

**Daily Reading Comprehension & Critical Reasoning**

Two RC passages (English-as-Language) and two CR passages (Argumentation). Read each carefully and answer based on what is stated or implied.  
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**PASSAGE 1 (RC) – CLIMATE FINANCE AND THE EQUITY QUESTION (ENVIRONMENT / POLICY)**

**Q1-5**

**READ CAREFULLY AND ANSWER Q1-5 BASED ONLY ON THE PASSAGE.**

The architecture of international climate finance rests on a moral premise that has proved easier to declare than to implement. Developed nations, having burned the bulk of the world's carbon budget over two centuries of industrialisation, accepted at the 2009 Copenhagen summit a pledge to mobilise USD 100 billion annually by 2020 to support mitigation and adaptation in poorer countries. The pledge was missed. Even when nominal totals approached the figure, accounting practices inflated them: development loans on near-commercial terms were counted at face value rather than at the modest grant-equivalent that genuinely transferred resources.

The equity argument is straightforward. Countries that contributed almost nothing to historical emissions now face the sharpest physical impacts — rising seas in the Maldives, glacial melt in the Hindu Kush, intensified cyclones across the Bay of Bengal. They lack the fiscal space to finance adaptation through their own treasuries, and borrowing on commercial terms simply transmutes climate risk into debt distress. By the early 2020s several small island states were spending more on debt service than on health.

Defenders of the existing arrangement argue that distinguishing 'climate finance' from ordinary development assistance is conceptually fraught — many adaptation investments, such as resilient water systems, are indistinguishable from routine development spending. Some also note that emerging economies like China and the Gulf states are now major emitters and could plausibly contribute to the pool rather than draw from it.

The response is partly accepted: the 2022 COP27 agreement on a Loss and Damage fund signalled a partial expansion of contributors. But the deeper question — whether climate finance is owed as a matter of historical accountability or offered as a matter of contemporary generosity — remains unresolved. The two framings produce very different funding architectures and very different conversations about adequacy. Until that disagreement is faced, headline numbers will continue to mask the gap between what is needed and what is being delivered.

**1. As used in the passage, the phrase 'transmutes climate risk into debt distress' most nearly means:**

- A. Converts environmental hazards into a measurable monetary value
- B. Shifts a country's vulnerability to climate change into an inability to service its loans
- C. Replaces foreign aid with low-interest concessional borrowing
- D. Reclassifies development loans as climate adaptation finance

**2. Which of the following can be most reasonably inferred from the passage?**

- A. The USD 100 billion climate finance target was met in full by 2020
- B. Reported climate finance figures often overstate the genuine resource transfer to recipient countries
- C. China and the Gulf states have refused to contribute to the Loss and Damage fund
- D. Adaptation projects are easier to finance than mitigation projects

**3. Which best captures the central argument of the passage?**

- A. Loss and Damage funding has resolved the long-standing equity gap in climate finance
- B. Climate finance for poorer nations has fallen short in both quantity and accounting honesty, and the deeper disagreement about whether it is owed or offered remains unsettled
- C. Small island states should restructure their commercial debt before seeking concessional climate finance
- D. Emerging economies, not developed nations, should bear the primary cost of global climate adaptation

**4. The author's primary purpose in the third paragraph is to:**

- A. Argue that climate finance and development assistance should be administratively merged
- B. Reject the equity-based case for additional climate finance to poor countries
- C. Present and partially acknowledge counter-arguments to the equity-based case before returning to the central concern
- D. Show that emerging economies have always opposed contributing to climate finance

**5. Which of the following, if true, would most weaken the author's case that current climate finance is inadequate?**

- A. Independent audits show that the OECD undercount climate finance by approximately one-third because of overly conservative methodologies
- B. Loss and Damage fund disbursements in 2024 were less than five per cent of estimated need
- C. Several Pacific island states defaulted on sovereign debt during the 2023 cyclone season
- D. Adaptation investments yield economic returns of three to four times their cost

**PASSAGE 2 (RC) – THE ATTENTION ECONOMY IN THE STREAMING AGE (CULTURE / TECHNOLOGY)**

**Q6-10**

**READ CAREFULLY AND ANSWER Q6-10 BASED ONLY ON THE PASSAGE.**

The phrase 'attention economy' was popularised by Herbert Simon in 1971, decades before any meaningful digital platform existed. Simon's insight was deceptively simple: in an information-abundant world, the binding constraint is not the supply of content but the human capacity to attend to it. Attention, not information, becomes the scarce resource around which markets organise themselves.

