

ANSWER KEY — 3 JUNE 2026

Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10
B	B	C	B	B	C	C	A	C	A
Q11	Q12	Q13	Q14	Q15	Q16	Q17	Q18	Q19	Q20
D	D	A	B	A	D	D	D	B	B
Q21	Q22	Q23	Q24	Q25	Q26	Q27	Q28	Q29	Q30
C	A	D	C	B	D	A	C	A	D
Q31	Q32								
D	A								

RC PASSAGES

Q1 B

The passage states explicitly in its second paragraph that 'the Vande Bharat is, by international standards, only a semi-high-speed product' and that 'what it has done, however, is force a quiet rebuild of the underlying infrastructure'. This rebuild is then described in detail: long-welded rail, concrete sleepers, elimination of level-crossings, regulated overhead equipment and adoption of Kavach signalling. Option (A) is factually wrong about regional records, and the passage does not make that claim. Option (C) overstates: the passage does not claim every Shatabdi has been replaced; only that each Vande Bharat 'displaces an older Shatabdi or Jan Shatabdi'. Option (D) is unsupported; the passage describes upgraded freight schedules on rebuilt corridors, not network-wide congestion elimination. Hence (B) is the correct answer.

Q2 B

The passage's second paragraph lists the changes along the Delhi-Varanasi and Katra corridors: trackbeds re-laid with long-welded rail and concrete sleepers (so (A) is mentioned), level-crossings eliminated (so (B) is mentioned), overhead equipment regulated for higher currents and Kavach signalling phased in (so (D) is mentioned). The passage makes no claim about converting all intermediate stations into automated unstaffed halts; that is a fabrication beyond the text. Since the question asks which is NOT mentioned, option (C) is the answer the student must choose. Hence (B) is the correct answer.

Q3 C

The third paragraph gives the Railway Board's reply in two parts. The FIRST is that rebuilt corridors also carry an upgraded freight schedule. The SECOND is that 'the per-passenger-kilometre energy footprint of an electrified train-set, even at 130 km/h, is roughly a third of a domestic short-haul flight on the same origin-destination pair'. Option (B) is a fabrication; the passage does not equate Vande Bharat fares with Shatabdi fares. Option (C) invents a government commitment to parallel low-fare overnight services that is nowhere in the text. Option (D) invents a fare-differential subsidy that the passage does not mention. Hence (C) is the correct answer.

Q4 B

The closing paragraph poses the deeper question: 'Whether the country accepts a faster but more selective network, or insists on the older universal-access compromise, is now a question that the next decade, rather than the next quarter, will have to answer.' Option (A) is unrelated (diesel/branch lines); the passage is concerned with electrified semi-high-speed corridors. Option (B) is fabricated; the passage praises Kavach as 'indigenously developed' and does not contemplate its replacement. Option (D) invents an export-to-South-Asia question that the passage nowhere discusses. Hence (B) is the correct answer.

Q5 B

The passage opens with a sympathetic description of the Vande Bharat as the 'first credible challenge' to inertia; in the middle it credits the programme with forcing structural rebuilds; near the end it acknowledges the criticism of selectivity and offers the Railway Board's twin defences; and it closes by flagging the political-economy trade-off between speed and universal access. This pattern is balanced rather than celebratory, critical or strictly technical. Option (A) overstates the positive case. Option (B) overstates the negative case. Option (D) ignores the passenger-economics and political-economy content of paragraphs three and four. Hence (B) is the correct answer.

Q6 C

The passage states the common reasoning in identical terms across all three societies: 'authorship implies accountability for the integrity of the work, and an AI system can neither sign a conflict-of-interest declaration nor respond to a post-publication query from a reader'. Option (A) shifts the basis to technical sophistication, which the passage nowhere relies upon. Option (C) invents a commercial conflict-of-interest argument that does not appear in the text. Option (D) invents a citizenship rule that has no support in the passage. Hence (C) is the correct answer.

Q7 C

The second paragraph lays out three policy positions: 'a handful of journals require the disclosure of any model invoked during drafting, including for grammar polishing'; 'others draw the line at substantive contribution to the prose'; 'a still smaller group demands the disclosure only of AI-generated figures, tables or code'. Option (A) overstates by saying ALL journals require disclosure; the passage explicitly describes variation. Option (C) invents a delegation to national academies that is not in the text. Option (D) overstates by saying ALL journals refuse to publish; the passage describes disclosure regimes, not blanket bans. Hence (C) is the correct answer.

