Pressure tactics: On the new U.S. tariffs on India

The new U.S. tariffs must not **erode** India's **stand** on a trade deal

The latest U.S. tariffs on India are nothing more than a pressure tactic to **push for** the signing of a trade deal. The U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) has **proposed** to **levy** a tariff of 25% for India's **apparent** use of strategic excess manufacturing capacity to the **detriment** of American industry. This is the second-highest tariff rate the USTR has applied across the 14 countries that it has taken action against. The pressure on India does not come from the 25% rate but from the 17% this could be reduced to if it signs a trade deal with the U.S. This latest action is yet another example of how, despite the **frothiness** of India-U.S. trade relations over the past year and a half, the actual **substance** has not changed. The 25% rate now proposed, which is net of **existing** tariffs, is nearly the same as the 26% rate that U.S. President Donald Trump had first announced when he **unveiled** his 'Liberation Day' **reciprocal tariffs** in April 2025. **Indeed**, it is exactly the same as the 25% tariff he finally **imposed** in July 2025, before he imposed an additional 25% for India's Russian oil imports. The 17% rate is also only **marginally** lower than the 18% that the two countries had agreed on in their joint statement in February 2026. It is also just one percentage point lower than the tariffs on competitors such as Indonesia and Malaysia. The **allegation** of India having excess capacity does not **hold water**. Indeed, were India to have excess manufacturing capacity in any sector, it would be the Government of India that would be the first to announce it with great **fanfare**, instead of denying it as it did. After all, that has been its aim since 2014.

Yet, even a basic **assessment** of India's import dependence and the fact that manufacturing's share in GDP is lower now than a **decade** ago shows that India is far from having excess manufacturing capacity in any sector. Further, higher tariffs are **unlikely** to reduce America's imports of the goods from India that it does depend on. The USTR mentioned generic pharmaceuticals, telecommunication equipment, and **renewable energy** goods. The first two are items that India has developed **expertise** in, which is **distinct** from **strategic** excess capacity. A relatively small tariff disadvantage will not **substantially** erode the **attractiveness** of these Indian products. Renewable energy imports from India have **swelled** because the U.S. is reducing its purchases from China. **Hanging over** all of this are the 100% tariffs related to the purchase of Russian oil, which have only temporarily been paused. India has **so far held off** on signing a deal, and must go ahead with one only if it is **convinced** that the benefits at least equal the costs. **[Practice Exercise]**

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

Vocabulary

1. **Tactics** (noun) - strategies, ploys, stratagems, manoeuvres, schemes रणनीतियाँ
2. **Tariffs** (noun) - duties, levies, taxes, tolls, imposts शुल्क
3. **Erode** (verb) - weaken, undermine, diminish, impair, corrode कमजोर करना
4. **Stand** (noun) - stance, position, posture, viewpoint, attitude रुख
5. **Push for** (phrasal verb) - to demand or press persistently for something to happen ज़ोर देना
6. **Propose** (verb) - suggest, recommend, moot, advance, submit प्रस्तावित करना
7. **Levy** (verb) - impose, charge, exact, assess, collect लगाना
8. **Apparent** (adjective) - ostensible, seeming, outward, perceived, purported प्रत्यक्ष
9. **Detriment** (noun) - harm, damage, injury, disadvantage, prejudice नुकसान
10. **Frothiness** (noun) - superficiality, frivolity, shallowness, volatility, triviality सतहीपन
11. **Substance** (noun) - essence, core, crux, gist, reality मूल तत्व
12. **Existing** (adjective) - prevailing, current, extant, present, ongoing मौजूदा
13. **Unveil** (verb) - reveal, disclose, announce, present, introduce अनावरण करना
14. **Reciprocal tariffs** (noun) - matching trade duties imposed by a country in response to similar tariffs levied by another पारस्परिक शुल्क
15. **Indeed** (adverb) - truly, verily, undeniably, certainly, genuinely वास्तव में
16. **Impose** (verb) - enforce, inflict, levy, exact, dictate थोपना
17. **Marginally** (adverb) - slightly, minimally, faintly, barely, negligibly मामूली रूप से
18. **Allegation** (noun) - accusation, charge, claim, assertion, imputation आरोप
19. **Hold water** (idiom) - to appear valid, sound, or logical when examined closely तर्कसंगत होना
20. **Fanfare** (noun) - pomp, spectacle, flourish, publicity, ostentation धूमधाम
21. **Assessment** (noun) - evaluation, appraisal, estimate, analysis, judgement मूल्यांकन
22. **Decade** (noun) - a period of ten consecutive years दशक
23. **Unlikely** (adjective) - improbable, doubtful, implausible, dubious, remote असंभावित
24. **Renewable energy** (noun) - energy obtained from natural sources that replenish themselves continuously अक्षय ऊर्जा
25. **Expertise** (noun) - proficiency, mastery, competence, skill, acumen विशेषज्ञता
26. **Distinct** (adjective) - separate, different, discrete, dissimilar, disparate भिन्न
27. **Strategic** (adjective) - tactical, calculated, deliberate, planned, intentional रणनीतिक
28. **Substantially** (adverb) - significantly, considerably, markedly, greatly, materially काफी हद तक

