



- 
- I. Why has the tide of democratization repeatedly exceeded expectations? The various backslidings, reversals, and black holes for democracy have led to theories which posit onerous prerequisites and an agonizing ordeal of democratization. (This serves as a convenient pretext for dictators to insist that their countries are not ready for it, like the revolutionary leader in Woody Allen's *Bananas* who upon taking power announces, "These people are peasants. They are too ignorant to vote.") The awe is reinforced by a civics-class idealization of democracy in which an informed populace deliberates about the common good and carefully selects leaders who carry out their preference.

By that standard, the number of democracies in the world is zero in the past, zero in the present, and almost certainly zero in the future. Political scientists are repeatedly astonished by the shallowness and incoherence of people's political beliefs, and by the tenuous connection of their preferences to their votes and to the behavior of their representatives. Most voters are ignorant not just of current policy options but of basic facts, such as what the major branches of government are, who the United States fought in World War II, and which countries have used nuclear weapons. Their opinions flip depending on how a question is worded: they say that the government spends too much on "welfare" but too little on "assistance to the poor," and that it should "use military force" but not "go to war." When they do formulate a preference, they commonly vote for a candidate with the opposite one. But it hardly matters, because once in office politicians vote the positions of their party regardless of the opinions of their constituents.

Nor does voting even provide much of a feedback signal about a government's performance. Voters punish incumbents for recent events over which they have dubious control, such as macroeconomic swings and terrorist strikes, or no control at all, such as droughts, floods, even shark attacks. Many political scientists have concluded that most people correctly recognize that their votes are astronomically unlikely to affect the outcome of an election, and so they prioritize work, family, and leisure over educating themselves about politics and calibrating their votes. They use the franchise as a form of self-expression: they vote for candidates who they think are like them and stand for their kind of people.

So despite the widespread belief that elections are the quintessence of democracy, they are only one of the mechanisms by which a government is held responsible to those it governs, and not always a constructive one. When an election is a contest between aspiring despots, rival factions fear the worst if the other side wins and try to intimidate each other from the ballot box.

[Extracted from: Steven Pinker, *Enlightenment Now* (Viking 2018)]



- 
1. Based on the passage, which of the following best describes how most voters approach voting?
- (A) A civic duty requiring careful deliberation.
  - (B) A form of self-expression and identity affirmation.
  - (C) A strategic choice to advance specific policy goals.
  - (D) A means to hold politicians accountable for their actions.
- 
2. What does the author imply about the relationship between voters' stated preferences and their voting behaviours?
- (A) Voters deliberately misrepresent their preferences.
  - (B) There is often significant inconsistency between what people say and how they vote.
  - (C) Voting behaviour is primarily determined by party loyalty.
  - (D) Voting behaviour is determined by voters' true preferences.
- 
3. What inference can be drawn about the author's view of voter rationality?
- (A) Voters are always rational in their political decisions.
  - (B) Voters would make better choices if provided with better information.
  - (C) Voter ignorance is primarily due to educational failures.
  - (D) Voters consciously decide not to invest time in political education.
- 
4. People of Greenland are citizens of which of the following countries?
- (A) United States of America
  - (B) Iceland
  - (C) Canada
  - (D) Denmark
- 
5. Who among the following is not a member of the Selection Committee to appoint the Chief Election Commissioner of India?
- (A) The Prime Minister of India
  - (B) The Leader of the Opposition in the House of the People
  - (C) The Chief Justice of India
  - (D) A Union Cabinet Minister nominated by the Prime Minister of India
- 
6. What conclusion does the passage draw about the relationship between elections and democracy?
- (A) Elections are necessary but not sufficient for democratic governance.
  - (B) Elections are fundamentally flawed and should be replaced.
  - (C) Elections work well only in established democracies.
  - (D) Elections serve primarily symbolic functions.
-



- 
7. What does the author imply when they call elections as “contests between aspiring despots”?
- (A) Aspiring despots do not opt for electoral contests.
  - (B) Elections can exacerbate rather than resolve social conflicts in some contexts.
  - (C) Voters generally prefer strong leaders over consensus builders.
  - (D) Political competition inevitably leads to corruption.
- 

8. Who among the following was arrested in March 2025 in accordance with an arrest warrant issued by the International Criminal Court?
- (A) Jair Bolsonaro
  - (B) Rodrigo Duterte
  - (C) Bashar Al-Assad
  - (D) Mahamat Said Abdel Kani
- 

- II. The loss of young lives, whether it be by flooding in a Delhi basement or suicides in Kota, are the alarm bells that mark the growth of the private test-preparation or coaching industry in India. However, the growth of the coaching industry itself represents a much deeper phenomenon that has proven to be far too complex to arrest whether it be in India or other parts of the world. Assuming that the exams for which aspirants are being coached test them on knowledge and skills that are essential for the particular education programme or job, it might be worth asking why mainstream education is not preparing them adequately on this front. On the other hand, if the assumption is that the tests have little correspondence with required knowledge, then perhaps the examinations themselves need to be revisited.

