

ENGLISH LANGUAGE & LOGICAL REASONING

PASSAGE - I

Source: "Decoding the GDP Surprise," by Sachchidanand Shukla, *The Indian Express*, 3 September 2025.

FIRST THINGS FIRST. To say that India's first-quarter GDP growth rate of 7.8 per cent surprised all would be an understatement. Growth was driven by strong performances in services, manufacturing, and construction, alongside significant government spending and solid private consumption. This robust start means even a more moderate growth rate of around 6 per cent for the remaining quarters would nudge the eventual 2025-26 numbers closer to the RBI's estimate of 6.5 per cent and help absorb some potential external shocks. It must also be acknowledged that the first quarter numbers don't provide clues as to the adverse impact of US tariffs.

One must not get too carried away by the numbers, given the role of some technical bump ups by way of the base effect, which contributed 40 basis points to GDP growth, or even the upward statistical push from an unusually low GDP deflator, a measure of price changes calculated via a weighted average of retail and wholesale price levels. The deflator at 0.9 per cent was one of the lowest outside of the Covid years. The decrease in overall prices statistically boosted the real growth calculation, making headline growth appear higher than underlying nominal strength in reality.

Growth is projected to trend lower from hereon during the fiscal year. The RBI's projection stands at 6.7 per cent for the second quarter, 6.6 per cent for the third, and 6.3 per cent for the fourth. Most forecasters have a similar trajectory pencilled in. The outlook for the rest of the year remains uncertain due to first- and second-order impact of tariffs and the uncertainty around a trade deal with the US.

While real growth surprised on the upside, the moderation in inflationary pressures led to a low nominal GDP growth of 8.8 per cent, which isn't surprising as it perfectly mirrors the drop in inflation. But this slowdown has several important knock-on effects.

First, it imparts more pressure on the government's fiscal position. The 2025-26 budgetary assumption is at 10.1 per cent nominal growth, which is now only growing at 8.8 per cent, and hence the "economic pie" is smaller than expected. Key targets, like the fiscal deficit, are measured as a percentage of GDP. Since the pie is smaller, the deficit percentage automatically gets bigger, putting the budget targets under strain.

Second, it can weigh on tax collections given that lower inflation means the prices of goods and services aren't rising much. When prices don't rise, the economy still collects less taxes, since taxes like GST are levied on value addition, and if the nominal growth slows, indirect tax buoyancy does too.

Also, the 50 per cent US tariffs prompted some export sectors to see higher prices being identified, and the subsequent impact will be felt across corporate earnings and government tax collections in later quarters. Moreover, GDP numbers represent average value-added across sectors, while corporate earnings reflect firm-level performance. Discrepancies arise due to differences in accounting and the exclusion of non-corporate sectors in GDP computation.

Well, the low deflator inflates real GDP growth relative to nominal growth, creating a perception of stronger economic expansion than workers or businesses experience in real terms. Corporate earnings, tied more closely to nominal growth, may not reflect the same buoyancy as real GDP.

Thus, while the 7.8 per cent growth figure seems impressive, it masks complex statistical and structural forces. The government's challenge will be to manage fiscal pressures and revive confidence without over-reliance on base effects or GST cuts in play.

1. Which of the following best captures the *central paradox* identified by the author in the passage?
 - A. The impressive GDP growth masks weaker nominal performance due to statistical effects.
 - B. The RBI has consistently underestimated real growth across multiple quarters.
 - C. India's growth narrative remains immune to external economic shocks.
 - D. Inflation and nominal GDP growth show a consistent upward pattern.
2. The author's tone towards India's first-quarter GDP numbers can best be described as:
 - A. Optimistically celebratory.
 - B. Cautiously skeptical.
 - C. Aggressively critical.
 - D. Indifferent and detached.
3. In the passage, the "base effect" serves primarily to:
 - A. Reduce headline inflation by deflating earlier high growth numbers.
 - B. Inflate apparent growth by comparison with a low previous base.
 - C. Neutralize the adverse impact of tariff-led inflation.
 - D. Strengthen the long-term GDP growth outlook.
4. What can be inferred about the author's view of the RBI's projections?
 - A. They are unrealistically optimistic about the fiscal trajectory.
 - B. They are aligned with independent forecasts, but subject to uncertainty.
 - C. They ignore tariff-induced volatility in trade.
 - D. They project a stronger growth path than warranted by fundamentals.
5. Which rhetorical device is most prominent in the phrase "*cut your deals, and good luck to everyone else*"?
 - A. Irony
 - B. Synecdoche
 - C. Euphemism
 - D. Hyperbole
6. Which of the following assumptions underlies the author's argument about the fiscal deficit?
 - A. Fiscal deficit ratios depend on nominal GDP rather than real GDP.
 - B. A smaller economic pie automatically reduces government borrowing.
 - C. Inflation always increases fiscal health.
 - D. Tariffs reduce both real and nominal growth equally.
7. If nominal GDP grows slower than expected, which outcome logically follows?
 - A. Tax revenues will rise because of higher price elasticity.
 - B. Deficit ratios will appear smaller.
 - C. Tax collections will fall due to lower value addition.
 - D. Fiscal buoyancy will increase due to inflation moderation.
8. Which of the following, if true, would *most weaken* the author's claim that "headline GDP masks structural weakness"?
 - A. High-frequency job and income data also show robust improvement.
 - B. Tariff escalation has reduced export earnings sharply.
 - C. GST collections remain stagnant despite growth claims.
 - D. Fiscal deficit exceeds projected targets in consecutive quarters.