29. **Attractiveness** (noun) - appeal, allure, desirability, charm, pull आकर्षण
30. **Swell** (verb) - surge, expand, escalate, mushroom, soar बढ़ना
31. **Hang over** (phrasal verb) - to remain as a looming threat or unresolved concern affecting a situation मंडराना
32. **So far** (phrase) - up to the present moment or until now अब तक
33. **Hold off** (phrasal verb) - to delay or postpone doing something until a later time टालना
34. **Convinced** (adjective) - persuaded, assured, certain, confident, satisfied आश्वस्न

Summary of the Editorial

1. The latest US tariff proposal against India is primarily a **pressure tactic** to force India into signing a bilateral trade agreement.
2. The US Trade Representative (USTR) has proposed a **25% tariff** on India over alleged strategic excess manufacturing capacity.
3. The proposed tariff is the second-highest rate imposed among the 14 countries targeted by the USTR.
4. The real pressure lies in the possibility of reducing the tariff from **25% to 17%** if India signs a trade deal.
5. Despite frequent diplomatic engagements, the actual substance of India-US trade relations has remained largely unchanged.
6. The proposed 25% tariff is similar to the tariffs announced by Donald Trump in April and July 2025.
7. The proposed 17% rate is only marginally lower than the **18% tariff** agreed upon in the February 2026 joint statement.
8. India's tariff disadvantage over competitors such as Indonesia and Malaysia is relatively small.
9. The US allegation of excess manufacturing capacity in India is **unconvincing and lacks sufficient evidence**.
10. India's dependence on imports and the declining share of manufacturing in GDP indicate that it does not have excess manufacturing capacity.
11. India's manufacturing share in GDP is currently lower than it was a decade ago.
12. Higher US tariffs are unlikely to significantly reduce imports of Indian goods, particularly generic medicines and telecommunications equipment.
13. India has developed considerable expertise in pharmaceuticals and telecommunications, which should not be confused with excess strategic manufacturing capacity.
14. India's renewable energy exports to the US have increased as America reduces its dependence on Chinese imports. Meanwhile, the threat of **100% tariffs over Russian oil purchases** continues to hang over India.
15. India should sign a trade agreement only when its benefits clearly outweigh its economic costs and should not compromise its negotiating position under American pressure.

Practice Exercise: SSC Pattern Based

1. **Which of the following statements best captures the central theme of the passage?**
   A. USTR's proposed 25% tariff represents the second-highest duty levied across fourteen targeted nations following April 2025's reciprocal tariff announcement. **[Editorial Page]**
   B. Because Washington's latest tariff move recycles familiar pressure tactics on unfounded excess-capacity claims, India should sign a deal only on equitable terms.
   C. India's developed expertise in generic pharmaceuticals and telecommunication equipment insulates domestic exporters from retaliatory tariffs linked to Russian oil imports.
   D. U.S. renewable energy imports from India have expanded rapidly over the past decade as American buyers reduced industrial purchases from China.
2. **What is implied by the observation that "A relatively small tariff disadvantage will not substantially erode the attractiveness of these Indian products"?**
   A. Lowering the tariff from 25% to 17% will double American imports of Indian generic medicines within a single fiscal year.
   B. Indian exporters in pharmaceuticals and telecom rely on excess manufacturing capacity to absorb 100% punitive tariffs on Russian oil.
   C. Structural U.S. demand and India's specialized capability in pharmaceuticals and telecom limit Washington's leverage to force lopsided trade concessions.
   D. American buyers can effortlessly replace Indian telecommunication equipment with domestic substitutes whenever USTR levies a 25% reciprocal tariff.
3. **What distinguishes the 25% tariff proposed by the USTR from the 100% tariffs mentioned near the end of the passage?**
   A. The 25% tariff applies to generic pharmaceuticals alone, whereas the 100% tariffs apply to telecommunication equipment from Indonesia and Malaysia.
   B. The 25% tariff was agreed upon in February 2026, whereas the 100% tariffs were permanently abolished in July 2025.
   C. The 25% tariff targets alleged excess manufacturing capacity, whereas the paused 100% tariffs stem from India's Russian oil purchases.
   D. The 25% tariff reduces existing duties by seventeen points, whereas the 100% tariffs reflect India's rising manufacturing GDP share.
4. **Which statement best explains why the author titles the passage "The new U.S. tariffs must not erode India's stand on a trade deal"?**
   A. Because signing a bilateral agreement at 17% would immediately trigger 100% retaliatory tariffs on Indian pharmaceutical and renewable exports.
   B. Because India's manufacturing sector has achieved surplus capacity since 2014 and no longer depends on access to American markets.
   C. Because the USTR applied higher tariffs to thirteen other nations in April 2025 before exempting India in February 2026.
   D. Because Washington's recycled 25% versus 17% tariff pressure rests on weak premises and does not warrant an unfavourable trade deal.
5. **Identify the correct passive voice form of the following multi-clause sentence adapted from the passage:**

The U.S. Trade Representative has proposed a 25% tariff for India's apparent use of excess capacity, yet higher duties will not substantially erode the attractiveness that Indian products hold.

A. A 25% tariff has been proposed by the U.S. Trade Representative for India's apparent use of excess capacity, yet the attractiveness that is held by Indian products would not be substantially eroded by higher duties.
B. A 25% tariff has been proposed by the U.S. Trade Representative for India's apparent use of excess capacity, yet the attractiveness that is held by Indian products will not be substantially eroded by higher duties.
C. A 25% tariff has been proposed by the U.S. Trade Representative for India's apparent use of excess capacity, yet the attractiveness that are held by Indian products will not be substantially eroded by higher duties.
D. A 25% tariff was proposed by the U.S. Trade Representative for India's apparent use of excess capacity, yet the attractiveness that is held by Indian products will not be substantially eroded by higher duties.

