

**Daily Reading Comprehension & Critical Reasoning**

Two RC passages (English-as-Language) and two CR passages (Argumentation). Read each carefully and answer based on what is stated or implied.  
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**PASSAGE 1 (RC) – HOW SUPER-COMPUTERS IMPROVED INDIA'S MONSOON FORECAST (SCIENCE / PUBLIC POLICY) Q1-5**

**READ CAREFULLY AND ANSWER Q1-5 BASED ONLY ON THE PASSAGE.**

For decades, the south-west monsoon — the four-month rainy season on which the larger part of Indian agriculture still depends — defied confident prediction. Forecasters at the India Meteorological Department (IMD) relied on statistical models that correlated about a dozen global parameters with eventual rainfall, producing seasonal outlooks with an honest but uncomfortably wide margin of error. A failed prediction had real costs: reservoirs were managed on the wrong assumptions, sowing decisions were postponed or rushed, and disaster-response budgets were either over-committed or left embarrassingly idle.

The turn began in the mid-2010s when India invested in petascale, and later early-exascale, super-computers explicitly to run dynamical models of the atmosphere. Unlike the older statistical approach, dynamical models solve, from first principles, the equations governing the motion of fluids on a rotating planet, divided into millions of three-dimensional grid cells. The catch is that resolution has a steep computational price: halving the horizontal grid spacing demands roughly sixteen times more computing power. The new machines made finer resolution affordable and made it possible to run not one forecast but ensembles of fifty or a hundred slightly perturbed forecasts to estimate the spread of likely outcomes.

The improvements were not merely cosmetic. The five-day landfall track of cyclones over the Bay of Bengal, once accurate to within about 200 kilometres, is now routinely accurate to within 60. Seasonal monsoon predictions, while still imperfect, now communicate both a central estimate and a calibrated probability — a far more useful product for an irrigation engineer than a single round number.

However, super-computers alone are insufficient. They must be fed observations from satellites, ocean buoys, ground stations and pilot-balloon launches, and they must be calibrated against decades of past weather. India's investment in observational infrastructure has not always kept pace with its investment in silicon. Critics also note that downstream users — district agriculture officers, farmers, urban water managers — are not always trained to interpret probabilistic outputs and continue to demand a single number. The next decade's challenge is therefore institutional as much as technological: building the human bridge between a forecast in a server room and a decision in a village field.

**1. Which of the following BEST captures the author's main idea?**

- A. Indian monsoon forecasts are now perfectly reliable thanks to super-computers.
- B. Super-computing has substantially improved Indian monsoon forecasting, but realising its full value requires complementary investments in observation and user training.
- C. Statistical forecasting models should be abandoned in favour of dynamical models.
- D. The India Meteorological Department has historically failed Indian farmers and needs to be replaced.

**2. As used in the passage, the word 'cosmetic' (paragraph 3) most nearly means:**

- A. Decorative and pleasing in appearance.
- B. Superficial or of little substantive consequence.
- C. Related to facial creams and beauty products.
- D. Detailed and meticulous in execution.

**3. Which of the following can be most reliably INFERRED from the passage?**

- A. Doubling the horizontal grid resolution of a dynamical model requires roughly sixteen times more computing power.
- B. Statistical forecasting models considered only one global parameter.
- C. Cyclone landfall predictions over the Bay of Bengal have become roughly three times more accurate at the five-day horizon.
- D. India was the first country to deploy a petascale super-computer for weather forecasting.

**4. The author's tone in the closing paragraph is best described as:**

- A. Triumphant and self-congratulatory.
- B. Cautiously qualified — recognising progress while flagging persisting institutional limits.
- C. Polemical and accusatory toward the meteorological department.
- D. Detached and indifferent to outcomes.

**5. Which of the following, if true, would MOST weaken the author's argument that super-computing is central to forecast improvement?**

- A. A peer-reviewed study finds that most of the improvement in cyclone landfall accuracy came from new satellite-borne radar instruments rather than from finer-resolution models.
- B. The IMD increased its outreach to district agriculture officers in 2024.
- C. Several countries have moved to exascale super-computers for climate research.
- D. Farmers continue to prefer single-number rainfall forecasts.

**PASSAGE 2 (RC) – REVIVING INDIAN HANDLOOMS IN A SYNTHETIC-TEXTILE ECONOMY (CULTURE / ECONOMY) Q6-10**

**READ CAREFULLY AND ANSWER Q6-10 BASED ONLY ON THE PASSAGE.**

Few crafts encode the cultural and geographical diversity of India as densely as handloom weaving. Each region carries its own grammar of fibre, weave and motif — the brocades of Banaras, the ikats of Pochampally, the muslins of Bengal, the kanchipurams of the Tamil south. Handloom is also, importantly, the second-largest source of rural non-farm employment in the country, sustaining over three million weavers, the majority of them women.

