

ANSWER KEY – 23 MAY 2026

Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10
B	C	A	B	B	B	B	C	B	B
Q11	Q12	Q13	Q14	Q15	Q16	Q17	Q18	Q19	Q20
B	A	A	B	B	B	B	B	C	A
Q21	Q22	Q23	Q24	Q25	Q26	Q27	Q28	Q29	Q30
A	B	A	B	B	B	B	B	A	B

RC PASSAGES

Q1 B

The passage explicitly defines 'choice fatigue' as the phenomenon in which users, 'presented with hundreds of plausible matches, find it harder rather than easier to commit.' The cognitive overload from abundant options reduces decisional effectiveness. Option A confuses tiredness from login activity; Option C describes user withdrawal, not choice fatigue specifically; Option D describes a different observation about parental authority. Choice fatigue is the well-documented decision-paralysis effect first articulated in Schwartz's work on the paradox of choice and applied here to the matrimonial context. The answer is B.

Q2 C

The author's central claim, stated in the opening paragraph and reinforced throughout, is that matrimonial platforms have 'digitised' the older system 'rather than overturning it' — they have 'exposed its underlying logic to fresh sociological scrutiny.' The persistence of caste filtering, the role of parents, and the gendered information asymmetries all reinforce this thesis of continuity. Option A (dismantling caste) contradicts the empirical claim that intra-caste rates have barely changed. Option B (autonomous individual choice) is contradicted by the ethnographic point that parents continue to write profiles. Option D (reversing arranged marriage) is unsupported. The answer is C.

Q3 A

Option A directly undermines the author's claim that caste continues as the dominant filter: if 60% of inter-caste marriages in metros originated on the apps, that would suggest the platforms are actively expanding cross-caste matching rather than reinforcing endogamy. Option B (skipping caste field) is too narrow — confined to English-speaking urban users only. Option C (sub-caste filters being most-used) STRENGTHENS the author. Option D (success rate of cross-caste matches) speaks to outcome, not to the persistence of the filter. The empirical proposition in Option A is the most direct refutation.

Q4 B

The author's tone in describing parental involvement is observational and analytic — he simply records that 'the technology has expanded the reach of the family without quite displacing its authority' and frames the open question of whether this is 'adaptation or stagnation' as one to be answered by data. There is no censure, no nostalgia, and no alarm. Option A (sharply critical) overstates; Option C (nostalgic) wrongly imputes approval; Option D (alarmed) overstates the concern. The correct characterisation is detached and analytic — Option B.

Q5 B

The passage explicitly observes that 'men outnumber women by margins of two-to-one or more, prompting women to set increasingly stringent filters and prompting men to inflate the credentialing portions of their profiles.' This directly supports the gendered behavioural inference in Option B. Option A is factually wrong (men dominate in numbers, not women). Option C overclaims elimination of disadvantages. Option D about premium subscriptions is not supported by the passage. The answer is B, drawing directly on the explicit textual claim.

Q6 B

The author identifies two distinguishing features in the second paragraph: (i) the pre-Portuguese Indian Ocean trade was 'largely a stateless commerce: no single empire controlled the sea-lanes', and (ii) the trade 'rested on the seasonal predictability of the monsoons.' Option B captures both correctly. Option A inverts the first (state monopoly is precisely what was absent). Option C is anachronistic (armed fleets came with the Portuguese). Option D imports a Mughal navy that is not mentioned and contradicts the maritime, not overland, character of the trade described. The answer is B.

Q7 B

The passage describes the cartaz as the system 'introduced' by the Portuguese to license maritime passage, used to 'extract rents through naval coercion.' This identifies the cartaz as a pass-based licence demanded by the Portuguese as a precondition for safe passage on Indian Ocean trade routes. The historical record confirms that Portuguese ships boarded merchant vessels and demanded payment for the cartaz, sinking those without one. Option A (a vessel type) is wrong; Option C (Gujarati merchant code) is unrelated; Option D (a wind pattern) is unrelated. The answer is B.