6. **Direction: In the following question, the passage is split into five parts and named 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. Rearrange these five parts to form a meaningful, logical, and coherent paragraph.**

1. Seen from above, the 72km (45-mile) wide Manicouagan crater forms an eerily perfect ring of water; mountains rise from its centre like a dusky pupil, while rivers and tributaries vein outward from the lake, vanishing deep in the woods.
2. Black spruce and balsam firs wove a dense tunnel around the road, and the sky was a low mass of clouds.
3. Hours ahead lay an unblinking eye that gazes skyward – one so vast it's visible from space.
4. Rain pelted my windshield as I steered northwards through the boreal forests of Quebec.
5. Behind me was the windswept coast of the St Lawrence River.

A. 4-2-5-3-1
B. 2-4-5-3-1
C. 5-4-2-3-1
D. 3-4-2-5-1

7. **Directions: Select the most appropriate synonym of the given word**
LUGUBRIOUS

A. Bright
B. Mournful
C. Happy
D. Hopeful

8. **Directions: Choose the correct idiom for the word highlighted in bold.**
Yesterday, in a collision between a truck and a car, he had a **close shave** .

A. A minor injury
B. A lucky escape
C. A serious accident
D. A smooth journey

9. **Directions: Fill in the blank with an appropriate degree of comparison.**
Between the two musicians, I find Bach's compositions to be ____ profound.

A. most

B. more
C. better
D. best

10. **Select the option that best expresses the meaning of the given phrasal verb.**
Hunker down
A. To gradually stop someone from using something
B. To gradually make something weaker or less effective
C. To prepare yourself to stay in a particular place or situation for a long time
D. To accept the financial responsibility for paying for something
11. **Select the most appropriate ANTONYM of the given word.**
Abundance
A. Non-serious
B. Miser
C. Meagreness
D. Unpleasantness
12. **Directions: What is the one-word substitute for**
"The pathological fear of open spaces or being in situations where escape might be difficult."
A. Nyctophobia
B. Claustrophobia
C. Agoraphobia
D. Xenophobia
13. **Directions: Select the correctly spelt word to replace the highlighted word in the given sentence.**
The movie was a **poinyant** family drama.
A. Poinyant
B. Poinant
C. Poignnant
D. Poignant
14. **Select the option that expresses the given sentence in passive voice.**
Priyanka edits the school magazine.
A. The school magazine was edited by Priyanka.
B. The school magazine were edited by Priyanka.
C. The school magazine is edit by Priyanka.
D. The school magazine is edited by Priyanka.
15. **Directions: A sentence is provided in indirect speech. From the four given options, choose the one that most accurately conveys the sentence in its corresponding direct speech.**
She said that she had hardly begun the speech when the microphone failed.
A. "Hardly had I begun the speech when the microphone failed," she said.
B. "I hardly began the speech when the microphone failed," she said.
C. "The microphone failed as I started speaking," she said.
D. "The microphone failed just after I began," she said.
16. **Identify the ANTONYM of the following word in the given sentence.**
Humility

The little girl was humble enough to negate the ideology of her classmate whose arrogance was indomitable

A. indomitable
B. negate
C. humble
D. arrogance

17. **Directions: Choose the correct phrase for the word highlighted in bold.**
"He expects his subordinates to be always **at his beck and call** "?
A. To be constantly available to obey orders
B. To challenge authority frequently
C. To work only when convenient
D. To ignore requests deliberately

18. **Directions: Find the part of the sentence that contains an error**
The employee were pulled out of the task for failing to keep it up.
A. The employee were
B. pulled out
C. of the task
D. for failing to keep it up.

19. **Directions: What is the synonym of the word "serene"?**
A. Calm
B. Bright
C. Angry
D. Disturbed

20. **Direction: In the following question, the first and the last sentences of the passage are numbered S1 and S6. The rest of the passage is split into four parts and numbered 1, 2, 3, and 4. Rearrange these four parts to form a meaningful, logical, and coherent passage.**
S1. Paddling into the Okefenokee, North America's largest blackwater swamp, is like travelling through time.
1. Here, alligators congregate by the hundreds and pterodactyl-like wood storks roost.
2. Straddling the Georgia-Florida line, its 120 miles (193km) of water trails weave through moss-draped cypress stands, sawtooth palmetto-covered islands and lily-dappled channels dyed black by peat deposits.
3. In 2026, Unesco named part of the swamp a World Heritage site – the US's first natural site inscribed in more than 30 years, fortifying its protection against mining proposals that risked draining this fragile ecosystem.
4. This 684-sq-mile (1,771-sq-km) primordial paradise has scarcely changed in 6,500 years.
S6. Newcomers can get to know it on a naturalist-guided tour, or make their own way: raised boardwalks invite birders and outdoors-lovers to hop out of a canoe, kayak or small motorboat (available for rent) and explore on foot.
A. 2-4-1-3
B. 4-2-1-3
C. 1-4-2-3
D. 3-4-2-1

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

The water is shallow, muddy and low in oxygen. Yet, rising above this _____ A _____ (squalor) is a flower of astounding beauty. The lotus is a timeless symbol of purity and the triumph of the spirit.

