

Section: Current Affairs & GK • **Topic:** March 2026 Round-up • **Date:** _____ **Marks:** 28 • **Time:** 28 min • **Negative:** -0.25

Instructions: 28 questions • 28 minutes • +1 correct, -0.25 wrong, 0 unanswered. All questions are passage-based in the CLAT format. Mark answers (A/B/C/D) on the OMR or in the margin. Section A (Q1–14) is to be solved in class; Section B (Q15–28) is homework. No calculators, reference material or mobile phones.

SECTION A — SOLVE IN CLASS (Q1–14)

Passage 1 • Policy / Constitutional Law

The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Amendment Bill, 2026 was introduced in Parliament in March 2026, amending the parent Act of 2019 which had, for the first time, statutorily recognised transgender persons and prohibited discrimination in employment, education and healthcare. The central innovation of the 2019 law, drawing from the Supreme Court's 2014 judgment in *National Legal Services Authority v. Union of India*, was the right to self-perceived gender identity — a right the Court had tied to Articles 14, 19 and 21 and described as an inalienable aspect of personal dignity. The 2026 amendment removes this core feature. In its place, it installs a two-tier certification regime under which a medical board recommends, and a District Magistrate finally grants, an identity certificate. The Bill also narrows the statutory definition of 'transgender' to certain socio-cultural identities such as hijra and kinner, and to intersex persons, excluding those who self-identify as gender-fluid or non-binary. Supporters in government argue that precise legal definition prevents the misuse of welfare schemes and channels benefits to 'genuine beneficiaries.' Critics respond that the amendment medicalises identity, displaces the self-identification doctrine of *NALSA*, intrudes upon the privacy interests recognised in *K.S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India*, and leaves gender-fluid persons outside the protective reach of the statute. A challenge to the Amendment has already been filed in the Supreme Court.

Q1. Which of the following changes brought about by the 2026 Amendment is most directly inconsistent with the ratio of the NALSA judgment as described in the passage?

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| A) Replacement of self-perceived gender identity with a medical board and District Magistrate certification regime. | B) Enhancement of punishments for forced labour and exploitation of transgender persons. |
| C) Mandatory reporting by hospitals of sex-reassignment procedures. | D) Narrowing of the definition of 'transgender' to hijra, kinner and intersex persons only. |

Q2. Which constitutional right, recognised in the Puttaswamy decision referred to in the passage, is most directly engaged by the mandatory hospital reporting requirement under the 2026 Amendment?

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| A) Right to equality before law. | B) Right to freedom of speech and expression. |
| C) Right to privacy. | D) Right against exploitation. |

Q3. On the government's justification as stated in the passage, the Amendment is most plausibly defended on the ground that:

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| A) Self-identification inevitably conflicts with Article 14. | B) Article 19 does not protect identity-based expression. |
| C) The Supreme Court in <i>NALSA</i> expressly permitted medical certification. | D) Welfare schemes are better targeted when the statutory definition of the beneficiary class is precise. |

Q4. Which of the following groups, according to the passage, falls OUTSIDE the protective coverage of the 2026 Amendment's definition of 'transgender'?

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| A) Intersex persons. | B) Hijra community members. |
| C) Gender-fluid and non-binary persons. | D) Kinner community members. |

Q5. Consider the following pairs based on general knowledge of constitutional law. Which is correctly matched?

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| A) <i>NALSA v. Union of India</i> — Right to privacy. | B) <i>K.S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India</i> — Recognition of the third gender. |
| C) <i>National Legal Services Authority v. Union of India</i> — Right to self-identification as part of Articles 14, 19 and 21. | D) <i>Navtej Singh Johar v. Union of India</i> — Prohibition of untouchability. |

Q6. Assume a new State enacts a law requiring every citizen to undergo medical examination before being permitted to change any detail on their Aadhaar card, including gender. Which constitutional challenge, most closely analogous to those advanced against the 2026 Amendment in the passage, is likely to succeed?