Independent of any skills and knowledge that coaching is able to add, is the role of an information broker that it is often hypothesised to play. India currently is in the midst of a massive education transition. Consequently, a large mass of young Indians and their families are navigating the formal education labyrinth and rapidly changing economic structures with very limited information and role models. In the absence of any other accessible mechanism, coaching institutes have also become *de facto* career counselling centres, advising students on which programmes to pursue and examinations to take.

A related puzzle that needs further explanation is the relationship between coaching and some (however flawed) notion of “merit”. It has been argued by various stakeholders that the excessive influence of the test-prep industry, which has now assumed the form of an indispensable tool for clearing key high-stakes examinations, has meant that the ability to pay, rather than merit, has become the standard for the distribution of precious resources in society, contributing to the fast widening gap between the better-off and relatively worse-off classes.

---



---

Given that high-stakes exams allow the state to maintain a broad semblance of “fairness” in the distribution of coveted resources, like quality technical higher education and government jobs, finding resource-neutral alternatives to them is not easy. However, a question that still might be worth engaging with, is whether the rise of the coaching industry represents a lack of imagination, efforts and investments among test setters, who are unable to break the shackles of their shadow, to “coach” future aspirants based essentially on information from previous examinations. After all, coaching can only be successful if the past is predictive of the future.

In light of the above, “Regulations” in the case of test-prep industry will only be a kind of “symptom management,” while the malaise pertains to deeper issues of quality of public schooling and higher education, lack of diversity of career options, and lack of access to vocational training systems which can allow the huge mass of our country’s youth to envision a career path capable of providing them a reasonably comfortable life.

**[Extracted, with edits and revisions, from Ankur Sarin and Vinayak Kishore, ‘Making Sense of the Indian Test-prep Industry’, Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. 60, Issue No. 7, February 15, 2025]**

---

9. The authors suggest that the success of coaching institutes depends on the predictability of examinations. Which of the following, if true, would weaken the authors’ argument?
- (A) Coaching institutes carefully organize previous years’ examination papers and identify repeatedly tested topics.
  - (B) Paper-setters of competitive examinations often incorporate innovative question formats and assess higher-order thinking skills.
  - (C) Coaching institutes successfully train students in personality development.
  - (D) Coaching institutes serve as effective career counselling centres.
- 
10. The authors argue that state regulation of the coaching industry would merely be “symptom management”. Which of the following statements strengthen this argument?
- (A) Regulation often leads to increased costs for coaching institutes, which will make them socially exclusionary.
  - (B) Regulation of coaching institutes will be counter-productive and lead to decline in numbers of good coaching institutes.
  - (C) The underlying concerns with the proliferation of coaching institutes, such as the existence of weak public education systems, would persist notwithstanding state regulation of the coaching industry.
  - (D) Many coaching institutes operate illegally and without necessary licenses, making their regulation a long-drawn out and complicated affair.
-



- 
11. Which of the following, if true, would most strengthen the argument that the growth of coaching institutes has contributed to the widening socio-economic inequality in the society?
- (A) Coaching institutes have robust needs-based scholarship programs for economically disadvantaged students.
  - (B) Students from wealthier backgrounds have better access to high-quality coaching and thus perform better in competitive exams.
  - (C) Coaching institutes have expanded into rural areas, increasing accessibility for all students.
  - (D) Public schools have improved their teaching methods, reducing the need for coaching.
- 
12. Which of the following, if true, would most effectively challenge the authors' argument that regulating the coaching industry is merely "symptom management"?
- (A) Data showing that regulated coaching institutes have significantly higher success rates than unregulated ones.
  - (B) Evidence that regulations have led to a substantial decrease in student stress and anxiety related to exams.
  - (C) Proof that regulations have forced coaching institutes to focus on holistic education rather than just exam preparation.
  - (D) Research demonstrating that regulations of the coaching industry have led to a significant improvement in the quality of public education.
- 
13. The authors' concern about the "lack of imagination" among test setters implies that they believe:
- (A) Test setters should focus on making exams more difficult and challenging.
  - (B) Test setters should design exams that are less predictable and assess a wider range of skills.
  - (C) Test setters should collaborate more closely with coaching institutes to align exam content.
  - (D) Test setters should be more aware of the social and economic impact of their exams.
- 
14. What significant action did the Ministry of Education in India take in January 2024 concerning private coaching centres?
- (A) Introduced new guidelines for their registration and regulation.
  - (B) Introduced a scheme for reimbursement of costs incurred by students at coaching centres, if they had been admitted to their schools under the Right to Education Act.
  - (C) Introduced regulation of fees that coaching centres can charge, based on paying capacity.
  - (D) Closed down unregistered coaching centres.
-



- 
15. Which of the following states has the lowest percentage of schools offering the study of three languages?
- (A) Assam (B) Tamil Nadu  
(C) Nagaland (D) Arunachal Pradesh
- 

III. There has been a great deal of critical commentary regarding the Supreme Court's reluctant engagement with the migrant crisis caused by the government-imposed lockdown— initially trying to avoid involvement, followed by its belated intervention through a *suo motu* (on its own accord) Public Interest Litigation (PIL).

