

ANSWER KEY — 16 JULY 2026

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

LEGAL REASONING

Q1 **C** Art 14 reasonable classification **MED**

Article 14 permits reasonable classification but forbids class legislation, and the twin-test from Anwar Ali Sarkar and Royappa asks two things: is there an intelligible differentia, and does it bear a rational nexus to the statute's object? Here the differentia is clear — co-operative societies that finance rural credit form a coherent, identifiable group distinct from ordinary commercial creditors. The object, providing a specialised recovery mechanism suited to rural co-operative lending, is legitimate, and grouping co-operatives for that distinct forum bears a rational nexus to it. Option (C) captures both limbs. Option (A) rests on numbers alone, which is irrelevant to the nexus. Option (D) invents an unrelated fee condition. Option (B) misstates the law by denying any classification among creditors, which Article 14 in fact allows. Hence (C).

Examiner's note — the trap: Option (B) feels rigorous and 'equal', but it wrongly rules out all classification among creditors; Article 14 forbids only class legislation, not reasonable classification.

Q2 **A** Art 14 reasonable classification **MED**

Under the twin-test, a classification survives if it rests on an intelligible differentia bearing a rational nexus to the statute's object. The 50-worker threshold is an intelligible differentia because it identifies establishments by size, and the object of not crushing tiny enterprises with compliance costs gives that line a rational nexus, so the cut-off can be sustained. Option (A) captures this. Option (B) is wrong because numerical thresholds are routinely upheld; a line must be drawn somewhere, and hardship for those just below the margin does not make it arbitrary. Option (C) misstates the law, since benefits may be classified by establishment size and need not be universal. Option (D) relies on sex as a 'natural class', which is not the ground of challenge here — the challenge is to the size cut-off, not to protecting women. Hence (A).

Examiner's note — the trap: Option (B) tempts because thresholds feel arbitrary, but numerical lines drawn for administrative feasibility regularly satisfy the nexus test.

Q3 **D** Art 14 unguided discretion **MED**

In *State of West Bengal v. Anwar Ali Sarkar* the Supreme Court struck down a provision letting the Government send any case it chose to a special court with a truncated procedure, because it laid down no intelligible differentia and left selection to unguided executive discretion, violating Article 14. Option (D) states this ground correctly. Option (A) is the trap: a speedy trial is a legitimate object, but a legitimate object cannot cure the absence of any differentia guiding which cases are singled out. Option (B), a presumption of good faith, cannot save a provision that permits arbitrary selection; the vice is the naked discretion itself. Option (C) overreaches, because special courts are not per se unconstitutional; they are valid when the statute supplies a proper basis for classifying which cases go before them. Hence (D).

Examiner's note — the trap: Option (A) is attractive because the object (speedy trial) is genuinely legitimate, but a legitimate object cannot rescue a provision that offers no intelligible differentia at all.

Q4 **B** Art 14 nexus / over-inclusion **HARD**

The twin-test asks for an intelligible differentia with a rational nexus to the object. Milk-based sweets carry a real adulteration risk absent in dry sweets, which is an intelligible differentia, and the levy funds milk-adulteration testing, supplying the rational nexus. Option (B) states both limbs, so the by-law is valid. Option (C) is the attractive trap: it argues the classification is over-inclusive because a mostly-dry-sweet shop is grouped with pure milk-sweet shops. But Article 14 tolerates reasonable imperfection; a classification need not be mathematically perfect, and a shop that stocks milk-based items does fall within the very risk the levy targets. Option (A) wrongly denies any public purpose to a milk-safety measure. Option (D) asserts an unlimited, unreviewable municipal power, which no taxing body enjoys under Article 14. Hence (B).

Examiner's note — the trap: Option (C) exploits the appealing 'over-inclusion' argument, but minor over-inclusion is permitted so long as the differentia and its nexus to the object both hold.

