से इसका उद्देश्य स्पष्ट करता है कि इसे 31वें संयुक्त राष्ट्र जलवायु परिवर्तन सम्मेलन (COP) में मिट्टी के पुनर्जनन (soil regeneration) को प्राथमिकता देने की Save Soil आंदोलन ("the movement's call") की मांग के प्रति जागरूकता बढ़ाने के लिए बनाया गया था।
   Sentence B Sentence A के बाद आकर क्रम को पूर्ण करेगा (A-B)। आंदोलन की मांग का उल्लेख करने के बाद Sentence B Save Soil के व्यापक वैश्विक मिशन का विवरण देता है कि यह दुनिया भर में मिट्टी के स्वास्थ्य में सुधार के लिए काम कर रहा है और इस विषय पर नीतियां बनाने के लिए सरकारों के साथ मिलकर कार्य करता है।
   English Explanation:

Sentence C directly follows the given opening sentence (Opening-C), immediately substantiating the record claim by specifying that Official Record Breakers verified Save Soil surpassed the previous best of 59,458 sq cm with the new painting measuring 61,000 sq cm.
Sentence D follows Sentence C (C-D), shifting from the record dimensions to the artist behind the work---identifying Phil Lambert of Cardiff and detailing the four types of soil and upcycled materials from Oxford Wood Recycling he used.
Sentence A forms an immediate explanatory pair with Sentence D (D-A), referring directly back to the painting via "The artwork" and stating its purpose: raising awareness for the movement's call to prioritize soil regeneration at the 31st UN Climate Change Conference (COP).
Sentence B concludes the sequence (A-B), elaborating on the organization introduced earlier by explaining how Save Soil advocates for global soil health and works with governments to shape policies.

7. B) **D-B-E-A-C**
Explanation:
Hindi Explanation:
Sentence D पूरे परिच्छेद का independent opening sentence है। यह मुख्य विषय और समय-रेखा की शुरुआत करता है कि जुलाई 2025 में Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) ने लगभग 12,000 नौकरियों (अपने कार्यबल के लगभग 2%) में कटौती करने की बात कही थी।
Sentence B Sentence D के तुरंत बाद आएगा और D-B का सीधा pronoun-referential एवं chronological link बनाएगा। Sentence D में Tata Consultancy Services के परिचय के बाद Sentence B pronoun "its" ("its net headcount") का उपयोग करते हुए मार्च 2026 तक कंपनी के कुल कार्यबल में 23,000 की भारी कमी का विवरण देता है।
Sentence E Sentence B को follow करेगा और B-E का company-to-industry broadening link बनाएगा। एक कंपनी के आंकड़ों के बाद Sentence E Aon's salary survey के माध्यम से पूरे क्षेत्र की स्थिति प्रस्तुत करता है कि 2026 में भारत में attrition दर 16.2% से बढ़कर 18% हो गई और अकेले टेक क्षेत्र में कुल वैश्विक छंटनी लगभग 1.22 लाख रही।
Sentence A Sentence E के ठीक बाद आएगा और E-A का cause-to-psychological-effect transition बनाएगा। बड़े पैमाने पर छंटनी के आंकड़ों के बाद Sentence A कर्मचारियों पर इसके मानसिक प्रभाव को दर्शाता है कि किसी भी दिन LinkedIn पर एक सामान्य स्क्रॉल डेस्क-जॉब कर्मचारियों के बीच व्याप्त paranoia (भय/असुरक्षा) को आसानी से उजागर कर सकता है।
Sentence C Sentence A के बाद आकर क्रम को पूर्ण करेगा (A-C)। Sentence A में "paranoia" के उल्लेख के तुरंत बाद Sentence C "this paranoia" के माध्यम से इसका एक स्पष्ट प्रमाण प्रस्तुत करता है कि इंजीनियर और आईटी पेशेवर अपनी व्यक्तिगत बचत से पैसे खर्च करके और रात-दिन मेहनत करके अर्जित किए गए AI, साइबर सुरक्षा और क्लाउड कंप्यूटिंग के प्रमाणपत्र सोशल मीडिया पर साझा कर रहे हैं।
English Explanation:
Sentence D serves as the standalone opening topic sentence, anchoring the timeline in July 2025 when Tata Consultancy Services announced plans to cut roughly 12,000 jobs, or 2% of its workforce.
Sentence B directly follows Sentence D (D-B), referring back to TCS via the possessive pronoun "its" ("its net headcount") and advancing the chronology to March 2026, when net headcount dropped by 23,000.

