



MOCK TEST | 2 MAY 2026

CLAT 2027 Mock Test 07

English Language + Current Affairs & General Knowledge

Test Code	CLAT Mock Test 07
Total Questions	120 (80 English + 40 GK)
Total Marks / Duration	120 Marks 120 Minutes
Marking Scheme	+1 Correct -0.25 Wrong 0 Unattempted
Format	100% Passage-Based (24 Passages)
Answer Marking	Use the previously finalised CLAT Gurukul OMR Sheet

Section	Questions	Passages	Marks
English Language	Q1 – Q80	16 x 5 Qs	80
Current Affairs & GK	Q81 – Q120	8 x 5 Qs	40

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

1. This test booklet contains **120 questions** divided into two sections. All questions are compulsory.
2. All questions are **passage-based**. Read each passage carefully before attempting the questions that follow.
3. Each question has **four options** (A, B, C, D). Choose the **most appropriate** answer.
4. **Marking:** +1 correct | -0.25 incorrect | 0 unattempted.
5. Use the **OMR Answer Sheet** provided separately. Use **blue/black ballpoint pen** only. Fill bubbles completely.
6. **Do not** use pencil, gel pen, or whitener on the OMR sheet.
7. Mark **only one bubble** per question. Multiple marks = **cancellation**.
8. Do not fold, tear, or damage the OMR sheet.
9. **Rough work** may be done in the blank space of this booklet. No separate rough sheets provided.
10. Total duration: **120 minutes** (2 hours). No extra time.
11. Do not leave the hall before the test concludes without the invigilator's permission.
12. Any **unfair means** (mobile phones, electronic devices, communication) = immediate disqualification.
13. **Suggested time:** English ~80 min | GK ~40 min.

DO NOT OPEN THIS BOOKLET UNTIL INSTRUCTED TO DO SO.

All the best!

SECTION I — ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Directions: Read each passage carefully and answer the questions that follow. Each passage is followed by five questions based on its content.

Passage 1 (Questions 1–5)

Stoicism in a Distracted Age

When the Roman Stoic Epictetus drew his sharp distinction between what is in our power and what is not, he was offering not a withdrawal from the world but a discipline for living in it. The body, reputation, property, public office — none of these, he argued, are properly ours; they are on loan, and any anguish caused by their loss is a category mistake. What is genuinely ours is narrower and stranger: judgement, intention, the assent we give to our own impressions. To be free is therefore not to expand the domain of one's possessions but to contract the domain of one's anxieties to those things one can in fact govern.

The argument has acquired a peculiar resonance in an age engineered, at considerable expense, to keep our attention fixed on precisely the territory Epictetus warned against. Notifications, rankings, the metrics of approval — these are designed to reach inside the citadel of judgement, to bid for assent before assent has had time to deliberate. Modern Stoicism, in the hands of writers like Pierre Hadot and, more popularly, Ryan Holiday, is therefore not a quietism but a counter-discipline: the deliberate, repeated act of withdrawing assent from impressions one has not chosen to entertain.

Critics object that this risks a privileged complacency, a philosophy for those whose external goods are already secure and who can therefore afford to treat them as indifferent. The objection is sharp but not, I think, fatal. The Stoic response is that no one's external goods are secure — the wealthiest and most powerful citizens of Rome lost theirs by sunrise — and that to predicate one's serenity on their permanence is to live in chronic terror disguised as contentment. The training, if anything, is more urgent for the precariously placed, not less.

1. The author's principal claim about Stoicism is that it is best understood as:

- (A) A philosophy of withdrawal from the world.
- (B) A doctrine that property and reputation are illusions.
- (C) A counter-discipline against the modern engineering of attention, in which one deliberately withdraws assent from unchosen impressions.
- (D) A consolatory philosophy primarily designed for the wealthy.

2. In the second paragraph, the phrase “the citadel of judgement” functions principally as:

- (A) A metaphor for the inner faculty of assent that, on the Stoic view, alone belongs to us.
- (B) A literal historical reference to a Roman fortress.
- (C) A satirical attack on modern technology firms.
- (D) An allusion to Pierre Hadot's biography.

3. The author addresses the criticism that Stoicism is a “philosophy for the privileged” by:

- (A) Conceding the criticism without rejoinder.
- (B) Arguing that, since no one's external goods are in fact secure, the Stoic training is more, not less, urgent for the precariously placed.
- (C) Citing modern political science to dismiss the criticism as unhistorical.
- (D) Suggesting that only Roman citizens were entitled to practise Stoicism.

4. The word “quietism” in the second paragraph, as used in context, most nearly means:

- (A) An aesthetic preference for silence.
- (B) A school of Roman jurisprudence.
- (C) A doctrine of physical asceticism.
- (D) A passive acceptance of the world that abstains from action or engagement.

5. Which of the following, if true, would most weaken the author's defence of Stoicism in the third paragraph?

- (A) Evidence that, in modern populations, those whose external goods are secure derive significantly more benefit from Stoic exercises than those who are precariously placed.
- (B) Evidence that the wealthiest Romans in fact retained their property until death.
- (C) Studies showing that the practice of Stoic exercises significantly reduces self-reported anxiety in volunteers.
- (D) Evidence that Pierre Hadot misattributed several texts to Epictetus.

Passage 2 (Questions 6–10)

Postmodern Fiction and the Reader's Bargain

If realist fiction asks the reader to forget that she is reading, postmodern fiction asks her to remember it at every turn. The pact of suspension that the nineteenth-century novel had perfected — characters who behave as if no one is watching, narrators who report rather than perform, a world that pretends to have written itself — is not so much broken in writers like Italo Calvino or Donald Barthelme as held up to the light, examined, occasionally embraced and then abandoned mid-page.

This can be exasperating. Critics from F. R. Leavis onwards have accused the postmodern novel of trading the cumulative emotional power of its predecessors for a kind of cleverness that runs out of fuel within a hundred pages. There is something in the charge. A novel that reminds you on every page of its own constructedness has fewer resources for the slow, low-key earning of attachment that gives *Middlemarch* or *Anna Karenina* their hold. Cleverness flatters; attachment costs.

But to read the postmodern bargain only as a loss is to miss what it offers in exchange. The realist illusion is, after all, an illusion: the world does not in fact narrate itself, and the smoothness of nineteenth-century prose conceals a long apprenticeship in how to make a particular ideology of selfhood look like nature. The postmodernists, by exposing the seams, do not destroy the cloth so much as offer the reader a stake in its making. The bargain is no longer one of trust — "believe me" — but of collaboration: "watch me, and decide." Whether that exchange is worth the loss of immersion is, in the end, a question about what readers are for.

6. Which of the following best states the author's central thesis?

- (A) Postmodern fiction is artistically superior to realist fiction.
- (B) Postmodern fiction trades the trust-based pact of realism for a collaborative one in which the reader is invited to watch and judge the novel's making.
- (C) Postmodern fiction has destroyed the readership of the realist novel.
- (D) Postmodern fiction is, on balance, a failed experiment.

7. The author's attitude towards F. R. Leavis's criticism of postmodern fiction is best described as:

- (A) Wholly dismissive.
- (B) Wholly endorsing.
- (C) Partly conceding the substance of the criticism while ultimately reframing the postmodern novel as offering a different bargain rather than a failed one.
- (D) Indifferent.

8. The metaphor of "exposing the seams" in the third paragraph is best understood as referring to:

- (A) The literal binding of a printed book.
- (B) A school of literary biography.
- (C) An attack by Calvino on traditional tailoring metaphors.
- (D) The postmodern novel's deliberate display of its own techniques of construction, rather than concealing them in the manner of realist fiction.

9. Which of the following is the closest in meaning to the word "apprenticeship" as used in the third paragraph?

- (A) Legal contract.
- (B) Sustained period of training and practice.
- (C) Religious initiation.
- (D) Single act of imitation.

10. Which of the following, if true, would most strengthen the author's defence of postmodern fiction?

- (A) Evidence that readers of postmodern novels report a greater sense of active interpretive engagement than readers of realist novels of comparable length.
- (B) Evidence that postmodern novels have lower sales than realist novels.
- (C) Evidence that Calvino's novels have been translated into more languages than Tolstoy's.
- (D) Evidence that nineteenth-century critics also disliked *Middlemarch*.

Passage 3 (Questions 11–15)

Cognitive Biases and the Limits of Self-Knowledge

The catalogue of cognitive biases, assembled patiently over four decades by psychologists from Amos Tversky and Daniel Kahneman onwards, has made its way out of the laboratory and into the everyday vocabulary of the educated reader. Confirmation bias, anchoring, the availability heuristic — these are no longer technical terms but common reproaches, and to be told that one is "anchoring" is now a recognisable form of insult. The diffusion is, on the whole, healthy. A culture that has learned to name its own systematic errors is in a better position to correct them than one that has not.

And yet there is a paradox at the centre of this expansion. The very studies that document our biases also document a stubborn phenomenon called the "bias blind spot": the tendency to recognise distortion in others while remaining serenely confident that one's own judgement is unaffected. Knowing about a bias, it turns out, does not in any straightforward way protect against it. The educated reader, equipped with the vocabulary, may now be more efficient in attributing bias to her opponents and less, not more, alert to its operation in herself.

This does not invalidate the bias literature, but it reframes its proper use. The catalogue is most usefully read in the first person, as a kind of mirror, rather than in the third person, as an arsenal. Designed for self-suspicion, it becomes, in many readers, a tool for the more efficient suspicion of others. Like much of psychology, it is at its best when the laboratory finding is taken as a hypothesis about oneself and at its

worst when it is taken as a verdict on someone else.

11. The author's central concern about the popular diffusion of the bias literature is that:

- (A) It has been mistranslated outside the laboratory and bears little relation to the underlying findings.
- (B) It has displaced classical philosophy from public discourse.
- (C) It has produced a generation of readers immune to their own biases.
- (D) Although on the whole healthy, the literature is most often used as an arsenal against others rather than as a mirror for self-suspicion.

12. The phenomenon called the "bias blind spot," as described in the passage, most directly contradicts which assumption?