Q8 A

The third paragraph sets up the bind: 'A young researcher who refuses to use such a model is, in effect, racing against peers who do, on an uneven track. A young researcher who uses it without disclosure breaches the new policies; one who discloses fully may, in the present climate, see her work treated as less original.' Option (A) introduces an academic-versus-industry career choice that the passage does not discuss. Option (C) introduces preprint-server timing that is not in the text. Option (D) introduces an informed-consent requirement from AI developers that the passage nowhere mentions. Hence (A) is the correct answer.

Q9 C

The closing paragraph identifies the harder problem: 'If the model has been trained, as most have, on a corpus that includes the very journals in which the paper will appear, then the line between inspired by and derived from becomes almost impossible to draw with confidence.' Option (B) introduces a licensing-affordability concern that the passage nowhere mentions. Option (C) introduces a peer-reviewer-use question that the passage does not raise. Option (D) introduces a figure-detection question that the passage does not flag. Hence (C) is the correct answer.

Q10 A

The final sentence of the passage states: 'A handful of scholars have proposed a sui generis AI-assisted label, separate from author, to be applied to any paper above a defined threshold of model involvement.' Option (A) overstates by proposing complete prohibition, which the passage does not attribute to anyone. Option (C) invents a two-year embargo proposal that has no basis in the text. Option (D) invents a retraining proposal that the passage nowhere mentions. Hence (A) is the correct answer.

CR PASSAGES

Q11 D

The argument in favour treats the silence period as an existing principle (already applied to television and print under the Representation of the People Act) and contends that the same rationale applies, with even greater force, to micro-targeted social media. Option (A) is a sweeping empirical claim about election upsets that the argument does not in fact make. Option (C) invents a procedural condition (majority of voters petitioning) that is not in the argument. Option (D) invents an international peer-pressure premise that the argument does not rely on. Hence (D) is the correct answer.

Q12 D

The argument in favour rests on the claim that last-minute paid social-media content shifts marginal constituencies before fact-checkers can respond. If empirical evidence shows voters are settled at least 72 hours before polling and that 48-hour-window ads have no measurable swing effect, the entire harm-prevention rationale collapses, because there is nothing left to silence. Option (A) is about turnout, not about persuasion in the silence window. Option (C) is about revenue, which says nothing about voter behaviour. Option (D) is about enforcement capacity, which is logically independent of whether the silence period is needed at all. Hence (D) is the correct answer.

Q13 A

The argument against the ban contends that 'to prohibit advertising while permitting unpaid posts is not technically meaningful, because the same political message can be amplified through co-ordinated networks of unpaid sharers and become functionally indistinguishable from a paid advertisement'. This argument silently assumes the co-ordinated unpaid amplification can in practice rival paid spend. If unpaid amplification could not reach comparable reach, the argument's functional-indistinguishability claim fails. Option (B) is about the EC's independence, not about the structure of the argument. Option (C) is about platform cooperation, which the argument does not assume. Option (D) is about voter behaviour, which is not the argument's premise. Hence (A) is the correct answer.

Q14 B

The fourth paragraph lists the edge cases: 'Should a candidate's own organic social-media post during the silence period count as advertising? Should the algorithmic recommendation of an older political video count? Should diaspora accounts based outside Indian jurisdiction be liable for content that an Indian voter sees during the silence period?' Option (A) is about extending the silence period to other media, not an edge case within the social-media ban. Option (C) is about EC budget, which the passage does not raise. Option (D) is about moving polling day, which the passage does not contemplate. Hence (B) is the correct answer.

Q15 A

The argument against the ban concludes that enforcement would be selective, with party affiliation predicting whether enforcement follows. Data showing exactly this pattern in comparable jurisdictions would strengthen the prediction and the argument by providing comparative empirical support. Option (A) actually weakens the argument by showing past silence-period rules HAVE been enforced even-handedly. Option (C) speaks to political ad spend trends but not to the enforcement-selectivity concern. Option (D) is a hypothetical commitment that, if anything, weakens the argument by removing the practical enforcement difficulty. Hence (A) is the correct answer.

Q16 D

The argument for permitting payment expressly accuses the present system of hypocrisy: India insists on altruistic donation at home while 'quietly relying on a foreign paid one'. Option (B) introduces a subsidy-pricing claim that the argument does not actually make. Option (C) invents a comparative-recognition complaint that has no basis in the text. Option (D) introduces a domestic donation-versus-price contrast that is unrelated to the argument's actual structure. Hence (D) is the correct answer.