Sentence E follows Sentence B (B-E), zooming out from a single company to the broader industry using Aon's salary survey data---noting India's attrition rate rising to 18% in 2026 and global tech layoffs reaching 1.22 lakh.
Sentence A directly follows Sentence E (E-A), shifting from statistical layoff figures to the resulting psychological climate among workers: a casual scroll through LinkedIn reveals widespread paranoia among desk-job employees.
Sentence C concludes the sequence (A-C), linking directly back to Sentence A via the demonstrative phrase "this paranoia" to illustrate how engineers and IT professionals are posting self-funded certificates in AI, cybersecurity, and cloud computing on social media.

8. C) **Speculate** (verb) – form a theory or conjecture about something without firm evidence. Hindi: अनुमान लगाना, अटकल करना। The word CONJECTURE (verb/noun) means form an opinion on the basis of incomplete information; a guess. Hindi: अनुमान लगाना, कयास करना।
    - **Confirm** (verb) – establish the truth or correctness of something previously believed. Hindi: पुष्टि करना। It is the antonym of CONJECTURE.
    - **Prove** (verb) – demonstrate the truth or existence of something by evidence or argument. Hindi: सिद्ध करना। It is opposite in meaning to CONJECTURE.
    - **Verify** (verb) – make sure or demonstrate that something is true, accurate, or justified. Hindi: सत्यापित करना। It does not match the meaning of CONJECTURE.
9. B) **Accusation** (noun) – a charge or claim that someone has done something illegal or wrong. Hindi: आरोप, दोषारोपण। The word RECRIMINATION (noun) means an accusation made in response to one from someone else; a counter-charge. Hindi: पलटवार, प्रत्यारोप।
    - **Praise** (noun) – the expression of approval or admiration for someone or something. Hindi: प्रशंसा। It is the antonym of RECRIMINATION.
    - **Compliment** (noun) – a polite expression of praise or admiration. Hindi: तारीफ। It is opposite in meaning to RECRIMINATION.
    - **Forgiveness** (noun) – the action of forgiving or being forgiven. Hindi: क्षमा। It does not match the meaning of RECRIMINATION.
10. A) **To call a spade a spade** (idiom) – To speak plainly and truthfully, even if it is unpleasant. साफ़-साफ़ बात कहना
11. C) make me extremely angry. (Idiom) - drive me up the wall. बहुत परेशान कर रहा है।
    - **Driving me blind** (idiom) – This is not a common idiom and doesn't fit the given context.
    - **Bringing me round** (idiom) – To cause someone to regain consciousness or to convince someone. मुझे होश में लाना
    - **Shove me under the table** (idiom) – This is not a standard idiom and doesn't convey the sense of annoyance or anger. मुझे मेज के नीचे धकेल दो
12. A) **Unconvincing** (adjective) – not able to convince someone that something is true or real; weak, implausible, doubtful, improbable, flimsy. (अविश्वसनीय)
    Antonym: **Credible** (adjective) – able to be believed; convincing and trustworthy; believable, plausible, reliable. (विश्वसनीय)
    - **Implausible** (adjective) – not seeming reasonable or probable; unlikely, far-fetched. (असंभाव्य)

- **Tenuous** (adjective) – very weak or slight, with little substance; flimsy, insubstantial. (कमज़ोर / आधारहीन)
- **Flimsy** (adjective) – weak and unconvincing, as in an excuse or argument; feeble, thin. (लचर / कमज़ोर)