- (A) That biases are universal across cultures.
- (B) That confirmation bias is the most powerful of all biases.
- (C) That awareness of a bias straightforwardly protects the aware person from its operation in herself.
- (D) That Kahneman and Tversky were correct in their original formulations.

13. The contrast between "mirror" and "arsenal" in the third paragraph functions principally to:

- (A) Distinguish between two competing schools within experimental psychology.
- (B) Distinguish between the proper, self-directed use of the bias catalogue and its frequent misuse as a tool for the suspicion of others.
- (C) Distinguish between qualitative and quantitative methods.
- (D) Distinguish between bias and stereotype.

14. Which of the following best captures the author's overall tone?

- (A) Cautiously appreciative, but concerned about a particular pattern of misuse.
- (B) Sceptical of the bias literature in its entirety.
- (C) Indignant and polemical.
- (D) Triumphant.

15. Which of the following findings, if established, would most weaken the author's argument?

- (A) Studies showing that confirmation bias is more powerful than the availability heuristic.
- (B) Studies showing that the bias blind spot is more pronounced in highly educated populations.
- (C) Studies showing that readers of popular bias literature are systematically more accurate in identifying bias in their own judgements than non-readers, even after controlling for general education.
- (D) Studies showing that Tversky and Kahneman's early work has been replicated.

Passage 4 (Questions 16–20)

Behavioural Economics and the Architecture of Choice

Standard economic theory begins with a simple, demanding assumption: that people, given the relevant information, choose what they prefer. Behavioural economics, building on the work of Kahneman, Tversky, Thaler and others, has spent forty years demonstrating that this assumption is, at best, a useful approximation. Default options are accepted; framing alters preferences; small fees deter behaviours that large penalties would not; the same retirement plan attracts very different participation rates depending on whether enrolment is opt-in or opt-out.

The policy implication, developed most influentially by Cass Sunstein and Richard Thaler under the unhappy banner of "libertarian paternalism," is that policymakers should design the architecture of choice deliberately, since they will design it inadvertently if they do not. If one default produces 30 per cent enrolment in a savings plan and another produces 80 per cent, the choice between defaults is not neutral, and pretending it is simply hands the design over to whichever clerk drafted the form.

Critics on the left worry that this re-licenses paternalism under a market-friendly label and that the "choice architects" are, in practice, well-paid consultants whose preferences quietly become everyone else's. Critics on the right worry that defaults work because they exploit cognitive limitations rather than respecting them, and that a state that engineers behaviour by exploiting weakness is a state that has stopped treating its citizens as adults.

Both criticisms have a kernel of truth, and both can be answered. The defence is not that nudges are always benign — they are not — but that the alternative is not the absence of architecture but a less reflective version of the same thing. The honest question, then, is not whether to design choice environments but who designs them, on whose authority, and with what mechanisms of accountability.

16. Which of the following best captures the author's principal argument?

- (A) Behavioural economics has refuted standard economic theory in its entirety.
- (B) Choice architecture is unavoidable, so the meaningful question is who designs it, on whose authority, and with what accountability.
- (C) Nudges are always benign and should be expanded across all areas of policy.
- (D) Standard economic theory is correct and should be retained.

17. The author describes the term "libertarian paternalism" as an "unhappy banner" most likely because:

- (A) Sunstein and Thaler have themselves disowned the phrase.
- (B) It refers to a discredited nineteenth-century school.
- (C) It was coined by an opponent of behavioural economics.
- (D) The phrase combines apparently contradictory commitments and lends itself to misunderstanding from both political flanks.

18. Which of the following is the closest restatement of the criticism attributed to the political right in the passage?

- (A) That defaults are effective only because they exploit cognitive limitations, and that a State that engineers behaviour through such exploitation has ceased to treat its citizens as adults.
- (B) That nudges are too expensive to administer.
- (C) That nudges produce better outcomes than mandates.
- (D) That choice architects are always state employees.

19. The author's attitude towards the criticisms of nudging is best described as:

- (A) Wholly dismissive.
- (B) Wholly accepting.
- (C) Conceding that each criticism contains a kernel of truth, while reframing the issue around the design and accountability of choice architecture.
- (D) Indifferent.

20. Which of the following, if true, would most weaken the author's defence of nudging?

- (A) Evidence that the average citizen would, on reflection, endorse the design choices made by typical choice architects.
- (B) Evidence that, in practice, nudges are almost always designed by a small group of consultants whose preferences systematically diverge from those of the populations affected, with little possibility of revision.
- (C) Evidence that opt-out organ donation systems significantly increase donation rates.
- (D) Evidence that standard economic theory is empirically robust in financial markets.

Passage 5 (Questions 21–25)

Quantum Entanglement and the Limits of Intuition

When two particles become "entangled" in the technical sense of quantum mechanics, a measurement made on one of them yields a result correlated with the result of a measurement on the other, no matter how far apart they are at the moment of measurement. The correlation is not, on the standard interpretation, a signal travelling between the two; nothing physical passes from one to the other at any speed, let alone at a speed greater than that of light. And yet the correlations cannot be explained by any "hidden variable" theory in which each particle quietly carried, from the outset, a complete set of definite properties.

This result, secured by the inequalities derived by John Bell in 1964 and confirmed by experiments from Aspect in the 1980s through to the loophole-free runs of the 2010s, has the unhappy feature of being precisely as solid as the rest of physics and precisely as offensive to common sense as anything else in modern science. Einstein famously dismissed it as "spooky action at a distance." The dismissal was elegant; it was also wrong, in that the experiments have steadily closed the loopholes through which one might still hope to rescue local realism.

The philosophical question is what to do with such a result. One option, congenial to many physicists, is to shrug: the formalism predicts the experiments, the experiments confirm the formalism, and the demand that nature also conform to our pre-quantum intuitions is itself naive. Another option, congenial to philosophers, is to read the result as evidence that one of the deep assumptions of classical metaphysics — locality, realism, or perhaps the very idea that physical objects have determinate properties prior to measurement — must be revised. The experimental physicist need not choose; the rest of us, perhaps, should.

21. Which of the following statements about entanglement is most directly supported by the passage?

- (A) Correlations between measurements of entangled particles cannot be explained by any local hidden-variable theory.
- (B) Measurement of one entangled particle sends a faster-than-light signal to the other.
- (C) Bell's inequalities have been refuted by recent experiments.
- (D) Einstein's dismissal of entanglement has been vindicated by recent experiments.

22. The author's attitude towards Einstein's dismissal of entanglement as "spooky action at a distance" is best described as:

- (A) Wholly endorsing.
- (B) Contemptuous.
- (C) Indifferent.
- (D) Acknowledging the elegance of the dismissal while noting that subsequent experiments have undercut its substance.

23. In the third paragraph, the contrast between physicists who "shrug" and philosophers who do not, primarily serves to:

- (A) Suggest that physicists are intellectually superior to philosophers.
- (B) Distinguish between a pragmatic acceptance of the formalism and a deeper interpretive concern about which classical assumption must be revised.
- (C) Defend a strict separation between physics and philosophy.
- (D) Endorse the local hidden-variable interpretation.

24. The author's overall stance, as expressed in the closing sentence, is best described as:

- (A) That philosophical worry about entanglement is a luxury and should be set aside.
- (B) That the question of entanglement has been definitively resolved by Bell's inequalities.
- (C) That the experimental physicist may legitimately set the question aside, but that those interested in metaphysics should take it seriously.
- (D) That the formalism of quantum mechanics is itself in error.

25. The phrase "local realism," as used in the passage, is best understood to mean:

- (A) A movement in twentieth-century literature.
- (B) An economic doctrine of regional self-sufficiency.
- (C) A school of legal theory associated with John Bell.
- (D) The combined assumption that physical influences propagate no faster than light and that physical objects possess determinate properties prior to measurement.

Passage 6 (Questions 26–30)

The Renaissance and the Invention of the Individual

The familiar story, popularised in the nineteenth century by the Swiss historian Jacob Burckhardt, runs as follows: in the medieval centuries, men and women understood themselves principally as members of a corporate body — a guild, a parish, a chivalric order, a city — and only with the Italian Renaissance did the modern individual, conscious of himself as a distinct centre of perception and ambition, step decisively into European history. The cathedrals were built by communities; the Sistine Chapel was painted by Michelangelo.

The story is too neat by half, and historians have spent the better part of a century qualifying it. Medieval autobiographies — Augustine's *Confessions* is the obvious counter-example, but there are many others — show a sustained and sophisticated interest in interiority. Renaissance Florence, for its part, was a city of guilds and confraternities at least as much as it was a city of individual geniuses, and many of the works we now attribute to single names were the productions of workshops in which apprentices and masters were structurally indistinguishable to contemporary observers.

And yet, with all those qualifications entered, something does shift. The signed self-portrait, the dated diary, the autobiography written in adult middle age and intended for posterity rather than confession to God — these are recognisably more abundant in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries than in the centuries that precede them. Burckhardt's claim, then, is best read not as the discovery of an historical light-switch but as the identification of a slow change in the centre of gravity. The medieval individual existed; the Renaissance individual is the one who has arranged for posterity to know it.

26. Which of the following best captures the author's overall position on Burckhardt's account of the Renaissance?

- (A) It overstates a discontinuity but identifies a real, if gradual, shift in the centre of gravity of self-presentation.
- (B) It is wholly false and should be discarded.
- (C) It is wholly correct as originally stated.
- (D) It is irrelevant to modern historical practice.

27. The author cites Augustine's *Confessions* principally to:

- (A) Demonstrate that the modern individual was an invention of the fourth century.
- (B) Argue that Burckhardt was wholly correct.
- (C) Provide a counter-example to the claim that medieval people lacked sustained interest in interiority.
- (D) Suggest that medieval Christianity was hostile to art.

28. The metaphor of an "historical light-switch" in the third paragraph is used to:

- (A) Endorse the view that the Renaissance was a sudden break from the medieval period.
- (B) Reject the view that the Renaissance was a sudden break, in favour of a slower change in centre of gravity.
- (C) Compare medieval and Renaissance illumination technology.
- (D) Defend the workshop attribution of paintings.