Growing in slow-moving water, the lotus is remarkably well equipped to thrive even in the murkiest environments. Beginning life underwater, its long, flexible stem shoots upwards, yielding large, waxy leaves that spread on the water surface, absorbing sunlight and air while repelling water and dirt. In time, buds appear on the stem above the leaves and unfurl _____ B _____ large, mature flowers with a conical seed pod at the centre. The pod produces heat, which keeps the flower warm and spreads its scent, making it a magnet for pollinators.

This _____ C _____ (splendour) lasts for a few short days. Then, the flower dries, the stem weakens, and the pod droops, releasing seeds back into the water. Lotus seeds are remarkably resilient and can remain viable for centuries. Researchers have successfully germinated seeds as old as 1,300 years! Originally found in subtropical Asia, humans took lotuses all over the world. While they come in many colours and sizes, two species are widely recognised: the Sacred Lotus (Nelumbo nucifera), native _____ D _____ Asia and parts of Australia, and the American Lotus (Nelumbo lutea), native to North America and the Caribbean. Perhaps their greatest place, though, is in human culture. From kitchens to prayer rooms, the lotus has made its way into people's lives across Asia. In India, it is the national flower. Its stem is a _____ E _____ (prized) vegetable that is fried into chips, turned into pickle, and cooked in curries. The flower, meanwhile, is offered in temples and appears frequently in portraits of Hindu gods and goddesses.

21. **Choose the most appropriate synonym for the word in (A): (squalor).**
    A. opulence
    B. sordidness
    C. probity
    D. serenity
22. **Fill in blank (B) with the correct preposition to complete the phrase.**
    A. onto
    B. over
    C. into
    D. with
23. **Choose the most appropriate synonym for the word in (C): (splendour).**
    A. resplendence
    B. ignominy
    C. penury
    D. banality
24. **Fill in blank (D) with the correct preposition to complete the phrase.**
    A. in
    B. for
    C. of
    D. to
25. **Choose the most appropriate synonym for the word in (E): (prized).**
    A. spurned

B. disparaged
C. coveted
D. mundane

Answers

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

Explanations

1. **B) Because Washington's latest tariff move recycles familiar pressure tactics on unfounded excess-capacity claims, India should sign a deal only on equitable terms.**
   The author argues that the new 25% tariff is only a pressure tactic, since the rates are almost the same as earlier ones (26%, 25%, 18%). The excess-capacity claim is called baseless, and higher tariffs are unlikely to cut US imports of goods it needs. The conclusion is that India should sign a deal only if benefits at least equal costs. Option B covers the pressure tactic, the weak excess-capacity claim and the advice on the deal, so it is correct.
   - Option A: Incorrect. The option says the main point is that 25% is the second-highest duty among 14 countries. The passage mentions this as one supporting fact, not the central theme.
   - Option C: Incorrect. The option says India's expertise in generics and telecom equipment protects exporters from tariffs linked to Russian oil. The passage says this expertise shows the goods are not "excess capacity" and that a small tariff disadvantage will not hurt their appeal. It also says the 100% Russian oil tariffs are only paused, so India is not insulated from them.
   - Option D: Incorrect. The option says US renewable imports from India grew over the past decade. The passage says they grew because the US is reducing purchases from China, with no mention of a decade. It is a minor detail, not the central theme.
2. **C) Structural U.S. demand and India's specialized capability in pharmaceuticals and telecom limit Washington's leverage to force lopsided trade concessions.**
   The author says the US depends on Indian generics and telecom equipment because India has real expertise in them. So a small tariff gap (25% versus 17%) will not make US buyers stop buying. This means the tariff threat is a weak lever, and India does not have to accept a bad deal under pressure. The passage ends by saying India should sign only if benefits at least equal costs. Option C says exactly this, so it is correct.
   - Option A: Incorrect. The option says cutting the tariff to 17% will double US imports of Indian generics in one year, but the passage never predicts any such jump. It only says the tariff gap will not reduce the products' attractiveness.
   - Option B: Incorrect. The option says Indian exporters use excess capacity to absorb 100% Russian-oil tariffs, but the passage says India does not have excess capacity, and the 100% tariffs are only paused. The products' appeal comes from expertise, not excess capacity.
   - Option D: Incorrect. The option says American buyers can easily replace Indian telecom equipment with domestic substitutes, but the passage says the opposite. It says higher tariffs are unlikely to reduce US imports of goods it depends on from India.
3. **C) The 25% tariff targets alleged excess manufacturing capacity, whereas the paused 100% tariffs stem from India's Russian oil purchases.**

passage: "The U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) has proposed to levy a tariff of 25% for India's apparent use of strategic excess manufacturing capacity to the detriment of American industry... Hanging over all of this are the 100% tariffs related to the purchase of Russian oil, which have only temporarily been paused."----The passage gives a different reason for each tariff. The 25% tariff is justified by the claim that India has strategic excess manufacturing capacity. The 100% tariffs are linked to India's purchase of Russian oil, and they are only paused for now. Option C says exactly this, so it is correct.

