

ENGLISH LANGUAGE & LOGICAL REASONING

(Verbatim, formatting edits only — The Indian Express, July 30, 2025 — Jayant Chaudhary)

IN RECENT YEARS, education in India has not only expanded in scale but matured in ambition. Our reforms today are about quality, pedagogy, and learning outcomes. We have made a deliberate shift towards ensuring that every child in the country not only attends school but also truly learns. To understand if that is happening, we must pause and ask the right questions: What are our children learning? Are schools enabling them to build essential skills at each stage of their education? These questions require reliable, scientific answers.

As an expert noted, “Students can learn despite poor teaching but they cannot overcome poor assessment.” This reminder is crucial because the best way to determine the effectiveness of our education systems is through large-scale assessments. These analyze macro trends to determine educational effectiveness. They find patterns in data from different locations, subjects, grades, and schools. This form of evaluation helps teachers and policymakers understand the strengths and weaknesses of students. Overall, it helps diagnose systemic issues and buttress policymaking.

Over the past two decades, India has gradually built capacity in this area. Advancing from the National Achievement Surveys (NAS) to PARAKH Rashtra Sarvekshan (PRS) 2024, the scale of the survey has grown to cover 21.15 lakh students in 74,229 schools across the country. Students from Grades III, V, and IX were assessed to correspond with the end of the foundational, preparatory, and middle stages of schooling. These stages are now well-established under the new curricular structure inline with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

At the foundational stage, the data show that India has not only recovered from the learning losses of the pandemic but, in many cases, surpassed earlier benchmarks. In Grade III, 57 per cent of children demonstrated proficiency or above in Language, up from 39 per cent in 2021 and 47 per cent in 2017. In Mathematics, the figure has jumped to 65 per cent, compared to 42 per cent in 2021. These gains reflect the serious and sustained efforts made under the NIPUN Bharat Mission, including targeted support, teacher mentoring, and early-grade interventions that are beginning to bear fruit. The data also show that schools in rural areas have, in some cases, outperformed their urban and private counterparts in foundational grades. This is a significant development, demonstrating what focused systemic reform can achieve.

However, as we move to Grades V and IX, the picture becomes more complex. Central government schools have performed well overall, but learning gaps persist by gender and region, particularly in Mathematics and Science. These are areas that need urgent focus.

Many comparisons have been made between PRS 2024 and earlier surveys, which have misplaced and require clarification. The structure of the assessments has changed. Earlier surveys focused on Grades V and VIII, whereas this edition concentrates on Grades V and IX, aligning with the new curricular stages. Moreover, the shift from textbook learning outcomes to competencies means the assessment tools are fundamentally different. Directly comparing a Grade V outcome from NAS 2021 with a Grade V outcome from 2024 is methodologically unsound. Only Grade III scores are comparable across all three surveys, and the improvement in these scores is established. Any interpretation that suggests a decline in performance based on comparisons with other grades risks misrepresenting the actual story.

What we now have is not just a report card, but a roadmap. The actual value of the data from the survey lies in how they are used locally. PRS provides district-level insights, and it is now the responsibility of states, districts, and school systems to translate these findings into granular, need-based interventions. Every state and UT will need to study its data — where learning levels are strong, where gaps persist, which support systems are working and which

are not. The Centre will continue to provide guidance, frameworks, and resources; however, the real impact will come from what is done at the

school and district levels. Our goal is not just to meet national benchmarks, but to achieve international comparability, and we are steadily moving in that direction.

The importance of assessments, however, does not end with school education. We must also focus on how young people transition into the world of work, entrepreneurship, and economic participation. Skills matter as much as academics. That is why, soon, the government will initiate a qualitative, large-scale skills assessment that will help us understand skill-readiness of our population, map regional variations, and plan targeted interventions in vocational education and skilling. The recent adoption of data-driven ITI grading and the expansion and inclusion of NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) in the PLSF exercise are aimed at providing key inputs for our reform process.

The ambition is to link learning to livelihood, ensuring that every young Indian is not only educated but also employable, entrepreneurial, and equipped to contribute meaningfully to the country's development.

PRS 2024 is a powerful reflection of how far we have come. But it is also a signal of what lies ahead. As we build stronger foundations in school education, we must also look at the horizon of skill development. With evidence-driven policy, we can imagine a future that is inclusive, evidence-driven, and future ready.

The writer is Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, and Minister of State for Education, Government of India.