There are two assumptions underlying this criticism. First, that the intervention should have been at the level of the Supreme Court. Second, the intervention would necessarily take the form of a PIL to alleviate the suffering of the millions of stranded migrants. Both assumptions are worth examining.

The tendency to view the Supreme Court as the prime and preferred site for judicial intervention for all public issues has taken on alarming proportions in recent times. At one level, this is another symptom of the centralisation of our political imagination.

As the site of power in Indian politics has increasingly moved to the centre in the last few years, the High Courts too have been gradually sidelined, with any issue of import being moved directly at the Supreme Court or transferred there, often at the behest of the Central Government.

But it is also partly due to the outsized importance of the Supreme Court Bar, thriving in the disproportionate media attention it attracts. During the migrant crisis, many High Courts did intervene and passed significant orders against state (in)action.

However, we have got so used to the Supreme Court presence in public policy that until it intervened, it felt like there had not been any serious judicial involvement.

It is the second assumption of PIL being the default route for judicial relief that is even more symptomatic of the pathologies of the Indian legal system.

The idea underlying this assumption is that the widespread public suffering of the migrants would lead the court to throw its doors open and provide succour.

Since the rise of PIL and its popularisation, there has grown a belief that it is the Supreme Court's responsibility to alleviate the suffering of the underprivileged in India. And that all social problems of such magnitude can be and should be addressed by the Supreme Court.

---



---

The courts can have direct unmediated access to this suffering by setting aside all procedural obstacles in its path. The PIL, however, does not just lead to dilution of standing requirements as is popularly understood. Over a period of time, other adjudicative fundamentals too have got diluted, such as the need to rely on minimal evidentiary standards or even the need to ground judicial decisions in legal reasoning.

With a PIL, the invocation of suffering is seen as enough and no need is felt to interpret such suffering into a problem of law or rights. There is a perceived problem, to which the court attempts to fashion a solution.

Of course, these can conceivably be framed as legal issues, but such interpretive effort is increasingly felt to be unnecessary.

The lack of interest in translating a socio-economic issue of public concern into a legal issue is at the heart of the problem with the legal culture that PIL has engendered. And the migrant workers' cases are a textbook example.

**[Extracted with edits from: Anuj Bhuvania, The Curious Absence of Law in Migrant Workers' Cases, Article14.com, June 16, 2020]**

---

16. What is the author's primary criticism of the Supreme Court's response to the migrant crisis emanating from the government-imposed lockdown?
- (A) It intervened too quickly without proper deliberation.
  - (B) It failed to intervene at all.
  - (C) It initially avoided involvement and intervened late.
  - (D) It transferred all cases to the High Courts.
- 
17. The Supreme Court, in April 2025, cancelled the appointments of teaching and non-teaching staff of the School Service Commission of which of the following States ?
- (A) Tamil Nadu
  - (B) West Bengal
  - (C) Delhi
  - (D) Gujarat
- 
18. According to the passage, what is one of the issues with relying on PILs for addressing social problems?
- (A) They often delay legal proceedings.
  - (B) They have led to dilution of evidentiary and procedural standards.
  - (C) They are only applicable to economic matters, not social issues.
  - (D) They make judicial reasoning more complex.
-



- 
19. According to the passage, why do many believe it is the Supreme Court's responsibility to alleviate suffering?
- (A) The Supreme Court is the highest court in the country.
  - (B) PILs have created a perception that courts should intervene directly in social issues.
  - (C) The government has formally assigned this role to the judiciary.
  - (D) High Courts have refused to address social concerns.
- 
20. According to the passage, what is a serious problem with the legal culture created by PILs?
- (A) They rely more on invocation of emotion than legal reasoning.
  - (B) They take too long to resolve disputes.
  - (C) They do not allow public participation.
  - (D) They are limited to the Supreme Court.
- 
21. How many women judges does the Supreme Court of India currently have?
- (A) One                      (B) Two                      (C) Four                      (D) Six
- 
22. The author discusses how legal issues can be framed in a way that makes them appropriate for judicial intervention. What does this suggest about the role of courts in addressing social problems?
- (A) Courts must translate social issues into legal questions before they can provide solutions.
  - (B) Courts should intervene in social issues even if they are not framed in legal terms.
  - (C) Courts should leave social issues entirely to the government and policymakers.
  - (D) The Supreme Court should have exclusive authority over resolving social problems.
- 
23. The passage argues that the centralization of political power has affected the role of the Supreme Court. Which of the following, if true, would most weaken this argument?
- (A) High Courts frequently take independent action in major public issues.
  - (B) The Supreme Court has ruled that all PILs must be transferred to it for final decision-making.
  - (C) The Supreme Court is the only judicial body with the authority to hear constitutional cases.
  - (D) The media plays no role in shaping public perception of the Supreme Court's role in governance.
-