9. Which reasoning flaw, if any, is present in the argument that a “low GDP deflator justifies optimism”?

- A. It confuses correlation with causation.
- B. It relies on unrepresentative statistical comparison.
- C. It assumes that statistical inflation translates to economic welfare.
- D. It treats technical anomalies as structural indicators.

10. The author would most likely agree with which of the following statements?

- A. GDP figures must always be read alongside fiscal and nominal indicators.
- B. India’s growth resilience will offset all tariff-related uncertainties.
- C. Inflation moderation ensures stable long-term growth.
- D. Deflator adjustments enhance the precision of real growth estimates.

LEGAL REASONING

PASSAGE - I

This passage has been prepared exclusively for academic and analytical purposes to assist students in developing legal reasoning and comprehension skills for law entrance exams such as CLAT. The facts, though derived from real judicial developments, have been adapted and simplified for conceptual clarity. Students must rely only on the facts and principles given in this passage to answer the subsequent questions.

In *M/s Halliburton Offshore Services Inc. v. Vedanta Limited & Anr.* (Delhi High Court, 2020), the central question before the Court was whether the COVID-19 pandemic and the nationwide lockdown constituted a “force majeure” event sufficient to excuse contractual non-performance.

The petitioner, Halliburton Offshore Services Inc., an American company, entered into a contract dated 25 April 2018 with Vedanta Limited for the construction of oil wells and the development of surface facilities under three sub-projects: Mangala, Bhagyam, and Aishwarya. The contract specified rigid commencement and completion dates for each sub-project and included a force majeure clause that excused performance in the event of unforeseeable and uncontrollable circumstances beyond the parties’ control.

Despite repeated extensions of time, Halliburton failed to meet several deadlines even before the onset of the pandemic. The respondent, Vedanta Limited, alleged chronic delays and non-performance. In March 2020, when the nationwide lockdown was imposed, Halliburton invoked the force majeure clause via a letter dated 18 March 2020, asserting that the pandemic and resulting restrictions had rendered performance impossible. Vedanta, however, viewed the invocation as a pretext to avoid contractual responsibility and issued termination notices dated 31 March and 7 April 2020.

In response, Halliburton filed a petition under Section 9 of the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996, seeking interim protection to restrain Vedanta from invoking bank guarantees and terminating the contract. On the very day of filing—13 April 2020—Vedanta terminated the contract, leading to judicial intervention.

Before the Delhi High Court, Halliburton argued that COVID-19 constituted an “Act of God” under the contract, absolving it from delay. It further claimed that the invocation of bank guarantees during a global pandemic amounted to an inequitable and coercive measure. Vedanta countered that force majeure could not rescue a party already in default before the pandemic, emphasizing that Halliburton’s failure was longstanding and not directly caused by the lockdown.

The Court, while acknowledging the disruptive impact of the pandemic, ruled that not every case of non-performance could be excused as a force majeure event. The Court observed that the force majeure clause could be invoked only where performance was rendered impossible by the unforeseen event, not merely more difficult or inconvenient. Since Halliburton's delays existed long before COVID-19, the pandemic could not retrospectively justify its breach.

The High Court dismissed Halliburton's plea, holding that force majeure cannot serve as a "universal shield" for contractual non-performance. It reiterated that parties are bound by their obligations unless the supervening event directly frustrates the contract within the meaning of Section 56 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872. Furthermore, the invocation of bank guarantees could not be restrained absent fraud or special equities.