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| A) Violation of Article 21 (dignity and autonomy) read with the right to privacy. | B) Violation of Article 32 only. |
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Scrutiny Committee, the Court held that a person returning to Hinduism after earlier conversion may have SC status restored if accepted back by the community. In 2022, the Central Government constituted the K. G. Balakrishnan Commission to examine whether SC status should extend to Dalit Christians and Muslims. The debate cuts across Articles 14 (equality), 15 (non-discrimination), and 25 (freedom of religion) and engages the secular premise that legal benefits should not, ordinarily, depend on religious identity.

Q13. Under Article 341 as described in the passage, which authority initially specifies castes, races or tribes deemed Scheduled Castes in relation to a State or Union Territory?

- A) Parliament, by ordinary legislation.
- B) The Supreme Court, by judicial order.
- C) The President, by public notification.
- D) The Governor of the concerned State.

Q14. The Presidential Order of 1950, as amended, currently extends Scheduled Caste status to persons professing which of the following religions?

- A) Hinduism, Sikhism and Buddhism only.
- B) Hinduism and Christianity only.
- C) All religions practised in India.
- D) Hinduism, Islam and Sikhism only.

SECTION B — HOMEWORK (Q15–28)

Q15. Which of the following best reflects the holding in K.P. Manu v. Scrutiny Committee as described in the passage?

- A) SC status may be restored upon reconversion to Hinduism, if the person is accepted back by the community.
- B) SC status is automatically lost upon conversion to any religion.
- C) SC status once conferred can never be withdrawn.
- D) SC status is determined solely by the Central Government.

Q16. Suppose the Balakrishnan Commission recommends extending SC status to Dalit Christians and Dalit Muslims, and Parliament passes a law to that effect. Which of the following constitutional provisions would MOST directly support the legality of such a law?

- A) Article 341(2), which permits Parliament to include or exclude from the SC list by law.
- B) Article 368, which governs amendment of the Constitution.
- C) Article 44, which concerns a uniform civil code.
- D) Article 300A, which concerns right to property.

Q17. Which of the following is the MOST accurate statement of the reasoning in Soosai v. Union of India as described in the passage?

- A) Christian converts are constitutionally entitled to SC benefits.
- B) SC benefits were denied because the petitioner failed to show that caste-based social disabilities persisted after conversion.
- C) Conversion has no effect on SC status in any circumstance.
- D) The Court held Article 25 inapplicable to converts.

Q18. The argument AGAINST extending SC status to religious converts, as suggested by the passage, would LEAST rely on which of the following?

- A) The caste system is historically rooted in Hindu social structure.
- B) Conversion to an egalitarian faith is intended to shed caste identity.
- C) Concerns about strategic conversion and policy misuse.
- D) The principle that Article 14 demands identical treatment regardless of lived social conditions.

Passage 4 • Economy / RBI & Forex

India's foreign exchange reserves, which touched an all-time peak of approximately USD 645 billion in 2024, have declined through 2025 and into early 2026. Foreign exchange reserves, held by the Reserve Bank of India, comprise four main components: foreign currency assets (the largest share), gold reserves, Special Drawing Rights (an IMF-created reserve asset), and India's reserve position with the IMF. Reserves are maintained chiefly to stabilise the rupee, meet external obligations such as oil imports and external debt, and signal macroeconomic stability to global investors. The recent decline is attributed to a combination of factors. The RBI has periodically sold dollars to temper sharp depreciation of the rupee — an intervention that, by design, draws down reserves. A strong US dollar, driven by Federal Reserve policy, has triggered capital outflows from emerging markets including India. Global uncertainty arising from geopolitical conflicts, inflationary shocks, and elevated oil prices has pushed investors toward "safe" assets abroad. A persistent trade deficit, aggravated by heavy oil imports, adds to the pressure. Even after the decline, India's reserves remain among the largest in the world and continue to provide an import cover of

approximately ten to eleven months. The RBI's management of reserves is governed by the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934, while forex transactions are regulated under the Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999.

Q19. According to the passage, which component constitutes the LARGEST share of India's foreign exchange reserves?

- A) Gold reserves.
- B) Reserve position with the IMF.
- C) Special Drawing Rights.
- D) Foreign currency assets.

Q20. Which Act, as identified in the passage, governs forex transactions in India?

- A) Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934.
- B) Banking Regulation Act, 1949.
- C) Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999.
- D) Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002.