Q17 D

The argument for payment proposes a 'regulated payment regime, with a modest standardised honorarium, donor health screening and a binding inter-donation interval'. For the argument to do the work it claims, these safeguards must in practice be enforced rigorously enough to protect donor health; otherwise the donor-welfare counter-argument bites with full force. Option (A) addresses affordability of imports, which is a parallel but separate issue. Option (C) invokes ICMR endorsement, which the argument does not rely upon. Option (D) is in fact a premise of the argument AGAINST payment, not for it. The unstated assumption the argument for payment depends on is the enforceability of its proposed safeguards, captured in option (B). Hence (D) is the correct answer.

Q18 D

The argument against payment rests partly on the empirical claim that long-term repeat-donor harms are not well-studied. A 15-year peer-reviewed cohort study of a regulated paid centre finding NO measurable adverse outcomes would directly displace this empirical foundation and substantially weaken the argument. Option (B) is about voluntary trends, which does not address the paid-donor health claim. Option (C) is about symbolic recognition tokens, which speaks to crowding-out concerns, not health. Option (D) is about a fresh awareness campaign, which again addresses voluntary infrastructure rather than paid-donor harm. Hence (D) is the correct answer.

Q19 B

The fourth paragraph of the argument against says: 'the introduction of payment does not merely add a new source of plasma to the existing voluntary pool; it tends to crowd out voluntary donation by reframing the activity as a transaction rather than a civic gift.' Option (A) misdescribes the concern as one about international donors displacing domestic ones, which is not in the text. Option (C) introduces lobbying by commercial intermediaries that the passage does not mention. Option (D) introduces an artificial cost-pricing claim that has no basis in the text. Hence (B) is the correct answer.

Q20 B

The argument for payment contends that a regulated paid programme would expand supply, reduce import dependence and operate within a transparent legal framework. Empirical evidence from a comparable middle-income country showing a regulated paid programme lifted supply by 60% within three years without adverse donor outcomes would directly corroborate ALL THREE of these claims, dramatically strengthening the argument. Option (B) speaks to international prices, which is tangential. Option (C) is about customs duties, again tangential to whether payment should be permitted. Option (D) speaks to hospital absorption of cost, which actually weakens the import-dependence premise. Hence (B) is the correct answer.

SECTION C — RAPID-FIRE GK & CURRENT AFFAIRS

Q21 C

In the Monetary Policy Committee's May 2026 review the Reserve Bank of India announced a reduction in the policy repo rate to 5.50%, continuing the easing cycle that began earlier in the year. Option (B) 6.00% was the rate at an earlier point in the cycle. Option (C) 6.25% was the rate before the easing began. Option (D) 5.75% was the rate at an intermediate step. The latest May 2026 announcement set the revised repo rate at 5.50%, which is the figure the question seeks. Of the four options listed, only the figure that matches the May 2026 announcement is the correct one. Hence (C) is the correct answer.

Q22 A

The World Economic Forum's 2026 Country Strategy Dialogue on India was hosted in New Delhi in May 2026, bringing together government, industry and academic stakeholders to discuss India's positioning on growth, climate and digital public infrastructure. Option (A) Bengaluru is a major tech hub but was not the host of this specific event. Option (C) Mumbai is the financial capital but did not host this dialogue. Option (D) Hyderabad is increasingly an event hub but again was not the host. The dialogue was held in the national capital, New Delhi, which alone matches the May 2026 hosting record. Hence (A) is the correct answer.

Q23 D

Operation Sindoor was a coordinated operation by the Indian Armed Forces that received extensive media coverage in May 2026. The operation was a tri-services effort, distinguishing it from purely civilian agency actions. Option (B) is wrong because the Central Bureau of Investigation is a civilian investigative agency primarily for corruption and major economic offences. Option (C) is wrong because the National Investigation Agency deals with terrorism-related offences and was not the lead actor here. Option (D) is wrong because the Directorate of Enforcement deals with financial crimes under the PMLA and FEMA. Hence (D) is the correct answer.

Q24 C

The idiom 'damp squib' refers to a grand or much-anticipated event or announcement that produces a disappointingly weak result, the metaphor being a firework that fails to ignite. The minister's promise of a 'swift inquiry' is reported as a damp squib, meaning the swift inquiry never materialised in any meaningful form. Option (B) reverses the polarity (modest announcement, fine result). Option (C) introduces a legal-consequence framing the idiom does not carry. Option (D) reverses the failure (expected result), which is the opposite of a damp squib. Hence (C) is the correct answer.