Q8 C

The author traces a long arc: (i) a pre-modern stateless commercial order; (ii) Portuguese militarised disruption; (iii) imperial recasting after the Suez Canal and steam; and (iv) a contemporary 'surprising echo' of the earlier era through container shipping, with the same chokepoints commanding strategic attention. The thesis is one of geographic continuity across regime changes. Option A (continuous decline) is wrong — the closing paragraph emphasises resurgence. Option B (steady linear European progress) ignores the contemporary resurgence under Asian actors. Option D (total subordination) ignores the modern revival. The answer is C.

Q9 B

Option B provides direct quantitative support for the claim that the Indian Ocean has resumed centrality: a 60% rise in Suez transit tonnage between 2015 and 2024 reinforces the claim that the corridor now carries the world's busiest maritime traffic. Option A actively WEAKENS the claim (faster Trans-Pacific growth). Option C points to a future Arctic alternative, undermining Indian Ocean primacy. Option D shifts container hubs to the Caribbean, also undermining the claim. Only Option B is strengthening evidence. The answer is B.

Q10 B

The closing paragraph is reflective rather than rhetorical: the author notes the 'surprising echo' of the earlier era, observes that 'between forty and fifty per cent of global container traffic now traverses' the Indian Ocean, and closes with the line 'the actors have changed; the geography has not' — a quiet, ironic observation about historical continuity. Option A (triumphalist) is wrong — the author is critical of Portuguese militarisation. Option C (alarmed) overstates. Option D (sceptical) is unsupported — the author treats the resurgence as factual. The correct tone is quietly observational of historical irony — Option B.

CR PASSAGES

Q11 B

The opening paragraph states the proponents' position precisely: 'from 1 April 2030, no internal-combustion two-wheeler may be sold for first registration in India. Only electric models would qualify.' This is the principal conclusion the proponents urge — a binding mandate on first registration from 2030. Option A (tax-out by 2025) is a different and earlier instrument. Option C (battery prices alone will do it) contradicts the very justification for any mandate. Option D (import restrictions) is offered only as a subsidiary industrial-policy concern, not as the principal conclusion. The answer is B.

Q12 A

The industrial-policy argument runs: 'a credible mandate would compel domestic manufacturers to commit capital to electric platforms.' This presupposes that manufacturers will respond to the mandate by investing rather than by exiting the segment entirely (e.g., shifting capital to other markets, ceasing two-wheeler production, or merely importing finished electric vehicles). If this assumption fails — say, large incumbents simply exit — the industrial-policy benefits do not materialise. Options B (Chinese imports to zero), C (12-month retooling) and D (full battery-cell localisation) are stronger claims not necessary for the argument. The minimum unstated assumption is A.

Q13 A

Option A directly attacks the empirical premise of the public-health argument: if two-wheeler tailpipe emissions contribute under 5% of urban PM2.5, with road dust dominating, then eliminating two-wheeler emissions would yield only marginal public-health improvements — undermining the claim of 'tens of thousands of premature deaths prevented.' Option B (tighter WHO guideline) is neutral or strengthens. Option C (current EV sales) is irrelevant to the public-health case. Option D (battery fires) is a separate safety concern that does not bear on tailpipe-emission benefits. The correct weakener is Option A.

Q14 B

Option B provides a peer-reviewed life-cycle analysis showing that, given India's coal-heavy grid, well-to-wheel emissions of an electric two-wheeler exceed those of a comparable petrol scooter over the first 40,000 km — directly substantiating the opponents' claim that the mandate would 'relocate rather than eliminate emissions.' Options A (45% renewables capacity), C (500 GW non-fossil target) and D (state-level registration-fee exemptions) all WEAKEN the opponents by suggesting the grid is decarbonising or that EVs are already preferred. The correct strengthener is Option B.