1. What is the author's primary objective in this passage?

- A. To argue that PRS 2024 demonstrates the failure of India's educational reforms.
- B. To highlight how PRS 2024 offers a scientifically robust framework for identifying and addressing learning gaps.
- C. To assert that national assessments are redundant and should be replaced by local evaluation systems.
- D. To defend the credibility of earlier surveys against criticism from new methodologies.

2. The phrase "*learning losses of the pandemic have been surpassed*" implies that:

- A. Students have merely recovered to pre-pandemic performance levels.
- B. Foundational learning outcomes have not only recovered but improved beyond earlier benchmarks.
- C. Learning outcomes remain stagnant despite remedial measures.
- D. The PRS 2024 data exaggerate minor gains to project success.

3. Which of the following statements best represents the author's view on comparing PRS 2024 with earlier surveys like NAS 2021?

- A. Such comparisons are misleading unless methodological differences are accounted for.
- B. PRS 2024 completely invalidates data from earlier surveys.
- C. Comparison is unnecessary because all assessments are equally flawed.
- D. The findings from NAS 2021 are superior and should guide future reforms.

4. What does the author imply when he states that "the actual value of the data lies in how they are used locally"?

- A. Local authorities must translate national-level data into specific interventions suited to their contexts.
- B. Only district administrators should interpret PRS data; national policymakers should abstain.
- C. National benchmarks alone are sufficient to measure educational progress.
- D. Centralised education reforms are the only reliable instruments of change.

5. Which of the following statements best encapsulates the author's outlook on linking education and employment?

- A. Vocational education should be kept separate from school education to maintain academic rigor.
- B. Academic reform should focus exclusively on traditional subjects before considering skills.
- C. Skill development must accompany education so that learning translates into employability.
- D. The goal of assessments should remain confined to measuring literacy and numeracy.

6. The author's argument that PRS data should guide local interventions assumes which of the following?

- A. Decentralised interventions reduce the reliability of national metrics.
- B. Local policymakers are inherently resistant to evidence-based reforms.
- C. Educational performance is uniform across all districts.
- D. National-level data can be effectively disaggregated and interpreted at local levels.

7. Which of the following, if true, would most strengthen the author's claim that early interventions (like NIPUN Bharat Mission) have been effective?

- A. Independent data confirm significant gains in early-grade literacy and numeracy across multiple states.
- B. PRS 2024 shows stagnation in Grade III learning outcomes despite new initiatives.
- C. Teachers report confusion about assessment frameworks and skill alignment.
- D. State-level governments abandon NIPUN Bharat implementation mid-year.

8. Which reasoning error would be committed by comparing Grade IX results from PRS 2024 directly with Grade VIII results from NAS 2021?

- A. Ignoring changes in methodology and curricular structure across the two surveys.
- B. Failing to control for student background variables like gender or location.
- C. Assuming that higher grade levels always imply better learning outcomes.
- D. Overestimating the impact of NIPUN Bharat Mission on secondary education.

9. If critics argue that district administrations lack capacity to translate PRS data into actionable plans, what response aligns best with the author's reasoning?

- A. PRS data should be centralised and interpreted only by national experts.
- B. The Centre should provide additional funding, technical support, and frameworks to build local capacity.
- C. The scale of PRS should be reduced to a few pilot states for manageability.
- D. Further assessments should be deferred until international benchmarks are achieved.

10. Which analogy best captures the author's perspective on PRS 2024?

- A. A thermometer that identifies where the fever lies so that treatment can begin.
- B. A final exam that permanently ranks schools and students.
- C. A public relations exercise that showcases policy success without real impact.
- D. A theoretical model irrelevant to on-ground realities.

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LEGAL REASONING

This passage and accompanying questions are purely academic and fictional. They are designed for educational and analytical purposes, particularly for law entrance examinations. The facts, characters, and judicial reasoning are hypothetical and do not represent real judgments or governmental positions.

This Court is called upon to determine whether the *Oilfields (Regulation and Development) Amendment Act, 2025* (hereinafter “the 2025 Amendment”) strikes an appropriate constitutional balance between the Union’s regulatory powers and the States’ proprietary and environmental responsibilities under the Constitution of India.

It is contended that the 2025 Amendment — by vesting exclusive licensing authority in the Central Government and creating a single National Hydrocarbon Authority (NHA) — has, in effect, displaced the States’ jurisdiction over mineral and land regulation, traditionally preserved under the Concurrent and State Lists. The Petitioners, representing a consortium of coastal States, argue that the Amendment violates the federal structure by centralising every aspect of exploration, production, and trade in hydrocarbons, thus diminishing cooperative federalism into a formality.