13. C) **Efficient** (adjective) – working in a well-organised and competent way with minimum waste of effort; capable, competent, effective, productive, proficient. (कुशल)
    Antonym: **Inept** (adjective) – having or showing no skill; clumsy, incompetent, unskilled. (अयोग्य / अकुशल)
    - **Skilled** (adjective) – having the ability to do something well; expert, proficient. (निपुण)
    - **Dynamic** (adjective) – full of energy and new ideas; energetic, active. (गतिशील)
    - **Prompt** (adjective) – done without delay; quick, punctual. (तत्पर)
14. A) **Catalogue** (noun) – A detailed list of items (e.g. books in a library). सूची, सूचीपत्र
    - **Index** (noun) – An alphabetical list of topics at the end of a book. अनुक्रमणिका
    - **Diary** (noun) – A daily record of personal events. दैनंदिनी
    - **Almanac** (noun) – An annual calendar with astronomical data. पंचांग
15. A) The correct spelling of 'controvertial' (part 3) is 'controversial' which means "giving rise to public disagreement; debatable" विवादास्पद।
16. **C) He said that he would have to stay with her as her condition was critical.**
    Direct से Indirect Speech में बदलने के लिए inverted commas हटाकर "that" लगाया जाता है और Reported Speech के Tense, Modal तथा Pronoun में आवश्यक बदलाव किए जाते हैं। Reporting Verb "said" Past Tense में है, इसलिए Reported Speech "I must stay with her as her condition is critical" का Modal "must" (आवश्यकता) Indirect Speech में "would have to" बन जाता है और Present Simple "is" Past Simple "was" बन जाता है। Pronoun "I" का मतलब बोलने वाला "He" है, इसलिए "I" की जगह "he" आएगा। "would stay" में आवश्यकता का भाव खो गया है, "has to ... has been" में Tense गलत बदला गया है और "must stay ... were critical" में Modal नहीं बदला और Subject-Verb Agreement गलत है, इसलिए ये गलत हैं।
    To change a sentence from Direct to Indirect Speech, the inverted commas are removed and "that" is added, and the tense, modals and pronouns of the reported speech are adjusted as required. The reporting verb "said" is in the Past Tense, so in the reported speech "I must stay with her as her condition is critical", the modal "must" (necessity) changes to "would have to" and the Present Simple "is" changes to the Past Simple "was". The pronoun "I" refers to the speaker, "He", so it changes to "he". "Would stay" loses the sense of necessity, "has to ... has been" changes the tense wrongly, and "must stay ... were critical" does not change the modal and has wrong subject-verb agreement, so these options are incorrect.
17. C) 'corroborate' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि गलत सूचनाओं के बढ़ने पर प्रसार से पहले स्रोतों की पुष्टि करना ज़रूरी है, और corroborate का अर्थ है किसी बात की पुष्टि करना। जबकि ameliorate (सुधारना), fabricate (गढ़ना) और incriminate (दोषी ठहराना) का अर्थ यहाँ सही नहीं है।
    - 'Corroborate' should be used because with the rise of misinformation it is essential to confirm sources before spreading them, and corroborate means to confirm or support. Whereas, 'ameliorate' means to improve, 'fabricate' means to invent and 'incriminate' means to implicate, which do not fit.

