

ANSWER KEY — 3 JULY 2026

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

RC PASSAGES

Q1 A

The passage surveys three traditions — Lockean tacit consent, Rawlsian hypothetical consent, and deliberative/procedural legitimacy — and concludes that each faces a decisive objection (the mugger analogy, Nozick's objection, Cohen's objection, and the cultural-capital critique). The final paragraph explicitly frames all three as proposed settlements of the tension between collective authority and individual freedom. The option about Rawls being most defensible is contradicted by the balanced critical treatment. The option about deliberative democracy being the only acceptable view is too strong. The claim that consent theories have been largely abandoned is unsupported — the passage shows they remain actively debated. Hence, option (A) is correct.

Q2 A

The mugger analogy appears immediately after the critique that a person born into a society cannot plausibly be said to have consented merely by not emigrating. The analogy's function is to show that labelling an unavoidable situation as consent does not make it so — the mugger relabels coercion as consent by tying acceptance to staying in place. The passage does not claim all state coercion equals criminal violence; it makes a narrower logical point. The option about Locke's distinction being incoherent in every formulation is stronger than the passage supports. The analogy is introduced before Rawls is discussed and has no connection to the veil of ignorance. Hence, option (A) is correct.

Q3 A

The author introduces Rawls as an attempt to rescue the consent tradition and then presents Nozick's and Cohen's criticisms without endorsing either. The phrase critics find it equally unsatisfying, though for opposite reasons describes the critics' shared rejection, not the author's own verdict. There is no endorsement of hypothetical consent as an improvement — the passage says both critics find it unsatisfying. Aligning the author with Cohen goes beyond what the passage claims; Cohen's position is one critique among others. Calling all hypothetical-consent theories bankrupt exceeds the passage's framing. Hence, option (A) is correct.

Q4 D

The passage directly states that procedural legitimacy is also vulnerable and that procedures can be formally inclusive while systematically disadvantaging those who lack the cultural capital, time, or legal literacy to navigate them. This is presented as the author's own observation. The option requiring express contracts as the sole basis reflects Nozick's view, not the author's synthesis. The author does not suggest the deliberative model avoids earlier difficulties — it is presented as having its own distinct vulnerability. The passage presents Nozick and Cohen as equally noted critics and makes no ranking between them, so inferring the author favours Nozick over Cohen is unwarranted. Hence, option (D) is correct.

Q5 A

The final paragraph states that every theory of political legitimacy is a proposed settlement of the tension and that every proposed settlement reflects a prior, contestable judgment about which value ought to give way. The word contestable and the phrase prior judgment signal that the settlement is philosophical, not legally or historically procedural. The other options import meanings from legal or political negotiation contexts that the passage does not support — none of the passage's theories involve a negotiated legal compromise, a party power-sharing deal, or a founding constitutional moment in the relevant sense. Only the correct option captures the prior value-choice that each theory makes. Hence, option (A) is correct.

Q6 D

The central argument is captured in the line: the algorithmic architecture does not merely cater to psychological tendencies that exist independently of it — it participates in constructing those tendencies. This thesis connects all three body sections. The option about deliberate misinformation is directly contradicted by the final sentence, which says algorithmic curation threatens the epistemic commons not by spreading misinformation — though it sometimes does that too. The option about eliminating human judgment is also contradicted: the passage says judgment has been moved upstream, not eliminated. The option about inter-community polarisation being the primary effect is too narrow; the passage discusses both intra-community monoculture and inter-community polarisation as two faces of the same architecture. Hence, option (D) is correct.

Q7 D

The passage introduces the demand-side defence with the framing critics sometimes invoke and then immediately dismantles it: this argument, however, obscures the degree to which demand itself is shaped by prior supply. The structure is classic steelman-and-rebut. The option about the author conceding ground is incorrect — the author directly refutes the defence. The option about regulatory intervention is not discussed anywhere in the passage. The option about distinguishing solicited from unsolicited content is a plausible-sounding but fabricated distinction the passage does not draw — the relevant distinction is between demand as pre-social and demand as partly constructed by prior supply. Hence, option (D) is correct.

Q8 A

The passage defines epistemic commons explicitly: an overlapping set of facts, methods of inquiry, and standards of argument that citizens can bring to contested questions of public policy. The correct option closely paraphrases this definition. The option about publicly owned media infrastructure imports an economic and structural meaning the passage never invokes — the commons here is epistemic, about knowledge and reasoning, not about ownership. The option about all content circulating on platforms misunderstands the argument: the passage is concerned that algorithmic curation is reducing the overlap, not that content is inaccessible in principle. The option about universal moral values conflates epistemological standards with moral consensus, a distinction the passage itself presupposes. Hence, option (A) is correct.

