

ANSWER KEY — 1 JUNE 2026

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

RC PASSAGES

Q1 B
The passage describes the algorithmic pressure on classical recordings: streaming platforms optimise for retention, and their algorithms have learned that most listeners drop off when a recording exceeds a certain length, with the elaborate alap identified in internal platform documents as a 'high-skip risk segment'. The result is a quiet pressure on younger artists to truncate their alaps. Option B captures this precisely. Option A overstates by claiming the alap is eliminated entirely; Option C is unsupported by the passage (the passage does not say recordings are commercially unviable); Option D introduces a 'standardisation' claim that the passage does not make. The principal pressure is truncation, not elimination.

Q2 D
The phrase 'an act of cultural resistance' appears in the context of specialist niche platforms marketing long-form recordings on the idea that surrendering an hour to a single raga is itself an act of cultural resistance. The plain reading is that listeners are deliberately refusing the convenience-oriented logic of mainstream streaming — they are making a stand on behalf of the older listening tradition. Option A captures this. Option B over-politicises the phrase (no formal political protest is described); Option C wrongly treats it as a commercial strategy aimed at extracting premium fees; Option D wrongly treats it as an attempt by older musicians to prevent younger artists from recording. The phrase is about listener-side resistance.

Q3 A
The author's tone throughout is cautiously balanced: she acknowledges that streaming has brought real convenience ('a listener in Bhopal can today summon a Kishori Amonkar recording within seconds') while flagging the form-altering pressure the algorithm now exerts on artists ('a quiet pressure on younger artists to truncate the elaborate alap'). The closing paragraph notes that the algorithm is now a participant in the form's evolution. Option A captures this balanced stance. Option B (wholly condemnatory) overstates the negative; Option C (wholly celebratory) ignores the criticism; Option D (indifferent) ignores the evaluative language throughout the passage.

Q4 C
The third paragraph notes that 'several specialist platforms, founded by musicians and rasikas, have begun curating long-form recordings deliberately' as a counter-trend to mainstream algorithmic pressure. The author explicitly flags that the commercial sustainability of this niche is uncertain — 'whether this niche can sustain itself commercially is unclear'. Option C captures both points: existence of a counter-trend and uncertainty over its sustainability. Option A (state subsidy) is not in the passage; Option B (mainstream will be replaced) overstates; Option D (older musicians have rejected platforms entirely) is not in the passage. The counter-trend illustration is the correct reading.

Q5 A
The claim that the algorithm is 'a participant in the form's evolution' rests on the empirical premise that younger musicians design their concerts and recordings partly in dialogue with — and partly in defiance of — streaming retention data. If younger musicians in fact design their sets without any reference to streaming retention data or platform-side metrics, the claim of algorithmic participation is directly undermined. Option A states this. Option B (more long-form in playlists) is irrelevant to whether musicians respond to algorithms; Option C (more rasikas at live concerts) does not weaken the algorithm-participation claim; Option D (a senior musician criticising platforms) actually supports the claim of algorithmic salience.

Q6 D
The second paragraph states the proponents' principal argument: when water is free or priced below scarcity value, it is wasted; a properly functioning market, by contrast, sends a signal — the high price of water tells everyone simultaneously that the resource is scarce and that they should economise. The market reallocates water from low-value to high-value uses. Option B captures this. Option A is wrong (moral obligation is not the proponents' argument); Option C overstates by attacking customary systems wholesale (which the proponents do not do); Option D introduces a centrally-planned grid, which is not in the passage. The price-signal argument is the correct reading.

Q7 C

The author presents the proponents' argument with care, then presents the critics' arguments (distributional consequences, concentration in agribusinesses) with equal care, and concludes that the deepest difficulty is that water sits at the intersection of three categories that ordinary economic theory keeps separate. The author does not endorse either side wholesale. Option C captures this balanced stance. Option A (unqualified endorsement) ignores the critics' arguments; Option B (unqualified rejection) ignores the proponents' arguments; Option D (treat as sacred only) is a fringe position the author does not take. The balanced reading is the correct one.