The Union Government, however, defends the legislation as a necessary response to inefficiencies, environmental hazards, and inter-State disputes that plagued the earlier fragmented regulatory framework. It asserts that hydrocarbons being critical to national energy security, the 2025 Amendment ensures uniform licensing, stricter environmental due diligence, and integration with India’s international climate commitments.

This Court observes that the doctrine of cooperative federalism does not imply equality of power between the Centre and the States, but coordination in pursuit of shared constitutional objectives. Yet, such coordination cannot mean unilateral subordination. When Parliament enacts a law that impacts the States’ executive or proprietary domains, it must ensure procedural participation and consultative mechanisms. The record before this Court shows that while the NHA includes representation from the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, the Environment Ministry, and NITI Aayog, the States’ participation is limited to an advisory role without decisive authority — a structure that risks reducing consultation to tokenism.

The petitioners further argue that the 2025 Amendment weakens environmental accountability. Section 22 of the Act allows project clearances based on “strategic national importance,” permitting extraction even in ecologically fragile zones if deemed “necessary for energy transition.” While energy transition is indeed a national goal, environmental protection under Article 48A and the right to a healthy environment under Article 21 are not expendable. The State’s constitutional duty to protect forests, biodiversity, and coastal ecosystems cannot be waived in the name of expediency.

It is equally true, however, that economic development and environmental protection are not opposing objectives but complementary imperatives. The 2025 Amendment introduces an Environmental Performance Index (EPI) for oilfields and imposes penalties for ecological non-compliance. The issue, therefore, is not of absence of safeguards, but of proportionality — whether such safeguards are effective, enforceable, and not subordinated to economic expedience.

The Court also notes with concern the provision empowering the Central Government to suspend State-level exploration licenses “in the public interest.” Such a clause, if exercised without procedural fairness, could violate the doctrine of natural justice and the principle of federal comity. While public interest is a legitimate ground for intervention, it cannot be left undefined or unchecked by independent oversight.

Hence, the core constitutional question is not whether Parliament may legislate on oilfield regulation — for it undoubtedly may under Entries 53 and 54 of List I — but whether the exercise of such power respects the procedural

and environmental constraints inherent in the constitutional design. Federalism, in the Indian context, is not merely administrative but structural; it embodies trust, accountability, and participation.

The principle that emerges from this case is clear: national regulation must not become national domination, and developmental urgency cannot override constitutional discipline. Energy sovereignty cannot come at the cost of ecological justice or the States' participatory autonomy.

11. A Central order, issued under the 2025 Amendment, suspended all ongoing hydrocarbon exploration in a particular State "in the public interest," citing potential national security implications tied to an upcoming international energy summit. The State government asserts it received no prior notice, had no opportunity to present data or mitigation plans, and that the order was issued abruptly, causing immediate stoppage of thousands of local jobs and contractual obligations. Local courts issued interim relief but the Centre invoked the Act's power to override State action. The State now challenges the suspension as a breach of the constitutional principles of cooperative federalism and natural justice, arguing that "public interest" cannot be a carte blanche to suspend rights without hearing or consultation. The Centre contends urgency and stated interest in national energy diplomacy justified expedited action and that the Act permits such suspension. Which of the following best reflects the legal position based on the passage?

- A. The Centre's suspension is valid whenever it cites "public interest"; consultation is optional.
- B. The suspension is valid only if the State's objections are immaterial to national interest.
- C. The order is valid but the State must be paid full compensation for losses.
- D. Suspension orders in public interest require procedural fairness and reasonable consultation with States.

12. A company holding a pre-Amendment State lease alleges that the 2025 Amendment retroactively removed its vested rights by transferring licensing and suspension authority to the NHA. The firm invested heavily relying on the old regulatory scheme and claims that unilateral centralisation without transitional safeguards violates legitimate expectation and contract sanctity. The Centre argues Parliament can legislate for national interest and that environmental and administrative uniformity justified central takeover. The State supports the company, claiming the Amendment trampled its proprietary control over land and resources. The firm seeks judicial relief to protect its contractual investments and prevent arbitrary cancellation. Considering the passage's judicial reasoning on federal power, procedural participation, and legislative competence, which option best captures the likely legal tenor?