The judgment reaffirmed the judicial principle that commercial contracts operate within the framework of predictability, responsibility, and risk allocation. Force majeure clauses must be interpreted narrowly and contextually, ensuring that unforeseen circumstances do not become tools for avoiding foreseeable obligations.

11. A petroleum contractor, Delta Energy Pvt. Ltd., entered into an agreement with the Government of Rajasthan to construct oil extraction facilities by December 2022. The contract had a strict time schedule and a standard force majeure clause. By early 2022, Delta had already missed multiple milestones, citing "technical coordination issues." In March 2022, the company invoked force majeure due to a nationwide transport strike that delayed delivery of critical machinery. The government refused to grant an extension, arguing that Delta's default predated the strike. Delta sought court protection, claiming impossibility of performance.

Which of the following principles should the Court apply?

- A. Any event disrupting work, even if temporary, automatically triggers force majeure.
- B. Force majeure can excuse delay only when the supervening event directly causes non-performance and not when the breach existed prior to it.
- C. Prior delay is irrelevant if an unforeseeable event occurs later.
- D. Once a force majeure clause exists, contractual breach becomes excusable.

12. Omega Engineering Ltd. signed a three-year contract with Bharat Gas Corporation to lay pipelines. After repeated extensions due to internal mismanagement, the project was still incomplete when severe floods struck the region. Omega invoked the force majeure clause, arguing that natural disasters made further work impossible. The Corporation rejected the plea, citing Omega's history of delays.

Which of the following is legally accurate?

- A. The floods nullify prior breaches since natural disasters are unforeseeable.
- B. The floods qualify as a force majeure event, but Omega cannot rely on it because the company was already in breach before the event occurred.
- C. The floods excuse Omega's past defaults as part of the same project timeline.
- D. Omega's invocation of force majeure automatically extends the completion deadline.

13. Zen Hydro Limited entered into a contract to build a dam for a state government. The project schedule was tight, and the company faced delays due to misallocation of funds. When an earthquake occurred, halting work for two months, Zen invoked force majeure. The government, citing *Halliburton Offshore*, rejected the claim.

Which statement best applies the legal principle?

- A. Zen cannot rely on force majeure because its default existed prior to the earthquake.
- B. Force majeure applies even when performance becomes more difficult, not impossible.
- C. The earthquake automatically discharges Zen from all obligations.
- D. Courts must compel government compensation for force majeure events.

14. A company, Stellar BuildTech, agreed to supply prefabricated steel structures to an airport project. Due to foreign export restrictions amid global crises, shipment of components was delayed. Stellar invoked force majeure, citing global trade disruptions. The buyer argued that the delay was foreseeable since export restrictions had been announced months earlier.

Which of the following is most consistent with judicial reasoning?

- A. Force majeure applies even to foreseeable disruptions.
- B. Foreseeability of an event weakens a claim of force majeure if parties could have mitigated its effect.
- C. Once the event occurs, the timing or foreseeability is irrelevant.
- D. Buyers cannot challenge force majeure once invoked.

15. During a pandemic, Alpha Constructors failed to complete a public housing project and cited COVID-19 restrictions as the cause. However, the record showed that Alpha had already been warned thrice for delays due to labour shortages and mismanagement before lockdowns began. The state authority invoked bank guarantees. Alpha petitioned the court to restrain invocation citing force majeure.

Which is the correct position?

- A. The court should stay invocation since pandemic qualifies as force majeure.
- B. Bank guarantees cannot be restrained unless fraud or special equities are shown.
- C. Delay caused by internal factors can still attract protection under pandemic clauses.
- D. Pandemic automatically suspends contractual obligations.

16. Beta Marine Ltd. entered into a shipping contract to transport crude oil. A month before loading, international port workers announced a strike. Beta made no contingency arrangements and later invoked force majeure after shipments were delayed. The consignee alleged negligence.

Which is correct under Indian law?

- A. Force majeure applies even when mitigation measures were available.
- B. Failure to foresee or mitigate foreseeable risks defeats a force majeure claim.
- C. Port strikes always qualify as force majeure.
- D. Beta can demand full payment despite delay.

17. In a mining contract, Gamma Resources Ltd. agreed to deliver mineral samples by a fixed date. Owing to administrative delays, delivery was late. Subsequently, flash floods rendered the mine inaccessible for three months. Gamma invoked force majeure. The client claimed that the delay occurred before the floods.