Q5 C Art 14 nexus (Stretch) ELITE

Even a valid opening classification can be undone by a limb of the same statute. Assume the fixed-date grouping of 'displaced persons' is itself a valid intelligible differentia. The vice lies in the open-ended clause that lets the Government reclassify particular migrants and withhold benefits: two persons who migrated on the same day, and are thus identically situated, are treated unequally with no guiding principle, so the differentia loses its rational nexus to the rehabilitation object. Option (C) identifies this breach of the nexus limb and is the sharpest objection. Option (B) is seductive because rehabilitation is benevolent, but a benign object does not immunise arbitrary unequal treatment of equals. Option (A) is superficial, since dates are not arbitrary merely because other dates were possible. Option (D) wrongly treats naming a territory as automatically fatal. Hence (C).

Examiner's note — the trap: Option (B) plays on sympathy for a welfare statute, but a benevolent object cannot save a clause permitting arbitrary unequal treatment of identically-situated persons.

Q6 B Section 9 HMA — reasonable excuse EASY

Section 9 grants restitution only where a spouse has withdrawn from the other's society 'without reasonable excuse'. The husband's persistent cruelty is a recognised reasonable excuse for the wife's departure, so her withdrawal is not without reasonable excuse and the decree should be refused. Option (B) is correct. Option (A) is the trap: it treats mere physical departure as decisive, but Section 9 turns on whether the withdrawal lacked a reasonable excuse, not on the bare fact of leaving. Option (C) imports a criminal standard, proof beyond reasonable doubt, whereas matrimonial matters are decided on the balance of probabilities. Option (D) misreads the scheme, because the one-year period is relevant only to a later divorce under Section 13(1A), not to whether restitution is granted at the threshold stage. Hence (B).

Examiner's note — the trap: Option (A) tempts by treating any physical departure as 'withdrawal', but the statute asks whether the withdrawal was without reasonable excuse, and cruelty is a recognised excuse.

Q7 D Section 9 HMA — withdrawal from society MED

'Withdrawal from society' under Section 9 means a repudiation of the marital obligation to cohabit, not any physical separation. A husband transferred for employment who lives apart has not repudiated the marriage; the separation is compelled by work and carries a reasonable excuse, so it is not a withdrawal without reasonable excuse. Option (D) states this correctly. Option (A) is the trap, because it equates the mere fact of living apart with legal 'withdrawal', ignoring the repudiatory intent the section requires. Option (B) is a non-sequitur: the wife's own non-withdrawal does not entitle her to a decree unless the husband has withdrawn without excuse. Option (C) is legally wrong, since Section 9 is available to either spouse, not only to a wife. The remedy tests repudiation of consortium, which is simply absent here. Hence (D).

Examiner's note — the trap: Option (A) equates ordinary physical separation with legal withdrawal, but separation forced by employment lacks the repudiatory intent Section 9 demands.

Q8 A Section 9 HMA — Explanation, burden of proof HARD

The Explanation to Section 9 places the burden of proving a reasonable excuse on the spouse who has withdrawn. Once the husband proves the fact of withdrawal, the onus shifts to the wife to show a reasonable excuse; having led no evidence, she fails to discharge that burden, and the decree should follow. Option (A) states this correctly. Option (B) is the attractive trap: ordinary 'he who asserts must prove' logic suggests the petitioner carries the whole burden, but the statute expressly shifts the reasonable-excuse burden onto the withdrawing spouse. Option (C), indefinite adjournment, has no basis in the section and would reward inaction. Option (D) confuses entitlement with enforcement: that a restitution decree is not physically enforced does not defeat the petitioner's right to obtain the decree itself. Hence (A).

Examiner's note — the trap: Option (B) relies on the default 'he who asserts must prove' rule, but the Explanation to Section 9 deliberately shifts the reasonable-excuse burden onto the spouse who withdrew.

Q9 C Section 13(1A) HMA — divorce ground MED

Where cohabitation is not resumed for one year after a restitution decree, Section 13(1A) makes that non-compliance a ground for divorce, and the ground is available to either spouse, including the one who did not return. Eighteen months having passed, the wife may petition. Option (C) is correct. Option (A) is the trap: it wrongly confines the remedy to the decree-holder, but Section 13(1A) deliberately allows either party to seek divorce on non-compliance. Option (B) overstates a bar, because while a party may not profit from a genuine wrong, mere non-resumption by the petitioner is not itself such a disqualifying wrong under this particular ground. Option (D) is wrong because a restitution decree is never enforced by physically compelling a spouse's return; enforcement operates only through the Section 13(1A) route. Hence (C).