- 
24. If the trends described in the passage continue, what is the most likely long-term consequence for the Indian legal system?
- (A) The Supreme Court may become the sole body responsible for all legal disputes, bypassing lower courts.
  - (B) Public expectations of judicial intervention in policy matters may continue to rise, further weakening legal procedures.
  - (C) PILs will eventually be abolished due to concerns over procedural dilution.
  - (D) The government will establish a new court to handle PILs separately from the judiciary.
- 
25. Who among the following is currently a member of the Supreme Court of India's collegium that makes recommendations for appointment of judges to the Supreme Court?
- (A) Justice K.V. Viswanathan
  - (B) Justice P.S. Narasimha
  - (C) Justice J.B. Pardiwala
  - (D) Justice Sanjiv Khanna
- 

IV. Pakistan is pulao country. In each of the regions that make up this land, the less elaborate dish has historically been more popular. But there is one place where biryani reigns: the city of Karachi. It was brought here by migrants from India, people who would come to be called Muhajirs. In the decades that followed, it took on a life of its own. As one chef put it, "Karachi *jiddat wala sheher hai*. It is a city of innovation." [Translation : Jiddat = Innovation] The people here, he said, "are total all-rounders. Those who work here know how to create *jiddat*— so you can understand biryani itself as a form of *jiddat*."

The most popular theory about biryani in Pakistan is that it was brought over to the subcontinent by the warlords who became the Mughals. The second-most popular is that it was introduced by their predecessors from Central Asia. The third is that it developed after interaction with Arab traders along India's western coasts. Common to all these is the view that biryani was born out of some origin-defining interaction with one religious group, Muslims, even though all these societies were distinct from one another. Biryani history now repeats the colonial folly of viewing South Asian history as a series of distinct, religiously defined phases.

The author and journalist Nilanjan Hajra is one of the few people who has consulted primary sources in his quest for tracing the biryani's evolution. In an article published in August 2018, he referenced the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*, which mentions a dish that "should have rice cooked with the meat" and was to be eaten "with clarified butter."

---



---

Hajra also outlined how subcontinental food kept building on this recipe through the eras. All of these built off the first, fundamental combination of rice with fat and protein. In essence, Hajra's argument is that the biryani evolved across the Indian subcontinent rather than arriving from the outside.

On the coastline of Karachi, in what was once a small fishing village from which the enormous city emerged, I came upon the true consequence of Hajra's theory. Fatima Majeed is a tall woman with a soft face. She is a formidable activist and a treasure trove of information on the culture of Karachi's original indigenous population: its fisherfolk. For instance, there's no restaurant that serves prawn biryani the way it is made here in Ibrahim Hyderi, where Fatima lives and where all roads lead to the ocean.

Fatima explains the defining characteristics of the local biryani as I take notes: tamarind and tomato for tanginess, fried red onions as garnish, prawns. Then she says something intriguing. Karachi's fisherfolk version of the biryani is so old, she feels, that it was invented here itself. "We haven't just been eating biryani since our childhood," she said. "Even my grandfather remembers having it when he was a child."

Fatima's story made me think of Hajra's thesis of biryani evolving over various places and eras in the subcontinent, influenced by the myriad of cultures that swept through it. In this view of the world, biryani can authentically be a *jiddat* of Karachi's people. Having left these shores a millennium ago, having travelled across the vast homeland, and learnt its many lessons, Karachi is where it returns to find its most transcendent form.

**[Excerpted, with edits, from Ahmer Naqvi, "Rice, Fat, Meat, Streets", *Fifty Two* (October 2021)]**

---

26. What, according to the author, is an essential attribute of a biryani?

- (A) It is a combination of rice with fat and protein.
  - (B) It includes a tangy ingredient and fried onions.
  - (C) It is prepared by a chef who is Muslim.
  - (D) It is prepared in a restaurant in Karachi.
- 

27. According to the passage, what role does biryani play in Karachi?

- (A) It is a symbol of traditional cooking.
  - (B) It serves as a form of cultural expression and innovation.
  - (C) It is only consumed by the wealthy class.
  - (D) It is part of Karachi's religious rituals.
-



- 
28. Read the Statements 1 and 2 below and pick the option that best describes the relationship between them, based only on the information given in passage.

Statement 1: In Karachi, migrants from India are called Muhajirs.

Statement 2: Biryani in Karachi is made with prawns.