The streaming era has tested Simon's framework in ways he could not have anticipated. Platforms like Netflix, Spotify, and YouTube do not merely compete for paying customers; they compete for hours of waking attention against every other claimant — work, family, sleep. Internal Netflix memoranda leaked in 2017 famously named sleep, not Disney+, as the company's chief competitor. The remark captured a literal truth about the economics: each additional hour of binge-viewing was an hour reallocated from another activity, and platforms had every incentive to win that reallocation.

The consequences for content design have been substantial. Episode lengths have stretched and compressed in unintuitive ways: prestige drama runs to ten one-hour instalments to maximise narrative depth, while short-form video collapses to fifteen-second loops to maximise refresh frequency. Both designs serve the same goal of session extension but route the user through different cognitive grooves. Personalised recommendation systems further tighten the loop, predicting the next item the user is most likely to attend to before the current item ends.

Critics observe that this design philosophy externalises a cost: while platforms internalise the gains from attention captured, the long-term effects of fragmented attention — on reading capacity, deep work, civic conversation — fall outside the firm's profit calculus. Whether that externality should be addressed by user discipline, platform self-restraint, or regulatory intervention remains contested. What is no longer contested is the diagnosis: in the streaming age, the scarce resource is not the next show but the viewer's remaining attention to give it.

6. As used in the passage, the word 'externalises' most nearly means:

- A. Hides from public view through corporate secrecy
- B. Shifts the cost of an action onto parties not party to the transaction
- C. Outsources to an international subsidiary
- D. Disclosing through mandatory regulatory filings

7. Which of the following can be most reasonably inferred from the passage?

- A. Herbert Simon designed the recommendation algorithm used by Netflix
- B. Streaming platforms view themselves as competing primarily with each other rather than with non-platform activities
- C. Both very long and very short content formats can serve the platform's interest in extending session time
- D. Short-form video has been shown to improve users' deep reading capacity

8. Which best captures the central argument of the passage?

- A. Streaming platforms should voluntarily limit binge-viewing features to protect user wellbeing
- B. Simon's 1971 framework is now outdated and needs to be replaced
- C. Content design and recommendation systems on streaming platforms are oriented around capturing scarce attention, with externalities whose distribution remains unresolved
- D. Regulatory intervention is the only viable response to the harms of streaming

9. The author's primary purpose in citing the 2017 Netflix memorandum is to:

- A. Criticise Netflix for unethical business practices
- B. Demonstrate that streaming platforms understand and act on the substitution of attention across activities, not merely across platforms
- C. Argue that sleep deprivation is the most pressing public health concern of the streaming age
- D. Show that internal corporate communications should be publicly disclosed

10. Which of the following best describes the tone of the passage?

- A. Strongly polemical, calling for platform regulation
- B. Analytical and measured, presenting the mechanism while flagging an unresolved normative question
- C. Nostalgic, lamenting the loss of pre-streaming culture
- D. Sceptical, suggesting that the attention economy is a fictional construct

### PASSAGE 3 (CR) — SHOULD EV SUBSIDIES CONTINUE? (ECONOMY / POLICY)

Q11–15

READ THE ARGUMENT AND ANSWER Q11–15.

Critics of India's electric-vehicle subsidy programme advance the following argument. The FAME-II scheme, they observe, has disbursed thousands of crores in incentives to EV buyers and manufacturers since 2019. Two-wheeler sales now account for more than seventy per cent of all EVs sold in the country. Yet sales penetration of electric two-wheelers as a share of total two-wheeler sales remains stubbornly below ten per cent. From this the critics conclude that the subsidy is failing in its central purpose — driving mass adoption — and should be allowed to lapse rather than be renewed.

The argument proceeds on a particular causal claim: that high subsidy spend, if effective, would by now have produced higher penetration rates. Implicit in this is the further premise that no other factor has been preventing the price-signal from translating into purchase decisions, and that adoption is therefore best understood as price-elastic in this market.

Critics also point to the fiscal opportunity cost. Every rupee directed to EV subsidies, they argue, is a rupee unavailable for charging infrastructure, grid upgrades, or domestic battery manufacturing capacity. They contend that capital expenditure on infrastructure offers a more durable foundation for long-term adoption than recurring per-unit consumption subsidies, which capture demand only for the period the subsidy lasts.

A third strand of the critics' argument is distributional. They note that the median electric two-wheeler buyer earns substantially more than the median Indian household, and conclude that the subsidy primarily benefits upper-middle-income consumers — an inversion of the social purpose for which fiscal transfers are usually justified.