29. The closing sentence — "The medieval individual existed; the Renaissance individual is the one who has arranged for posterity to know it" — primarily emphasises:

- (A) A change in self-conception of the same magnitude as the change in self-presentation.
- (B) A celebration of medieval communal anonymity.

- (C) The author's rejection of the very category of "the individual."
- (D) A continuity of inner life with a marked change in the technologies and conventions of self-documentation.

30. Which of the following findings, if established, would most strengthen the author's revised version of Burckhardt?

- (A) Quantitative evidence that signed self-portraits, dated diaries and autobiographies intended for posterity rose sharply in number from the fifteenth century onwards, even as forms of corporate identity persisted.
- (B) Evidence that no medieval autobiographies survive.
- (C) Evidence that Renaissance Florence was unaffected by guild structures.
- (D) Evidence that Burckhardt was unaware of Augustine's Confessions.

Passage 7 (Questions 31–35)

Surveillance, Capitalism, and the Question of Consent

Shoshana Zuboff's term "surveillance capitalism" describes a particular mutation in the business model of large internet firms: the systematic harvesting of behavioural data — clicks, dwell-times, location traces, scroll patterns — and its conversion, through machine learning, into predictive products sold to advertisers and others. The harvest, on Zuboff's account, is not an incidental by-product of services rendered but the principal commercial purpose of the architecture; the services are bait.

Defenders of the model reply that consumers have consented, in the form of terms-of-service agreements that they were free to read and reject. The reply is technically correct and substantively thin. The agreements are long, complex, and presented at moments — installation, registration — when the user has every incentive to click through and none to read. Studies estimate that a careful reading of every terms-of-service agreement encountered by a typical user in a year would consume something on the order of a working month. Consent extracted under conditions in which non-consent is impractical to a point of fiction is consent in form rather than in substance.

The sharper question is not whether the existing model violates a principle of consent — almost any plausible reading of consent shows that it does — but what kind of regulatory framework could substitute. Outright bans on behavioural advertising would, if European experience is any guide, simply migrate the practice into less visible and less regulated channels. Default-on protections, akin to the opt-out architecture of certain medical-data regimes, alter the equilibrium without abolishing the practice. The harder cases turn on the use of inferred data: information you did not provide and could not have refused to provide, because it was constructed from your behaviour. To consent to that, in any meaningful sense, would require knowing what was being inferred — which is precisely what the architecture is designed to obscure.

31. Which of the following best summarises the author's central argument?

- (A) That outright bans on behavioural advertising are the only acceptable policy.
- (B) That terms-of-service agreements are an adequate basis for consent.
- (C) That consent in the surveillance-capitalism model is largely a formality, and that the real regulatory difficulty turns on the governance of inferred data.
- (D) That Zuboff's account of surveillance capitalism is mistaken.

32. In the second paragraph, the phrase "consent in form rather than in substance" most directly serves to:

- (A) Endorse the legal validity of terms-of-service agreements.
- (B) Distinguish a procedurally satisfied requirement of consent from a substantively meaningful one.
- (C) Argue that no consent is ever possible online.
- (D) Defend the harvesting of behavioural data.

33. The reference to a hypothetical "working month" of reading is included primarily to:

- (A) Illustrate that the practical conditions under which consent is sought make non-consent close to impossible.
- (B) Praise the productivity of users who read every agreement in full.
- (C) Argue for the abolition of all online services.
- (D) Criticise European medical-data regimes.

34. Which of the following best describes the author's view of outright bans on behavioural advertising?

- (A) They are clearly the right approach and should be adopted.
- (B) They were proposed by Zuboff and should be rejected.
- (C) They have already been adopted in the European Union with great success.
- (D) They risk simply migrating the practice into less visible and less regulated channels.

35. The author identifies the governance of "inferred data" as a particularly hard case because:

- (A) Inferred data is illegal under all major data-protection frameworks.
- (B) Inferred data is more accurate than directly provided data.

- (C) Meaningful consent to the use of inferred data would require knowing what was being inferred, which the architecture is designed to obscure.
(D) Inferred data is rarely commercially valuable.

Passage 8 (Questions 36–40)

Modernism and the Refusal of Decoration

In an essay published in 1908, the Austrian architect Adolf Loos declared that "ornament is crime." The phrase, scandalous in its own time, became one of the foundational slogans of architectural modernism. What Loos meant was not that decoration was, in any straightforward sense, immoral, but that the labour expended on it — the carving, the gilding, the meticulous application of motif on surface — was, in an industrial age, a misallocation. The hours given to the carving of an acanthus leaf might instead have been given to the housing of a worker.

The argument is at once aesthetic and economic, and the aesthetic case has worn better than the economic. Modernism's stripped surfaces, exposed materials, and refusal of historical reference produced, in their best examples — the Bauhaus, Le Corbusier's Villa Savoye, Mies van der Rohe's Farnsworth House — buildings of austere clarity that have lost nothing of their force a century on. The economic case has been more troubled. Industrial production did not, in the event, free labour for the housing of workers; it freed it, eventually, for the carving of new forms of decoration on new surfaces, including those of modernist buildings themselves, which acquired by the 1980s a recognisable iconography of their own.

The deeper irony is that modernism's polemic against ornament became, over time, an ornament — a way of signalling cultivation, expense and seriousness, no less recognisable than a Corinthian capital. The rejection of decoration was, on its own terms, decoration. This does not refute Loos's argument so much as relocate it: every age generates its own grammar of significant surface, and the modernist age made one in the very act of denying that it had.

36. The author's principal claim about Adolf Loos's slogan "ornament is crime" is that it:

- (A) Was meant literally as a moral condemnation of all decoration.
(B) Combined an economic argument about the misallocation of industrial-age labour with an aesthetic argument, the latter of which has aged better.
(C) Was withdrawn by Loos in his later writings.
(D) Was directed primarily at Le Corbusier.

37. Which of the following best captures the irony identified in the closing paragraph?

- (A) That the modernist rejection of decoration itself became a form of decoration — a recognisable grammar of significant surface.
(B) That modernist architects secretly preferred ornamented buildings.
(C) That Loos lived in a heavily ornamented house.
(D) That modernist buildings were unpopular with the public.

38. The author's overall stance on Loos's argument is best described as:

- (A) Outright rejection.
(B) Outright endorsement.
(C) Indifferent.
(D) Acknowledging the durability of the aesthetic case while complicating the economic case and noting the historical irony of modernism's own ornamental grammar.

39. The phrase "misallocation" in the first paragraph is closest in meaning to:

- (A) Mathematical error.
(B) Theft.
(C) Wasteful or wrongful direction of resources from a use of higher value to one of lower value.
(D) Random distribution.

40. Which of the following findings, if established, would most strengthen the author's complication of Loos's economic case?

- (A) Evidence that the Bauhaus designed no buildings.
(B) Evidence that industrial labour saved by undecorated production was, on the whole, redirected to other forms of cultural production rather than to housing.
(C) Evidence that Loos in fact endorsed the Corinthian order.
(D) Evidence that Le Corbusier disliked Mies van der Rohe.

Passage 9 (Questions 41–45)

The Slow Erosion of Democratic Norms

When democracies fail in the twenty-first century, the political scientists Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt have argued, they rarely fail by tank. The army does not roll into the capital; the constitution is not formally suspended; the elections, in many cases, continue to be held. Failure proceeds instead through the slow erosion of unwritten norms — the conventions that, in a healthy democracy, restrain the holders of office from using the full instruments of state against their political opponents.

Two such norms do most of the work. The first is what Levitsky and Ziblatt call "mutual toleration": the recognition by competing parties that their opponents, however much they are disliked, are legitimate participants in the same democratic project rather than enemies of the nation. The second, more elusive, is "institutional forbearance": the deliberate non-use of legally available powers — the power to impeach for trivial reasons, to pack the courts, to investigate every donor of an opposing party — out of an understanding that the long-term health of the system depends on holding those powers in reserve.

The trouble with norms is that they cannot, by definition, be enforced by formal rule, since once they are formalised they cease to be norms and become merely the operation of the rule. They survive, when they survive, by a shared willingness to be bound by something less than law and more than habit. Their erosion is correspondingly difficult to measure and difficult to reverse: each individual breach can be defended as the lawful exercise of a recognised power, and the cumulative damage becomes visible only in retrospect, when the convention that everyone tacitly relied upon has stopped existing. The defence of democracy, on this account, is less a matter of constitutional drafting than of cultivating, in elites and citizens alike, the habits of restraint on which formal institutions silently depend.

41. Which of the following best captures the central thesis of the passage?

- (A) That twenty-first-century democracies most often fail through outright military coups.
- (B) That democratic failure can always be measured precisely as it occurs.
- (C) That formal constitutional drafting is sufficient to safeguard democratic government.
- (D) That the most consequential threat to modern democracies is the slow erosion of unwritten norms such as mutual toleration and institutional forbearance.

42. "Institutional forbearance," as defined in the passage, refers to:

- (A) The deliberate non-use of legally available powers in the long-term interest of the system.
- (B) The constitutional duty to follow every available legal procedure.
- (C) The power of the executive to impeach legislators.
- (D) A doctrine of judicial deference to the legislature.

43. The author's principal observation about the difficulty of measuring norm erosion is that:

- (A) Each individual breach is illegal and easily catalogued.
- (B) Norm erosion can be detected by formal constitutional review.
- (C) Each breach can be defended as the lawful exercise of a recognised power, with the cumulative damage becoming visible only in retrospect.
- (D) Democratic theory provides no vocabulary for describing it.

44. The closing sentence of the passage implies that the defence of democracy depends most importantly on:

- (A) Frequent constitutional amendments.
- (B) The cultivation of habits of restraint among elites and citizens.
- (C) Increased formal powers for the courts.
- (D) The election of charismatic leaders.

45. Which of the following findings, if established, would most weaken the argument of the passage?

- (A) Evidence that some norms are difficult to enforce by formal rule.
- (B) Evidence that some twenty-first-century democracies have nonetheless been overthrown by classical coups.
- (C) Evidence that Levitsky and Ziblatt have published several books on the topic.
- (D) Cross-national evidence that democracies in which mutual toleration and institutional forbearance have visibly declined remain otherwise stable for decades, with no measurable democratic erosion.