- (A) Both Statement 1 and Statement 2 are true and Statement 1 is the correct explanation of Statement 2.
- (B) Both Statement 1 and Statement 2 are true but Statement 1 is not the correct explanation of Statement 2.
- (C) Statement 1 is true but Statement 2 is false.
- (D) Statement 1 is false but Statement 2 is true.
- 
29. In the passage, why does the author describe Fatima Majeed's statement as "intriguing"?
- (A) She says that biryani originated in Karachi, but it is commonly believed that biryani was brought to Karachi by Indian migrants.
- (B) She mentions prawns as an ingredient of biryani, but biryani is commonly made with mutton.
- (C) There is no fat in the recipe that she describes.
- (D) She says that biryani originated in Muslim communities, but documented history traces it back to the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*.
- 

30. The Hindi-language movie "Mrs." is an adaption of which of the following movies?

- (A) Mr & Mrs. Iyer (B) Aachar & Co.  
(C) The Great Indian Kitchen (D) Iraivi
- 

31. Which of the following best describes Nilanjan Hajra's theory of the origins of biryani?

- (A) It was brought to the Indian sub-continent by Arab traders.  
(B) It was brought to the Indian sub-continent by the Mughals.  
(C) It originated in Karachi and then spread to other parts of the Indian sub-continent.  
(D) It originated in parallel across different parts of the sub-continent.
- 

32. Which of the following Nobel Prize-winning economists authored the book "Chaunk: On Food, Economics and Society"?

- (A) Esther Duflo (B) Amartya Sen  
(C) Venkatraman Ramakrishnan (D) Abhijit Banerjee
-



- 
33. Which of the following Pakistani political parties had its election symbol blocked before its General Election in 2024?
- (A) Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf
  - (B) Pakistan Peoples Party
  - (C) Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz)
  - (D) Pakistan Awami Raj
- 

V. The Prime Minister was wondering how to turn yet another catastrophic failure into a success. In his long career in power, his party had first counted all of his failures as incorrectly measured successes, then proceeded to extinguish all institutions that called out failures, then celebrated failure as the storm before the calm, then denounced failure as a dastardly ploy by the extinct opposition to spread 'negativity', then ignored failure entirely to focus on the emotional toll it was causing the PM, and now, if this alien arrival turned out poorly, well... it wasn't clear what was left to do. His advisor who normally handled this sort of thing had been killed a few hours earlier when the spaceship had landed neatly on his head. Liberals had cheered in their hearts at his death, for it would be against their values to publicly celebrate anyone's violent end. Instead, they wore knowing smiles and nodded at each other on the street – this alien visitation had started on an enormously positive note.

Just as the PM had concluded that fleeing was his best choice, two nervous-looking screenwriters and an intelligence agent entered his tent.

'Well, what?' spat the PM.

'Our intelligence team has quickly gathered that these two women are responsible for the script of the film *Invaders*.'

The PM blinked at him.

'*Invaders* was a hit film released last year, sir.'

The PM considered this briefly and then broke into a smile. 'I see! You hired them to spin this alien thing as a positive story for me. Fantastic.'

'No, sir ... um.'

'Well, then what?' spat the PM.

---



---

The screenwriters found their voices. One of them said, 'Have you watched *Invaders*, sir?'

'No. I'm the Prime Minister. I barely have time to watch all my favourite TV shows.'

'Well, sir...' said the other screenwriter. 'If you had ... you'd realise that this ... that everything that's happening is ... more or less exactly like the script of our movie.'

'You mean to tell me...' said the PM, stepping towards the two quivering women, 'that you are in cahoots with these aliens?' He clapped his hands in excitement. 'Fantastic! Will they listen to me? How do they feel about history? Will they convert?'

'No, sir...' said the two women in unison.

'Well, then what?' spat the PM.

'It's just... an alarming coincidence. The ship is exactly as we described it, landed where it does in the movie, at the exact time, the rectangle of light emerged in the same way, and they asked for the hero...'

The intelligence agent coughed at them to stop. 'Sir, we have interrogated them and found no extraterrestrial link, because no one really has an extraterrestrial link – this is actually humanity's first contact with aliens. We just thought that since everything seems to follow the plot of their movie, it would be best to contact them to ask what happens next.'

**[Extracted, with edits and revisions, from *Acts of God*, by Kanan Gill]**

---

34. The name of the craft in which Barry Wilmore and Sunita Williams travelled to the International Space Station in 2024, and which returned without them, is:
- (A) SpaceX Dragon
  - (B) Boeing Starliner
  - (C) SpaceX Falcon 9
  - (D) Blue Origin New Shepard
- 
35. Which of the following is most accurate as regards how the PM's party tried to respond to his failures?
- (A) They always refused to recognise their existence.
  - (B) They put the blame for them squarely on the PM.
  - (C) They tried to suppress or deflect attention from them.
  - (D) They sought the opposition's help to solve them.
-