Which is the most appropriate application of principle?

- A. Force majeure cannot excuse a breach that predated the supervening event.
- B. Floods discharge all contractual obligations automatically.
- C. Gamma is entitled to extension without showing causal link.
- D. The client must renegotiate since floods are Acts of God.

18. Sigma Developers signed an MoU to construct a port terminal. Before the start date, it faced financial distress and delayed mobilisation. Later, a cyclone devastated the site. Sigma invoked force majeure to escape liability. The government argued that Sigma's failure occurred before the cyclone.

Which of the following is correct?

- A. Cyclone constitutes valid force majeure even if default occurred earlier.
- B. Pre-existing inability to perform negates the causal chain necessary for force majeure.
- C. Natural disasters always justify termination of contracts.
- D. The government must compensate Sigma for environmental risk.

19. Lambda Tech signed a contract to supply control systems to an oil refinery. Delays occurred due to its own testing failures. Later, a government embargo on imported microchips disrupted production. Lambda invoked force majeure. The buyer contended that failure resulted from internal defects, not the embargo.

Which statement is correct?

- A. Force majeure requires proof that the unforeseen event directly caused non-performance.
- B. Presence of an embargo automatically triggers the clause.
- C. Once government orders exist, contracts are suspended.
- D. Internal negligence and external causes can coexist as valid grounds.

20. Rho Infrastructure Pvt. Ltd. was constructing an offshore rig under a contract that required completion by June 2021. In May 2021, the company's equipment was destroyed in a cyclone. Evidence showed that Rho had delayed procurement for months before the cyclone. It invoked force majeure.

Which is the most legally sound conclusion?

- A. Rho cannot rely on force majeure as its delay existed before the cyclone.
- B. Cyclone automatically discharges contract irrespective of prior default.
- C. Rho can claim partial relief because of mixed causes.
- D. The contract stands suspended until fresh negotiations.

Passage-II

This passage has been created exclusively for academic and analytical use to train students for law entrance examinations like CLAT. While inspired by statutory principles from the Indian Contract Act, 1872, it has been rephrased for conceptual clarity and educational use. Students must answer questions solely on the basis of the facts and reasoning contained herein.

In the law of contracts, mistake refers to a misconception or misunderstanding regarding a fact or law that affects the agreement between parties. A mistake operates upon a contract in two distinct ways. Firstly, it may defeat the very consent that the parties are supposed to have given—meaning that consent is not real or genuine. Secondly, it may mislead the parties as to the purpose which they both contemplated while forming the agreement.

For a valid contract, there must be consensus ad idem, meaning both parties must agree upon the same thing in the same sense. If they misunderstand each other's intentions or the nature of the subject matter, their apparent agreement lacks true consent, and the contract becomes void.

Mistake of Fact and Void Agreements

Section 20 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872 provides that "where both the parties to an agreement are under a mistake as to a matter of fact essential to the agreement, the agreement is void." Three conditions must be satisfied:

1. Both parties must be under a mistake;
2. The mistake must concern a matter of fact; and
3. The fact must be essential to the agreement.

For example, if A agrees to sell to B a horse which, unknown to both, is already dead, the contract is void because the subject matter no longer exists. However, if A agrees to sell a horse to B at ₹50,000 believing it to be worth ₹1,00,000, while B knows it is worth only ₹40,000, the agreement remains valid. An erroneous opinion as to value is not a “mistake of fact.”

Mistake of Law

A contract is not void merely because it was caused by a mistake as to Indian law; parties are presumed to know the law in force in India. However, a mistake regarding foreign law is treated as a mistake of fact, since parties are not expected to know the laws of other jurisdictions.

Mistake as to Identity

A mistake as to identity arises when one party represents himself to be someone else and the other party intends to contract only with that specific person. Such a mistake vitiates consent only if the identity of the person is essential to the contract. If no such person exists, or if the supposed identity is fictitious, the mistake does not render the agreement void.

For instance, if a person named X impersonates a well-known trader and purchases goods on credit, the contract may be void if the seller intended to contract only with the real trader. But if X merely uses a false name with no such trader existing, it is not a mistake of identity—rather, it is fraud or misrepresentation.

Mistake and Consensus

True consent requires both parties to understand and agree on the same subject matter, the same identity, and the same purpose. Any divergence in understanding on an essential fact prevents the formation of a valid contract. Thus, mistake goes to the root of consent—and without genuine consent, no binding contract can exist.