Q9 C

The author's claim is that repeated exposure to confirmatory content develops a diminished tolerance for cognitive dissonance — that epistemic habits are self-reinforcing in the direction of closure. If studies showed the opposite, increased openness, that would directly contradict this mechanism. The option about advertising revenue is irrelevant to the epistemic-habit claim; it concerns platform incentives, not user psychology. The option about long-form journalism declining before algorithmic systems arrived might suggest other factors drive preferences, but it does not directly address the self-reinforcing mechanism described for users already inside algorithmic environments. The option about polarisation across countries with varying social media penetration might suggest other causes, but does not directly challenge the self-reinforcement mechanism. Hence, option (C) is correct.

Q10 C

The paradox the author identifies is logical: if algorithms push each community toward internal agreement around shared triggers, one might expect communities to converge on similar content globally — the opposite of polarisation. Instead, because different communities have different engagement triggers, the algorithm calibrates divergent content streams, amplifying between-group differences. This is the tension the word paradoxically marks. The option about volume versus variety describes a real dynamic but is not the paradox the author explicitly names. The option about geographic connection versus social isolation is a commonly noted paradox, but not the one the passage raises. The option about design intent versus outcome is an intent-outcome paradox, not the structural paradox the passage identifies. Hence, option (C) is correct.

CR PASSAGES**Q11 A**

The author's central claim that UBI 'effectively cuts the real social protection of the poorest' rests on the premise that in-kind services — personal care, accessible housing, medical support — deliver value that cash alone cannot replicate. If cash were a perfect substitute for those services, dismantling targeted programmes in favour of cash transfers would not harm the vulnerable at all, and the passage's first major objection would collapse entirely. The argument about pilot-to-national scaling is a stated premise, not an unstated assumption. The claim about historical employment is explicitly asserted in the text. The source of UBI tax revenue is speculated about but is not the load-bearing assumption. Only the non-substitutability of in-kind services functions as the silent premise that makes the first objection logically coherent. Hence, option (A) is correct.

Q12 D

The passage's second objection is that the premise automation will destroy net employment has 'repeatedly proven too pessimistic,' citing historical transitions where new labour categories emerged to replace old ones. The author uses this historical pattern to argue that current AI displacement is unlikely to be categorically different. If empirical studies show that the new tasks created by modern automation are themselves performed by machines rather than new human workers, the historical analogy breaks down: the pattern of human re-employment that followed past transitions would not hold for the current wave. This directly undermines the passage's claim that the AI wave is not categorically different. The option about reskilling dropout rates weakens an alternative policy solution, not the employment objection. The option about Nordic welfare states is orthogonal to the employment prediction. The computing revolution example actually supports rather than weakens the second objection. Hence, option (D) is correct.

Q13 C

The passage acknowledges that Nordic pilots 'showed modest gains in psychological wellbeing and only marginal reductions in work participation' — a concession that the available evidence favours UBI. The author then argues that pilot success does not entail national viability because scaling alters incentive structures and macroeconomic conditions. However, this scaling concern is asserted, not demonstrated; the author provides no evidence that these adverse dynamics actually occur when programmes are scaled. The burden of proof lies with the party making the claim, and the author has not met it. This is the core vulnerability: asserting that inference from pilot to national scale is 'epistemically unsafe' without showing what specifically goes wrong at scale. The distractor about misrepresentation is false — the passage does say reductions were marginal. No ad hominem appears in the passage. The passage does not limit itself to a single country. Hence, option (C) is correct.

Q14 D

The passage's third objection follows this structure: (1) pilot programmes show positive results; (2) pilots are small-scale, time-limited, and externally funded; (3) these features mean results cannot be reliably extrapolated to a permanent, nationwide programme; (4) therefore, inferring national viability from pilot success is epistemically unsafe. The pharmaceutical analogy mirrors this exactly: a short-term, small-cohort, grant-funded trial cannot be assumed to demonstrate safety at population scale over an indefinite period because the underlying conditions — pharmacokinetics versus macroeconomic and behavioural dynamics — differ fundamentally. The tax-cut distractor goes in the opposite direction, inferring from past success that the same policy works in a changed context. The congestion toll distractor moves from partial success to system-wide abolition, a different inferential error. The fasting distractor conflates population differences rather than scale-and-duration differences. Hence, option (D) is correct.