Q8 B

The fourth paragraph identifies the deepest difficulty: 'water sits at the intersection of three categories that ordinary economic theory keeps separate: a commodity (you can ship it), a public good (everyone needs it), and a sacred resource (in many cultures, rivers are revered, not bought).' Option A captures this precisely. Option B (water markets have failed everywhere) overstates; Option C (customary systems collapsed irreversibly) is not in the passage; Option D (international law forbids water markets) is wholly unsupported. The conceptual difficulty — water resists categorisation as a single thing — is the author's stated deepest difficulty.

Q9 A

The author mentions Australia and the western United States 'as models, with proponents claiming that they have reduced over-extraction and helped reallocate water from low-value to high-value uses.' This is presented as part of the proponents' case, not as the author's own endorsement. The author leaves open whether the models actually deliver the claimed efficiency gains. Option B captures this presentation. Option A (adopt without modification) overstates the author's view; Option C (universally failed) misreads the proponents' presentation; Option D (Indian design must be drafted by economists from those jurisdictions) is wholly unsupported by the passage.

Q10 C

The critics' case is that water markets bear down hardest on those who have the least ability to pay, and that they concentrate rights in the hands of large agribusinesses who buy out smallholder allocations during dry years at distress prices. Empirical confirmation that smallholder allocations have been bought out at distress prices in regions with water markets directly strengthens this case. Option A states this. Option B (panchayat systems work well) does not weaken markets directly; Option C (low price-elasticity at the household level) strengthens the case but indirectly; Option D (drip irrigation reduces water demand) is irrelevant to the distributional point.

CR PASSAGES

Q11 A

The editorial opens with a clear policy proposal: India should introduce an annual wealth tax of 2% on the net wealth of individuals with assets exceeding ₹50 crore. The remainder of the editorial argues in support of this proposal. The main conclusion is the policy proposal itself. Option A states this. Option B (inequality is corrosive) is a supporting premise, not the conclusion; Option C (reinstate the old wealth tax) is wrong — the editorial proposes a new tax with different parameters; Option D (European countries should reintroduce wealth taxes) is not the editorial's conclusion. The main conclusion is the proposed Indian policy.

Q12 B

The editorial argues that the very wealthy can structure their affairs so that they realise very little taxable income while their underlying wealth compounds untaxed, and that a wealth tax would catch what other taxes miss. For this argument to support introducing a wealth tax, the unstated assumption is that the gap between realised income and underlying wealth at the top of the distribution is large enough to make a wealth tax raise significant revenue beyond what income tax already raises. Option B captures this. Option A (corruption) is not the editorial's premise; Option C (zero capital gains tax) is factually wrong; Option D (voluntary declaration) is not the editorial's assumption.

Q13 D

The editorial concedes that wealth taxes have been repealed in France (2018) and Germany (1997) but points to Spain, Norway and Switzerland as countries that have retained wealth taxes without observing the catastrophic capital flight that opponents predict. The administrative challenges of valuation are described as 'real but manageable'. The strategy is to concede the European-repeal point partly while pointing to retained European wealth taxes as counter-examples. Option B captures this. Option A (disputing French repeal) is wrong; Option C (European administrations less competent) is the opposite of the editorial's view; Option D (capital flight impossible under FX controls) is not the editorial's argument.

Q14 C

The editorial assumes that the very wealthy will not engage in significant capital flight in response to the proposed tax — pointing to Spain, Norway and Switzerland as evidence. If a simulation predicts a 30% drop in domestic equity investment by ultra-wealthy individuals within two years, this directly contradicts the editorial's premise that capital flight is not catastrophic. Option C states this. Option A (inequality has fallen) weakens but only modestly; Option B (valuation is feasible) supports the editorial; Option D (existing financing is adequate) weakens but indirectly. The simulation result is the most direct weakener.

Q15 B

The editorial distinguishes the proposed new tax from the earlier Indian wealth tax (repealed 2015) by saying: 'The earlier Indian wealth tax exempted productive assets and applied at a low rate from a low threshold; the proposed new tax would apply only above ₹50 crore at a meaningful rate, capturing precisely the segment where wealth concentration is most acute.' Option A states this. Option B (different tax authority) is not in the editorial; Option C (exempt financial assets) is wrong; Option D (voluntary contribution) is wholly absent from the editorial. The threshold-and-rate distinction is the editorial's principal differentiation argument.