21. A and B enter into an agreement for the sale of a painting which they both believe to be an original work of Raja Ravi Varma. Later, it is discovered that the painting was a reproduction and not an original. B refuses to pay, arguing that the agreement is void because both parties were mistaken about the authenticity of the painting. A sues B for breach of contract, claiming that the mistake was merely about the value of the painting, not about its existence.

Which of the following is legally correct?

- A. The contract is valid because both parties intended to transfer the same painting.
- B. The contract is voidable at B's option.
- C. The contract is void because the mistake concerns a fact essential to the agreement.
- D. The contract remains enforceable since mistaken value does not make a contract void.

22. X and Y enter into a contract for the sale of 500 bags of rice stored in a particular warehouse. Unknown to both, the warehouse had caught fire the previous night and all goods were destroyed. Later, Y demands delivery, and X refuses, claiming the contract is void. Y sues X for non-performance.

Which of the following legal principles applies?

- A. The contract is valid since there was consensus ad idem.
- B. The contract is void because the subject matter ceased to exist at the time of contract formation.
- C. The contract is voidable at Y's discretion since X failed to deliver.
- D. X must compensate Y for non-delivery.

23. A and B agree to buy and sell a horse named “Thunderbolt.” Unknown to both, the horse had died an hour before the agreement was executed. When B asks for delivery, A refuses, saying the contract is void. B insists A must bear the loss.

Which statement is correct?

- A. The agreement is void as there was a mistake regarding an essential fact—the existence of the horse.
- B. The contract is voidable at B’s option.
- C. A must compensate B for loss.
- D. The contract is valid because risk passes to the buyer upon agreement.

24. C, residing in India, agrees to sell a piece of land to D, believing that the land belongs to him. In reality, the land has already been acquired by the government for public purposes. D sues C for breach, claiming he relied on C’s representation. C contends the contract is void due to mutual mistake.

Which statement best applies?

- A. C is liable for breach because he failed to verify ownership.
- B. The contract is void as both parties were under a mistake about an essential fact—ownership of the land.
- C. The contract is voidable at D’s discretion.
- D. The contract is enforceable since D acted in good faith.

25. P agrees to sell a consignment of wheat to Q, believing it to be in his warehouse. Unknown to both, a flood had destroyed the warehouse and all the wheat before the agreement. When P fails to deliver, Q sues for breach.

Which of the following is correct?

- A. P must pay damages since the agreement was valid when made.
- B. The contract is void due to mutual mistake regarding the existence of the subject matter.
- C. The contract is voidable because only Q was mistaken.
- D. P can substitute another consignment to fulfill the contract.

26. R, a resident of Delhi, and S, a resident of London, enter into a contract for the sale of R’s ancestral property. Both believe that under Indian law, such property can be sold freely without government approval. Later, it is discovered that special permission under the Urban Land Ceiling Act was required. S claims the contract is void due to mistake of law.

Which of the following is correct?

- A. The contract is voidable since both misunderstood the law.
- B. Mistake of Indian law does not render a contract void.
- C. Mistake of law in force in India is treated as mistake of fact.
- D. The contract is void as the permission requirement frustrated the object.

27. T, a businessman, enters into a contract with U, a company in Singapore, to supply electronic chips. Both believe that Singapore law allows unrestricted import of the goods. Later, it is discovered that Singapore prohibits such imports. U claims the agreement is void due to mistake of law.

Which principle applies?

- A. Mistake as to foreign law is treated as mistake of fact and renders the agreement void.
- B. Mistake of foreign law does not affect the validity of the contract.
- C. The contract is voidable because one party is foreign.
- D. Parties must renegotiate as the mistake was mutual.

28. V, a jeweller, agrees to sell a diamond ring to W for ₹5 lakh, believing it to be a genuine diamond. Later, it turns out to be cubic zirconia. W refuses to pay, claiming the agreement was void. V sues for recovery.

Which is the correct position?

- A. The agreement is void because both were mistaken about the identity of the subject matter.
- B. The agreement is voidable since W can reject the ring.
- C. The agreement is valid because the mistake concerns quality, not existence of subject matter.
- D. The contract stands frustrated.

29. A fraudster named Z impersonates a famous businessman, M, and buys gold from N on credit. N later discovers the deception and sues to recover the gold. Z claims there was a valid contract.

Which statement correctly applies the principle of mistake of identity?

- A. The contract is valid since N voluntarily sold the goods.
- B. The contract is void because N intended to contract with M, not Z.
- C. The contract is voidable because Z deceived N.
- D. The contract stands as N failed to verify identity.