- Option A: Incorrect. The option says the 25% tariff applies to generic pharmaceuticals alone and the 100% tariffs apply to telecom equipment from Indonesia and Malaysia. The passage says the USTR mentioned generics, telecom equipment and renewable energy goods together, and the 100% tariffs relate to Russian oil, not to goods from Indonesia or Malaysia.
- Option B: Incorrect. The option says the 25% tariff was agreed in February 2026 and the 100% tariffs were permanently abolished in July 2025. The passage says the February 2026 agreement was at 18%, the 25% tariff is a new proposal, and the 100% tariffs are only temporarily paused, not abolished.
- Option D: Incorrect. The option says the 25% tariff reduces duties by seventeen points and the 100% tariffs reflect a rising manufacturing GDP share. The passage says 17% is the rate the tariff could fall to if a deal is signed, and manufacturing's share in GDP is lower than a decade ago, not rising.

4. **D) Because Washington’s recycled 25% versus 17% tariff pressure rests on weak premises and does not warrant an unfavourable trade deal.**
passage: "The latest U.S. tariffs on India are nothing more than a pressure tactic to push for the signing of a trade deal... The allegation of India having excess capacity does not hold water... A relatively small tariff disadvantage will not substantially erode the attractiveness of these Indian products... India has so far held off on signing a deal, and must go ahead with one only if it is convinced that the benefits at least equal the costs."----The title says India's stand should not be weakened by the new tariffs. The author supports this by showing that the tariff rates are almost the same as earlier ones (26%, 25%, 18%), so the substance has not changed. The excess-capacity claim is called baseless, and the US still depends on Indian goods. So the pressure is weak, and India should sign only if the deal is fair. Option D says exactly this, so it is correct.
    - Option A: Incorrect. The option says signing at 17% would trigger 100% retaliatory tariffs, but the passage says the 100% tariffs are tied to Russian oil purchases and are only paused. It never says a deal would trigger them.
    - Option B: Incorrect. The option says India has achieved surplus capacity and no longer needs American markets, but the passage says India is far from having excess capacity, and the author calls that allegation baseless.
    - Option C: Incorrect. The option says the USTR applied higher tariffs to thirteen other nations in April 2025 and exempted India in February 2026, but the passage says the 25% rate is the second-highest among 14 countries, and the February 2026 joint statement set an 18% rate, not an exemption.

5. **B) A 25% tariff has been proposed by the U.S. Trade Representative for India's apparent use of excess capacity, yet the attractiveness that is held by Indian products will not be substantially eroded by higher duties.**
"The U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) has proposed to levy a tariff of 25%... A relatively small tariff disadvantage will not substantially erode the attractiveness of these Indian products."----
The sentence has two clauses joined by "yet".
Clause 1: "has proposed" is present perfect, so the passive is "has been proposed". The object "a 25% tariff" becomes the subject, and the doer "the U.S. Trade Representative" moves to the end with "by".
Clause 2: "will not erode" is simple future, so the passive is "will not be eroded". The object "the attractiveness that Indian products hold" becomes the subject, "that Indian products hold" becomes "that is held by Indian products", and "higher duties" moves to the end with "by". Option B keeps both tenses correct and uses the correct singular verb "is held", so it is correct.
    - Option A: Incorrect. It changes "will not erode" to "would not be eroded", which changes the tense from future to conditional.
    - Option C: Incorrect. It uses "attractiveness that are held". "Attractiveness" is singular, so it needs "is held", not "are held". This is a subject-verb agreement error.
    - Option D: Incorrect. It changes "has proposed" (present perfect) to "was proposed" (simple past), which changes the time meaning of the first clause.
6. **A) 4-2-5-3-1**
Hindi Explanation:
Sentence 4 पूरे passage का independent opening sentence है (4), जो यात्रा की शुरुआत और स्थान का परिचय देता है कि जब लेखक उत्तर की ओर Quebec के boreal forests से होकर गाड़ी चला रहे थे, तब बारिश उनकी windshield पर गिर रही थी।
Sentence 2 Sentence 4 के तुरंत बाद आएगा (4-2), जो आसपास के जंगल और मौसम के दृश्य का विस्तार करता है कि black spruce और balsam firs ने सड़क के चारों ओर एक घनी सुरंग बुन दी थी, और आसमान बादलों का एक निचला समूह था।
Sentence 5 Sentence 2 को follow करेगा (2-5), जो यात्रा की दिशात्मक स्थिति को स्पष्ट करता है कि लेखक के पीछे St Lawrence River का हवादार तट (windswept coast) छूट चुका था।
Sentence 3 Sentence 5 के ठीक बाद आएगा (5-3), जो "Behind me" के विपरीत "Hours ahead" का प्रयोग करते हुए आगे आने वाले गंतव्य का परिचय देता है कि घंटों आगे एक अपलक आंख (unblinking eye) स्थित थी जो आकाश की ओर देखती है—इतनी विशाल कि अंतरिक्ष से दिखाई देती है।
Sentence 1 Sentence 3 के बाद आकर क्रम को पूर्ण करेगा (3-1), जो "visible from space" और "unblinking eye" के रूपक को विस्तार देते हुए स्पष्ट करता है कि ऊपर से देखने पर 72km (45-mile) wide Manicouagan crater पानी का एक अद्भुत गोलाकार घेरा बनाता है जिसके केंद्र से पहाड़ एक धुंधली पुतली (dusky pupil) की तरह उभरते हैं।
English Explanation:
Sentence 4 serves as the standalone opening topic sentence, setting the scene as rain pelts the narrator's windshield while steering northwards through the boreal forests of Quebec.
Sentence 2 directly follows Sentence 4 (4-2), expanding on the immediate surroundings by describing how black spruce and balsam firs wove a dense tunnel around the road beneath a low mass of clouds.