Q16 C

The policy piece opens with a clear policy proposal: all AI-generated text, images, audio and video distributed in India should carry a mandatory machine-readable watermark identifying the underlying model and the date of generation. The remainder of the piece argues for this proposal. The main conclusion is the watermarking proposal itself. Option A states this. Option B (criminal liability for failure to disclose in all contexts) overstates; Option C (banning offshore models) is not the conclusion; Option D (banning all deepfake content) is a different proposal not advanced here. The watermarking proposal is the principal conclusion.

Q17 A

The piece concedes that 'offshore content will leak in' — it does not deny that offshore models produce much of the content. Instead, the argument shifts the comparison: the relevant baseline is not perfection but the current situation in which no provenance signal exists at all. Even a leaky watermarking regime substantially improves the average reader's ability to assess what they are seeing. Option B captures this baseline-shift move. Option A (denying offshore predominance) is wrong; Option C (international treaty pursuit) is not in the passage; Option D (extraterritorial regulator powers) is wholly unsupported.

Q18 D

The piece responds to the free-speech objection by distinguishing 'disclosure of a fact about how the content was made' from 'forced endorsement of an opinion'. The rule disclosed is the former — a fact, not an opinion — and that distinction is described as 'well established in Indian free-speech jurisprudence'. Option C captures this. Option A (commercial/political distinction) is not the piece's move; Option B (social-media/messaging distinction) is not in the passage; Option D (artistic/journalistic distinction) is wholly unsupported. The fact-versus-opinion distinction is the operative move.

Q19 B

The argument concedes the technical objection in part — 'any watermark that is robust to image compression and re-encoding is also detectable enough to be removed by a sufficiently determined adversary' — but argues that even a leaky regime is better than no provenance signal at all. If independent testing finds that the only watermarks robust to compression are also trivially removable by ordinary consumer tools, this undercuts the 'even leaky is useful' move by suggesting that the regime would be evaded routinely, not only by determined adversaries. Option C states this. Option A (better detection) strengthens; Option B (compression-robust watermarks exist) supports the proposal; Option D (Indian courts uphold disclosure) supports.

Q20 A

The piece is structured as: (i) identifies a problem — the collapse of the distinction between human and machine output and the resulting harms; (ii) proposes a remedy — mandatory watermarking; (iii) identifies three lines of objection — technical, jurisdictional, free-speech; (iv) responds to each, conceding the first two in part and rebutting the third by the fact-versus-opinion distinction. Option A captures this exactly. Option B (no engagement with objections) is wrong; Option C (no problem identified) is wrong; Option D (refutation of a competing proposal) is wrong — the piece advances its own proposal. The problem-remedy-objections-replies structure is the correct reading.

SECTION C — RAPID-FIRE GK & CURRENT AFFAIRS

Q21 C

Justice Bhushan Ramkrishna Gavai was sworn in as the 52nd Chief Justice of India in May 2025, following the retirement of Justice Sanjiv Khanna. He became the second Dalit CJI of India. Option B states this. Option A (Chandrachud) had retired earlier; Option C (Khanna) preceded Gavai; Option D (Lalit) had retired in 2022 and was not reappointed. Justice Gavai's appointment was widely reported in May 2025 ahead of his swearing-in. The correct answer is Justice B.R. Gavai.

Q22 D

'Ubiquitous' means present, appearing, or found everywhere — omnipresent. The sentence 'mobile phones have become ubiquitous in Indian classrooms' means mobile phones are found everywhere in Indian classrooms. Option D (omnipresent) is the standard synonym. Option A (rare) is the opposite; Option B (outdated) refers to a temporal property; Option C (expensive) refers to cost — none of these match the meaning of 'ubiquitous'. The word ubiquitous comes from the Latin ubique meaning 'everywhere' and is widely used in English to denote omnipresence.