Examiner's note — the trap: Option (A) sounds intuitive — surely only the decree-holder benefits — but Section 13(1A) expressly lets either spouse seek divorce on the one-year non-compliance.

Q10 B Section 23 HMA — no advantage of own wrong HARD

Although Section 13(1A) appears to allow either spouse to seek divorce after a year's non-compliance, a party may not take advantage of his own wrong to obtain relief, a principle reflected in Section 23, which bars relief to a petitioner exploiting his own wrongdoing. Here the husband procured the restitution decree by concealing his prior desertion, in response to which the wife withdrew; allowing him to convert that tainted decree into a divorce would reward his concealment. Option (B) states this objection and is the strongest. Option (A) is the trap, reading Section 13(1A) as absolute and ignoring the wrongdoer bar. Option (C) wrongly claims restitution decrees can never lead to divorce, contradicting the very scheme of Section 13(1A). Option (D) raises a limitation point about appeals that is irrelevant to the doctrinal defence to the divorce claim. Hence (B).

Examiner's note — the trap: Option (A) reads Section 13(1A) as exception-free, but the bar on profiting from one's own wrong (Section 23) can defeat the husband's tainted claim.

LOGICAL REASONING

Q11 A Assumption MED

An assumption is an unstated premise the conclusion needs. The editor concludes that going fully digital will lose no readers, inferring this from the fact that website readership doubled as print circulation fell. That inference only holds if the readers who dropped print are the same people now reading online. Option (A) states exactly this bridge and is therefore assumed. Negate it — if the online growth came from entirely new visitors while the old print readers simply stopped reading — and the conclusion collapses, confirming (A) is necessary. Option (C) about newsprint being the largest cost supports only the money-saving remark, not the no-reader-loss conclusion. Option (B) about digital quality and option (D) about rivals are both irrelevant to whether the very same readers migrated online. Hence (A).

Examiner's note — the trap: Option (C) is attractive because it props up the cost-saving sentence, but the conclusion is about losing no readers, not about costs, so (C) is not assumed.

Q12 D Assumption (necessary vs sufficient) HARD

The plan promises to lose 'not a single reader', so it must assume that print-only readers who currently do not visit the website will actually be able and willing to read online once print stops. Option (D) states precisely this minimal condition and is the necessary assumption. Option (A) is too strong: it demands that every print reader positively prefers screens, but the conclusion needs only that they can and will switch, not that they prefer it, and an argument does not assume more than it strictly requires. Option (B), attracting brand-new readers, is a bonus rather than a necessity, since the claim is about not losing existing readers. Option (C) about advertisers concerns revenue, not readership retention. Applying the negation test, only the failure of (D) guarantees lost readers. Hence (D).

Examiner's note — the trap: Option (A) overshoots by demanding a positive preference for screens; the argument needs only the weaker ability-and-willingness to switch, which is (D).

Q13 C Assumption (falsification test) HARD

To find an assumption, ask which statement, if false, destroys the argument. The editor's inference that readers 'migrated' rather than left depends on the doubling of website readership being driven by former print subscribers. Option (C) asserts exactly that. If (C) were false — the doubling came mainly from wholly new visitors — then the lost print readers may simply have vanished, and the no-reader-loss conclusion fails, so (C) is an unstated assumption. Option (D), that the total reading population stayed constant, is merely consistent with the argument but not required; the conclusion can hold or fail regardless of the population's size. Options (A) on advertising rates and (B) on newsprint prices bear only on economics, not on whether the same readers actually moved online. Hence (C).

Examiner's note — the trap: Option (D) looks relevant because it mentions readership numbers, but the argument survives whether or not the reading population is constant; only (C), if false, breaks the migration inference.