Q15 B

The opponents propose a 'graduated, market-share-based target with periodic review' as an alternative to the proposed hard 2030 mandate. This explicitly concedes the long-run direction (electric two-wheelers will dominate — 'almost everyone now concedes that they will') while disputing only the choice of policy instrument and timeline. Option A is wrong (it is a counter-proposal, not a strengthening). Option C wrongly rejects the long-run premise. Option D over-claims that no policy intervention at all is needed. The correct characterisation is Option B — an alternative instrument that concedes the long-run direction while disputing mechanism and timeline.

Q16 B

The reformists offer three reasons but converge on a single principal conclusion: that a 'constitutionally protected — though qualified — right to strike for at least non-essential categories of public-sector workers' should be recognised. The use of 'qualified' and the carve-out for 'non-essential categories' are central. Option A overstates by extending to all government employees unqualifiedly. Option C wrongly asserts that Article 19(1)(c) already guarantees an absolute right. Option D inverts the position. The principal conclusion is precisely Option B.

Q17 B

The reformists' second argument cites ILO conventions and the practice of other democracies (UK, France, Germany, Japan, South Africa) as authority for recognising public-sector strike rights. This argument has logical force only if comparative practice and international labour norms are accepted as relevant benchmarks for shaping Indian constitutional doctrine on workplace rights. Without that bridging assumption, the foreign comparison would be irrelevant. Option A overstates (ILO conventions need not be binding to be persuasive). Options C and D introduce factual claims not necessary for the argument. The required minimum assumption is Option B.

Q18 B

The reformists argue that Rangarajan has merely 'driven [industrial action] into less orderly forms.' This implies that the total volume of disruptive action has NOT fallen, only its formal character. Option B directly weakens this: an independent labour-bureau audit finding a sharp post-2003 fall in public-sector mass-protest incidents (to fewer than three per year, with negligible disruption) contradicts the displacement thesis. Option A is consistent with the reformist claim. Option C (Railways in 2024) is a single outlier and does not bear on the systemic pattern. Option D (union membership growth) is unrelated to the volume of industrial action. The correct weakener is Option B.

Q19 C

The opponents' central premise, repeated in the third paragraph, is that 'the cost of a public-sector strike falls on third parties — patients, students, commuters, applicants — who have no voice at the bargaining table.' This third-party-externality argument is the structural foundation of their position. Option A (contractual prohibition) is not raised in the passage. Option B (strikes are economically irrational anywhere) overstates and is not the opponents' actual position. Option D (100% conciliation success) is not asserted. The correct premise identification is Option C.

Q20 A

Option A provides empirical evidence that strengthens the opponents' position by undermining the reformist suggestion that 'qualified' rights can be confined to non-essential services: it shows that, even where 'qualified' rights exist, they are invoked in essential services in 70% of cases with severe third-party spill-overs. This directly supports the opponents' worry. Options B (membership levels), C (non-ratification of ILO conventions) and D (judgment composition) are irrelevant to the strength of the qualification mechanism. The correct strengthener is Option A.

SECTION C — RAPID-FIRE GK & CURRENT AFFAIRS

Q21 A

Indonesia has been the world's largest natural-rubber producer since the early 2010s, narrowly ahead of Thailand and Vietnam, producing approximately 3.3 million tonnes annually as of 2024. India is a significant but smaller producer (around 0.85 million tonnes). The ranking is Indonesia > Thailand > Vietnam > China > India. This GK fact is regularly tested in CLAT and other admission tests, and is reported annually by the Association of Natural Rubber Producing Countries (ANRPC).

Q22 B

'Specious' means superficially plausible or attractive but actually false — appearing convincing while being untrustworthy. The word derives from the Latin 'speciosus' meaning 'showy' or 'fair-appearing.' A specious argument has the surface form of validity but conceals a flaw. Option A (honest and clear) is the opposite. Option C (cleverly succinct) confuses it with 'pithy.' Option D (aggressively delivered) confuses it with 'strident.' In the example sentence, 'specious but persuasive' captures the irony of an argument that misleads precisely because it appears reasonable.