30. Rita places an online order for a “Mac Pro” believing it to be a laptop, while the seller intended to sell the desktop version. Upon delivery, Rita refuses to accept it, claiming lack of consent. The seller insists that “Mac Pro” clearly meant desktop.

Which is correct?

- A. The contract is valid as the term is unambiguous.
- B. The contract is void as there was no consensus ad idem between the parties.
- C. The contract is voidable at Rita’s option due to misrepresentation.
- D. The contract can be rectified by clarifying the term.

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

Passage-I

India is planning a new strategic connectivity corridor for its North-Eastern states, linking them to the major port city of Kolkata through a multi-modal sea-and-land route, bypassing the narrow Siliguri “Chicken’s Neck” and reducing dependence on neighbouring Bangladesh.

The route utilises the existing Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project (KMTTP) which connects Kolkata by sea (via the Bay of Bengal) to Sittwe port in Myanmar, then river and inland-waterway links to Paletwa, then road-link to Zorinpui in Mizoram, and into India’s North East. On the Indian side, a four-lane high-speed highway of ~166.8 km between Mawlyngkhawng (Meghalaya) near Shillong and Panchgram (Assam, near Silchar) on NH-6 is under construction.

This corridor is part of India’s larger “Act East” policy, aiming to integrate the North East not just with mainland India but with the ASEAN and Bay-of-Bengal economic region, and to reduce the geographic and logistic isolation of the region. The sea route via Myanmar offers a strategic alternative to transit through Bangladesh, which New Delhi views as increasingly complex due to transit and diplomatic uncertainties. Economically, the corridor will shorten supply-chain distances, boost trade, enable faster cargo movement for goods produced in the North East and eastern India, and attract investment in logistics, processing hubs and maritime-oriented industry. It also has strategic implications: strengthening India’s access to the Bay of Bengal and the broader Indo-Pacific, offering redundancy in connectivity, and enhancing security of supply-routes and resilience to regional disruptions.

From a developmental perspective, the corridor is expected to accelerate infrastructure, create jobs in the North East, and ensure balanced growth. The highway stretch is expected to be completed by around 2030, while the inland and sea-link sections via Myanmar are targeted for full functionality by 2027 under revised timelines. In summary, the new sea-corridor from Kolkata to India’s North East reflects a convergence of economic, strategic and regional-integration interests—aiming to transform the region’s connectivity, reduce reliance on Bangladesh’s transit routes, and embed the North East more firmly in India’s trade-and-security calculus in the Bay-of-Bengal and Indo-Pacific space.

31. Which of the following are objectives of the new North-East–Kolkata corridor?

1. Strengthening India’s Act East Policy.
2. Integrating the North-East with ASEAN markets.
3. Providing maritime redundancy to the Indian Navy.

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

32. The corridor forms a part of which major connectivity initiative?

- A. Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project
- B. Bharatmala Pariyojana
- C. India–Myanmar Friendship Highway
- D. Bangladesh–China–India–Myanmar (BCIM) Corridor

33. Assertion (A): India’s new North-East–Kolkata corridor aims to strengthen India’s strategic access to the Bay of Bengal and Indo-Pacific.

Reason (R): The project is being developed as part of the India–Myanmar–Thailand Trilateral Highway.

- A. Both A and R are true, and R explains A.
- B. Both A and R are true, but R does not explain A.
- C. A is true, R is false.
- D. A is false, R is true.

34. Which of the following are key nodes of the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project (KMTTP)?

1. Kolkata Port
2. Sittwe Port
3. Paletwa (Myanmar)
4. Zorinpui (Mizoram)

A. 1, 2 and 3 only B. 2, 3 and 4 only C. 1, 2, 3 and 4 D. 1 and 2 only

35. With reference to the corridor's timeline and progress, which of the following is correct?

- A. The inland-waterway and sea leg are targeted for completion by 2027.
- B. The highway portion in India is expected to be completed before 2025.
- C. The entire corridor will be operational by 2035.
- D. The Sittwe port was commissioned only in 2024.

36. Which of the following is *not* an expected outcome of the corridor project?

- A. Creation of logistics and processing hubs in the North-East.
- B. Development of an industrial cluster near the Sittwe Port.
- C. Promotion of inland shipping on the Brahmaputra.
- D. Formal integration of Bhutan as a partner state in the project.