Q14 A Assumption MED

The conclusion that ending print costs no readers must assume that readers attached specifically to a physical paper will not be driven away when print disappears. Option (A) supplies this bridging assumption; without it, print-loyal readers could leave and the argument fails, so it is necessary. Option (D), that digital subscriptions are cheaper, is neither stated nor needed, because the argument never relies on price to retain readers, and a cheaper product does not guarantee the same audience follows. Option (B) about article volume speaks to content quantity, not to reader loyalty. Option (C) about the editor's own reading habits is anecdotal and irrelevant to the general readership. The assumption the reasoning cannot survive without is (A) — that attachment to paper itself will not cost the paper its readers. Hence (A).

Examiner's note — the trap: Option (D) is tempting because cheaper digital seems to retain readers, but lower price is neither stated nor required; the argument assumes attachment to paper itself will not cost readers.

Q15 B Strengthen **EASY**

A strengthener makes the conclusion more likely. The economist claims distance-based fares will cut overcrowding, chiefly on short inner-city hops. Option (B) — that many short-distance riders would switch to walking once charged even a small distance fare — directly supplies the behavioural response the argument needs, so it strengthens most. Option (D), that other countries already use such fares, is weak support, because adoption elsewhere without any outcome data does not show that crowding will fall here. Option (A), that long-distance riders would keep riding regardless, is neutral on overcrowding and, if anything, bears only on revenue. Option (C) about the age of the buses is irrelevant to whether the fare change reduces crowding. The key is evidence that riders actually change behaviour, which only (B) supplies. Hence (B).

Examiner's note — the trap: Option (D) offers 'it works abroad', but mere adoption elsewhere without any outcome data does not show the fare change will cut crowding in this city.

Q16 D Strengthen (targeted sub-claim) **HARD**

The revenue-neutrality claim rests on higher fares from long-distance riders offsetting the fares lost from discouraged short-trip riders. Option (D) states that, on modelling, the extra long-distance fares would closely match the fares forgone from short-trip riders, which directly supports the offset and most strengthens the specific revenue claim. Option (A), that short-distance riders vastly outnumber long-distance riders, actually threatens revenue: if the many short riders leave, lost fares could exceed the gains, so it weakens rather than strengthens. Option (B), spending any surplus on shelters, presupposes a surplus and says nothing about whether revenue stays stable. Option (C), that walking is healthier, supports the fairness or health angle, not revenue. Only (D) speaks to the balance between fares gained and fares lost. Hence (D).

Examiner's note — the trap: Option (A) seems relevant to revenue, but many short riders leaving would drain fares and undercut neutrality, so it weakens the revenue claim rather than strengthening it.

Q17 C Strengthen (fairness premise) **MED**

The fairness argument is that flat fares make short-distance riders subsidise long-distance riders. Option (C) — that the cost of carrying a rider rises with distance yet every rider pays the same — supplies the precise cost-versus-price mismatch that makes a flat fare a cross-subsidy, so it most strengthens the fairness claim. Option (A), that long-distance riders have higher incomes, cuts the other way: charging poorer short-distance riders more to relieve richer long-distance riders looks regressive, which weakens the fairness case. Option (B), that fares have not been revised for years, concerns timing, not fairness. Option (D), that most riders buy passes, muddies who pays per trip and does not establish the subsidy at all. The fairness claim needs the distance-cost against flat-price gap, which is exactly (C). Hence (C).

Examiner's note — the trap: Option (A) mentions incomes and feels like a 'fairness' fact, but higher-income long riders being subsidised makes the reform look regressive, weakening rather than strengthening the case.

Q18 A Strengthen (whole conclusion) **HARD**

The overall conclusion bundles three outcomes: less crowding, greater fairness, and financial soundness. Option (A) reports a pilot on a busy route where short-trip ridership fell (less crowding), seats were freed for long-distance riders, and total fare revenue held steady (financial soundness) — real-world evidence for the very outcomes claimed, so it strengthens most. Option (B), general dissatisfaction with flat fares, shows appetite for change but not that the three outcomes actually occur, and sentiment is not proof. Option (C), hiring ticket inspectors, concerns enforcement, not crowding, fairness, or revenue. Option (D), that neighbouring towns merely debated the idea, offers no outcome evidence at all. A demonstrated pilot delivering the predicted results is the strongest possible support for the compound conclusion. Hence (A).