Q15 D

The passage advances three distinct objections. The first is that UBI revenue can only be raised by dismantling targeted social programmes, harming the most vulnerable. If the government funds UBI entirely through a new wealth tax while preserving all existing programmes, this objection is completely removed: the trade-off between UBI and in-kind services no longer exists. However, the second objection — that automation does not in fact destroy net employment, making UBI an unnecessary response — and the third objection — that pilot results cannot be safely extrapolated to a permanent nationwide programme — are entirely unaffected by the funding mechanism. The overall argument is therefore weakened but not defeated: two of three objections survive. The distractor claiming the argument is completely defeated overreads the scenario by treating the first objection as the only substantive one. The distractor about capital flight introduces a new argument not present in the passage. The distractor claiming the funding source is irrelevant ignores that the first objection is explicitly revenue-and-dismantlement-based. Hence, option (D) is correct.

Q16 B

The passage's first objection is that presumed consent is invalid as genuine consent when individuals lack awareness of the default, do not understand its implications, or lack a realistic opportunity to opt out. The objection targets contexts of low digital literacy, limited portal access, and institutional distrust. The option showing that fewer than thirty percent of rural low-income adults knew about the proposal and fewer than ten percent knew how to access the portal directly establishes both missing conditions: ignorance of the default and lack of realistic opt-out access. This makes the passage's theoretical concern concrete and empirically grounded. The option about Spanish transplant coordinators addresses the second objection about transplant bottlenecks, not the consent objection. The option about family donation history concerns donor motivation, not awareness. The option about reduced coordinator spending concerns downstream policy consequences, not consent validity. Hence, option (B) is correct.

Q17 B

The passage introduces Wales to support its second objection: that transplant outcomes depend not just on organ availability but on family cooperation, and that even where opt-out legally designates more donors, actual transplants do not increase proportionately because families retain a de facto veto. The Wales evidence shows the system increased people on the donor register — an apparent success — but not actual transplants, because family veto remained decisive. This demonstrates that the mechanism presumed consent advocates rely on does not reach the real bottleneck, which is family culture and clinical communication. The distractor about ethical impermissibility conflates the second objection with the first consent-validity objection; the Wales data is not cited on ethical grounds. The distractor about incentive-based programmes introduces an alternative the passage does not recommend. The distractor about registration being the only metric is the opposite of what the passage argues. Hence, option (B) is correct.

Q18 B

The passage's phrase 'hidden tax on autonomous refusal' appears in the context of arguing that opting out requires navigating a bureaucratic procedure, which is a cost. The author identifies who bears this cost disproportionately: the elderly, the poor, and the digitally excluded. A tax, in the economic sense, is a burden levied on an activity; here, the activity is exercising the right to refuse donation, and the burden is procedural rather than financial. The 'hidden' element refers to the fact that the system presents itself as non-coercive while embedding a real cost that deters certain groups. The distractor about financial penalties invents a literal monetary fee not described in the passage. The distractor about government revenue-raising fabricates a financial mechanism not in the text. The distractor about deliberate deception attributes bad faith to governments, which the passage does not claim; the author's critique is structural, not intentional. Hence, option (B) is correct.

Q19 D

The proponent's response defends opt-out by pointing to the retained formal right of refusal, implying that because the right formally exists, the system is non-coercive. The passage's objection, however, is not that the formal right is removed; the passage explicitly acknowledges that people can opt out. The objection is that the practical ability to exercise that right is unequally distributed: for rural residents, low-literacy populations, and those with institutional distrust, the opt-out procedure is a realistic barrier, not a costless formality. The proponent's response thus fails by conflating the formal existence of a right with its practical exercisability — a classic gap between de jure and de facto rights. The distractor about strawman misreads the dialectic. The distractor about default neutrality introduces a claim neither party makes. The distractor about descriptive versus normative consent is a philosophical distinction irrelevant to the passage's empirical access argument. Hence, option (D) is correct.

Q20 (B)

The passage concludes that expanding the donor pool requires sustained investment in hospital infrastructure, transplant coordinators, public education, and community-level conversations rather than a legal presumed-consent default. This conclusion implicitly claims that the infrastructure and education path is both effective and preferable to opt-out. The option presenting longitudinal data showing that education campaigns produce only a four percent increase over ten years while opt-out produces an eighteen percent increase in actual transplants within five years directly challenges that conclusion by showing the alternative the passage recommends is far less effective. This quantitative comparison undercuts the practical case for the passage's preferred policy path without addressing its ethical objections, but it makes the overall conclusion empirically untenable. The distractor about awareness as a barrier supports the education path rather than undermining it. The distractor about co-investment makes causal isolation difficult but does not show education is less effective than opt-out. The distractor about faith leaders narrows the conversation but does not compare effectiveness against opt-out. Hence, option (B) is correct.