- A. The company's vested rights are absolute and the Amendment cannot affect them.
- B. The Amendment is presumptively valid; vested rights may be limited if Parliament provides statutory transition mechanisms.
- C. The company's remedy lies solely in arbitration with the State and not the courts.
- D. The Centre must restore the original regulatory regime until fresh terms are negotiated.

13. Section 22 of the Amendment allows extraction in areas designated as of "strategic national importance," even when such zones overlap with ecologically fragile regions like mangroves and wetlands. An environmental NGO filed a petition asserting that invoking "strategic national importance" to bypass environmental protections violates Article 21 and Article 48A because the Act lacks a strict test for when ecological sacrifice is permissible. The Government replies that strategic energy needs and international climate commitments require harnessing certain reserves and that the Act includes an Environmental Performance Index (EPI) to monitor compliance. Local fishing communities claim the EPI is theoretical and that past violations indicate enforcement is weak. Which option most closely aligns with the passage's approach to this constitutional conflict?

- A. Strategic national interest always overrides local ecological concerns.
- B. The EPI mechanism suffices to protect the environment regardless of strategic designation.
- C. Environmental protection and energy security must be balanced; strategic designation cannot dispense with enforceable safeguards.

D. Local economic interests always prevail over strategic objectives under Article 48A.

14. The NHA's governing board comprises mostly Union nominees; State representatives have only advisory seats. A consortium of States sues, contending this composition undermines cooperative federalism because the board makes binding licensing decisions, revenue allocations, and overrides State-level clearances. The Union argues that a strong central authority is needed to prevent inter-State race-to-the-bottom behaviours and to ensure investor confidence. Witnesses testify that past State-led decisions were non-uniform and led to litigation. The States demand at-minimum weighted votes or binding veto powers on environmental matters. Based on the passage's judgmental tone about token consultation and federal participation, which of the following best represents the constitutional concern and likely remedial principle?

- A. Centralised composition is constitutionally unassailable if intended to achieve uniformity.
- B. Token advisory roles for States can suffice so long as the Centre reports outcomes annually.
- C. The NHA's design is vulnerable unless States have meaningful, decision-making participation on core matters.
- D. States should be completely excluded to avoid conflict and ensure national interest.

15. An operator caused a substantial oil spill. It immediately self-reported, stopped operations, began cleanup, and cooperated with authorities. Nevertheless, the NHA imposed maximum penalties and revoked the UEPL, citing zero tolerance. The operator argues penalties should be proportionate; prompt remediation and self-reporting merit leniency, whereas the NHA insists strict sanctions deter future pollution. The operator claims the Act's stated goal of balancing development and protection implies proportionality. Considering the passage's emphasis on proportional safeguards, which outcome best follows that reasoning?

- A. Zero-tolerance cancellation is mandatory regardless of remediation.
- B. Proportionate penalties that consider prompt remedial action and self-reporting should guide enforcement.
- C. Self-reporting operators are immune from penalties under the Act.
- D. The Act requires criminal prosecution in addition to administrative cancellation.

16. The Central regulator introduced a new compliance requirement mandating quarterly carbon-emission disclosures. A long-standing UEPL holder argues these retrospective compliance burdens, applied to pre-existing licences, violate legal certainty and fair play because the licence terms did not contemplate such obligations. The Centre maintains that environmental duties are continuing obligations inherent in any extraction activity and that regulatory standards can evolve. Using the passage's judgment about continuing environmental duties and proportional regulation, which option aligns best with the reasoning presented?

- A. Retrospective imposition of new environmental reporting is an impermissible breach of contract.
- B. Continuing environmental obligations attach to all operators; evolving standards can legitimately impose additional reporting.
- C. New regulatory standards bind only new licensees after re-issuance.
- D. Courts cannot review environmental reporting mandates as they are technical.

17. A coastal community sues an operator alleging groundwater contamination, loss of livelihood, and health impacts. The operator contends that strict compliance with licence conditions and EPI metrics shields it from private civil claims, asserting the licence is comprehensive and pre-empts tort liability. The community argues that statutory obligations do not displace civil remedies for environmental harm and that EPI scores cannot substitute for on-ground remediation and compensation. Drawing on the passage's integration of statutory EPOs and continuing responsibility, which option most accurately reflects the legal position?

- A. Compliance with statutory EPOs completely immunises operators from private civil liability.
- B. Statutory environmental obligations and private civil liability coexist; compliance does not automatically discharge private claims.