For each of these reasons, the argument concludes, FAME-II should sunset on schedule and the saved fiscal space should be redirected to capital-side interventions in the EV ecosystem. Continuation, they suggest, would be politically tempting but economically unwarranted.

11. Which of the following best captures the conclusion of the critics' argument?

- A. Electric two-wheelers will eventually achieve mass adoption regardless of subsidy support
- B. The FAME-II subsidy should be allowed to lapse, with fiscal space redirected to charging infrastructure, grids and domestic battery manufacturing
- C. The Indian Government has historically over-spent on transport subsidies
- D. Two-wheeler EVs are inherently inferior to four-wheeler EVs as a target for subsidy

12. Which of the following is an unstated assumption on which the critics' core argument depends?

- A. EV adoption in India is price-elastic and the subsidy's failure to lift penetration above ten per cent is therefore evidence that the subsidy is ineffective
- B. Indian consumers prefer petrol two-wheelers regardless of any price differential
- C. The Government will face no political consequences for ending FAME-II
- D. Battery technology will improve continuously over the next decade

13. Which of the following, if true, would most weaken the critics' argument?

- A. Independent surveys show that fewer than fifteen per cent of Indian households live within five kilometres of a public charging point, and the principal reason cited by non-buyers is range anxiety, not vehicle price
- B. FAME-II disbursements rose modestly between 2022 and 2024
- C. Petrol prices in India are higher than in several neighbouring countries
- D. Some EV manufacturers have been investigated for misreporting localisation content

14. Which of the following, if true, would most STRENGTHEN the critics' fiscal-redirection claim?

- A. An independent econometric study finds that one rupee spent on charging infrastructure adds three to four times more long-run EV adoption than the same rupee disbursed as a per-unit subsidy
- B. EV manufacturers have lobbied vigorously for the renewal of FAME-II
- C. Several state governments offer their own EV subsidies on top of the central scheme
- D. Battery prices have fallen sharply over the past decade

15. Which of the following best identifies a flaw in the critics' distributional argument?

- A. It assumes the subsidy is the sole determinant of which households purchase electric two-wheelers, ignoring the possibility that subsidy withdrawal would push purchases even further up the income distribution
- B. It cites the median household income, which is irrelevant to consumption decisions
- C. It compares Indian EV adoption to global averages rather than to the Indian context
- D. It assumes that only households, not firms, purchase electric two-wheelers

**PASSAGE 4 (CR) – THE BILINGUAL CURRICULUM DEBATE (EDUCATION / PUBLIC POLICY)**

**Q16–20**

**READ THE ARGUMENT AND ANSWER Q16–20.**

A recent commentary in an education weekly has argued that India should mandate bilingual instruction — mother tongue and English — at the primary level across all government schools. The argument runs as follows. Cognitive science research, the author observes, consistently shows that children acquire foundational literacy and numeracy more securely when instruction is delivered in a language they already speak fluently at home. Yet English fluency, the author further notes, is a strong predictor of access to higher-paying labour markets in contemporary India. From these two observations, the author concludes that a curriculum delivered partly in mother tongue and partly in English would simultaneously secure cognitive foundations and preserve labour-market mobility.

The argument relies on a particular causal claim: that delivering content partly in each language is the optimal way to combine the two benefits — strong foundational learning and adult labour-market access. The author treats the two outcomes as additively combinable, assuming that splitting instruction does not erode either benefit relative to single-language delivery.

The commentary further claims that the policy is administratively feasible. The author cites pilot programmes in three southern states which reported moderately higher reading-comprehension scores in their bilingual cohorts, and infers that nationwide scaling would produce comparable outcomes. The pilots ran for three years and used specially trained teachers recruited from teachers' colleges with bilingual certification.

Finally, the author argues that the bilingual model would mitigate the social fragmentation that single-medium schooling has historically reproduced. By offering a common bilingual standard, government schools could reduce the gap between elite English-medium private institutions and ordinary regional-medium government ones, narrowing the social premium attached to elite schooling.

For these reasons — cognitive, economic, administrative and social — the commentary concludes that nationwide bilingual mandate at primary level is the right next step in Indian education policy.