37. Which of the following is true regarding India's connectivity initiatives in the eastern neighbourhood?

1. India is developing the Trilateral Highway with Myanmar and Thailand.
2. The BIMSTEC Master Plan for Transport Connectivity includes the Kaladan project.
3. India's Mekong-Ganga Cooperation has a maritime corridor element.

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

38. Which of the following Indian states share borders with Myanmar?

1. Mizoram
2. Manipur
3. Nagaland
4. Meghalaya

A. 1, 2 and 3 only B. 2 and 4 only C. 1 and 3 only D. 1, 2, 3 and 4

39. Which of the following river systems is crucial to the inland-waterway portion of the Kaladan project?

- A. Kaladan River
- B. Chindwin River
- C. Irrawaddy River
- D. Barak River

40. Which of the following statements about the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) is/are correct?

1. Myanmar and India are founding members.
2. The secretariat is located in Dhaka.
3. The organisation focuses mainly on connectivity, trade, and energy cooperation.

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

Passage - II

The Air Quality Life Index (AQLI) is an initiative of the Energy Policy Institute at the University of Chicago (EPIC) that links fine particulate air pollution ($PM_{2.5}$) to a concrete metric — the reduction in life expectancy from sustained exposure to polluted air. According to the AQLI methodology, each additional $10 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ of $PM_{2.5}$ exposure reduces life expectancy by about 0.98 years, based on peer-reviewed evidence.

Globally, AQLI reveals some stark results: in South Asia, for example, average gains of over five years of life expectancy could be realised if air pollution were reduced to the $\leq 5 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ guideline set by the World Health Organization (WHO). For India specifically, satellite-derived $PM_{2.5}$ data indicate that in 2023 India's annual average hovered around $41 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$, more than eight-times the WHO guideline. The country-fact sheet shows that reducing $PM_{2.5}$ levels to the WHO baseline could add approximately 3.5 years to the average Indian's life.

In India's capital region, the situation is worse: in the National Capital Territory of Delhi, residents could gain as much as 8.2 years of life on average if pollution were cut to the WHO guideline. Across northern India's populous plains, states such as Bihar (5.4 years), Haryana (5.3 years) and Uttar Pradesh (5.0 years) also face significant life-expectancy losses due to particulate exposure. AQLI also highlights that nearly all of India's 1.4 billion people live in areas where annual average $PM_{2.5}$ exceeds the WHO guideline of $5 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ — even in regions measuring “cleaner” by national standards.

The index is also a tool for policy: it emphasises that strong clean-air policies can generate large life-expectancy pay-offs. For instance, a reduction of India's average $PM_{2.5}$ from $\sim 51.3 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ in 2021 to $\sim 41.4 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ in 2022 is estimated to have added approximately 1 year to the country's life expectancy. AQLI's reports caution that while pollution declines have occurred in some districts, many still fall short of national ambient standards (such as India's $40 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ benchmark) and far short of the WHO guideline. Unequal access to monitoring, enforcement and data also mean that pollution burdens are uneven and often concentrated in poorer or more vulnerable communities.

In sum, the AQLI frames air pollution not just as an environmental or economic problem, but as a direct threat to human longevity. It enables policymakers, civil society and citizens to understand not just “how polluted” the air is, but “how many years of life” are lost due to that pollution — thereby raising the stakes and making the health implications clear. In contexts such as India's northern plains, where pollutants are persistently high, AQLI changes the conversation from “bad air” to “lost life”.

41. Consider the following statements regarding the Air Quality Life Index (AQLI):

1. It quantifies the impact of particulate air pollution on life expectancy.
2. It is published by the Energy Policy Institute at the University of Chicago (EPIC).
3. It measures only ozone and nitrogen dioxide levels.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

42. Which of the following is the central pollutant considered under AQLI?

- A. $PM_{2.5}$ B. PM_{10} C. Sulphur Dioxide (SO_2) D. Carbon Monoxide (CO)

43. According to AQLI's methodology, every $10 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ increase in $PM_{2.5}$ exposure leads to approximately:

- A. 0.5 years reduction in life expectancy
- B. 0.98 years reduction in life expectancy
- C. 1.5 years reduction in life expectancy
- D. 2 years reduction in life expectancy