Passage 10 (Questions 46–50)

When a Language Dies

Linguists estimate that, of the roughly seven thousand languages currently spoken in the world, between half and three-quarters will have ceased to be spoken by the end of the twenty-first century. The figures are estimates rather than measurements, and the mechanisms of decline are various — colonisation, schooling, migration, television — but the trajectory is unmistakable. A language disappears, on average, every fortnight. By the time the last fluent speaker dies, the structures she carried with her — phonological, grammatical, lexical, discursive — leave no further trace except in whatever recordings and grammars happened to be made.

It is sometimes argued, principally by economists, that this loss is regrettable but not tragic, since the speakers of dying languages have, in shifting to dominant ones, secured access to wider opportunities. The argument has the elegance of treating language as a transferable medium of communication and the inadequacy of treating it as nothing else. Languages are not interchangeable in the way that currencies are. Each carries within it categories of perception, classifications of kinship, distinctions of evidentiality and aspect that have no precise equivalent in any other tongue, and a community that loses its language loses, with it, the only fluent access to the conceptual world that the language encoded.

This is not, on its own, an argument against the wider opportunities afforded by dominant languages. It is an argument for taking seriously the loss that accompanies the gain — for documenting languages while their fluent speakers remain, for designing schools that do not force a binary choice, and for treating linguistic diversity as the bearer of intellectual diversity rather than as an obstacle to commerce. The instrumentalist view is not, in the end, refuted. It is shown to be incomplete.

46. Which of the following best captures the author's central argument?

- (A) That the loss of languages is, all things considered, a benefit.
- (B) That language loss is regrettable but trivial, since it concerns only communication.
- (C) That the instrumentalist view of language as merely a medium of communication is incomplete, because each language encodes a distinctive conceptual world the loss of which is a real intellectual cost.
- (D) That dominant languages should be banned in regions where minority languages survive.

47. The author's attitude towards the economic argument that language loss is acceptable in exchange for wider opportunities is best described as:

- (A) Acknowledging its partial validity while arguing that it is incomplete because it treats language as nothing more than a transferable medium of communication.
- (B) Endorsing it without qualification.
- (C) Dismissive of its substance.
- (D) Indifferent.

48. Which of the following is the most accurate paraphrase of the analogy implicit in "Languages are not interchangeable in the way that currencies are"?

- (A) Currencies are more valuable than languages.
- (B) Languages, unlike currencies, carry conceptual content that cannot be straightforwardly converted into another medium.
- (C) Currencies and languages are both abstract symbols.
- (D) Languages should be regulated by central banks.

49. The author's principal policy recommendation, drawn from the closing paragraph, is that:

- (A) All instruction in dominant languages should cease in multilingual regions.
- (B) Recordings of dying languages are unnecessary.
- (C) Linguistic diversity is an obstacle to commerce and should be reduced.
- (D) Schools should be designed to avoid forcing a binary choice between minority and dominant languages, and endangered languages should be documented while fluent speakers remain.

50. The word "evidentiality" in the second paragraph, as used in context, most nearly refers to:

- (A) A grammatical category by which some languages systematically encode the source of the speaker's information.
- (B) A doctrine of evidence in courts of law.
- (C) A school of nineteenth-century philosophy.
- (D) The volume of recordings of a language.

Passage 11 (Questions 51–55)

Deep Ecology and the Limits of Anthropocentrism

The Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess introduced the term "deep ecology" in 1973 to mark a contrast with what he called the "shallow" environmentalism then dominant in policy circles. Shallow environmentalism, on his account, framed the protection of nature instrumentally: clean air because it is good for human lungs, biodiversity because it sustains agriculture, forests because they regulate the rivers that supply human cities. The framing was effective in mobilising public support, but it left the deeper question — whether the natural world had value independent of its usefulness to human beings — politely unasked.

Deep ecology answered that question in the affirmative. It argued that other species, ecosystems and indeed the biosphere as a whole have intrinsic value that is not reducible to their usefulness to us, and that human flourishing must be reinterpreted to fit within, rather than against, the flourishing of the wider community of life. The position is at once metaphysical and political: it commits its adherents to a view about the standing of non-human nature, and it draws from that view consequences for population, consumption and economic organisation that more anthropocentric environmentalisms find too radical to discuss in mainstream forums.

Critics, including some sympathetic environmentalists, have argued that the deep ecological position is hard to operationalise — that any policy will, in the end, have to compare human and non-human interests, and that the language of intrinsic value can obscure the fact that someone, somewhere, is making the comparison. The objection is fair. But it is one thing to acknowledge that comparisons must be made, and quite another to insist that only one side of the scale carries weight. Deep ecology's enduring contribution is not a complete decision procedure but a refusal to let the question be settled in advance by the convenient assumption that everything non-human is, by default, raw material.

51. Which of the following best captures the contrast Naess drew between "shallow" and "deep" environmentalism?

- (A) Shallow environmentalism is concerned with rivers and deep environmentalism with forests.
- (B) Shallow environmentalism frames the protection of nature instrumentally; deep environmentalism attributes intrinsic value to non-human nature.
- (C) Shallow environmentalism is a Scandinavian movement and deep environmentalism a global one.
- (D) Shallow environmentalism rejects population policy; deep environmentalism endorses it.

52. The author's overall stance on deep ecology is best described as:

- (A) A wholesale endorsement.
- (B) An outright rejection.
- (C) Sympathetic, while acknowledging that the position is hard to operationalise and does not provide a complete decision procedure.
- (D) Indifferent.

53. Which of the following best captures the criticism of deep ecology that the author both acknowledges and answers?

- (A) That deep ecology is too sympathetic to human interests.
- (B) That intrinsic value is identical to economic value.
- (C) That deep ecology was invented by economists.
- (D) That any policy will, in the end, require comparison of human and non-human interests, and that talk of intrinsic value can obscure the fact that the comparison is being made.

54. The author's reply to that criticism is best stated as:

- (A) That acknowledging the need to compare interests is consistent with refusing to let the comparison be settled in advance by an assumption that the non-human side carries no weight.
- (B) That comparisons need not be made at all.
- (C) That the criticism is a fabrication.
- (D) That only deep ecologists may make such comparisons.

55. The phrase "raw material" in the closing paragraph functions principally as:

- (A) A literal reference to industrial inputs.
- (B) An allusion to nineteenth-century mining policy.
- (C) A characterisation of the implicit anthropocentric view that the non-human world has only instrumental value.
- (D) A defence of resource extraction.

Passage 12 (Questions 56–60)

The Origins of Jazz and the Politics of Authorship

The conventional account of jazz traces its origins to the African-American communities of New Orleans in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, where the legacies of West African polyrhythm, the blues, the spirituals, the brass-band traditions of the French and Creole quarters and the dance forms of the Caribbean fused into something that was recognisably new by about 1900 and recognisably named by about 1917. The story is, in its broad outlines, accurate; what it obscures is the slowness of recognition — the long decades during which the players who made the music were credited far less than the bandleaders who arranged it and the publishers who sold it.

The figure of Louis Armstrong illustrates the asymmetry. By the late 1920s, his solos with the Hot Five and Hot Seven had reorganised the entire vocabulary of the music, transforming jazz from an ensemble form in which the soloist was incidental into a soloist's art in which the ensemble was, in effect, accompaniment. The transformation was as fundamental to twentieth-century music as anything in classical composition; it is also, demonstrably, what listeners today still hear when they hear jazz. And yet the royalty arrangements, the published credits and the early scholarly histories all systematically under-recorded both his economic share and his intellectual contribution.

Nothing in this is unique to jazz. Folk traditions, hymnody, popular song and oral epic share a structural problem of authorship, in which a form's most decisive innovators are also those least likely to have access to the legal and commercial machinery through which authorship is claimed. The corrective work of the last fifty years — by historians, archivists and an increasingly attentive listening public — has not so much overturned the conventional account as filled in the names that the conventional account had left as collective nouns. "New Orleans," it turns out, was a list of people, and the list was longer and more specific than the early histories had room to record.

56. Which of the following best states the author's central claim?

- (A) That the conventional account of jazz's origins is wholly false.
- (B) That the conventional account is broadly accurate, but obscured the slow recognition of the players whose contributions were systematically under-credited.
- (C) That jazz was invented in Europe.
- (D) That Louis Armstrong's importance has been overstated.

57. The author cites Louis Armstrong principally to:

- (A) Argue that he was the sole inventor of jazz.
- (B) Defend early scholarly histories of jazz.
- (C) Suggest that the Hot Five and Hot Seven recordings have been overrated.
- (D) Illustrate the asymmetry between decisive musical innovation and the legal and commercial recognition of that innovation.

58. The phrase "a list of people, and the list was longer and more specific than the early histories had room to record" most directly serves to:

- (A) Illustrate the corrective work of recovering individual authorship from a collective noun.
- (B) Argue that early histories of jazz were deliberately falsified.
- (C) Reject the geographical attribution of jazz to New Orleans.
- (D) Defend the use of collective nouns in historiography.

59. The author's overall tone is best described as:

- (A) Polemical and accusatory.
- (B) Detached and ironic.
- (C) Measured, sympathetic and corrective rather than dismissive.
- (D) Sentimental.

60. Which of the following findings, if established, would most strengthen the author's argument about the structural problem of authorship?

- (A) Evidence that the term "jazz" was first used in Europe.
- (B) Evidence that Louis Armstrong recorded only a single album.
- (C) Evidence that no jazz historian has ever revised the conventional account.
- (D) Quantitative evidence that, across folk, hymnody and popular song traditions, the principal stylistic innovators were systematically under-credited in royalty and publication records.

Passage 13 (Questions 61–65)

Bauhaus and the Marriage of Craft and Industry

When Walter Gropius founded the Bauhaus in Weimar in 1919, the school's animating ambition was to dissolve the inherited distinction between fine art and applied craft. The teacher of the colour wheel was to share a corridor with the teacher of joinery; the painter and the potter were to be apprentices in a single workshop. The early years of the school carried strong traces of an arts-and-crafts romanticism, in which the medieval cathedral lodge — with its undivided community of glaziers, masons and sculptors — served as a half-mythical model for what a modern art school might once again become.