Sentence 5 follows Sentence 2 (2-5), establishing spatial orientation by noting what lay behind the narrator—the windswept coast of the St Lawrence River.
Sentence 3 directly follows Sentence 5 (5-3), contrasting "Behind me" with "Hours ahead" to introduce the destination lying ahead: an unblinking eye gazing skyward, vast enough to be visible from space.
Sentence 1 concludes the sequence (3-1), elaborating on the "visible from space" and "unblinking eye" imagery by describing how, seen from above, the 72km (45-mile) wide Manicouagan crater forms a ring of water with central mountains rising like a dusky pupil.

7. B) **Lugubrious** (adjective) – Looking or sounding sad and dismal. (शोकपूर्ण, उदास)
   Synonym: **Mournful** (adjective) – Feeling or expressing sorrow. (शोकग्रस्त)
   - **Bright** (adjective) – Giving out much light. (चमकीला)
   - **Happy** (adjective) – Feeling pleasure. (खुश)
   - **Hopeful** (adjective) – Feeling optimistic. (आशावान)
8. B) **A close shave** (idiom) – A lucky escape from danger. खतरे से बाल-बाल बच जाना
9. B) 'more' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि "Between the two musicians" में केवल दो की तुलना है, इसलिए Comparative Degree 'more profound' आएगी। जबकि 'most' और 'best' Superlative हैं और तीन या अधिक की तुलना के लिए आते हैं, और 'better' के साथ 'profound' का प्रयोग सही नहीं है।
   - 'More' should be used because "Between the two musicians" compares only two, so the Comparative Degree 'more profound' is needed. Whereas, 'most' and 'best' are superlatives for three or more, and 'better' is not correct with 'profound'.
10. C) **Hunker down** (phrasal verb) – to prepare yourself to stay in a particular place or situation for a long time. (सुरक्षित स्थान पर रुकना / डटे रहना)
11. C) "**Abundance**" (noun) refers to a large quantity of something, a profusion, plentifulness. समृद्धि
    Antonym: C) **Meagreness** (noun) – The quality of being meager, insufficiency, scantiness, paucity. अभाव
    - **Non-serious** (adjective) – Not being serious, frivolous, light-hearted. अगंभीर
    - **Miser** (noun) – A person who hoards wealth and spends as little money as possible, penny-pincher, tightwad. कंजूस
    - **Unpleasantness** (noun) – The state of being unpleasant, discomfort, disagreeableness. अप्रियता
12. C) **Agoraphobia** (noun) – The pathological fear of open spaces or of situations where escape might be difficult. खुली जगहों का रोगात्मक भय
    - **Nyctophobia** (noun) – Fear of the night or darkness. अँधेरे का भय
    - **Xenophobia** (noun) – Fear or dislike of foreigners. विदेशियों से भय या घृणा
    - **Claustrophobia** (noun) – Fear of confined spaces. बंद जगहों का भय
13. D) Solution: D) **'Poignant'** सही spelling है, जिसका अर्थ है "evoking a keen sense of sadness or regret". मार्मिक, भावुक कर देने वाला
14. **D) Solution: D) The school magazine is edited by Priyanka.**
    Active वाक्य में "Priyanka" Subject है, "edits" Verb (Present Simple) है और "the school magazine" Object है। Passive में Object "The school magazine" Subject बन गया, Verb "is edited" (is + V3) हो गई और "by Priyanka" agent के रूप में आया।

In the active sentence, "Priyanka" is the Subject, "edits" is the Verb (Present Simple) and "the school magazine" is the Object. In the passive, the Object becomes the Subject, the Verb changes to "is edited" (is + V3) and "by Priyanka" is used as the agent.