Examiner's note — the trap: Option (B) reads like support because dissatisfaction hints at demand for change, but it speaks only to sentiment, not to whether the three specific outcomes materialise.

QUANTITATIVE TECHNIQUES

Q19 B Percentage change **MED**

Percentage change = $(\text{new} - \text{old}) / \text{old} \times 100$. Chandrapur's votes polled rose from 260 lakh in 2019 to 390 lakh in 2024. Substituting: $(390 - 260) / 260 \times 100 = 130 / 260 \times 100 = 50\%$. So the answer is a 50% increase, option (B). Option (A), 30%, is the growth in Chandrapur's electoral roll (400 to 520 lakh), a different column entirely. Option (D), 40%, is Ashvara's votes-polled growth, imported from the wrong row. Option (C), about 33.3%, arises from mistakenly dividing the change of 130 by 390 (the new value) instead of by the old base of 260. Always divide the absolute change by the original figure, never by the final one. Hence (B).

Examiner's note — the trap: Option (A), 30%, is the electoral-roll growth for Chandrapur, not its votes-polled change; reading across the wrong column produces it.

Q20 D Percentage-point change (turnout) HARD

Turnout = votes polled ÷ electors × 100, so compute both years for each State. Ashvara: $130/200 = 65\%$, then $182/260 = 70\%$, a rise of 5 points. Bhoomika: $90/150 = 60\%$, then $108/180 = 60\%$, no change. Chandrapur: $260/400 = 65\%$, then $390/520 = 75\%$, a rise of 10 points. Devgarh: $60/100 = 60\%$, then $75/125 = 60\%$, no change. The greatest rise is Chandrapur's, from 65% to 75%, i.e. 10 percentage points, option (D). Option (A), Ashvara +5 points, is a real but smaller rise. Options (B) and (C) attach the correct 10-point figure to the wrong State. Note the difference between a percentage-point rise (subtracting the two turnout percentages) and a percentage rise; the question asks for points. Hence (D).

Examiner's note — the trap: Options (B) and (C) carry the right number, 10 points, but pin it on Bhoomika or Ashvara; only Chandrapur actually jumps from 65% to 75%.

Q21 A Percentage change EASY

Percentage change = (new – old) / old × 100. Ashvara's electoral roll grew from 200 lakh in 2019 to 260 lakh in 2024. Substituting: $(260 - 200) / 200 \times 100 = 60 / 200 \times 100 = 30\%$, option (A). Option (C), 40%, is Ashvara's votes-pollled growth (130 to 182 lakh), a common column mix-up. Option (B), 25%, would result from using 240 as the new value or from mis-dividing. Option (D), 60%, is the absolute increase of 60 lakh mistaken for the percentage. The base for a percentage change is always the earlier figure, here 200 lakh, giving 30%. This is a single-step calculation on the electors column; the only real trap is drifting into the adjacent votes column, which grew faster at 40%. Hence (A).

Examiner's note — the trap: Option (C), 40%, is the votes-pollled growth for Ashvara sitting in the next column, the classic electors-versus-votes mix-up.

Q22 C Percentage change (comparison) MED

Compute each State's votes-pollled percentage change with (new – old) / old × 100. Ashvara: $(182 - 130)/130 = 52/130 = 40\%$. Bhoomika: $(108 - 90)/90 = 18/90 = 20\%$. Chandrapur: $(390 - 260)/260 = 130/260 = 50\%$. Devgarh: $(75 - 60)/60 = 15/60 = 25\%$. The smallest increase is Bhoomika's 20%, option (C). Option (A), Devgarh at 25%, is the next-smallest and traps those who halt at the first modest figure they compute. Options (B), Ashvara 40%, and (D), Chandrapur 50%, are the two largest, not smallest. Comparing all four ratios on the same base rule is essential; eyeballing absolute increases (Bhoomika +18 lakh versus Devgarh +15 lakh) would wrongly suggest Devgarh, but percentage change depends on the base, not the raw rise. Hence (C).