The move to Dessau in 1925, and the appointment of Hannes Meyer and then Mies van der Rohe as directors, marked a decisive turn. The cathedral lodge was quietly retired in favour of an industrial idiom: design now had to answer to series production, the chair to the assembly line, the lamp to the wholesale catalogue. What the Bauhaus offered, in this second phase, was a vocabulary for serial production that did not feel cheap — that married the discipline of the workshop to the geometry of the factory, and produced objects that have proved unusually resistant to the dating that fashion otherwise inflicts on industrial design. The school was closed under political pressure in 1933, but its influence was carried abroad by the very dispersal that closed it. Mies built skyscrapers in Chicago; Gropius taught at Harvard; Albers at Black Mountain and then Yale. The result was less a Bauhaus diaspora than a global vocabulary, recognisable enough that designers a century later still defend or refuse it under that name. The most enduring lesson, perhaps, was the simplest: that careful design, accessible to ordinary purchasers through industrial production, is not a contradiction in terms, and that the alternative to mass-produced ugliness need not be hand-made expense.

61. Which of the following best captures the principal shift the author identifies between the Weimar and Dessau phases of the Bauhaus?

- (A) From abstract painting to representational painting.
- (B) From an arts-and-crafts romanticism modelled on the medieval cathedral lodge to an industrial idiom oriented to series production.
- (C) From a private to a state-funded institution.
- (D) From a German to an Austrian school.

62. The author identifies which of the following as the most enduring lesson of the Bauhaus?

- (A) That careful design accessible to ordinary purchasers through industrial production is not a contradiction in terms.
- (B) That mass production is incompatible with good design.
- (C) That hand-made craft is the only basis for serious design.
- (D) That the medieval cathedral lodge should be revived.

63. The phrase "the dating that fashion otherwise inflicts on industrial design" most nearly suggests that:

- (A) Industrial design is usually highly resistant to fashion.

- (B) The Bauhaus was indifferent to industrial design.
- (C) Fashion is a form of dating.
- (D) Most industrial design becomes visibly outdated, while well-designed Bauhaus objects have proved unusually resistant to that fate.

64. The closure of the Bauhaus in 1933 is presented in the passage as:

- (A) An event that ended its influence.
- (B) An event whose dispersal of teachers paradoxically extended its global influence through institutions like Harvard and Yale.
- (C) An event without consequence for design history.
- (D) An event prompted by Mies van der Rohe's resignation.

65. The author's overall tone in describing the Bauhaus is best described as:

- (A) Sceptical.
- (B) Indifferent.
- (C) Appreciative and historically situated, neither hagiographic nor dismissive.
- (D) Hostile.

Passage 14 (Questions 66–70)

Sapir, Whorf, and the Question Linguists Refuse to Settle

The hypothesis associated with the names of Edward Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf — that the language a person speaks shapes the thoughts that person can think — has had a strange career. In its strongest formulation, often attributed to Whorf rather than carefully extracted from him, the hypothesis is plainly false: speakers of every language can, given time and motivation, think about anything. Translators succeed; bilinguals exist; concepts that have no single word in one language can be paraphrased in five. If language strictly determined thought, none of these would be possible.

In its weakest formulation, on the other hand, the hypothesis is too obviously true to be interesting: of course the categories one habitually uses make some patterns of thought easier and others harder. The serious question, and the one that has divided cognitive science for fifty years, lies between these two extremes. Do speakers of languages that obligatorily mark, say, the source of one's information, the cardinal direction of an object, or the precise relation of an event to the moment of speech, in fact attend more readily to those features of the world than speakers of languages that do not?

The experimental record, after several waves of dispute, suggests a cautious yes. Speakers of languages with cardinal-direction systems do, on memory tasks, locate objects with reference to absolute rather than body-relative directions. Speakers of languages with obligatory evidential marking do, on judgement tasks, attend more readily to the source of information. The effects are real; they are also modest, contextual and reversible. The strong Whorfian thesis remains false; the weak thesis remains true; and the moderately interesting middle thesis appears, on present evidence, to be true in a measurable but qualified way. That is not the conclusion any partisan wanted, but it has the advantage of being where the evidence actually points.

66. Which of the following best captures the author's overall position on the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis?

- (A) The strong version is true; language strictly determines thought.
- (B) The hypothesis applies only to bilinguals.
- (C) The hypothesis is incoherent and should be abandoned.
- (D) The strong version is false; the weak version is true; the moderate middle version is supported by modest, contextual and reversible empirical effects.

67. The author argues that the strongest formulation of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis is plainly false because:

- (A) Translators succeed, bilinguals exist, and concepts without single-word equivalents can be paraphrased.
- (B) It was never advanced by Whorf himself.
- (C) It cannot be tested experimentally.
- (D) Cognitive scientists have unanimously rejected it.

68. The phrase "too obviously true to be interesting," applied to the weakest formulation, conveys that:

- (A) The weak version has been falsified.
- (B) The weak version is interesting only to linguists.
- (C) The weak version is so trivial that its truth provides no contested intellectual content.
- (D) The weak version was a private joke of Sapir's.

69. Which of the following best summarises the experimental findings the author cites?

- (A) Speakers of all languages perform identically on memory and judgement tasks.
- (B) Speakers of languages with cardinal-direction or evidential systems show measurable but modest, contextual and reversible differences in attention to those features.

- (C) Speakers of languages without cardinal-direction systems are unable to navigate.
- (D) Bilinguals are immune to all such effects.

70. The closing observation that the conclusion is "not the conclusion any partisan wanted" most directly conveys that:

- (A) The author has no view of his own.
- (B) The hypothesis is politically motivated.
- (C) Both partisans were correct.
- (D) The empirical record fits neither the strong nor the dismissive partisan position, requiring intellectual honesty rather than ideological consistency.

Passage 15 (Questions 71–75)

Algorithmic Curation and the Public Square

Twentieth-century media theory was built on a model of broadcasting in which a small number of editors selected, from a wider universe of possible content, the items that would reach a mass audience. The model was, in many respects, unattractive: the editors were unrepresentative, the universe was narrow, and the audience had little capacity to talk back. But the model had two virtues that have come into focus only since its decline. First, the editorial decisions were, in principle, attributable to identifiable persons whose names appeared in the masthead. Second, broadly the same selection reached broadly the same audience, so that public deliberation could proceed against a shared, if imperfect, set of facts.

Algorithmic curation has, over the last two decades, dismantled both features. The selection that reaches a given user is now produced by systems whose authorship is diffused across teams of engineers, advertisers and machine-learning models, none of whom can plausibly be named as the editor of what any given user sees. And the selection is personalised to a degree that makes the assumption of a shared informational baseline increasingly fictional. Two readers of the same nominal news service may, in practice, encounter substantially different distributions of stories, framings and emphases, with no way of telling that this is so.

The consequences are easier to lament than to remedy. Calls to "break up" the platforms address the question of market concentration but not the question of curation itself; calls for "transparency" run into the genuine difficulty that no human being could read the relevant logs in any useful way. The most promising responses, perhaps, lie in restoring some of the lost virtues of the older model — attributable editors, shared baselines — without re-instating its narrowness. That is a harder design problem than the slogans suggest, but it is at least the right design problem.

71. Which of the following best captures the author's central claim?

- (A) That algorithmic curation has dismantled two virtues of the older broadcast model — attributable editors and a shared informational baseline — and that the harder design problem is to restore them without re-instating the narrowness of the old model.
- (B) That twentieth-century broadcasting was, on balance, more attractive than algorithmic curation.
- (C) That breaking up the platforms is the only effective response.
- (D) That algorithmic personalisation has improved public deliberation.

72. The author identifies which two virtues of the older broadcast model that have "come into focus only since its decline"?

- (A) A diverse editorial workforce, and global reach.
- (B) A wide universe of content, and an audience with strong capacity to talk back.
- (C) Editors with identifiable names, and a broadly shared selection reaching broadly the same audience.
- (D) Free distribution, and absence of advertising.

73. The author's view of calls for "transparency" of curation algorithms is best described as:

- (A) Wholly endorsing.
- (B) Sympathetic in principle but sceptical in practice, since no human being could read the relevant logs in any useful way.
- (C) Wholly dismissive.
- (D) Indifferent.

74. The phrase "increasingly fictional," applied to the assumption of a shared informational baseline, conveys that:

- (A) Algorithmic curation produces uniform results across users.
- (B) Public deliberation has improved as personalisation has expanded.
- (C) Twentieth-century broadcasting was itself fictional.
- (D) Personalisation has made the assumption increasingly difficult to sustain in fact, even where it remains in form.

75. The closing observation that the harder problem is "at least the right design problem" implies that:

- (A) Although unsolved, the problem of restoring attributable editorship and shared baselines without re-instating narrowness is the appropriate target of regulatory imagination.

- (B) The author has identified a complete solution.
- (C) All design problems are political.
- (D) Slogans should replace technical analysis.

Passage 16 (Questions 76–80)

Artificial Intelligence and the Limits of Moral Agency

It is increasingly common to read, in the press and even in some philosophical writing, of artificial-intelligence systems being held "responsible" for the consequences of their decisions. A medical-imaging model is said to be "accountable" for a missed diagnosis; a credit-scoring system is described as having "discriminated" against an applicant; an autonomous vehicle is said to have "chosen" between two unfortunate trajectories. The idiom is convenient, and on some occasions even illuminating, but it conceals a question that is now overdue for serious treatment: can a system that does not understand the meaning of what it does be a moral agent at all?

The traditional answer is no. Moral agency, on the standard view, requires at least three capacities — an ability to grasp the morally relevant features of a situation, an ability to deliberate among alternatives in the light of reasons, and a capacity to be moved by those reasons in action. Current systems possess sophisticated functional analogues of the first two — they classify and select with great speed across vast spaces of options — but they possess them in a form that is, by the most plausible philosophical analyses, not yet meaning-bearing. The system does not know that what it has classified is a tumour or a person; it has merely produced an output that humans interpret in those terms.