Q23 A

The Constitution (One Hundred and Sixth Amendment) Act, 2023, popularly known as the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam, provides for the reservation of one-third of seats for women in the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies. The reservation is to take effect after the next delimitation exercise conducted after the publication of the relevant Census. Option A states this. Option B (corporate boards) is unrelated; Option C (gram panchayats) overlaps with earlier women-reservation provisions but is not the subject of this Amendment; Option D (civil-service posts) is wholly unrelated. The 106th Amendment is the women-reservation amendment.

Q24 B

'Brought to book' means called to account or formally held accountable for misconduct. In the context of the sentence — after the auditor uncovered the hidden ledger, the whole fraud was 'brought to book' — the idiom fits naturally. Option A states this. Option B (up in the air) means uncertain, which is the opposite of the required sense; Option C (on the cards) means likely to happen in the future, which does not fit the past-discovery context; Option D (in the same boat) means sharing a difficult situation, which does not apply to a fraud being exposed. The correct idiom for accountability is 'brought to book'.

Q25 C

Article 17 of the Constitution of India provides: 'Untouchability is abolished and its practice in any form is forbidden. The enforcement of any disability arising out of "Untouchability" shall be an offence punishable in accordance with law.' Option C states this. Article 14 (Option A) deals with equality before law; Article 15 (Option B) prohibits discrimination by the State on enumerated grounds; Article 19 (Option D) deals with the six freedoms. The specific abolition of untouchability is in Article 17, supplemented by the Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955 and the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989.

Q26 D

The Hague Conference on Private International Law adopted the 2024 Convention on Recognition and Enforcement of Foreign Judgments in Civil and Commercial Matters, building on the 2019 Judgments Convention. India is among the states actively considering accession to the new instrument. Option B states this. Option A (maritime arbitration) is unrelated; Option C (criminal jurisdiction over corporate officers) is wholly unrelated; Option D (cyber-crime extradition) refers to the Budapest Convention which is a Council of Europe instrument, not Hague. The correct answer relates to civil and commercial matters.

Q27 B

'Ephemeral' means lasting only a very short time; transitory; short-lived. The sentence 'the trends of the season are notoriously ephemeral' means the trends do not last long. Option D (short-lived) is the standard synonym. Option A (long-lasting) is the opposite; Option B (profitable) refers to commercial returns; Option C (sophisticated) refers to refinement. None of these except short-lived captures the temporal meaning. The word ephemeral comes from the Greek *ephemeros* meaning 'lasting only a day' and is widely used in English to denote brevity.

Q28 A

Article 32 of the Constitution of India confers on the Supreme Court the power to issue writs for the enforcement of Fundamental Rights conferred by Part III of the Constitution. Article 32(1) itself guarantees the right to move the Supreme Court for enforcement of fundamental rights, and the right is itself a fundamental right (Article 32 is in Part III). Option A states this. Option B (Directive Principles) is wrong — DPSPs are non-justiciable; Option C (Fundamental Duties) is wrong — duties are not enforceable through writs; Option D (any statutory right) is wrong — Article 32 is confined to fundamental rights, with statutory rights enforceable through Article 226 in High Courts.

Q29 C

The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023, replaced the Indian Penal Code, 1860 — the principal substantive criminal-law statute of India for over 160 years. The BNS came into force on 1 July 2024, alongside the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (replacing CrPC) and the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam (replacing the Evidence Act). Option C states this. Option A (CrPC) was replaced by BNSS, not BNS; Option B (Evidence Act) was replaced by BSA, not BNS; Option D (Contract Act) was not part of the criminal-law reform. The BNS is the substantive-law statute replacing the IPC.

Q30 D

'Sagacious' means having or showing keen mental discernment and good judgment; wise; shrewd. Option C (wise) is the standard synonym. Option A (foolish) is the opposite; Option B (verbose) refers to wordiness; Option D (tall) refers to physical height — none of these except wise captures the meaning. The word sagacious comes from the Latin *sagax* meaning 'keen-scented' and by extension keen of perception or judgment. The correct synonym for sagacious is wise.