18. C) suddenly' के बदले 'unexpectedly' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि संदर्भ से यह प्रतित होता है कि Ramesh का आगमन अनपेक्षित था।
    - 'unexpectedly' will be used instead of 'suddenly' because the context suggests that Ramesh's arrival was unanticipated.
19. A) 'a stunning red silk long scarf' में Adjectives का क्रम गलत है। सही क्रम (Opinion, Size, Colour, Material) के अनुसार "a stunning long red silk scarf" होना चाहिए, यानी size 'long' colour 'red' से पहले आएगा।
    - The order of adjectives in 'a stunning red silk long scarf' is incorrect. According to the correct order (opinion, size, colour, material), it should be "a stunning long red silk scarf", i.e. size 'long' comes before colour 'red'.
20. **C) Greece will be visited by Neena in May.**
    Passive वाक्य में बदलने के लिए, Active वाक्य का Object Passive वाक्य का Subject बन जाता है। Verb को Active से Passive में बदलते समय सही Tense के अनुसार "be form + V3" का प्रयोग किया जाता है। Active वाक्य में "Neena" Subject है, "will visit" Verb (Future Simple) है और "Greece" Object है। Passive में बदलने पर "Greece" Subject बन गया, Verb "will be visited" (Future Simple Passive) हो गया और "Neena" Agent के रूप में "by Neena" में use हुआ।
    To change a sentence from Active to Passive Voice, the object of the active sentence becomes the subject of the passive sentence. The verb is transformed from the active form to the passive form using "be form + V3" according to the correct tense. In this case, "Neena" (Subject), "will visit" (Verb in Future Simple) and "Greece" (Object) from the active voice have been transformed into "Greece" (Subject), "will be visited" (Verb in Future Simple Passive) and "by Neena" (Agent).
21. **D) however**
    Blank (A) needs a linking word that signals contrast. The first sentence says almost everything about Nehru has already been said or written, while this one points to a side of him that "has not been adequately commented upon." a) likewise: signals similarity, violating the requirement since the two sentences make opposite claims, not similar ones. b) therefore: introduces a result, violating the requirement since a neglected dimension cannot follow from everything having been said. c) moreover: adds a point in the same direction, violating the requirement since this sentence turns against the first rather than adding to it. d) however: introduces a contrast, matching the turn from "everything has been said" to "this has not."
    Hindi:
    - Blank (A) में contrast दिखाने वाला linking word चाहिए। पहला sentence कहता है कि Nehru पर लगभग सब कुछ कहा या लिखा जा चुका है, जबकि यह sentence उनके एक ऐसे पक्ष की ओर संकेत करता है जिस पर "has not been adequately commented upon।" a) likewise: यह समानता बताता है, जो violate करता है क्योंकि दोनों sentences एक-दूसरे के उलट बातें कहते हैं, मिलती-जुलती नहीं। b) therefore: यह result बताता है, जो violate करता है क्योंकि सब कुछ कहे जाने से कोई अनदेखा पक्ष result के रूप में नहीं निकलता। c) moreover: यह उसी direction में एक और point जोड़ता है, जो violate करता है क्योंकि यह sentence पहले sentence के उलट जाता है, उसमें कुछ जोड़ता नहीं। d) however: यह contrast बताता है, जो "सब कुछ कहा जा चुका है" से "यह नहीं कहा गया" की ओर मुड़ने से match करता है।
22. **A) redoubtable**

Blank (B) needs an adjective for a formidable, highly respected figure, since the next sentence calls the DIB "the last word on all matters pertaining to intelligence and security," and Mullik held the post for almost all of Nehru's tenure. a) redoubtable: means formidable and commanding respect, matching an intelligence chief whose word was final. b) inconsequential: means unimportant, violating the requirement since the DIB was "the last word on all matters" of intelligence. c) obsequious: means excessively eager to please, violating the requirement since Mullik took umbrage at the Prime Minister's letter and resolved never to approach him again, hardly the conduct of a fawning subordinate. d) pusillanimous: means timid and lacking courage, violating the requirement since a timid figure would hardly be "the last word" on matters of security.

Hindi:

- Blank (B) में किसी प्रभावशाली और बहुत सम्मानित व्यक्ति के लिए adjective चाहिए, क्योंकि अगला sentence DIB को "the last word on all matters pertaining to intelligence and security" बताता है, और Mullik लगभग पूरे Nehru काल में इस पद पर रहे। a) redoubtable: इसका meaning है प्रभावशाली और सम्मान पाने वाला, जो उस intelligence chief से match करता है जिसकी बात अंतिम होती थी। b) inconsequential: इसका meaning है महत्वहीन, जो violate करता है क्योंकि DIB intelligence के सभी विषयों में "the last word" था। c) obsequious: इसका meaning है अत्यधिक चाटुकारिता करने वाला, सदा हाँ में हाँ मिलाने वाला, जो violate करता है क्योंकि Mullik Prime Minister की चिट्ठी से रुष्ट हुए और फिर कभी उनसे न मिलने का निश्चय कर लिया; यह किसी चाटुकार का व्यवहार नहीं है। d) pusillanimous: इसका meaning है डरपोक और साहसहीन, जो violate करता है क्योंकि कोई डरपोक व्यक्ति security के विषयों में "the last word" नहीं हो सकता।