- C. Only regulatory agencies can seek remediation; private citizens have no remedy.
- D. EPI compliance provides absolute shield if operator achieves requisite numerical thresholds.

18. A dispute arises about revenue sharing: a State argues the statute's formula (Centre 60% : State 40%) infringes its fiscal autonomy, claiming natural resources belong to States under Indian constitutional principles. The Centre counters that the allocation is a legislative policy choice to ensure national consolidation of energy revenues for strategic deployment. Licensees stop payments pending judicial resolution, creating fiscal uncertainty. Considering the passage's discussion on revenue sharing and federal balance, which option best captures the passage's probable approach to resolve this dispute?

- A. The State's position prevails; resources and revenues belong solely to the State.
- B. The Centre's allocation formula is binding as a valid statutory policy subject to constitutional review if arbitrary.
- C. Revenue-sharing disputes must be solved by unilateral executive fiat.
- D. The ATPR must immediately freeze all allocations until political settlement.

19. An environmental NGO petitions the High Court to cancel multiple UEPLs on grounds of systematic non-disclosure of baseline ecological data prior to grant. The Centre argues that the NHA has investigatory powers and that the ATPR is the exclusive forum for contesting licence validity. The NGO contends public-interest litigation preserves accountability where regulatory capture is suspected. The licensees argue that only aggrieved private parties have standing to challenge. Based on the passage's emphasis on accountability and oversight, which answer best fits the institutional design and principles described?

- A. Only private, directly aggrieved licensees may challenge licence validity; NGOs have no locus standi.
- B. Public interest litigation complements statutory oversight and NGOs may invoke judicial review to prevent regulatory capture.
- C. The ATPR's exclusive jurisdiction removes judicial review entirely.
- D. The statute forbids any challenge to licences for a fixed initial period to provide stability.

20. Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh contest allocation of extraction rights from a transboundary offshore reserve; the Centre unilaterally awards exclusive rights to a Central PSU citing national strategic interest. Tamil Nadu files a writ, alleging the Centre undermined cooperative federalism and failed to consult the affected States. Andhra Pradesh supports the Centre, arguing national security necessitated swift action. The licence's grant caused immediate economic and political repercussions in the region. Based on the passage's judicial tone about national regulation versus State autonomy, which option most closely reflects the constitutional balance the passage indicates?

- A. The Centre's unilateral grant is valid whenever national strategic interest is invoked; States have no remedy.
- B. The Centre may act for national interest but must provide meaningful consultation and procedural participation to the States affected.
- C. The States hold veto power over any Central assignment affecting their coastal zones.
- D. Such disputes must be ignored by courts as they are political questions outside judicial purview.

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

Passage - I

India unveiled its National Red List Assessment (NRLA) Vision 2025–2030 at the IUCN World Conservation Congress in Abu Dhabi in October 2025, marking a nationally coordinated drive to assess extinction-risk across the country's flora and fauna. The roadmap — prepared by the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) and Botanical Survey of India (BSI) in collaboration with IUCN-India and the Centre for Species Survival: India — sets out a science-based framework to generate India's National Red Data Books and a centralised database to underpin conservation policy and action.

India is a megadiverse country: although it covers only about 2.4% of global land area, it harbours roughly 8% of global flora and 7.5% of global fauna, with a high degree of endemism (the Vision document cites ~28% endemic plants and ~30% endemic animals). NRLA aims to prioritise threatened and endemic taxa for assessment, and to align national criteria with internationally accepted IUCN Red List methodology while adapting protocols for India's contexts and data realities.

The NRLA roadmap targets assessment of approximately 11,000 species in the initial phase (about 7,000 plants and 4,000 animals) and envisages publication of National Red Data Books for flora and fauna by 2030. To operationalise this, the programme includes assessor training and certification, capacity building across states, integration of traditional ecological knowledge, and development of digital workflows for data collation, peer review and transparent publication.

Institutionally, ZSI/BSI will lead taxon-specific assessments with partnerships across universities, state forest departments, NGOs and IUCN members. The initiative emphasises quality control (peer review, standards, metadata), data-sharing mechanisms and linkages to legal and policy instruments, notably for strengthening implementation of the Wild Life (Protection) Act and aligning with the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KM-GBF). The NRLA is also expected to feed into national biodiversity targets and international reporting obligations.