Yet the sector has been in measurable decline. Cheap powerloom imitations, often woven on Chinese fabric and Indian thread, have flooded markets at a fraction of the price. Younger weavers, even in storied weaving towns, increasingly migrate to construction sites and gig-economy delivery jobs. Government schemes — yarn subsidies, marketing assistance, geographical-indication tags — have arrested but not reversed the decline. The most recent census of handloom weavers, released in 2024, recorded a 12 per cent fall in the active weaver population over eight years.

A more interesting question is whether the sector can be revived not as a heritage industry preserved through philanthropy, but as a commercially viable, design-led ecosystem. Some signs are encouraging. A small but growing number of urban designers source directly from weavers' cooperatives, paying premiums of two or three times the powerloom rate in exchange for shorter lead times and creative input. E-commerce platforms have allowed individual weavers to address niche audiences globally. The GI tags, once dismissed as ornamental, have begun to anchor price floors in court cases against counterfeit producers.

The challenges, however, are not romantic. Yarn quality has degraded as Indian mills consolidate around polyester. Power and weft costs have risen faster than handloom retail prices. The youth-aspiration gap — handloom is often perceived as the work of one's parents to be escaped, not embraced — will not yield to subsidy alone. What is needed is a generational repositioning that connects weaving with design education, with sustainability narratives that resonate with the global slow-fashion movement, and with assured-buyer arrangements that reduce the weaver's price risk. Whether India musters this combination will determine whether the loom survives the century.

6. Which of the following BEST captures the author's central argument?

- A. Handlooms are a doomed industry that should be retired with dignity.
- B. Government subsidies are sufficient to revive the handloom sector.
- C. Reviving handlooms requires not just heritage protection but a commercially viable, design-led ecosystem and a generational repositioning.
- D. Powerloom imitations are the sole reason for the decline of handlooms.

7. As used in the passage, the phrase 'not romantic' (final paragraph) most nearly means:

- A. Not concerned with personal love stories.
- B. Pragmatic and grounded in hard economic realities rather than nostalgic sentiment.
- C. Hostile to the cultural value of weaving.
- D. Strictly limited to questions of profitability.

8. Which of the following can be most reliably INFERRED from the passage?

- A. The number of active handloom weavers in India has fallen at an average rate of around 1.5 per cent a year over the most recent eight-year census interval.
- B. Powerloom imitations are always made of inferior thread.
- C. All government handloom schemes have failed.
- D. GI tags have entirely eliminated counterfeit production.

9. Which of the following, if true, would MOST strengthen the author's optimism about a design-led revival?

- A. A large urban department-store chain announces a five-year contract with handloom cooperatives at premium prices in exchange for design exclusivity, and reports a sales uplift in its first year.
- B. Powerloom imports from China rise sharply.
- C. Polyester yarn prices fall by 20 per cent.
- D. The handloom census records a further decline of 5 per cent in weaver numbers.

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

- A. Sentimental and elegiac.
- B. Cautiously optimistic — alive to both opportunity and structural constraint.
- C. Cynical and dismissive of policy intervention.
- D. Strictly statistical and free of any normative judgement.

**PASSAGE 3 (CR) — SHOULD SUB-CATEGORISATION WITHIN SC RESERVATION BE PERMITTED?  
(CONSTITUTIONAL / SOCIAL POLICY)**

**Q11–15**

**READ THE ARGUMENT AND ANSWER Q11–15.**

Reservation for Scheduled Castes (SCs) in India treats the community as a single, homogeneous category under Article 341 of the Constitution. The argument for permitting sub-categorisation — that is, sub-dividing the SC quota among more and less advanced castes within the SC list — proceeds as follows. The empirical premise: the benefits of SC reservation, both in education and in public employment, have flowed disproportionately to a few relatively better-off castes within the SC list, while the most marginal castes have received almost none. Data from multiple state commissions, and the recent Constitution Bench judgment in *State of Punjab v. Davinder Singh* (2024), confirm this stratification within the broader category.

The normative premise: the constitutional promise of equality (Article 14) and the affirmative-action enabling clauses (Articles 15(4) and 16(4)) aim at substantive equality, not merely group representation. If a sub-set of an already disadvantaged group captures the entire benefit of a programme designed for the whole group, the deeper purpose of the programme is frustrated, even if its formal targets are met.