- 
36. Which of the following is the PM most likely to agree with?
- (A) If you cannot find a way to escape blame for your failures, run away.
  - (B) The best way to deal with failures was to hire a film crew.
  - (C) Finishing institutions that called out failures was the best way to deal with them.
  - (D) The alien visitation had started on an enormously positive note.
- 
37. Which of the following best explains why the intelligence agent brought the screenwriters to meet the PM?
- (A) So they could spin the alien visitation as a positive story for the PM.
  - (B) Their script for *Invaders* seemed to predict how the alien visitation would occur.
  - (C) Because they were collaborating with the aliens and could control them.
  - (D) Because the PM wanted to understand the film *Invaders* better.
- 
38. Which of the following, if true, would most weaken the intelligence agent's arguments?
- (A) The aliens had seen *Invaders* and mimicked some events from it to provide humans a guide to communicating with them and knowing their next actions.
  - (B) The aliens had seen *Invaders* and mimicked some events from it to mislead humans into thinking that things would continue happening as they did in the film.
  - (C) The aliens had not seen *Invaders* since they knew the PM was too busy to watch anything other than TV shows.
  - (D) Many stories narrated the same events as *Invaders*, but none of the others had predicted the exact location where the alien ship would land.
- 
39. Which filmmaker, a recipient of both, the Padma Shri and the Padma Bhushan, passed away at the age of 90 in 2024?
- (A) Rohit Bal
  - (B) Ramoji Rao
  - (C) MT Vaasudevan Nair
  - (D) Shyam Benegal
- 
40. This film, directed by Payal Kapadia, won the prestigious Grand Prix at the Cannes Film Festival in 2024. Which film is this?
- (A) All We Imagine as Light
  - (B) Girls Will be Girls
  - (C) Laapataa Ladies
  - (D) Stree 2
-



- 
41. Based on the information in the passage, which of the following is most likely to be true about liberals?
- (A) They thought the alien visitation was the direct outcome of the PM's failures.
  - (B) They thought the alien visitation would be catastrophic for the country.
  - (C) How they remembered some things was different from how the PM did.
  - (D) How they felt about some things was contrary to their values.
- 
42. If the statements about the PM's party in the passage are true, which of the following must necessarily be true?
- (A) They thought it was time to replace the PM with his advisor, since they could not find new ways of dealing with his failures.
  - (B) They thought the screenwriters had extraterrestrial links and had directed the intelligence agencies to interrogate them.
  - (C) They thought it was more important to deny failures than to understand how to avoid them in the future.
  - (D) They felt the liberals were hypocritical since they were secretly happy at the advisor's death, even though such feelings were against their values.
- 
43. Why does the intelligence agent say the screenwriters do not have an extraterrestrial link?
- (A) Because the aliens' previous visits had gone unnoticed.
  - (B) Because there had been no contact between humans and extraterrestrials previously.
  - (C) Because they had been too busy making *Invaders* to contact aliens.
  - (D) Because the PM's advisor had died without introducing them to the aliens.
- 

VI. In 2022, while granting bail to Alt News co-founder Mohammed Zubair, the Supreme Court had rejected the imposition of a ban on his social media activities. "Gag orders have a chilling effect on the freedom of speech," it had said. This week, the Court appears to have turned the clock back on a right it had stoutly defended once. In prohibiting podcaster-influencer Ranveer Allahbadia — whose comments on a YouTube show set off a controversy earlier this month — from airing content on social media until further notice, the Court has set a troubling precedent for free speech.

The Court has expressed strong disapproval of Allahbadia's comments, asserting that such language could bring shame to families and society. It granted relief to Allahbadia, in the form of protection from arrest, besides allowing the FIRs against him to be clubbed together. Yet, the imposition of prior restraint in the form of a gag is concerning. The Court must ask

---



---

itself if it wants to give further ammunition to a political class that has, in the past, been quick to clamp down on anything it deems offensive, with an alacrity that cuts across party lines. Its order also goes against the spirit that animated the Court's earlier defence of freedom of speech, notably in *Shreya Singhal versus Union of India* (2015), in which the Supreme Court emphasised that vague restrictions on online speech can lead to a "chilling effect". This logic has been upended in the Allahbadia order. The speaker is now expected to anticipate legal red lines. Such restrictions can empower arbitrary state action and incentivise frivolous complaints, creating an environment in which free expression becomes a privilege of the powerful, not the right of the people.

It is also worrying that when hearing another matter, the Bench referred to the Allahbadia case and sought the government's response on whether it is considering addressing the regulatory "vacuum" in online content. Already, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Communications and Information Technology has asked the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology to look at bringing online platforms under legal scrutiny. While regulation to prevent genuinely harmful content is necessary, it must be balanced against the fundamental right to freedom of speech. Over-regulation or vague guidelines, as the Court itself had warned in the *Shreya Singhal* case, could lead to self-censorship. As the case proceeds, the Court must reconsider these directives. In an era where digital platforms are the new public square, the judiciary must remain vigilant against tools of suppression, however benign their guise and well-meaning their intention.

