

**ANSWER KEY — 9 JUNE 2026**

Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10
B	D	D	C	D	C	D	C	A	B
Q11	Q12	Q13	Q14	Q15	Q16	Q17	Q18	Q19	Q20
B	A	B	C	A	C	A	B	B	D

RC PASSAGES

**Q1 B**  
The passage opens by noting half a century of neglect, describes the Jal Marg Vikas Project as the first serious attempt to reverse it, sets out the economic case, the ecological contestation, and the unresolved question of commercial viability without subsidy. Option B captures all these threads — revival, third-mode role, cheaper but ecologically contested. Option A overstates uniformity and goes too far on displacement; the passage does not argue for displacing road and rail. Option C overstates the environmental concern as decisive against any expansion. Option D denies the visible effect of the Project that the passage actually documents. Hence (B) is the correct answer.

**Q2 D**  
The statistic appears in the opening paragraph immediately after the observation that many manufacturing belts sit within a hundred kilometres of a navigable river. Its rhetorical work is to underline the gap between under-use and potential — a low share despite favourable geography. Option B is a normative claim the passage does not make. Option C generalises about road dominance, which is context but not the point of the statistic. Option D is a non-sequitur about railway freight that the passage does not assert. The function of the figure is therefore to highlight disproportionate under-use. Hence (D) is the correct answer.

**Q3 D**  
Paragraph 3 says the Authority 'has, in response, mandated propeller-guard fittings and seasonal speed limits in identified stretches' — clearly treating dolphin habitats as warranting some operational restriction. Option A is contradicted by paragraph 2, which says barging suits only certain cargo classes. Option C is contradicted by paragraph 3, which records that the Authority has acted, not refused. Option D is contradicted by paragraph 2's note that 'only a handful' of the hundred-plus waterways are commercially active. The reliable inference from the two paragraphs is therefore B. Hence (D) is the correct answer. Hence (D) is the correct answer.

**Q4 C**  
The supporters argue that letting expressways absorb every extra tonne is 'neither sustainable nor cheap when the carbon price is internalised'. The phrase therefore serves as a premise: it strengthens the supporters' position by saying the apparent cheapness of road haulage rests on ignoring its climate cost. Option A misreads the phrase as a concession against waterways. Option C misreads it as a statement of present Indian fact, whereas the passage frames it conditionally. Option D dismisses it as a rhetorical aside, but it is doing argumentative work for the supporters. Hence (C) is the correct answer.

**Q5 D**  
The supporters' position is that a true multi-modal grid integrating waterways saves cost once carbon pricing is internalised. The argument is therefore most directly weakened by evidence that, even with first-mile and last-mile road haulage included AND after carbon pricing, barge routes are systematically costlier than expressway haulage — option C. Option A strengthens the supporters by confirming integrated cost savings. Option B addresses an environmental concern but does not touch the cost-and-subsidy argument. Option D supports the supporters by showing operational displacement of diesel. The strongest weakener is therefore C. Hence (D) is the correct answer. Hence (D) is the correct answer.

**Q6 C**  
The passage frames the dispute at the International Seabed Authority as a contest about how an international commons should be governed when its benefits and harms fall on radically different constituencies — option B captures this exactly. Option A is a fact recital, not the central concern. Option C is too sweeping; the passage records that the Convention has worked over several decades, not that it has 'wholly failed'. Option D overstates Indigenous influence — the passage records opposition but not successful blockage of all proposed mining. The central concern is therefore the governance of the commons. Hence (C) is the correct answer.

**Q7 D**  
Paragraph 2 explains that the two-year rule required the Authority to finalise the mining code within twenty-four months or else process the application under existing rules; the Authority missed the deadline in July 2023, producing contested legal effects. Option B captures both the trigger function and the resulting ambiguity. Option A misdescribes it as an optional procedural device for assessments. Option C wrongly treats it as a moratorium. Option D wrongly elevates landlocked States to controllers of licensing. The rule's argumentative function is therefore B. Hence (D) is the correct answer.

**Q8 C**

Paragraph 3 says nodules grow at rates measured in millimetres per million years and that sediment plumes from collection vehicles can smother filter-feeders far beyond the immediate mining site — a clear statement of long-recovery and wide-spreading harm. Option B captures both halves of that point. Option A is contradicted by the 'far beyond' phrase. Option C is contradicted by the explicit reference to Indigenous opposition. Option D contradicts the plume-spreading sentence in the paragraph. The reliable inference from paragraph 3 is therefore B. Hence (C) is the correct answer. Hence (C) is the correct answer.

**Q9 A**

The passage says the 'common heritage of mankind' status is 'meant to ensure that any benefits from its exploitation are shared equitably with developing States'. Option A captures this purpose directly. Option B is contradicted by the very meaning of the phrase — the deep seabed is precisely not national territory. Option C reverses the principle by treating it as a licence for unrestricted commercial use. Option D wrongly inflates Indigenous customary law into 'the controlling legal standard' under the Convention. The phrase's function is therefore to convey equitable sharing of benefits, not appropriation. Hence (A) is the correct answer.

**Q10 B**

An opinion of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea holding that the 'common heritage' principle requires an adopted code before any commercial extraction would be directly and authoritatively supportive of the position that no mining can lawfully begin without the code — option B. Option A is irrelevant to the legality question; abundance does not bear on the legal precondition. Option C addresses demand, not legal authority. Option D addresses operational mitigation, again not the legality question. The strongest support is therefore B. Hence (B) is the correct answer. Hence (B) is the correct answer.