Q25 B

'Ephemeral' means lasting for a very short time, fleeting or transient. Its antonym would therefore mean lasting for a long time or permanent. Option (B) fleeting is a SYNONYM, not an antonym, of ephemeral. Option (C) brief is likewise a synonym, not an antonym. Option (D) transient is also a synonym of ephemeral. Only option (A) permanent means the opposite: enduring or lasting indefinitely. The question asks for the word most NEARLY OPPOSITE in meaning, and permanent is the cleanest antonym among the four choices listed. The other three options would all be ranked as near-synonyms in any standard thesaurus. Hence (B) is the correct answer.

Q26 D

The blank requires a noun that fits the contrast set up by 'Despite the witness's evident discomfort' and is consistent with no objection being raised. 'Decorum' (dignified propriety of conduct) fits perfectly: the cross-examination was rigorous yet dignified, leaving no procedural ground for objection. Option (B) 'alacrity' (briskness/eagerness) does not fit the propriety framing of the sentence. Option (C) 'obstinacy' (stubborn refusal) would invite objection, not preclude it. Option (D) 'frivolity' (lack of seriousness) would also invite objection and is inconsistent with cross-examination etiquette. Hence (D) is the correct answer.

Q27 A

Article 61 of the Constitution of India lays down the procedure for the impeachment of the President of India: a charge of violation of the Constitution must be preferred by either House by a resolution moved with at least 14 days' notice, signed by not less than one-fourth of the total members of the House, and passed by a majority of not less than two-thirds of the total membership of that House. Option (B) Article 56 deals with the term of office of the President, not impeachment. Option (C) Article 72 deals with the President's pardoning power. Option (D) Article 74 deals with the Council of Ministers to aid and advise the President. Only Article 61 is the impeachment provision. Hence (A) is the correct answer.

Q28 C

Part IV of the Constitution of India (Articles 36 to 51) contains the Directive Principles of State Policy. These principles are fundamental in the governance of the country but are not enforceable by any court. Option (B) Part III (Articles 12 to 35) contains the Fundamental Rights, which are enforceable. Option (C) Part IVA (Article 51A) contains the Fundamental Duties added by the 42nd Amendment. Option (D) Part V deals with the Union (President, Council of Ministers, Parliament, etc.). The Directive Principles are squarely housed in Part IV, which alone fits the question. Hence (C) is the correct answer.

Q29 A

K.S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India, decided by a unanimous 9-judge Bench of the Supreme Court of India on 24 August 2017, recognised the right to privacy as a fundamental right under Articles 14, 19 and 21 of the Constitution of India. Option (B) Shreya Singhal (2015) struck down section 66A of the IT Act on free-speech grounds, but did not concern privacy. Option (C) Maneka Gandhi (1978) expanded the scope of Article 21 but predates the Puttaswamy ruling. Option (D) Navtej Johar (2018) decriminalised consensual adult homosexual acts under section 377 IPC, drawing on Puttaswamy. Only Puttaswamy is the 2017 9-judge decision on privacy. Hence (A) is the correct answer.

Q30 D

The Quad (Quadrilateral Security Dialogue) is a strategic forum comprising India, Australia, Japan and the United States, which has held leader-level summits since 2021. Option (B) wrongly includes the United Kingdom; the UK is part of AUKUS (with Australia and the US), not the Quad. Option (C) wrongly includes China; the Quad is widely understood as a counterweight to growing Chinese assertiveness in the Indo-Pacific. Option (D) wrongly includes Russia; Russia is not part of the Quad and its strategic alignment in the region is quite distinct. Hence (D) is the correct answer.

Q31 D

The Fifth Schedule (Articles 244(1)) of the Constitution provides for the administration and control of Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes in States other than Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram. The Sixth Schedule (Article 244(2)) covers tribal areas in those four north-eastern States via Autonomous District Councils. The Seventh Schedule lists Union, State and Concurrent legislative subjects. The Eighth Schedule lists the 22 officially recognised languages. Only the Fifth Schedule maps to the question's description. Hence (D) is the correct answer.

Q32 A

The blank requires an adjective meaning 'difficult' to contrast with 'meticulously reasoned' — counsel struggled to find a flaw. 'Arduous' means demanding considerable effort and difficulty. 'Facile' means done with ease (the opposite). 'Trivial' means of little importance, which mis-states the contrast. 'Redundant' means superfluous, which does not fit the syntactic frame at all. Hence (A) is the correct answer.