The inferential step: therefore, the State should be constitutionally permitted to identify, on the basis of intelligible criteria, those sub-groups within the SC list that are most disadvantaged, and to ring-fence a share of the reservation pool for them — much as the State has long sub-categorised the OBC pool into 'creamy' and 'non-creamy' layers.

Critics raise three counter-claims. First, Article 341 vests in the President the exclusive power to specify the SC list, which precludes any further classification at state level. Second, sub-categorisation will fracture SC political solidarity by pitting community against community in competition for a smaller share. Third, the empirical basis is contested, with some studies suggesting that recent data already show convergence in outcomes across SC sub-groups. The constitutional question therefore turns on whether the goal of substantive equality, when an empirically demonstrable concentration of benefits exists, justifies a refinement of the affirmative-action architecture that the original framers may not have specifically contemplated.

11. Which of the following BEST states the main conclusion of the argument in favour of sub-categorisation?

- A. Article 341 should be repealed.
- B. The State should be constitutionally permitted to ring-fence a share of the SC reservation pool for the most disadvantaged sub-groups within the SC list.
- C. SC reservation should be abolished.
- D. OBC and SC sub-categorisation should be combined.

12. Which of the following is an UNSTATED ASSUMPTION on which the argument crucially depends?

- A. Identifying the most disadvantaged sub-groups within the SC list can be done on the basis of intelligible, non-arbitrary criteria.
- B. The President should lose all power under Article 341.
- C. Reservation should be permanent.
- D. Sub-groups within the SC list will welcome sub-categorisation.

13. Which of the following, if true, would MOST weaken the argument for sub-categorisation?

- A. A rigorous nationwide study finds that the distribution of SC reservation benefits across sub-castes has converged sharply in the last decade, with no statistically significant remaining concentration.
- B. OBC sub-categorisation has worked well in some states.
- C. The 2024 Davinder Singh judgment was decided by a Constitution Bench.
- D. Some SC organisations support sub-categorisation.

14. Which of the following, if true, would MOST strengthen the argument for sub-categorisation?

- A. A study of three large states finds that, over the last 20 years, more than 80 per cent of central-government class-I posts filled by SC candidates have gone to two of the 60 SC sub-castes in those states.
- B. The author of the argument is a serving High Court judge.
- C. Sub-categorisation enjoys political support in several state legislatures.
- D. Article 14 was inserted in 1949.

15. Which of the following BEST captures the LOGICAL STRUCTURE of the argument?

- A. It moves from a constitutional text to a single judicial decision and stops there.
- B. It combines an empirical premise (concentration of benefits) and a normative premise (substantive equality) to support an inferential conclusion (permitting sub-categorisation), and acknowledges three categories of counter-claims.
- C. It rests entirely on the analogy with OBC creamy-layer doctrine.
- D. It is a pure appeal to authority based on the Davinder Singh judgment.

**PASSAGE 4 (CR) – SHOULD MARITAL RAPE BE CRIMINALISED IN INDIA? (CRIMINAL LAW / GENDER JUSTICE) Q16–20**

**READ THE ARGUMENT AND ANSWER Q16–20.**

Exception 2 to Section 375 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860 (now substantially carried over into the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023) excluded sexual intercourse by a man with his own wife, the wife not being below a certain age, from the offence of rape. The argument for the removal of this exception — that is, for the criminalisation of non-consensual sexual intercourse within marriage — runs as follows. First, the legal premise: the right to bodily autonomy and informational self-determination has been recognised as a facet of the fundamental right to life and personal liberty under Article 21, most authoritatively in Justice K.S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India (2017). A married woman does not forfeit this right at the threshold of the marital home, and consent to marriage is not consent to every act of sexual intercourse during its subsistence.

Second, the comparative premise: an overwhelming majority of legal systems with which India shares its common-law heritage — England, Australia, Canada, South Africa, the United States — have removed similar marital-rape exceptions over the past three decades. India is increasingly an outlier.

Third, the inferential step: the marital-rape exception is therefore incompatible with constitutional commitments to dignity and equality (Articles 14, 15 and 21), and should be struck down or legislatively removed, bringing non-consensual marital intercourse within the general definition of rape.