23. **C) apprise**

Blank (C) needs a verb meaning "inform" that pairs with "of," since Mullik wanted to tell Nehru about the reconstruction efforts. "Apprise someone of something" is the fixed pattern. a) relieve: pairs with "of," but means to free someone from a burden, violating the requirement since Mullik was not taking anything off Nehru's hands. b) brief: has the right sense, which tempts, but violates the requirement since it pairs with "on," as in "brief someone on a matter," not "of." c) apprise: means to inform someone of something, matching an officer trying to tell Nehru about the police's reconstruction work. d) deprive: also pairs with "of," but means to take something away, violating the requirement since Mullik wanted to share information, not withhold it.

Hindi:

- Blank (C) में "inform" के meaning वाला ऐसा verb चाहिए जो "of" के साथ आता हो, क्योंकि Mullik Nehru को reconstruction efforts की जानकारी देना चाहते थे। "Apprise someone of something" fixed pattern है। a) relieve: इसके साथ "of" आता है, पर इसका meaning है किसी को किसी भार से मुक्त करना, जो violate करता है क्योंकि Mullik Nehru का कोई भार नहीं उठा रहे थे। b) brief: इसका sense ठीक है, जो tempting है, पर violate करता है क्योंकि इसके साथ "on" आता है, जैसे "brief someone on a matter," "of" नहीं। c) apprise: इसका meaning है किसी को किसी बात की जानकारी देना, जो उस officer से match करता है जो Nehru को police के reconstruction work की जानकारी देना चाहता था। d) deprive: इसके साथ भी "of" आता है, पर

इसका meaning है किसी से कुछ छीन लेना, जो violate करता है क्योंकि Mullik जानकारी देना चाहते थे, छीनना नहीं।

24. **A) call on**

Blank (D) needs a phrasal verb meaning "pay a formal visit to," since Patel advised Mullik to go and meet the Prime Minister, and the next paragraph describes their "very first interaction." a) call on: means to pay a formal visit, matching a new DIB presenting himself to the Prime Minister. b) call for: means to demand something or to go and collect someone, violating the requirement since Mullik was to visit Nehru, not summon or fetch him. c) call off: means to cancel something, as in "call off a meeting," violating the requirement since a person cannot be cancelled; Mullik was meant to meet Nehru. d) call forth: means to summon up or bring out, as in "call forth courage," violating the requirement since it is used for qualities or responses, not for visiting a person.

Hindi:

- Blank (D) में ऐसा phrasal verb चाहिए जिसका meaning हो "औपचारिक रूप से मिलने जाना," क्योंकि Patel ने Mullik को Prime Minister से मिलने का परामर्श दिया, और अगला paragraph उनकी "very first interaction" बताता है। a) call on: इसका meaning है औपचारिक रूप से मिलने जाना, जो नए DIB के Prime Minister से मिलने जाने से match करता है। b) call for: इसका meaning है कुछ माँगना या किसी को लेने जाना, जो violate करता है क्योंकि Mullik को Nehru से मिलने जाना था, उन्हें बुलाना या लेने जाना नहीं। c) call off: इसका meaning है किसी काम को cancel करना, जैसे "call off a meeting," जो violate करता है क्योंकि किसी व्यक्ति को cancel नहीं किया जा सकता; Mullik को Nehru से मिलना था। d) call forth: इसका meaning है किसी गुण या प्रतिक्रिया को जगाना या सामने लाना, जैसे "call forth courage," जो violate करता है क्योंकि यह गुणों या प्रतिक्रियाओं के लिए आता है, किसी व्यक्ति से मिलने के लिए नहीं।