NRLA recognises implementation challenges: taxonomic gaps (many taxa remain poorly known), data-deficiency for wide groups (insects, lower plants, fungi), unequal institutional capacity across states, need for sustained funding and scientific manpower, and translating assessments into field conservation interventions. To address this, the roadmap includes plans to train hundreds of assessors over the next five years, prioritise high-risk and endemic taxa, and use citizen-science and museum collections to fill data gaps. If successfully executed, NRLA will be among the largest national red-listing exercises globally and will strengthen India's evidence base for biodiversity conservation and policy prioritisation.

21. Which of the following statements about NRLA are correct?

1. NRLA's Vision 2025–2030 was unveiled at the IUCN World Conservation Congress in October 2025.
2. The initial NRLA phase plans to assess about 11,000 species (flora + fauna).
3. NRLA restricts assessments only to endemic species and excludes widespread non-endemic taxa.

A. 1 and 2 only B. 1 and 3 only C. 2 and 3 only D. 1, 2 and 3

22. Which of the following institutions are the primary nodal leads for NRLA?

- A. Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) & Botanical Survey of India (BSI)
- B. IUCN & World Wildlife Fund (WWF)
- C. Ministry of Defence & ISRO
- D. National Biodiversity Authority & DRDO

23. Which of the following best describes NRLA's approach to red-listing?

- A. Adopt IUCN Red List criteria but adapt protocols and peer-review steps to India's national context and data realities.
- B. Invent an entirely new untested set of criteria that are incompatible with global assessment standards.
- C. Use only local, traditional knowledge without any scientific criteria.
- D. Limit assessments to a non-transparent internal database accessible only to central ministries.

24. Which of the following is an explicit target in the NRLA roadmap?

- A. Publish National Red Data Books for flora and fauna by 2030.
- B. Complete global assessments for all species worldwide by 2028.
- C. Replace the IUCN Red List with a national list that negates international standards.
- D. Close all museums and collections after 2025.

25. Which of the following figures are stated in NRLA documentation / the Vision document?

- 1. India occupies about 2.4% of global land area.
- 2. India harbours nearly 8% of the world's flora and 7.5% of the world's fauna.
- 3. Over 28% of plant species in India are endemic.

- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 1, 2 and 3 only
- C. 2 and 3 only
- D. 1 and 3 only

26. Which statement is not a realistic challenge for NRLA implementation?

- A. Large taxonomic and data gaps for many insect and fungal groups.
- B. Unequal institutional capacity across states and need for assessor training.
- C. Unlimited immediate budget and no need to prioritise species because funding is plenary.
- D. Translating red-list outcomes into on-ground conservation action.

27. Which of the following measures is the NRLA roadmap most likely to include (or already includes)?

- A. Training and certifying a cohort of species assessors, including taxonomists and conservation biologists.
- B. Mandating that all species assessments be completed only by foreign experts, excluding Indian scientists.
- C. Prohibiting publication of assessment results to maintain secrecy.
- D. Requiring all citizen science contributions be rejected.

28. NRLA explicitly aims to align and inform which of the following policy or international frameworks?

- 1. Wild Life (Protection) Act (for strengthened implementation).
- 2. Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KM-GBF).
- 3. The Montreal Protocol on ozone-depleting substances.

- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 2 only
- C. 1 and 3 only
- D. 1, 2 and 3

29. Given the scale of NRLA, which of the following operational priorities is most likely to be emphasised in the early years?

- A. Prioritising endemic, threatened and legally protected species for early assessment.
- B. Equally assessing all 100,000+ taxa at once with no prioritisation.
- C. Focusing solely on charismatic megafauna and ignoring plants, fungi and invertebrates entirely.
- D. Outsourcing all work to private commercial data brokers with no scientific oversight.

30. Which of the following best captures NRLA's stated significance?

- A. A nationally coordinated, science-based system to assess and monitor conservation status aligned with international best practice.
- B. A private database for commercial exploitation of species lists.
- C. A narrow, state-level pilot with no national ambition.
- D. A short-term media campaign with no institutional commitment.

Passage - II

The Union Cabinet approved the Prime Minister Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana (PMDDKY) on 16 July 2025 as a six-year, mission-mode programme (FY 2025-26 to FY 2030-31) to transform 100 agricultural districts chosen for lagging agro-performance. The scheme has an annual outlay of ₹24,000 crore and is designed to achieve district-level turnaround through a "saturation-based convergence" of 36 existing schemes from 11 central ministries, together with state programmes and local partners. Official releases indicate the scheme will directly benefit roughly 1.7 crore farmers across the selected districts. (PIB / PMIndia / press).