Examiner's note — the trap: Option (A), Devgarh 25%, snares candidates who compare absolute rises (+15 lakh looks smallest) instead of percentage change on each State's own base.

Q23 B Ratio & proportion HARD

A ratio compares quantities in their simplest form. The combined forest cover of Nilgiri and Aravali = $12000 + 6000 = 18000$ sq km. The combined forest cover of Suvarna and Tamas = $8000 + 4000 = 12000$ sq km. The ratio is 18000 : 12000. Dividing both terms by their HCF, 6000, gives 3 : 2, option (B). Option (A), 2 : 3, inverts the order by putting Suvarna and Tamas first. Option (C), 4 : 3, comes from pairing the regions incorrectly, for example $12000 + 4000 : 8000 + 6000 = 16000 : 14000$. Option (D), 5 : 3, is simply a miscalculation of the two sums. Keep the order exactly as asked, Nilgiri and Aravali first, and always reduce by the highest common factor. Hence (B).

Examiner's note — the trap: Option (A), 2 : 3, is the correct pair of numbers in reversed order; candidates who read the two groups the wrong way round pick it.

Q24 D Ratio & proportion (multi-step, Stretch) ELITE

The cap equals three times the forest cover expressed in thousands of sq km: cap = $3 \times (\text{forest} \div 1000)$. Suvarna's forest cover is 8000 sq km = 8 thousand sq km, so the permitted emissions ceiling = $3 \times 8 = 24$ mt. Suvarna currently emits 40 mt. Required reduction = current – cap = $40 - 24 = 16$ mt, option (D). Option (B), 24 mt, is the compliant ceiling itself, not the cut, and is the classic 'stopped one step too soon' trap. Option (C), 12 mt, merely halves the gap for no reason. Option (A), 8 mt, equals the forest figure in thousands, an unrelated number pulled from the wrong quantity. The two-step chain — first find the ceiling, then subtract it from current emissions — must be completed in full. Hence (D).

Examiner's note — the trap: Option (B), 24 mt, is the emissions ceiling you compute first; students who find the cap and forget to subtract from the current 40 mt select it.

Q25 A Ratio & proportion (per capita) MED

Emissions per lakh = total emissions ÷ population. Nilgiri: $48/80 = 0.6$. Suvarna: $40/80 = 0.5$. Aravali: $24/60 = 0.4$. Tamas: $18/45 = 0.4$. The maximum is Nilgiri at 0.6 mt per lakh, option (A). Option (D) tempts candidates who assume the smallest-population region, Tamas at 45 lakh, must have the highest per-capita figure; but Tamas's low emissions give only 0.4. Option (B), Suvarna at 0.5, shares Nilgiri's population of 80 lakh yet emits less, so its ratio is lower. Option (C), Aravali at 0.4, is among the lowest. Per-capita intensity depends on both the numerator and the denominator, so neither absolute emissions nor population alone can decide it; the division must be done for each region. Hence (A).

Examiner's note — the trap: Option (D) baits the intuition that the least-populous region must have the highest per-head figure, but Tamas's small emissions leave it at only 0.4.

Q26 **C** **Ratio & proportion (proportional share)** **HARD**

Shares are allocated in proportion to forest cover, so a region's fraction equals its forest cover divided by the total forest cover. Total forest = $12000 + 8000 + 6000 + 4000 = 30000$ sq km. Aravali's forest = 6000 sq km. Fraction = $6000 / 30000 = 1/5 = 20\%$, option (C). Option (D), $3/10$, is Nilgiri's share ($12000 / 30000$), obtained by reading the wrong region's figure. Option (B), $1/4$, assumes an equal split among the four regions, ignoring that the split is proportional to forest area rather than a flat quarter each. Option (A), $1/6$, arises from dividing 6000 by an incorrect total such as 36000. Proportional allocation always takes each part over the whole. Hence (C).

Examiner's note — the trap: Option (B), $1/4$, tempts anyone who defaults to an equal four-way split, but the fund is shared in proportion to forest cover, not divided evenly.