The arguments against removal are pressed forcefully. Some submit that criminalisation would destabilise the institution of marriage and lead to a flood of false complaints. Others argue that existing civil and criminal remedies — the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act 2005, Section 498A IPC, judicial separation — already address marital cruelty without resort to the full machinery of rape law. A third strand suggests that India's social and economic conditions, including the high financial dependence of many wives on their husbands, make the criminal-law response of doubtful practical value. The constitutional question, however, is not primarily one of social engineering but whether the State may permissibly carve out a class of intercourse — that occurring within marriage — from the definition of rape, given the equality and dignity guarantees of Part III.

16. Which of the following BEST states the main CONCLUSION of the argument for removal?

- A. The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita should be repealed.
- B. The marital-rape exception is incompatible with Articles 14, 15 and 21 and should be struck down or legislatively removed.
- C. Marriage as an institution should be abolished.
- D. False complaints should be punished more severely.

17. Which of the following is an UNSTATED ASSUMPTION on which the argument MOST CRUCIALLY depends?

- A. Consent to marriage does not constitute irrevocable consent to every subsequent act of sexual intercourse during the subsistence of the marriage.
- B. Marriage rates in India are declining.
- C. Article 21 will be amended.
- D. Most Indian women hold paid employment.

18. Which of the following, if true, would MOST STRENGTHEN the argument for removal?

- A. A Constitution Bench reaffirms that Puttaswamy applies inside the marital home and that bodily autonomy is a non-negotiable element of Article 21.
- B. England removed the marital-rape exception in 1991.
- C. Marriage rates in India have remained stable.
- D. Section 498A IPC has been invoked in many cases.

19. Which of the following, if true, would MOST WEAKEN the argument for removal?

- A. A long-term national study finds that, in jurisdictions that have removed marital-rape exceptions, prosecution rates remain very low while a measurable rise in demonstrably false complaints has been documented, with no measurable reduction in spousal sexual violence.
- B. The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita came into force in 2024.
- C. Some Indian states have separately criminalised marital cruelty.
- D. The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act 2005 is a civil statute.

20. The argument that 'India's social and economic conditions, including high financial dependence of wives, make the criminal-law response of doubtful value' is BEST characterised, in argumentation terms, as:

- A. An appeal to constitutional text.
- B. A pragmatic counter-claim about implementation, conceding the principle but contesting the practical efficacy of criminalisation.
- C. A direct denial of the conclusion on textual grounds.
- D. An ad hominem attack on the proponents.

**SECTION C — RAPID-FIRE GK & CURRENT AFFAIRS**

**Q21–30 · 10 Marks**

*Standalone questions on current affairs, static GK, vocabulary in context and idiom usage. No passage required.*

21. Which Indian city hosted the G20 Leaders' Summit in September 2023?

- A. Mumbai
- B. Bengaluru
- C. New Delhi
- D. Hyderabad

22. Choose the word MOST NEARLY OPPOSITE in meaning to 'ASSUAGE':

- A. Soothe
- B. Aggravate
- C. Conceal
- D. Postpone

23. The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 replaced which earlier statute?

- A. The Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973
- B. The Indian Evidence Act, 1872
- C. The Indian Penal Code, 1860
- D. The Indian Contract Act, 1872

24. The idiom 'to bite the bullet' means:

- A. To engage in a futile activity.
- B. To accept and endure a difficult or unpleasant situation with courage.
- C. To take an unnecessary risk.
- D. To act in haste and regret later.

25. Which Article of the Constitution of India enshrines the Right to Constitutional Remedies, famously described by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar as the 'heart and soul' of the Constitution?

- A. Article 14
- B. Article 19
- C. Article 21
- D. Article 32

26. Who was conferred the Bharat Ratna in 2024 posthumously, becoming the first agricultural scientist to receive the honour?

- A. M.S. Swaminathan
- B. Verghese Kurien
- C. Norman Borlaug
- D. C.N.R. Rao

27. Choose the word MOST NEARLY SIMILAR in meaning to 'EPHEMERAL':

- A. Permanent
- B. Transient
- C. Mythical
- D. Repetitive

28. The landmark judgment *Kesavananda Bharati v. State of Kerala (1973)* is best known for establishing which doctrine?

- A. The doctrine of pith and substance.
- B. The doctrine of basic structure of the Constitution.
- C. The doctrine of colourable legislation.
- D. The doctrine of eclipse.

29. The capital city of Australia is:

- A. Sydney
- B. Melbourne
- C. Canberra
- D. Perth

30. The phrase 'a flash in the pan' is used to describe:

- A. A sudden, brief success that is unlikely to be repeated.
- B. A well-planned, lasting achievement.
- C. An act of cooking quickly in oil.
- D. A long and difficult journey.