- 44.** Assertion (A): The Air Quality Life Index (AQLI) provides a clearer understanding of air pollution's impact on health than traditional Air Quality Index (AQI).
Reason (R): AQI indicates daily pollutant concentration, whereas AQLI translates long-term exposure into potential life expectancy loss.
- A. Both A and R are true, and R is the correct explanation of A.
B. Both A and R are true, but R is not the correct explanation of A.
C. A is true, R is false.
D. A is false, R is true.
- 45.** Which of the following statements are true about India's air pollution levels as per the AQLI 2024 report?
- India's national annual average $PM_{2.5}$ concentration is over 8 times the WHO guideline.
 - Delhi residents could gain around 8 years of life if pollution fell to WHO's safe limit.
 - The WHO annual $PM_{2.5}$ guideline is $10 \mu g/m^3$.
- A. 1 and 2 only B. 2 only C. 1 and 3 only D. 1, 2 and 3
- 46.** Which of the following statements about the *purpose* of AQLI is correct?
- A. To measure only pollution emissions per capita.
B. To convert long-term particulate exposure into life expectancy loss.
C. To predict future industrial pollution based on GDP growth.
D. To calculate national GDP loss due to pollution.
- 47.** Which of the following best describes the distinction between AQLI and conventional Air Quality indices?
- A. AQLI focuses on short-term air quality trends, while AQI measures mortality rates.
B. AQLI expresses life-years lost, while AQI provides pollution levels and health categories.
C. AQI is based on WHO life-expectancy norms, while AQLI is not.
D. Both are identical but issued by different agencies.
- 48.** Which of the following statements correctly reflect the findings of AQLI for India?
- Reducing $PM_{2.5}$ to WHO standards would increase India's average life expectancy by ~3.5 years.
 - Nearly 100% of Indians live in areas exceeding WHO's $PM_{2.5}$ guideline.
 - Life expectancy losses are uniform across all Indian states.
- A. 1 and 2 only B. 1 only C. 2 only D. 1, 2 and 3
- 49.** Which of the following is *not* a limitation of AQLI?
- A. It doesn't include pollutants other than $PM_{2.5}$.
B. It provides only country-level, not district-level, data.
C. It relies on satellite-derived estimates rather than dense ground monitoring.
D. It does not consider unequal exposure among socio-economic groups.
- 50.** Which one of the following Indian government programmes most closely aligns with AQLI's objectives?
- A. National Clean Air Programme (NCAP)
B. National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC)
C. Green India Mission (GIM)
D. National Adaptation Fund for Climate Change

Quantitative Technique

Passage-I

Directions: Study the following information carefully and answer the questions given beside.

Fishes are one of the very few aquatic creatures that can easily swim against the flow of the current of a river. The Dolphin is a fish that swims in the waters of Ganga River. Speed of Dolphin in still water is 20 km/h. However, it takes thrice the time to travel upstream than it takes to travel downstream.

51. Find the speed of Dolphin when it is travelling upstream.

- (A) 10km/hr (B) 20km/hr (C) 40km/hr (D) 80km/hr

52. Find the ratio of speed of Dolphin downstream to its speed in still water.

- (A) 2:3 (B) 3:1 (C) 3:2 (D) 2:1

53. Find the time taken by Dolphin to travel 6km upstream?

- (A) 30mnt (B) 36mnt (C) 34mnt (D) 40mnt

54. Find the time taken by Dolphin to travel 9km downstream?

- (A) 20mnt (B) 18mnt (C) 36mnt (D) 45mn

55. If speed of the dolphin in still water is 30 km/hr, then find out the speed of water current?

- (A) 12km/hr (B) 30km/hr (C) 15km/hr (D) 10km/hr

Passage-II

Directions: Study the following information carefully and answer the questions given beside.

Data given below shows number of girls and boys in different classes in a School. Number of boys in class A is equal to number of girls in class B. Number of boys in class B is 20 more than that of boys in class A. Ratio between number of girls in class A to class B is 3:2. Total number of students in class B is 20% more than that in class A. Number of Teacher in class A = 40% of boys in class A. Number of Teacher in class B = 60% of girls in class B.

56. Find out the ratio of no. of boys in class B to the no. of girls in class A

- (A) 3:4 (B) 2:3 (C) 4:3 (D) 1:2

57. The number of Teacher in class B is what % to the total number of student in that class?

- (A) 15% (B) 12% (C) 20% (D) 25%

58. Find out the total number of Teacher in that school?

- (A) 20 (B) 25 (C) 40 (D) 15

59. Find out the total number of Student in that school?

- (A) 100 (B) 105 (C) 110 (D) 120

60. If the number of girls in class B is increased by 20%, then by what percent the number of boys in class B should be decreased so that the total number of students in class B remains same as before?

- (A) 10% (B) 20% (C) 25% (D) 67%

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