16. Which of the following best captures the conclusion of the commentary?

- A. English-medium private schools should be subject to greater regulation
- B. India should mandate bilingual instruction (mother tongue and English) at the primary level across government schools
- C. Cognitive science is the most authoritative source for education policy decisions
- D. Government schools should adopt the curriculum used in elite private schools

17. Which of the following is an unstated assumption on which the commentary's case depends?

- A. Splitting instruction between two languages does not erode either of the benefits — cognitive grounding or labour-market access — relative to single-language delivery
- B. Mother-tongue instruction is universally superior to English instruction in every subject
- C. Private schools will voluntarily adopt the same bilingual model
- D. Indian parents prefer regional-medium instruction

18. Which of the following, if true, would most weaken the commentary's argument?

- A. A large multi-state randomised study finds that bilingual primary instruction produces lower foundational literacy than mother-tongue-only instruction, with no compensating gain in measured English fluency by age fourteen
- B. Some elite private schools have begun to introduce regional-language electives
- C. The southern pilot programmes used dramatically higher per-student spending than the national average
- D. English-language proficiency is positively correlated with later urban migration

19. Which of the following most fairly identifies a flaw in the commentary's reasoning from the southern pilots?

- A. It cites only government-run pilots and ignores private-sector data
- B. It generalises from a small set of pilots that used specially trained bilingual-certified teachers without evidence that such teachers are available at national scale, treating a programme-with-special-conditions as representative of an at-scale rollout
- C. It assumes reading-comprehension scores are the only relevant educational outcome
- D. It assumes that the southern states are linguistically representative of the country

20. Which of the following arguments, if successfully advanced, would most directly UNDERMINE the commentary's social-fragmentation claim?

- A. Elite private schools, far from converging on the bilingual standard, would respond to a government mandate by adopting trilingual or specialised programmes that further differentiate them from government schools, thereby widening rather than narrowing the schooling gap
- B. Some parents in regional-medium schools express satisfaction with the existing curriculum
- C. Government schools have historically struggled to recruit qualified teachers in any subject
- D. Social mobility in India depends on factors other than schooling

**SECTION C — RAPID-FIRE GK & CURRENT AFFAIRS**

**Q21–33 · 13 Marks**

Standalone questions on current affairs, static GK, vocabulary in context and idiom usage. No passage required.

21. Which constitutional Article provides for the establishment of the Goods and Services Tax Council?

- A. Article 270
- B. Article 279A
- C. Article 280
- D. Article 246A

22. The 'Mission Mausam' programme, launched by the Government of India, aims to enhance capabilities in which domain?

- A. Maritime defence
- B. Weather forecasting and climate research
- C. Space exploration
- D. Cyber-security

23. Choose the word most nearly opposite in meaning to 'EPHEMERAL':

- A. Transient
- B. Enduring
- C. Fragile
- D. Cursory

24. The idiom 'to throw in the towel' most nearly means:

- A. To clean up after a fight
- B. To admit defeat and stop trying
- C. To wave a flag in surrender
- D. To waste resources unnecessarily

25. Which landmark Supreme Court judgment recognised the right to privacy as a fundamental right under Article 21?

- A. Kesavananda Bharati v. State of Kerala (1973)
- B. Maneka Gandhi v. Union of India (1978)
- C. Justice K. S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India (2017)
- D. ADM Jabalpur v. Shivkant Shukla (1976)

26. The Bharat Ratna in 2024 was awarded posthumously to which former Prime Minister of India?

- A. Lal Bahadur Shastri
- B. P. V. Narasimha Rao
- C. Chaudhary Charan Singh
- D. Both B and C

27. Which Indian author won the International Booker Prize in 2025 for the novel 'Heart Lamp'?

- A. Geetanjali Shree
- B. Banu Mushtaq
- C. Perumal Murugan
- D. Arundhati Roy

28. The Dalai Lama, currently in exile, traditionally heads which school of Tibetan Buddhism?

- A. Nyingma
- B. Sakya
- C. Kagyu
- D. Gelug

29. Choose the word that best fits in the blank: 'The minister's \_\_\_\_ remarks at the press conference were widely criticised as undiplomatic.'

- A. Trenchant
- B. Mellifluous
- C. Insouciant
- D. Sycophantic

30. Which Article of the Constitution empowers the President of India to declare a financial emergency?

- A. Article 352
- B. Article 356
- C. Article 360
- D. Article 365

31. The High-Level Committee on 'One Nation, One Election', which submitted its report in March 2024, was chaired by:

- A. Justice (Retd.) U. U. Lalit
- B. Ram Nath Kovind
- C. M. Venkaiah Naidu
- D. Sushil Chandra

32. Choose the word most nearly similar in meaning to 'PERFUNCTORY':

- A. Cursory
- B. Meticulous
- C. Profound
- D. Diligent

33. At the Paris Olympics 2024, which Indian athlete won a silver medal in javelin throw?

- A. Kishore Kumar Jena
- B. Manu Bhaker
- C. Neeraj Chopra
- D. Arshad Nadeem