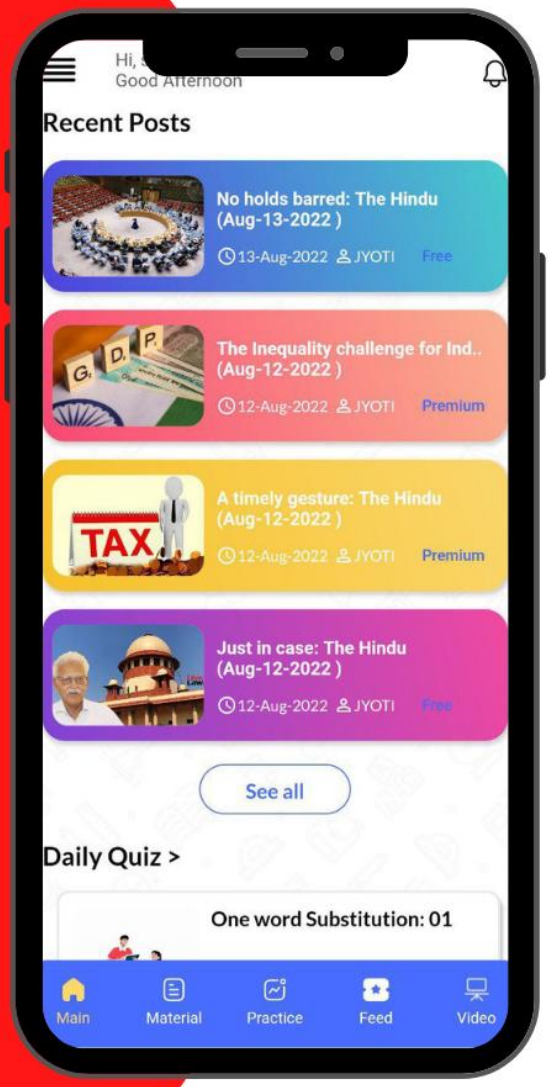
25. **B) with no option**

Blank (E) needs a passive participial phrase describing Mullik's situation, since he was the one given no choice: Patel's advice obliged him to meet a Prime Minister he had resolved never to approach. a) Having left no option: means Mullik had left others with no choice, violating the requirement since it reverses the situation: he was the one without a choice. b) Left with no option: is a past participle phrase in the passive sense, matching Mullik, who was left without a choice. c) To leave with no option: is an infinitive of purpose, violating the requirement since Mullik did not meet Nehru in order to depart. d) Leaving with no option: is active and means "departing," violating the requirement since nothing in the passage has Mullik departing; the phrase must describe the choice he was denied.

Hindi:

- Blank (E) में Mullik की स्थिति बताने वाला passive participial phrase चाहिए, क्योंकि विकल्प उनके पास नहीं था: Patel की advice ने उन्हें उस Prime Minister से मिलने को विवश किया जिनसे वे कभी न मिलने का निश्चय कर चुके थे। a) Having left no option: इसका meaning होगा कि Mullik ने दूसरों के लिए कोई विकल्प नहीं छोड़ा, जो violate करता है क्योंकि यह स्थिति को उलट देता है: विकल्प Mullik के पास ही नहीं था। b) Left with no option: यह passive sense वाला past participle phrase है, जो उन Mullik से match करता है जिनके पास कोई विकल्प नहीं छोड़ा गया था। c) To leave with no option: यह purpose वाला infinitive है, जो violate करता है क्योंकि Mullik चले जाने के उद्देश्य से

Nehru से नहीं मिले थे। d) Leaving with no option: यह active है और इसका meaning है "कहीं से चले जाना," जो violate करता है क्योंकि passage में Mullik कहीं से चले नहीं जाते; phrase को यह बताना है कि उनके पास कोई विकल्प नहीं बचा था।



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