**[Extracted with edits from the Editorial, 'Express View on SC gag order on Ranveer Allahbadia: Such restrictions can empower arbitrary state action', Indian Express February 21, 2025]**

---

44. According to the author, how does the Supreme Court's handling of the Ranveer Allahbadia case compare to its earlier stance on free speech?
- (A) It demonstrates a consistent commitment to protecting free speech.
  - (B) It reinforces the importance of responsible online expression.
  - (C) It appears to contradict its previous defense of free speech principles.
  - (D) It clarifies the limitations of free speech in the digital age.
- 
45. As per the passage, in 2022, why did the Supreme Court reject the imposition of the ban on Mohammed Zubair's social media activities?
- (A) There were no legal provisions to impose such a ban.
  - (B) Gag orders have a chilling effect on the freedom of speech.
  - (C) The Court believed social media bans are unconstitutional.
  - (D) Zubair was not found guilty of any wrongdoing.
-



- 
46. What was the Court's main concern regarding Ranveer Allahbadia's comments, as per the passage?
- (A) Their potential to incite violence.
  - (B) Their potential to defame public figures.
  - (C) Their potential to cause harm to family and social values.
  - (D) Their potential to disrupt public order.
- 
47. Which of the following corporations has challenged the Central Government's use of the Information Technology Act to set up a mechanism for regulation of unlawful online content (SAHYOG portal)?
- (A) X Corporation
  - (B) Telegram Inc.
  - (C) Tencents Holdings Ltd.
  - (D) Alphabet Inc.
- 
48. The passage argues that vague restrictions on online speech can lead to a "chilling effect". Which of the following scenarios best illustrates this?
- (A) A blogger decides not to publish an article critical of a powerful politician due to fear of potential legal repercussions, even though they believe the criticism is valid.
  - (B) A social media user posts a controversial opinion online and receives a barrage of hateful comments and personal attacks in response.
  - (C) A news website experiences a surge in traffic after publishing a story about a government scandal, demonstrating the public's interest in such information.
  - (D) An online platform removes a video that violates its community guidelines regarding hate speech, even though the video had only a few views.
- 
49. The passage implies that the political class might use free speech restrictions to its own advantage. What is the most likely consequence of this?
- (A) Speech restrictions may be selectively applied based on political interests.
  - (B) Political parties will unite to defend free speech rights.
  - (C) The judiciary will lose its authority over free speech cases.
  - (D) The public will support stricter regulations on all forms of media.
- 
50. If the Government overregulates online content, which of the following consequences, if they occur, would most support the concerns expressed by the author?
- (A) A challenge of the regulations in court.
  - (B) A decline in the number of controversial political discussions on social media.
  - (C) A rise in responsible digital journalism.
  - (D) Stronger protections against online harassment.
-



- 
51. The passage argues that the Allahbadia order “upended” the logic of the Shreya Singhal case. Which of the following best explains this argument?
- (A) The Shreya Singhal case emphasized the importance of preventing online harassment, whereas the Allahbadia case focused on protecting public figures from criticism.
  - (B) The Shreya Singhal case cautioned against vague restrictions on online speech, while the Allahbadia case imposed a gag order based on subjective interpretations of “offensive” content.
  - (C) The Shreya Singhal case gave the Court the absolute right to regulate online speech, whereas the Allahbadia case rejected this proposition.
  - (D) The Shreya Singhal case involved alleged abuse of a political leader, whereas the Allahbadia case involved making offensive jokes.
- 

52. Who among the following is the Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Communications and Information Technology?
- (A) Kangana Ranaut
  - (B) Mahua Moitra
  - (C) Priyanka Chaturvedi
  - (D) Nishikant Dubey
- 

53. Which of the following newly enacted offences in the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (which replaced the Indian Penal Code) was added by the Ghaziabad Police to an earlier First Information Report (FIR) filed by them against Mohammed Zubair for sharing a video clip of remarks by Yati Narsinghanand?
- (A) Endangering the Sovereignty, Unity, and Integrity of India
  - (B) Sedition
  - (C) Blasphemy
  - (D) Copyright violation
- 

**VII.** Imagine an alternate universe in which people don't have words for different forms of transportation—only the collective noun “vehicle.” They use that word to refer to cars, buses, bikes, spacecraft, and all other ways of getting from place A to place B. Conversations in this world are confusing. There are furious debates about whether or not vehicles are environmentally friendly, even though no one realises that one side of the debate is talking about bikes and the other side is talking about trucks. Meanwhile, fraudsters have capitalised on the fact that consumers don't know what to believe when it comes to vehicle technology, so scams are rampant in the vehicle sector.

---



---

Now replace the word “vehicle” with “artificial intelligence,” and we have a pretty good description of the world we live in.

Artificial Intelligence (“AI”) is an umbrella term for a set of loosely related technologies. ChatGPT has little in common with, say, software that banks use to evaluate loan applicants. Both are referred to as AI, but in all the ways that matter—how they work, what they’re used for and by whom, and how they fail—they couldn’t be more different.

Chatbots fall under the banner of generative AI. Generative AI can quickly generate many types of content: chatbots generate often-realistic answers to human prompts, and image generators produce photorealistic images matching almost any description. This technology has been rapidly advancing, its progress genuine and remarkable. But as a product, it is still immature, unreliable, and prone to misuse. At the same time, its popularisation has been accompanied by hype, fear, and misinformation.