If this is right, then the language of machine responsibility is, in its present applications, displaced. The agency at work in any consequence of a deployed system remains the agency of the persons who designed it, trained it, deployed it, supervised it, or accepted its outputs without challenge. To redescribe that distributed human agency as the agency of the system is not, on this view, a useful simplification but a moral evasion: it lets identifiable persons step out of frame and replaces them with an actor whom no one can apologise to and from whom no apology can be received.

76. Which of the following best captures the author's central thesis?

- (A) That contemporary artificial-intelligence systems are full moral agents and should be held accountable as such.
- (B) That artificial-intelligence systems should not be deployed in any morally consequential domain.
- (C) That current artificial-intelligence systems lack the capacities required for moral agency, and that the language of machine responsibility risks evading the distributed human agency that is in fact at work.
- (D) That moral agency requires no understanding of meaning.

77. The author identifies three capacities required for moral agency on the standard view. These are best summarised as:

- (A) Speed of computation, accuracy of prediction, and breadth of training data.
- (B) An ability to grasp morally relevant features, an ability to deliberate in the light of reasons, and a capacity to be moved by those reasons in action.
- (C) A capacity for self-replication, a capacity for emotion, and a capacity for legal personality.
- (D) Mathematical competence, technical curiosity, and physical embodiment.

78. The author concedes that current systems possess "functional analogues" of two of these capacities. By that phrase, the author most directly means:

- (A) That current systems possess the capacities in their full philosophical sense.
- (B) That current systems are entirely meaning-bearing.
- (C) That current systems possess only the capacity for deliberation.
- (D) That current systems perform processes that resemble those capacities in their input-output behaviour, but that on the most plausible analyses are not yet meaning-bearing.

79. The closing observation that machine responsibility "lets identifiable persons step out of frame" most directly conveys that:

- (A) Designers, trainers and deployers benefit from clearer accountability when machine responsibility is invoked.
- (B) All moral language is metaphorical.
- (C) The rhetoric of machine responsibility risks shifting moral attention away from the human persons whose distributed agency actually produces the relevant consequences.
- (D) Apologies should be programmed into machines.

80. Which of the following developments, if it occurred, would most directly weaken the author's thesis?

- (A) Convincing philosophical and empirical demonstration that an artificial-intelligence system possessed the capacity to grasp the morally relevant features of situations and to be moved by reasons in action in a way that was meaning-bearing rather than merely a functional analogue.
- (B) Continued improvements in the speed and accuracy of medical-imaging models.
- (C) Wider adoption of credit-scoring systems by financial institutions.

(D) The publication of additional press articles describing systems as "responsible."

SECTION II — CURRENT AFFAIRS & GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

Directions: Read each passage carefully and answer the questions that follow. Each passage is followed by five questions based on its content.

Passage 1 (Questions 81–85)

President's Rule in Manipur: Articles 355 and 356 Revisited

On 13 February 2025, the Union government imposed President's Rule in Manipur under Article 356 of the Constitution, three days after the resignation of Chief Minister N. Biren Singh. Fifteen months later, in May 2026, the proclamation continues, with the Supreme Court bench monitoring relief work and frequently citing *S. R. Bommai v. Union of India* (1994), the case that turned the President's "subjective satisfaction" under Article 356(1) into an objectively reviewable act.

Two provisions converge in the Manipur situation. Article 355 imposes on the Union an affirmative duty to protect every State against external aggression and internal disturbance and to ensure that the government of every State is carried on in accordance with the Constitution. It is a duty, not a power; by itself, it does not authorise the Centre to take over a State. Article 356, by contrast, is the operative power: where the President is satisfied that a situation has arisen in which the government of a State cannot be carried on in accordance with the Constitution, the President may issue a proclamation. Such a proclamation must be laid before both Houses of Parliament and ceases to operate after two months unless approved; if approved, it can extend up to six months at a time, and a maximum of three years.

In *Bommai*, a nine-judge bench held that the proclamation is amenable to judicial review on grounds of mala fides, irrelevant material, or perversity, and that floor tests, not Raj Bhavan opinions, are the appropriate test of majority. Article 365, often overlooked, allows the Union to treat a State's failure to comply with its lawful directions as a constitutional breakdown — a secondary ground that has not yet been formally invoked in the Manipur context.

81. Which of the following best captures the constitutional distinction the passage draws between Articles 355 and 356?

- (A) Article 355 is a discretionary power of the President while Article 356 is an obligation cast on Parliament.
- (B) Article 355 was rendered redundant by *S. R. Bommai* whereas Article 356 was strengthened by it.
- (C) Article 355 applies only to internal disturbance while Article 356 applies only to external aggression.
- (D) Article 355 imposes an affirmative duty on the Union but does not by itself authorise President's Rule, whereas Article 356 confers the actual power to proclaim such Rule.

82. Based on the passage, which of the following statements about the duration of a Proclamation under Article 356 is correct?

- (A) It lapses automatically after one month and cannot be revived.
- (B) It must be approved by both Houses within two months and, once approved, may be extended in slabs up to a maximum of three years.
- (C) It is permanent until revoked by the Supreme Court.
- (D) It can be renewed indefinitely without parliamentary approval if the Governor so reports.

83. Which of the following is the most accurate description of the holding in *S. R. Bommai v. Union of India* (1994), as drawn from the passage?

- (A) The Court held that the satisfaction of the President under Article 356(1) is purely subjective and not justiciable.
- (B) The Court abolished the office of Governor in States under President's Rule.
- (C) The Court ruled that the President's satisfaction is amenable to judicial review on grounds such as mala fides or irrelevant material, and recognised the floor test as the proper test of majority.
- (D) The Court declared Article 355 to be a non-justiciable directive principle.

84. The passage notes that Article 365 has "not yet been formally invoked" in the Manipur context. Which of the following best reflects what Article 365 provides?

- (A) It treats a State's failure to comply with lawful directions of the Union as a ground on which a constitutional breakdown may be inferred.
- (B) It bars the Union from issuing directions to a State without prior consultation.
- (C) It provides for the suspension of the entire Constitution during a financial emergency.
- (D) It empowers the Governor to dissolve a State Legislative Assembly without aid and advice.

85. Suppose, hypothetically, that the Union were to argue that Article 355 by itself empowered it to dismiss a duly elected State government. Based on the reasoning in the passage, the strongest constitutional response would be that:

- (A) Article 355 is non-binding because it is part of the Directive Principles.
- (B) Article 355 only operates after a Proclamation under Article 352 has already been made.
- (C) Article 355 has been impliedly repealed by the 44th Constitutional Amendment.

(D) Article 355 is a duty cast on the Union and not a source of power to displace a State government, which is a function specifically allocated to Article 356.

Passage 2 (Questions 86–90)

Operation Sindoor and the Law of Armed Conflict

On 7 May 2025, the Indian Armed Forces launched Operation Sindoor, a series of precision strikes on nine sites of terror infrastructure across Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, in response to the Pahalgam attack of 22 April 2025 in which 26 civilians were killed. By May 2026, the operation had become a fixed reference point in Indian and international discussions of the law of armed conflict, particularly the question of how a State may respond to attacks attributed to non-State actors operating from the territory of another State.

Two bodies of international law converge on the operation. The first is the United Nations Charter framework on the use of force. Article 2(4) of the Charter prohibits the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity of any State; Article 51 carves out the inherent right of individual or collective self-defence "if an armed attack occurs." The Indian position is that the cumulative pattern of cross-border terror amounts to an "armed attack" within the meaning of Article 51, justifying limited and necessary self-defence. The second body is International Humanitarian Law (IHL), the law that applies once a conflict is under way. Its four classical principles are distinction (between combatants and civilians), proportionality (incidental civilian harm must not be excessive in relation to the concrete military advantage), military necessity, and the prohibition on causing unnecessary suffering. Indian planners cited the choice of "terror infrastructure" rather than civilian or military headquarters targets as evidence of compliance with distinction and proportionality.

A collateral legal move was India's invocation, on 23 April 2025, of Article 60 of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties to suspend obligations under the Indus Waters Treaty on the ground of material breach. Together, the strikes and the treaty action are now standard reading on Indian State practice and opinio juris in relation to non-State-actor self-defence.

86. Which of the following pairs correctly identifies the treaty provisions invoked, respectively, for the use of force and for the suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty?

- (A) Article 2(4) of the UN Charter and Article 51 of the UN Charter.
- (B) Article 39 of the UN Charter and Article 26 of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties.
- (C) Article 51 of the UN Charter and Article 60 of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties.
- (D) Article 2(7) of the UN Charter and Article 18 of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties.

87. Which of the following is NOT one of the four classical principles of International Humanitarian Law mentioned in the passage?

- (A) Distinction between combatants and civilians.
- (B) Universal jurisdiction over crimes against humanity.
- (C) Proportionality between incidental harm and military advantage.
- (D) Prohibition on causing unnecessary suffering.

88. The passage notes that Indian planners cited their choice of targets as evidence of compliance with two specific IHL principles. Which two?

- (A) Distinction and proportionality.
- (B) Sovereignty and non-intervention.
- (C) Military necessity and humanity.
- (D) Pacta sunt servanda and rebus sic stantibus.

89. Which of the following best captures the legal significance of Operation Sindoor for the doctrine of self-defence under Article 51 of the UN Charter, as discussed in the passage?

- (A) It conclusively settled that pre-emptive strikes are always permissible.
- (B) It overturned the Caroline test of necessity and proportionality.
- (C) It established that the Security Council must authorise every act of self-defence.
- (D) It contributed to State practice and opinio juris on the question of self-defence against attacks attributed to non-State actors operating from another State's territory.

90. Suppose a State, in response to a single small-scale terror incident causing limited damage, launches large-scale aerial strikes that destroy civilian power grids and water systems in another State. Based on the IHL principles described in the passage, the most plausible legal objection would be that the response violates:

- (A) The principle of distinction only.
- (B) Article 60 of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties.
- (C) The principle of proportionality, since incidental civilian harm appears excessive in relation to the concrete and direct military advantage anticipated.
- (D) The doctrine of pacta sunt servanda.