PMDDKY targets districts with low agricultural productivity, moderate/low cropping intensity, and below-average access to agricultural credit; a minimum of one district per state/UT will be included and allocations are to be proportionate to net-cropped area and operating holdings to ensure geographic balance. District Dhan-Dhaanya Samitis — chaired by the District Collector and supported by agricultural universities and line departments — will prepare District Agriculture & Allied Activities Plans. Progress will be tracked through a digital dashboard with 117 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) monitored monthly; NITI (and central nodal officers) will review district plans and performance periodically. (PMIndia / Drishti / Indian Express).

The scheme emphasises a broad agenda: increase crop productivity and diversification, strengthen post-harvest storage and value-addition at panchayat/block levels, expand irrigation and micro-irrigation, improve soil and water conservation, and facilitate both short-term and long-term agricultural credit. It explicitly includes allied activities — livestock, fisheries, beekeeping, agro-forestry and horticulture — to widen livelihood options and boost rural incomes. The design mirrors the Aspirational Districts approach: convergence, competition (district rankings) and collaborative technical support to accelerate progress. (PIB / Govt statements).

Implementation rests on a three-tier governance architecture (district → state → national). Central nodal officers will be assigned to each district; digital tools (farmer apps, dashboards), monthly KPI monitoring and district ranking systems are intended to ensure transparency, accountability, and course correction. The roadmap stresses capacity building (extension services, training), climate-resilient practices and market linkages (aggregation, cold chains, FPO support) to raise farmer incomes and reduce post-harvest losses. Critics note coordination complexity when converging 36 schemes across 11 ministries, and the need for strong state cooperation, timely funds flow, and robust data systems. Nonetheless, PMDDKY is pitched as a flagship, mission-mode push to make selected lagging agro-districts productive, market-oriented and climate-resilient — advancing livelihoods and Atmanirbhar Bharat objectives in agriculture.

31. Consider the following statements about PMDDKY's core strategy:

1. It relies on saturation-style convergence of central & state schemes to create concentrated impact in selected districts.
2. It replaces state agricultural plans entirely by imposing a single central blueprint.
3. It uses monthly KPI dashboards and district rankings to foster performance competition.

Which are correct?

- A. 1 and 3 only B. 2 only C. 1 and 2 only D. 1, 2 and 3

32. Which of the following can be reasonably inferred about PMDDKY's financing in practice?

1. The ₹24,000 crore is an annual central allocation to be routed through the consolidated fund directly to district plans.
2. Funds are likely to be a mixture of re-purposed central scheme funds (converged) plus additional budgetary allocations, with state co-funding where applicable.
3. The scheme will be entirely financed by an earmarked crop-levy.

A. 1 and 2 only B. 2 only C. 3 only D. 1, 3 and 2

33. Which of the following selection criteria are mentioned or implied for choosing the 100 districts?

1. Low productivity and below-average credit access.
2. Moderate/low cropping intensity and proportionality by net cropped area.
3. Existing high productivity to showcase best practices.

A. 1 and 2 only B. 2 and 3 only C. 1 and 3 only D. 1, 2 and 3

34. Which of the following statements about district governance under PMDDKY is/are accurate?

1. A District Dhan-Dhaanya Samiti, chaired by the District Collector, prepares the district plan.
2. Agricultural universities and technical partners assist district implementation.
3. The District Samiti has sole authority to reallocate central scheme funds across ministries without state concurrence.

A. 1 and 2 only B. 2 and 3 only C. 1 and 3 only D. 1, 2 and 3

35. Which of the following objectives are explicitly part of PMDDKY as described in the passage?

1. Improve post-harvest storage at panchayat/block level.
2. Promote crop diversification and sustainable agricultural practices.
3. Provide a universal basic income to all rural households in selected districts.

A. 1 and 2 only B. 1 and 3 only C. 2 and 3 only D. 1, 2 and 3

36. Which of the following are realistic operational challenges for PMDDKY (inferred from the passage)?

1. Achieving timely convergence of 36 schemes across 11 ministries requires complex inter-ministerial coordination.
2. Monthly monitoring of 117 KPIs will be administratively simple and require little extra capacity.
3. Ensuring state co-operation and timely fund flows is critical to success.