15. **A) "Hardly had I begun the speech when the microphone failed," she said.**
Indirect से Direct Speech में बदलने के लिए, Reported Speech को inverted commas में लिखा जाता है और उसका Tense तथा Pronouns वापस बदले जाते हैं। यहाँ Past Perfect "had hardly begun" बदलकर "Hardly had I begun" हो गया है, जिसमें 'hardly' से शुरू होने के कारण Inversion आता है ("had + subject")। Pronoun "she" बदलकर "I" हो गया है और "when the microphone failed" वैसा ही रहता है।
To change a sentence from Indirect to Direct Speech, the reported speech is placed in inverted commas and its tense and pronouns are changed back. In this case, the Past Perfect "had hardly begun" becomes "Hardly had I begun", with inversion ("had + subject") because the sentence begins with 'hardly'. The pronoun "she" changes to "I" and "when the microphone failed" remains the same.
16. D) **Humility** (noun) – The quality of not thinking you are better than other people; modesty, humbleness, meekness. विनम्रता
Antonym: **Arrogance** (noun) – The quality of being self-important; overconfidence, egotism, haughtiness. अहंकार
    - **Indomitable** (adjective) – Impossible to subdue or defeat; unconquerable, invincible, unbeatable. अपराजेय
    - **Negate** (verb) – To deny the existence or truth of; invalidate, nullify, cancel out. नकारना
    - **Humble** (adjective) – Showing a modest or low estimate of one's own importance; modest, meek, respectful. विनम्र
17. A) **At one's beck and call** (idiom) – To be constantly available to obey someone's orders. हर समय हुक्म बजाने को तैयार रहना
18. **A) The employee were**
'The employee were' गलत है क्योंकि 'employee' Singular Noun है, इसलिए Singular Verb 'was' आएगी। सही वाक्य "The employee was pulled out of the task for failing to keep it up" होगा।
    - 'The employee were' is incorrect because 'employee' is a singular noun, so the singular verb 'was' is needed. The correct sentence is "The employee was pulled out of the task for failing to keep it up".
19. A) **Serene** (adjective) – Calm, peaceful and untroubled. (शांत, निर्मल)
Synonym: **Calm** (adjective) – Not showing nervousness or anger. (शांत)
    - **Bright** (adjective) – Giving out much light. (चमकीला)
    - **Angry** (adjective) – Feeling strong displeasure. (क्रोधित)
    - **Disturbed** (adjective) – Troubled, upset. (विचलित)
20. **B) 4-2-1-3**
Hindi Explanation:
Sentence 4 S1 के तुरंत बाद आएगा (S1-4), क्योंकि S1 में Okefenokee में नाव चलाने को समय की यात्रा जैसा बताने के बाद यह सीधे demonstrative phrase "This 684-sq-mile (1,771-sq-km) primordial paradise" के माध्यम से इसकी प्राचीनता को स्पष्ट करता है कि यह 6,500 वर्षों में शायद ही बदला है।
Sentence 2 Sentence 4 को follow करेगा (4-2), जो possessive pronoun "its" के माध्यम से इसके भौगोलिक विस्तार और जलमार्गों का वर्णन करता है कि Georgia-Florida line पर फैले इसके 120 मील (193

किमी) के water trails काई से ढके cypress stands, sawtooth palmetto-covered islands और peat deposits से काले रंगे lily-dappled channels से होकर गुजरते हैं।
Sentence 1 Sentence 2 के ठीक बाद आएगा (2-1), जो adverb "Here" के माध्यम से इस दलदली क्षेत्र के वन्यजीवों का परिचय देता है कि यहाँ सैकड़ों alligators इकट्ठा होते हैं और pterodactyl-like wood storks बसेरा करते हैं।
Sentence 3 Sentence 1 के बाद आकर क्रम को पूर्ण करेगा (1-3), जो 2026 में Unesco द्वारा दलदल के एक हिस्से को World Heritage site नामित किए जाने और खनन प्रस्तावों (mining proposals) के खिलाफ इसकी सुरक्षा को मजबूत करने की जानकारी देता है, और अंत में S6 नए आगंतुकों (Newcomers) के लिए गाइडेड टूर और raised boardwalks पर पैदल घूमने के तरीकों को बताकर passage को तार्किक रूप से समाप्त करता है।
English Explanation:
Sentence 4 directly follows S1 (S1-4), elaborating on the "travelling through time" idea by referring back to the Okefenokee via "This 684-sq-mile (1,771-sq-km) primordial paradise" and noting it has scarcely changed in 6,500 years.
Sentence 2 follows Sentence 4 (4-2), referring back via "its" to describe its location straddling the Georgia-Florida line and its 120 miles of water trails weaving through cypress stands, palmetto islands, and peat-dyed channels.
Sentence 1 directly follows Sentence 2 (2-1), using "Here" to anchor the wildlife present in this habitat, where alligators congregate and wood storks roost.
Sentence 3 follows Sentence 1 (1-3), transitioning to its 2026 Unesco World Heritage site designation that fortified protection against mining proposals, while S6 naturally concludes the sequence by explaining how newcomers can explore it via guided tours or raised boardwalks.

21. **B) sordidness**
The sentence describes the lotus rising above the muddy, dirty, and unpleasant water ("squalor"). The question asks for the closest synonym for "squalor" (a state of being extremely dirty and unpleasant).
a) opulence: means great wealth or luxuriousness (antonym).
b) sordidness: means the state of being dirty, filthy, or squalid, serving as the exact high-register synonym for "squalor".
c) probity: means the quality of having strong moral principles or honesty.
d) serenity: means the state of being calm, peaceful, and untroubled.
In Hindi:
यह sentence कमल के फूल के कीचड़ और गंदगी ("squalor") से ऊपर उठने को describe करता है. Question में "squalor" (गंदगी / कीचड़) का synonym पूछा गया है.
a) opulence: इसका meaning अत्यधिक धन-संपत्ति या ऐश्वर्य होता है.
b) sordidness: इसका meaning 'गंदगी या मैलापन' (dirtiness / filth) होता है, जो "squalor" के meaning से perfectly match करता है.
c) probity: इसका meaning ईमानदारी या सच्चाई होता है.
d) serenity: इसका meaning शांति या सुकून होता है.

22. **C) into**
The sentence describes buds opening up and transforming to become large, mature flowers (unfurl _____ large, mature flowers). Blank (B) requires a preposition that indicates transformation or a change of state from one form to another.
a) onto: indicates movement to a surface.