Passage 3 (Questions 91–95)

One Nation, One Election: The 129th Amendment Architecture

The One Nation, One Election (ONOE) framework is the most consequential constitutional reform proposal pending before Parliament for CLAT 2027 aspirants to track. The 129th Constitutional Amendment Bill, 2024, along with the Union Territories Laws (Amendment) Bill, was introduced in the Lok Sabha on 17 December 2024, and was referred to a 39-member Joint Parliamentary Committee chaired by P. P. Chaudhary, which is expected to deliver its report in 2026. The proposal seeks to synchronise elections to the Lok Sabha and all State Legislative Assemblies in a first phase, with municipal and panchayat elections to follow within one hundred days in a second phase.

The constitutional architecture rests on three Articles already in the Constitution. Article 83 prescribes the duration of the Houses of Parliament; Article 172 prescribes the duration of State Legislative Assemblies; Article 327 confers on Parliament the power to make provision with respect to elections to the Houses. The 129th Amendment Bill proposes to insert a new Article 82A and to amend Articles 83, 172 and 327, so as to enable a synchronised electoral cycle. Because the amendment touches on the federal structure of elections, it must be passed by special majority under Article 368 and ratified by not less than one-half of the State Legislatures.

The intellectual engine of the proposal is the High-Level Committee on Simultaneous Elections, chaired by former President Ram Nath Kovind, which was constituted on 2 September 2023 and submitted an 18,626-page report on 14 March 2024. India had de facto simultaneous elections from 1951-52 to 1967, after which the cycle broke down because of premature dissolutions of State Assemblies. Critics argue that ONOE, by tying State Assembly terms to a national clock, may erode the federalism strand of the basic structure doctrine recognised in *Kesavananda Bharati v. State of Kerala* (1973).

91. According to the passage, the 129th Constitutional Amendment Bill, 2024:

- (A) Inserts a new Article 82A and amends Articles 83, 172 and 327.
- (B) Repeals Article 356 and replaces it with a synchronised election clause.
- (C) Inserts a new Article 371J specific to simultaneous elections in southern States.
- (D) Amends only Article 324 dealing with the Election Commission.

92. Which procedural requirement under Article 368, as identified in the passage, must the 129th Amendment satisfy in addition to a special majority?

- (A) Ratification by all the State Legislatures.
- (B) Approval by a joint sitting of both Houses presided over by the President.
- (C) A national referendum supervised by the Election Commission.
- (D) Ratification by at least one-half of the State Legislatures.

93. Who chaired the High-Level Committee on Simultaneous Elections referred to in the passage?

- (A) P. P. Chaudhary
- (B) Ram Nath Kovind
- (C) M. M. Punchhi
- (D) B. P. Jeevan Reddy

94. The passage observes that India had de facto simultaneous elections from 1951-52 to a particular year, after which the cycle broke down. That year is:

- (A) 1967
- (B) 1975
- (C) 1971
- (D) 1989

95. Which of the following best captures the principal basic-structure objection to ONOE that the passage flags?

- (A) That synchronisation infringes on judicial independence under Articles 124 and 217.
- (B) That simultaneous elections violate the secularism principle under the Preamble.
- (C) That linking State Assembly terms to a national electoral clock could erode the federalism strand of the basic structure recognised in *Kesavananda Bharati*.
- (D) That the proposal abolishes the office of the Governor under Article 153.

Passage 4 (Questions 96–100)

The Supriyo Verdict and the Right to Marry

On 17 October 2023, a five-judge Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court delivered its verdict in *Supriyo @ Supriya Chakraborty v. Union of India*, the marriage-equality case. By a 3:2 majority — Chief Justice D. Y. Chandrachud and Justice S. K. Kaul in the minority on key issues — the Court refused to recognise same-sex marriage under the Special Marriage Act, 1954, holding that the right to marry is not a fundamental right and that creating such a right would require legislation rather than judicial reading-in. By the same 3:2 margin, the Court declined to craft a court-ordered framework for civil unions. It also upheld, by 3:2, the bar in the CARA Adoption Regulations, 2022 on joint adoption by unmarried couples, with the minority dissenting. By 2026, with review petitions filed and a Cabinet Secretary committee on entitlements at work, the case continues to be tested in classrooms and courts.

What the Bench was unanimous about is just as important as where it split. All five judges held that discrimination against the LGBTQIA+ community is constitutionally impermissible and that the State must take steps to ensure substantive equality, including through a high-powered committee on entitlements such as joint bank accounts, hospital next-of-kin status, ration cards, pensions and insurance nominations. The constitutional grammar in play is dense. Article 14 (equality before law) and Article 15 (non-discrimination) interact with Article 19 (freedoms), Article 21 (life and personal liberty, read after *Puttaswamy v. Union of India* (2017) to include privacy and dignity), and Article 25 (freedom of conscience and religion). The doctrinal split turned not on whether gay couples deserve dignity, but on the institutional question of whether courts may, in the absence of legislative recognition, design and operate a parallel statutory regime.

96. Which of the following best summarises the majority holding in *Supriyo* as described in the passage?

- (A) Same-sex marriage is unconstitutional.
- (B) The right to marry is not a fundamental right; recognition of same-sex marriage requires legislation rather than judicial reading-in.
- (C) There is a fundamental right to marry that the State must immediately enforce.
- (D) The Special Marriage Act, 1954 is wholly unconstitutional.

97. On which of the following points were all five judges in *Supriyo* unanimous, according to the passage?

- (A) That same-sex marriage must be recognised under the Special Marriage Act, 1954.
- (B) That a fundamental right to marry exists under Article 21.
- (C) That the CARA Adoption Regulations bar on joint adoption is unconstitutional.
- (D) That discrimination against LGBTQIA+ persons is constitutionally impermissible and that the State must take steps to ensure substantive equality.

98. The passage situates the doctrinal split between the majority and the minority on a particular institutional question. That question is best stated as:

- (A) Whether Article 25 protects sexual orientation.
- (B) Whether Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code should be re-introduced.
- (C) Whether the Court should design and operate a parallel statutory marriage regime in the absence of legislative recognition.
- (D) Whether Parliament has competence under the Concurrent List to legislate on marriage.

99. Which decision did the passage identify as having read privacy and dignity into Article 21?

- (A) *K. S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India* (2017)
- (B) *Naz Foundation v. Government of NCT of Delhi* (2009)
- (C) *ADM Jabalpur v. Shivkant Shukla* (1976)
- (D) *Maneka Gandhi v. Union of India* (1978)

100. Suppose Parliament enacts a statute creating a category of “civil partnership” that confers most spousal entitlements (pension, insurance, hospital next-of-kin) on same-sex couples but does not call it “marriage.” Based on the reasoning attributed to the majority in *Supriyo*, this enactment would most likely be:

- (A) Unconstitutional as a violation of Article 14.
- (B) Outside legislative competence under the Constitution.
- (C) Unconstitutional because the majority required full marriage equality.
- (D) Constitutionally permissible, since the majority view was that institutional recognition of unions is a matter for the legislature rather than the courts.

Passage 5 (Questions 101–105)

Sikkim's Paperless Judiciary and the Access-to-Justice Mandate

Inaugurating the National Conclave on Technology and Judicial Education at Gangtok on 1 May 2026, the Chief Justice of India, Surya Kant, announced that Sikkim had become the first State in India with a fully paperless judiciary. The CJI described digital reform as “a practical necessity for sustaining the rule of law,” arguing that records that once “languished in physical storage” are now part of a “vibrant digital ecosystem” accessible from any browser, courtroom or mobile phone. The constitutional weight of the announcement comes from Article 39A — a Directive Principle inserted by the 42nd Amendment, 1976 — which directs the State to secure equal justice and to provide free legal aid by suitable legislation or schemes.

A paperless judiciary is, in functional terms, the cleanest delivery mechanism for that promise. It compresses turnaround times for orders, allows prisoners and litigants to inspect their files without travel, and lifts the cost barrier that traps poor litigants in cycles of pendency. Read alongside Article 14 (equality before law) and Article 21 (life and personal liberty, which the Supreme Court has interpreted to include speedy justice), the Sikkim experiment is a test bed for whether technology can narrow the access-to-justice gap.

The financial backbone is e-Courts Phase III, a Rs 7,210 crore programme approved by the Union Cabinet. Phase III moves beyond the digitisation of records to the building of a unified case-management system, virtual courts, AI-assisted translation between Indian languages, and integrated portals for police, prisons, registrars and forensic laboratories. The Salem Bar Association v. Union of India (2003) framework — which upheld the 2002 amendments to the Code of Civil Procedure aimed at speedy disposal — together with the Justice Madan Lokur Committee on judicial backlog, supplies the policy spine that the Phase III architecture is now operationalising.

101. Which of the following statements about Article 39A is most directly supported by the passage?

- (A) It is a Fundamental Right against the State.
- (B) It is a Directive Principle that directs the State to secure equal justice and to provide free legal aid.
- (C) It was inserted by the 86th Constitutional Amendment, 2002.
- (D) It bars the use of digital records in court proceedings.

102. The passage describes e-Courts Phase III primarily as:

- (A) A unified programme covering case management, virtual courts, AI-assisted translation and integration with police, prisons and registrars.
- (B) A scheme limited to the digitisation of old judicial records.
- (C) A programme to construct new physical court buildings in district headquarters.
- (D) A scheme to recruit additional judges to the High Courts.

103. Which case did the passage identify as having upheld the 2002 amendments to the Code of Civil Procedure aimed at speedy disposal?

- (A) Hussainara Khatoon v. State of Bihar
- (B) All India Judges Association v. Union of India
- (C) Salem Bar Association v. Union of India (2003)
- (D) T. M. A. Pai Foundation v. State of Karnataka

104. The passage links the Sikkim paperless judiciary to which combination of constitutional provisions?

- (A) Articles 124 and 217 only
- (B) Articles 32, 226 and 227
- (C) Articles 19(1)(a) and 25 only
- (D) Articles 14, 21 and 39A

105. Which of the following inferences about the relationship between technology and access to justice is best supported by the passage?