Q23 A

K.S. Puttaswamy (Retd.) v. Union of India (2017), a nine-judge bench decision, unanimously recognised the right to privacy as an intrinsic part of the right to life and personal liberty under Article 21 and of the freedoms guaranteed in Part III. The judgment overruled M.P. Sharma (1954) and Kharak Singh (1962) to the extent that they had held privacy was not a fundamental right. Maneka Gandhi (1978) expanded Article 21 generally but did not specifically recognise privacy as a fundamental right. The correct decision is Puttaswamy (2017).

Q24 B

The idiom 'to bury the hatchet' originates from Native American practice: warring tribes would literally bury their tomahawks (hatchets) to symbolise the end of hostilities and the commencement of peace. In modern English usage, the idiom means to make peace and end a quarrel, often forgiving past grievances. Option A is literal, not idiomatic. Option C (abandon a project) confuses it with 'pull the plug.' Option D (plan in secret) confuses it with 'hatch a plot.' The correct meaning is to make peace and end a quarrel — Option B.

Q25 B

'Prolix' means tediously lengthy, wordy, or long-winded — using more words than necessary. Its direct antonym is 'concise' (brief and precise). Option A (verbose) is a synonym, not an antonym. Option C (hostile) is unrelated. Option D (complex) describes intricacy, not length. The Latin root is 'prolixus' meaning 'extended.' A prolix speaker uses many words to say little; a concise speaker says much in few. The correct antonym is therefore 'concise' — Option B.

Q26 B

Article 148 of the Constitution of India provides for the appointment of the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG), who is appointed by the President and may be removed in the manner provided for a Supreme Court judge. Article 124 deals with the establishment and constitution of the Supreme Court. Article 280 provides for the Finance Commission. Article 324 provides for the Election Commission. The CAG's office is governed by Articles 148 to 151, which together regulate appointment, conditions of service, duties and powers, and the form of audit reports.

Q27 B

The 2024 G20 Tourism Ministers' Meeting (under India's G20 presidency cycle) was hosted in Srinagar in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. The meeting was politically significant as the first major international gathering held in Srinagar since the 2019 reorganisation, and it focused on sustainable tourism, digitalisation and skill development. Although J&K is now a Union Territory, the question option treats it accordingly. The correct answer is Jammu and Kashmir (Union Territory).

Q28 B

The subject-verb agreement rule for 'neither...nor' constructions is that the verb agrees in number with the noun phrase nearest to it. 'The teachers' (plural) is the nearer subject, so the verb must be plural: 'were aware.' Option A (was aware) treats 'principal' as the agreement noun, which is wrong because 'teachers' is closer. Options C and D introduce tense shifts unsupported by the sentence. The standard prescriptive rule and the descriptively dominant usage both require 'were aware' — Option B.

Q29 A

'The Ministry of Utmost Happiness' (2017) is the second novel by Arundhati Roy, published twenty years after her Booker Prize-winning debut 'The God of Small Things' (1997). The novel is set across contemporary Delhi and Kashmir, with characters drawn from a Delhi graveyard community, the Kashmir insurgency, and the Indian political landscape. Jhumpa Lahiri (author of 'The Namesake'), Kiran Desai ('The Inheritance of Loss') and Anita Desai ('Clear Light of Day') are distinct contemporary Indian-English novelists. The correct author is Arundhati Roy — Option A.

Q30 B

The currency of Indonesia is the Rupiah (IDR), issued by Bank Indonesia. The ringgit is the currency of Malaysia. The baht is the currency of Thailand. The peso is the currency of the Philippines, Mexico and several Latin American countries. Indonesia's rupiah is one of the world's most heavily denominated currencies, with notes commonly issued in denominations up to 100,000 IDR. The correct answer is Rupiah — Option B.