A. 1 and 3 only
B. 2 only
C. 1 and 2 only
D. 1, 2 and 3

37. Which of the following statements about allied-sector emphasis in PMDDKY is correct?

1. The scheme explicitly includes livestock, fisheries, beekeeping, agro-forestry and horticulture as integral components.
2. The scheme excludes allied sectors and focuses only on cereal productivity.
3. Allied-sector inclusion helps diversify farmer incomes and reduce climate risk.

A. 1 and 3 only B. 2 only C. 1 and 2 only D. 3 only

38. Which of the following statements about PMDDKY's monitoring & accountability systems is correct?

1. Central nodal officers will be appointed at district level and NITI will review district plans.
2. Progress will be monitored through 117 KPIs on a monthly dashboard and district ranking system.
3. Monitoring will be purely paper-based with no digital dashboards.

A. 1 and 2 only B. 2 and 3 only C. 1 and 3 only D. 1, 2 and 3

39. PMDDKY's design is modelled on which earlier government approach or programme (implied by the passage)?

- A. Aspirational Districts Programme (convergence, competition, technical support)
- B. Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) in direct wage employment emphasis
- C. National Monetisation Pipeline (asset monetisation focus)
- D. None — it is a wholly novel siloed approach

40. Which statement best captures the passage's depiction of PMDDKY's significance?

- A. A mission-mode, convergence initiative to transform lagging agri-districts via productivity, allied-sector support, infrastructure and monitoring.
- B. A one-year subsidy giveaway equal across India to stabilise prices.
- C. A scheme that centralises agriculture completely and removes state role.
- D. A purely export-oriented programme aiming to double agri-exports in one year.

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QUANTITATIVE TECHNIQUE

Passage-I

The Line graph shows % profit earned by a company over the year:

41. If the expenditure in 2006 and 2009 are equal, then the ratio of the income in 2006 and 2009 respectively is?

- (A) 1:1 (B) 2:3 (C) 13:14 (D) 31:34

42. If the income in 2008 was Rs. 264 cr., what was the expenditure in 2008?

- (A) 104 cr (B) 145cr
(C) 160 cr (D) 185 cr

43. In which year is the expenditure minimum?

- (A) 2010 (B) 2007
(C) 2006 (D) CND

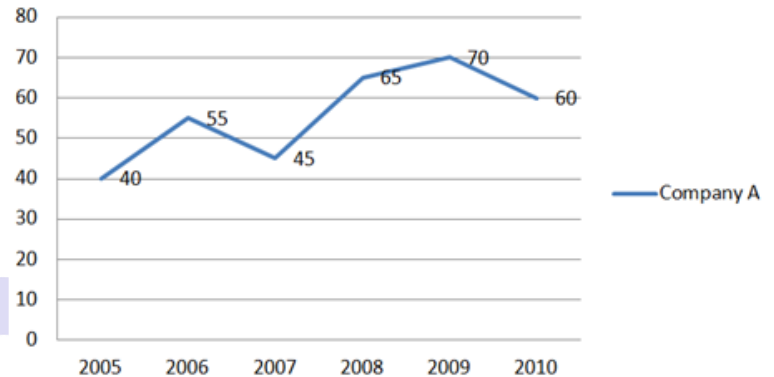
44. If the profit in 2009 was 4.2 cr, what was the income in 2009?

- (A) 4.2 cr (B) 3.4cr (C) 5 cr (D) 10.2 cr

45. If the income of 2005 and 2006 were same, then find out the ratio of expenditure of year 2005 to 2006?

- (A) 31:28 (B) 28:31 (C) 8:11 (D) 11:8

% Profit of company A



Passage-II

Study the following information and answer the given question:

A and B start a business with capital Rs 25000 and Rs 20000. After 4 months B invest Rs 5000 more and C join the business with capital Rs 40000. A is the working partner, for which he take 10 % of the total profit as his salary. At the end of the year the total profit Rs 44000 recorded.

46. Find out the share of profit of B?

- (A) 12300 (B) 12320 (C) 14000 (D) 13200

47. The profit receive by A is what % to the total profit distributed among them?

- (A) 16.67 % (B) 15% (C) 6.25% (D) 33.33%

48. How much total amount receive by A ?

- (A) 12300 (B) 17320 (C) 17600 (D) 13200

49. Find out the ratio of share of profit of A and C?

- (A) 15:16 (B) 16: 15 (C) 6:7 (D) 9:10

50. Investment of A is how much % less than the investment of C ?

- (A) 37.5 % (B) 15% (C) 16.25% (D) 27.25%

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