SECTION C — RAPID-FIRE GK & CURRENT AFFAIRS

Q21 (C)

Article 32 falls under Part III of the Indian Constitution and is itself a Fundamental Right — the Right to Constitutional Remedies guaranteed under Articles 32–35. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar famously called Article 32 'the heart and soul of the Constitution.' It empowers citizens to directly approach the Supreme Court when their fundamental rights are violated. The Supreme Court can issue writs — habeas corpus, mandamus, prohibition, quo warranto, and certiorari — under this article. Hence, option (C) is correct.

Q22 (D)

Mandamus (Latin: 'we command') is a writ directing a public authority, tribunal, or inferior court to perform a mandatory public duty that it has neglected or refused to perform. Certiorari quashes an order of a lower court. Prohibition prevents a lower court from exceeding its jurisdiction. Quo warranto challenges a person's legal right to hold a public office. Mandamus is the only writ that positively compels action and is frequently used in PIL proceedings to enforce statutory duties. Hence, option (D) is correct.

Q23 (B)

The 42nd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1976 — enacted during the Emergency — inserted the words 'Socialist' and 'Secular' into the description of the republic in the Preamble, and added 'Integrity' alongside 'Unity' in the last line. This is one of the most significant amendments to the Preamble. The Supreme Court in *Kesavananda Bharati* (1973) had held that the Preamble is part of the Constitution and can be amended, subject to the basic structure doctrine. Hence, option (B) is correct.

Q24 (C)

The Supreme Court in *Vishaka v. State of Rajasthan* (1997) laid down binding guidelines — the 'Vishaka Guidelines' — to prevent sexual harassment of women at the workplace, in the absence of specific legislation at that time. The case arose from the gang rape of social worker Bhanwari Devi in Rajasthan. These guidelines were later codified into the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013, commonly known as the POSH Act. Hence, option (C) is correct.

Q25 (B)

The concept of Directive Principles of State Policy was borrowed from the Constitution of Ireland (*Bunreacht na hÉireann*, 1937). Other major borrowings: the UK contributed the Westminster parliamentary model and parliamentary sovereignty; the USA contributed fundamental rights (Bill of Rights) and judicial review; Australia contributed the concurrent list structure. The DPSPs under Articles 36–51 are non-justiciable guidelines for the state in policy-making and social justice. Hence, option (B) is correct.

Q26 (B)

The Kosi River — originating in Tibet and flowing through Nepal before entering Bihar — is historically called the 'Sorrow of Bihar' due to its frequent and catastrophic flooding, which has caused massive displacement and agricultural destruction across generations. The Kosi shifts its course frequently (it has moved westward over 100 km in the last century), making it particularly dangerous. A major flood in 2008 breached an embankment and inundated large parts of North Bihar. Hence, option (B) is correct.

Q27 (C)

Article 21A, inserted by the 86th Constitutional Amendment Act, 2002, guarantees the right to free and compulsory education to all children in the age group of 6 to 14 years. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (RTE Act), 2009 operationalised this fundamental right. The provision placed an obligation on the State — both Central and State governments — to provide quality elementary education without imposing fees on parents. Hence, option (C) is correct.

Q28 (B)

The Basic Structure Doctrine was laid down by a 13-judge Constitutional Bench of the Supreme Court in *Kesavananda Bharati v. State of Kerala* (1973). The Court held (7:6) that Parliament can amend any provision of the Constitution under Article 368, but cannot alter, abrogate, or destroy its 'basic structure.' Basic features include supremacy of the Constitution, republican and democratic form of government, secular character, separation of powers, and federalism. *Minerva Mills* (1980) further affirmed and strengthened the doctrine. Hence, option (B) is correct.

Q29 A

Article 17 of the Indian Constitution abolishes untouchability and makes its practice in any form a punishable offence. It is a unique provision because it is a negative command directed against even private individuals, not just the State. The Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955 (formerly the Untouchability (Offences) Act) provides statutory teeth to Article 17. Article 15 prohibits discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex, or place of birth; Article 16 guarantees equal opportunity in public employment. Hence, option (A) is correct.

Q30 C

Operation Sindoor was a precision military strike launched by India on 7 May 2025 against terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir, in retaliation for the April 2025 Pahalgam terror attack that killed 26 tourists. This was a significant cross-border counter-terrorism operation. India targeted nine locations linked to terror groups. The operation was named 'Sindoor' — a symbol associated with the martyred Hindu women's widowhood — underscoring the civilian toll of the Pahalgam attack. Hence, option (C) is correct.