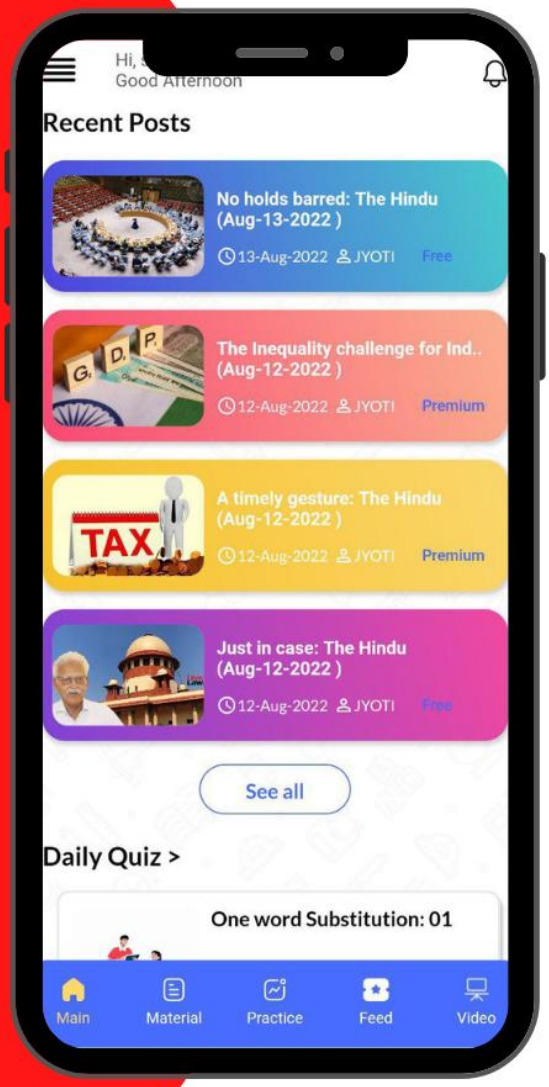
b) over: indicates position above or covering something.
c) into: correctly forms the expression "unfurl into" (meaning to open out and develop into a new form), which fits the context perfectly.
d) with: indicates accompaniment or possession.
In Hindi:
यह sentence कलियों के खिलकर बड़े और पूर्ण फूलों में बदलने को describe करता है. English grammar में किसी एक रूप से दूसरे रूप में बदलने (transformation) को दर्शाने के लिए preposition "into" का use किया जाता है.
a) onto, b) over, और d) with: ये इस context में grammatically गलत हैं.
c) into: यह "unfurl into" (खिलकर बदल जाना) के structure में perfectly fit होता है.

23. **A) resplendence**
The passage refers to the magnificent and brilliant beauty of the blooming lotus ("splendour"). The question asks for the most appropriate synonym for "splendour".
a) resplendence: means dazzling brilliance, grandeur, or splendid appearance, serving as the direct synonym for "splendour".
b) ignominy: means public shame or disgrace.
c) penury: means extreme poverty.
d) banality: means the fact of being boring, ordinary, or unoriginal (antonym).
In Hindi:
यह sentence खिले हुए कमल के फूल की भव्यता और चमक ("splendour") को describe करता है. Question में "splendour" (भव्यता / शानदार सुंदरता) का synonym पूछा गया है.
a) resplendence: इसका meaning 'भव्यता, चमक या शानदार रूप' (brilliance / grandeur) होता है, जो "splendour" के meaning से perfectly match करता है.
b) ignominy: इसका meaning बदनामी या अपमान होता है.
c) penury: इसका meaning अत्यधिक गरीबी होता है.
d) banality: इसका meaning साधारणपन या नीरसता होता है.

24. **D) to**
The sentence identifies the geographical origin of the Sacred Lotus (native _____ Asia and parts of Australia). Blank (D) requires the fixed preposition that standardly follows the adjective "native".
a) in, b) for, c) of: are grammatically incorrect after the adjective "native".
d) to: correctly completes the fixed English phrase "native to" (meaning originating in a particular place), which is also confirmed by the very next clause ("native to North America").
In Hindi:
यह sentence Sacred Lotus के मूल स्थान को describe करता है. English grammar में किसी स्थान का मूल निवासी या वहीं से उत्पन्न होने को दर्शाने के लिए adjective "native" के साथ हमेशा fixed preposition "to" का use किया जाता है.
a) in, b) for, और c) of: ये यहाँ grammatically गलत हैं.
d) to: यह मानक phrase "native to" को पूर्ण करता है, जो context में perfectly fit होता है.

25. **C) coveted**
The passage states that the lotus stem is a highly valued and sought-after vegetable ("prized"). The question asks for the closest synonym for "prized".
a) spurned: means rejected with disdain (antonym).

b) disparaged: means regarded or represented as being of little worth (antonym).
c) coveted: means greatly desired, valued, or sought after, serving as the closest high-register synonym for "prized".
d) mundane: means ordinary, dull, or lacking interest (antonym).
In Hindi:
यह sentence बताता है कि कमल का तना (कमल ककड़ी) एक बहुत ही कीमती या पसंदीदा ("prized") सब्जी है. Question में "prized" (बहुमूल्य / अत्यधिक पसंद किया जाने वाला) का synonym पूछा गया है.
a) spurned: इसका meaning ठुकराया हुआ (antonym) होता है.
b) disparaged: इसका meaning कम महत्व दिया गया या नीचा दिखाया गया (antonym) होता है.
c) coveted: इसका meaning 'अत्यधिक वांछित या कीमती' (greatly desired / valued) होता है, जो "prized" के meaning से perfectly match करता है.
d) mundane: इसका meaning साधारण या नीरस होता है.



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