CR PASSAGES

**Q11 B**

The argument's final paragraph spells out the conclusion: 'once a credible national caste-census data set is available, an automatic statutory review of the OBC reservation framework — both its size and its internal allocation — must follow as a matter of constitutional good faith'. Option B captures this. Option A speaks to the 50 per cent ceiling, which the argument neither attacks nor defends. Option C states a sub-claim about the 1980 estimate but not the conclusion. Option D goes further than the argument, which calls for review, not repeal. The conclusion is therefore B. Hence (B) is the correct answer. Hence (B) is the correct answer.

**Q12 A**

Paragraph 3 lists three premises: the proportionality logic (option A), the constitutional permissibility of sub-categorisation citing Davinder Singh (option B), and the legitimacy-by-empirical-alignment claim (option C). The argument never extends to private-sector reservation. Option D therefore states a proposition the argument does not use and is the correct pick for a 'not a premise' question. Each of A, B and C is expressly relied upon as a step in the argument's reasoning leading to its conclusion. Hence (A) is the correct answer. Hence (A) is the correct answer.

**Q13 B**

The argument relies on the Bihar caste survey as a credible signal that OBC shares are materially higher and uneven. Evidence that the Bihar survey itself was methodologically flawed — systematically under-counting non-OBCs and inflating OBC headcounts — would directly weaken the data-quality foundation of the argument and undermine the call for review. Option B strengthens the argument by reinforcing cross-survey consistency. Option C strengthens the argument by acknowledging staleness. Option D addresses utilisation, which is tangential to the legitimacy-of-quantum claim. The strongest weakener is therefore A. Hence (B) is the correct answer.

**Q14 C**

Davinder Singh is invoked to establish that sub-categorisation within reserved groups is constitutionally permitted; without that authority, the argument's call for redrawing internal allocations would face a constitutional barrier. Option A captures this anchor role. Option B overstates the case: Davinder Singh does not settle quantum at 27%. Option C inverts the case's effect: it does not bar judicial review of legislative choices. Option D invents a private-sector direction that the case does not give. The function of the citation is therefore A. Hence (C) is the correct answer.

**Q15 A**

The 'demonstrably stale' inference rests crucially on the assumption that the OBC population share has in fact materially changed since 1980, rather than remaining within a narrow band around the Mandal estimate. If that assumption is false — if the OBC share is still roughly what Mandal estimated — then the call for review on staleness grounds collapses. Option A is a factual recital that does not, if false, undermine the staleness inference. Option B is a precondition for any review at all but does not address staleness. Option D undergirds the sub-categorisation step but not the staleness inference. The key assumption is therefore C. Hence (A) is the correct answer. Hence (A) is the correct answer.

**Q16 C**

The closing paragraph states: 'legislatures should impose a mandatory disclosure rule on employers that uses AI to screen or rank shortlisted applicants, the disclosure to be made to each such applicant in clear and intelligible language at the point of shortlisting or rejection'. Option B is a faithful restatement of that conclusion. Option A understates by recommending only voluntary disclosure. Option C wrongly elevates the EU and EEOC into 'the only legitimate global standard'. Option D overshoots by recommending prohibition of algorithmic hiring altogether. The conclusion is therefore B. Hence (C) is the correct answer.

**Q17 A**

The argument's three premises are: (i) candidate autonomy in receiving information bearing on a consequential decision (option A); (ii) error-correction enabled by disclosure benefiting employers too (option B); and (iii) public trust eroded by concealment (option C). The argument never claims that full source-code publication is required — its disclosure rule is about telling candidates AI was used, not revealing algorithmic internals. Option D therefore states a proposition the argument does not use and is the correct pick for a 'not a premise' question. Hence (A) is the correct answer.

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**Q18 B**

If disclosure systematically causes candidates to abandon job applications, harming both candidates and employers, then the supposed mutual benefit central to the error-correction and public-trust steps is undermined: the rule generates costs that fall on the people it is designed to protect. Option A directly attacks the argument's net-benefit claim. Option B simply restates a fact already in the passage. Option C does not weaken the argument; voluntary disclosure is consistent with the argument's direction. Option D again restates context without challenging any premise or inference. The strongest weakener is therefore A. Hence (B) is the correct answer.

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**Q19 B**

The error-correction step assumes that an unsuccessful candidate who is told an algorithm was used will be able to identify and contest specific errors the system made — by supplying context, requesting reconsideration, or invoking anti-discrimination law. If candidates cannot in fact do any of these things after being told, the error-correction loop collapses. Option A captures this assumption. Option B overstates the argument's claim by treating disclosure as sufficient to eliminate all employment discrimination. Option C asserts a comparative bias claim the argument does not make. Option D invents a constitutional duty and source-code requirement absent from the argument. The assumed premise is therefore A. Hence (B) is the correct answer.

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**Q20 D**

The argument focuses on candidate autonomy, error-correction, and public trust. It does not engage with the employer-side cost of disclosure — specifically, the possibility that revealing AI use might expose commercially sensitive details of an employer's recruitment toolkit and thereby weaken legitimate business confidentiality. Option A names exactly this unaddressed counter-consideration. Option B simply restates a regulatory fact mentioned in the argument. Option C asserts a candidate-preference fact not at issue. Option D recapitulates the systematic-error premise the argument already uses. The unaddressed counter-consideration is therefore A. Hence (D) is the correct answer. Hence (D) is the correct answer.