- (A) Technology has no measurable impact on access to justice.
- (B) Article 39A requires that all proceedings be conducted in English.
- (C) Digital reform can compress turnaround times, lift cost barriers, and operationalise the access-to-justice promise of Article 39A.
- (D) Article 21 prohibits the use of artificial intelligence in courts.

Passage 6 (Questions 106–110)

UAE Exits OPEC: Cartel Economics and India's Energy Security

The United Arab Emirates, after almost sixty years of membership, formally exited the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and the wider OPEC+ alliance with effect from 1 May 2026. The departure removes the cartel's third-largest producer and one of its few holders of meaningful spare capacity, at a time when Brent crude has hovered around \$120 per barrel against the backdrop of an active US-Israel-Iran confrontation and renewed tension in the Strait of Hormuz. OPEC was founded at Baghdad in September 1960 by Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Venezuela; the UAE joined in 1967. OPEC+ was formed in late 2016 to bring Russia and other non-OPEC producers under a common production-coordination umbrella in response to the United States shale boom. OPEC's secretariat is in Vienna.

The Indian exposure is structural. India imports more than 85 per cent of its crude oil, and roughly two-thirds of its imports transit the Strait of Hormuz. Any sustained spike in Brent feeds rapidly into retail fuel prices, the current account deficit, and the rupee. The legal scaffolding for India's response is partly federal: petroleum and petroleum products fall under Entry 53 of the Union List in the Seventh Schedule, which makes regulation of pricing, refining and import a Union subject. The Petroleum Act, 1934 and the Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board Act, 2006 provide the domestic statutory backbone, and the Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserves were created precisely for short-duration supply shocks of this kind.

The Indian Express, in its editorial "UAE exiting OPEC wounds a cartel already far from peak," argues that the move accelerates the unravelling of OPEC's pricing discipline, even as it strips Saudi Arabia of an ally that frequently moderated cartel decisions. For oil markets the shock cuts both ways: short-term volatility, but possibly softer prices over the medium term as the UAE pumps freely.

106. Which of the following statements about OPEC is most directly supported by the passage?

- (A) OPEC was founded at Baghdad in September 1960 by Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Venezuela.
- (B) OPEC was founded at Vienna in 1973 by Saudi Arabia and Russia.
- (C) OPEC and OPEC+ are alternative names for the same body created in 1960.
- (D) The UAE was a founding member of OPEC in 1960.

107. Under which Entry of the Union List in the Seventh Schedule does the regulation of petroleum and petroleum products fall, according to the passage?

- (A) Entry 1
- (B) Entry 53
- (C) Entry 24
- (D) Entry 97

108. The passage attributes which of the following structural vulnerabilities to India in the event of a Brent crude price shock?

- (A) India is a net exporter of crude oil and would benefit from price spikes.
- (B) India's refining capacity is entirely dependent on UAE crude.
- (C) India's currency is pegged to Brent crude.
- (D) India imports more than 85 per cent of its crude oil and roughly two-thirds of those imports transit the Strait of Hormuz.

109. OPEC+ was formed in late 2016 primarily in response to which development, as the passage explains?

- (A) The Iran nuclear deal of 2015.
- (B) The United States shale boom and the consequent erosion of OPEC pricing discipline.
- (C) The 1973 Arab oil embargo.
- (D) The dissolution of the Soviet Union.

110. Which of the following best states the editorial argument cited from the Indian Express in the passage?

- (A) The UAE's exit will tighten OPEC's pricing discipline by removing a free-riding member.
- (B) The UAE's exit has no measurable consequence for global oil markets.
- (C) The UAE's exit accelerates the unravelling of OPEC's pricing discipline and strips Saudi Arabia of a moderating ally.
- (D) The UAE's exit is illegal under the United Nations Charter.

Passage 7 (Questions 111–115)

A Below-Normal Monsoon and the Constitutional Architecture for the Environment

The India Meteorological Department (IMD), in its first long-range forecast for the 2026 southwest monsoon issued on 13 April 2026, projected rainfall at 92 per cent of the Long Period Average (LPA) with a model error of plus or minus five per cent — placing the season firmly in the "below normal" bracket and marking India's first below-normal April forecast in three years. The forecast cites three converging signals: El Niño-Southern Oscillation conditions developing in the equatorial Pacific, with the current weak La Niña transitioning to neutral and a likely warm El Niño emerging through the season; a neutral Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD); and below-normal Eurasian snow cover in January-March 2026, which has historically been a precursor to weak Indian monsoons.

The constitutional architecture against which this forecast must be read is layered. Article 48A — a Directive Principle inserted by the 42nd Amendment — directs the State to endeavour to protect and improve the environment and to safeguard forests and wildlife. Article 51A(g) lays down a Fundamental Duty on every citizen to protect and improve the natural environment, including forests, lakes, rivers and wildlife. Article 21, the right to life, has been read in *Subhash Kumar v. State of Bihar* (1991) and a long subsequent line of cases to include the right to a wholesome environment and to clean drinking water. The statutory backbone runs through the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981, and the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974.

Flagship schemes provide the policy layer: the Jal Jeevan Mission (2019) for piped household water, Atal Bhujal Yojana for groundwater recharge in seven States, and the National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture. Below-normal rainfall puts pressure on kharif sowing, food inflation, hydropower generation and reservoir levels — and tests the resilience of every link in this constitutional and policy chain.

111. According to the passage, IMD's first long-range forecast for the 2026 southwest monsoon projected rainfall at:

- (A) 92 per cent of the Long Period Average, with a model error of ± 5 per cent.
- (B) Exactly 100 per cent of the Long Period Average.
- (C) 75 per cent of the Long Period Average, with no model error.
- (D) 120 per cent of the Long Period Average.

112. Which combination of climatic signals does the passage identify as driving the below-normal forecast?

- (A) Strong La Niña, positive IOD, and above-normal Eurasian snow cover.
- (B) Solar maximum and an Antarctic ozone surge.
- (C) Volcanic aerosols and an active Madden-Julian Oscillation.
- (D) Developing El Niño conditions, neutral Indian Ocean Dipole, and below-normal Eurasian snow cover in January-March 2026.

113. Article 48A of the Constitution, as described in the passage, is best characterised as:

- (A) A Fundamental Right enforceable under Article 32.
- (B) A Directive Principle directing the State to protect and improve the environment and to safeguard forests and wildlife.
- (C) A Fundamental Duty cast on individual citizens.
- (D) A constitutional amendment power vested in the President.

114. Which of the following decisions is identified in the passage as having read the right to a wholesome environment into Article 21?

- (A) Subhash Kumar v. State of Bihar (1991)
- (B) Bandhua Mukti Morcha v. Union of India
- (C) Vishaka v. State of Rajasthan
- (D) Indra Sawhney v. Union of India

115. Which of the following inferences is most strongly supported by the passage?

- (A) A below-normal monsoon has no implications for kharif sowing or food inflation.
- (B) The Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 was repealed when the Jal Jeevan Mission was launched in 2019.
- (C) Article 51A(g) overrides Article 48A in case of a deficient monsoon.
- (D) A below-normal monsoon stresses kharif sowing, food inflation, hydropower generation and reservoir levels, and tests the resilience of India's constitutional and policy framework on the environment.

Passage 8 (Questions 116–120)

Heatwaves as Notified Disasters: A 16th Finance Commission Recommendation

The 16th Finance Commission has recommended that heatwaves be added to the list of "nationally notified disasters" under the Disaster Management Act, 2005 — a small statutory tweak with significant fiscal and federal consequences. As the Indian Express has argued on its Ideas page, the move would unlock central-government financing through the National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) for States battling deadly summer temperatures, ending the awkward limbo in which States could only carve out up to 10 per cent of the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) for "State-specific disasters" such as heatwaves. With the IMD warning that Summer 2026 will see above-normal heatwave days across central and northern India, the timing of the recommendation is anything but academic.

The legal scaffolding sits in the Disaster Management Act, 2005. The Act creates a three-tier institutional architecture: a National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) chaired by the Prime Minister under Section 3; State Disaster Management Authorities under the Chief Ministers; and District Disaster Management Authorities. Section 11 mandates a National Disaster Management Plan; Section 46 establishes the NDRF (the Fund), distinct from the NDRF (the Force) raised under Section 44. The currently notified list includes cyclones, droughts, earthquakes, floods, tsunamis, hailstorms, landslides, avalanches, cloudbursts, pest attacks, frost and cold waves — but not heatwaves, an omission that has cost Indian cities dearly.

The constitutional anchor is Article 21: the right to life has been judicially expanded since Subhash Kumar v. State of Bihar (1991) to include the right to a clean and healthy environment, with the M. C. Mehta line of cases adding the doctrines of absolute liability, polluter pays, and the public trust. India's principal on-the-ground response has been the Heat Action Plan (HAP) — Ahmedabad pioneered the country's first HAP in 2013, and dozens of cities have followed.

116. Which body has recommended that heatwaves be added to the list of nationally notified disasters, according to the passage?

- (A) The Election Commission of India
- (B) The National Human Rights Commission
- (C) The 16th Finance Commission
- (D) The Niti Aayog Governing Council

117. Under the Disaster Management Act, 2005, the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) is chaired by:

- (A) The Prime Minister
- (B) The Vice-President of India
- (C) The President of India
- (D) The Union Home Minister

118. The passage observes that, in the absence of a national notification, States may currently set aside how much of the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) for "State-specific disasters" such as

heatwaves?

- (A) Up to 5 per cent
- (B) Up to 10 per cent
- (C) Up to 25 per cent
- (D) Up to 50 per cent

119. Which Indian city pioneered the country's first Heat Action Plan, and in which year, as per the passage?

- (A) Delhi, in 2010
- (B) Hyderabad, in 2015
- (C) Ahmedabad, in 2013
- (D) Mumbai, in 2009

120. The passage links a recurring constitutional anchor to the case for treating heatwaves as a notified disaster. That anchor is:

- (A) Article 19(1)(g), which protects freedom of trade and profession.
- (B) Article 21, the right to life, judicially expanded to include the right to a clean and healthy environment.
- (C) Article 32, which confers the right to constitutional remedies.
- (D) Article 300A, which protects the right to property.