Q21. On the passage's reasoning, RBI's sale of dollars to stabilise the rupee results in which immediate effect?

- A) A reduction in foreign exchange reserves.
- B) An increase in foreign exchange reserves.
- C) No change in reserves but a change in gold prices.
- D) Automatic appreciation of the rupee beyond market levels.

Q22. Special Drawing Rights (SDRs), referred to in the passage, are best described as:

- A) A currency issued by the World Bank for development aid.
- B) An international reserve asset created by the IMF, allocated to member countries.
- C) A type of gold-backed bond issued by the U.S. Federal Reserve.
- D) A cryptocurrency adopted by central banks.

Q23. Which of the following statements is MOST consistent with the passage's account of the causes of the recent decline?

- A) A weak US dollar drew capital out of India.
- B) India's trade surplus widened, increasing reserves.
- C) Oil imports fell sharply, reducing the need for reserves.
- D) A combination of RBI intervention, a strong dollar, global uncertainty and trade deficit contributed to the fall.

Passage 5 • International Reports / Environment & Society

March 2026 saw the release of several major global reports and honours. The World Happiness Report 2026, published on 20 March by the University of Oxford's Wellbeing Research Centre in collaboration with Gallup and the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network, retained Finland at the top for the ninth consecutive year. Rankings are drawn from the Cantril Ladder, a 0-to-10 self-assessment, and are explained by six factors including GDP per capita, social support, healthy life expectancy, freedom of choice, generosity, and perceptions of corruption. India was ranked 116 out of 147 countries, an improvement from 126 in 2024 and 118 in 2025, but still below Pakistan and Nepal. Afghanistan was last at 147. Four days later, on 24 March, countries observed World Tuberculosis Day with the theme "Yes! We Can End TB: Commit, Invest, Deliver." TB, caused by Mycobacterium tuberculosis — discovered by Robert Koch in 1882 — continues to afflict India most severely; the National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme (NTEP) targets elimination by 2025, ahead of the WHO End TB Strategy's 2030 milestone. Meanwhile, IQAir's World Air Quality Report for 2025 confirmed that only about 14 percent of cities met the WHO's PM2.5 limit of 5 µg/m³. Bangladesh, Pakistan and India were among the most polluted countries, with Delhi ranked the most polluted capital in the world. In cultural news, the 98th Academy Awards on 15 March saw "One Battle After Another" sweep six Oscars including Best Picture, while the Jnanpith Award for 2025 went to Hindi writer Vinod Kumar Shukla.

Q24. Which of the following statements is INCORRECT as per the passage?

- A) Finland topped the World Happiness Report 2026 for the ninth consecutive year.
- B) India ranked 116 in 2026, an improvement from 118 in 2025.
- C) Bangladesh, Pakistan and India were among the most polluted countries in the 2025 IQAir report.
- D) India was ranked above Pakistan in the World Happiness Report 2026.

Q25. Which pollutant is identified in the passage as the key indicator in IQAir's World Air Quality Report, and what is WHO's annual limit for it?

- A) PM10, at 10 µg/m³.
- B) PM2.5, at 5 µg/m³.
- C) Ozone, at 5 µg/m³.
- D) Sulphur dioxide, at 2.5 µg/m³.

Q26. The World Happiness Report's rankings, according to the passage, are derived from which of the following?

- A) A purely economic measure based on GDP per capita.
- B) A 0-to-10 self-assessment called the Cantril Ladder, explained by six factors.

C) A composite index maintained by the World Bank.

D) The Human Development Index of the UNDP.

Q27. On general knowledge, which of the following pairs is correctly matched?

A) 98th Academy Awards — Best Director awarded to Ryan Coogler.

B) Jnanpith Award 2025 — Awarded to a Hindi author.

C) World TB Day — Observed on 14 March annually.

D) World Happiness Report 2026 — Published by the World Bank.

Q28. Assume a citizen's petition seeks to compel a State Government to reduce PM2.5 levels to the WHO safe limit referred to in the passage. Which set of constitutional provisions would MOST appropriately be invoked together?

A) Articles 19, 31A and 330.

B) Articles 14, 17 and 25.

C) Articles 32, 226 and 227 only.

D) Articles 21, 48A and 51A(g).