In contrast is predictive AI, which makes predictions about the future in order to guide decision-making in the present. In policing, AI might predict “How many crimes will occur tomorrow in this area?” In inventory management, “How likely is this piece of machinery to fail in the next month?”

Predictive AI is currently used by both companies and governments, but that doesn’t mean it works. It’s hard to predict the future, and AI doesn’t change this fact. Sure, AI can be used to pore over data to identify broad statistical patterns—for instance, people who have jobs are more likely to pay back loans—and that can be useful. The problem is that predictive AI is often sold as far more than that, and it is used to make decisions about people’s lives and careers. It is in this arena that most AI snake oil is concentrated.

AI snake oil is AI that does not and cannot work as advertised. Since AI refers to a vast array of technologies and applications, most people cannot yet fluently distinguish which types of AI are actually capable of functioning as promised and which types are simply snake oil. This is a major societal problem: we need to be able to separate the wheat from the chaff if we are to make full use of what AI has to offer while protecting ourselves from its possible harms.

**[Extracted, with edits and revisions, from *AI Snake Oil: What Artificial Intelligence Can Do, What It Can’t, and How to Tell the Difference*, by Arvind Narayanan and Sayash Kapoor]**

- 
54. Who is the founder of the company that made DeepSeek, the AI-powered chatbot that was recently released?
- (A) Liang Wenfeng (B) Jack Ma  
(C) Ren Zhengfei (D) Wang Chuanfu
-



- 
55. Which of the following most accurately reflects the authors' arguments about how the term 'AI' is applied?
- (A) It is wrongly applied to technologies that have nothing to do with AI.
  - (B) It refers to several technologies which differ greatly from each other.
  - (C) It is only used in relation to generative AI, such as chatbots and image generators.
  - (D) It is only used in relation to predictive AI, such as policing applications.
- 
56. Microsoft unveiled a new quantum computing chip in February 2025. What is the name of the chip?
- (A) Majorana 1
  - (B) Willow
  - (C) Xeon 6
  - (D) Axion
- 
57. Which of the following are the authors most likely to agree with?
- (A) People would be able to take better decisions about AI if it was only used to generate text-based responses to queries.
  - (B) Chatbots would perform better if people made better decisions about the kind of questions they directed to them.
  - (C) Predictive AI would perform better if we gathered larger datasets that such systems could use to make more accurate predictions about the future.
  - (D) People would be able to take better decisions about AI if they understood the various types of AI better.
- 
58. Based on the authors' descriptions, an application that forecasts the weather for a location a year in advance would fall within the category of:
- (A) Generative AI
  - (B) AI snake oil
  - (C) Chatbots
  - (D) Predictive AI
- 
59. The government passes a law that requires all software developers to label any new AI application as either 'generative' or 'predictive' AI. Based on the information in the passage, the authors would:
- (A) support this law, since people would be able to better identify AI types.
  - (B) oppose this law, since AI of other types may be wrongly identified.
  - (C) oppose this law, since no one can distinguish between generative and predictive AI.
  - (D) support this law, since people should be able to distinguish between AI types.
-



- 
60. Who among the following is a founder of Studio Ghibli?
- (A) Elon Musk (B) Hayao Miyazaki  
(C) Mark Zuckerberg (D) Takashi Yamazaki
- 
61. Which of the following ways of describing predictive AI are the authors most likely to support?
- (A) Systems that spot statistical patterns in datasets.  
(B) Systems that generate realistic answers to human prompts.  
(C) Systems that produce photorealistic images matching most descriptions.  
(D) Systems that predict crime rates in a particular area.
- 
62. Which of the following, if true, is the strongest criticism of the authors' arguments about the ability to distinguish between false and accurate claims about technology?
- (A) It depends upon being able to identify each type of technology by a unique name that suits its features.  
(B) It depends upon how the people who develop it choose to describe it to potential users of that technology.  
(C) It depends upon being able to use technology, not upon using different names for a range of technologies.  
(D) It depends upon whether the same or different names are used for a large array of technologies and applications.
- 
63. In 2024, the Government of India announced an AI-based language translation tool designed to enable real-time translation of Indian languages. What is the name of this tool?
- (A) IndiaAI Mission (B) Bhashini  
(C) Bharat GPT (D) Hanooman AI
- 
64. Which of the following organizations sued OpenAI in the Delhi High Court alleging infringement of copyright?
- (A) Press Trust of India  
(B) Associated Press  
(C) Asian News International  
(D) Asianet Network India
-



---

VIII. In the book *Citizenship and Its Discontents*, political scientist Niraja Gopal Jayal has written that women's citizenship in India was premised on the existence of two separate spheres – the private sphere of the home (of duties) and the public sphere of rights. Congress leaders in the national movement, including women such as Sarojini Naidu, held the 'curiously' bifurcated notion of separate spheres for men and women. The private sphere was seen as the domain of responsibilities towards children and families – by implication that of women – and the public sphere as the domain of the exercise of rights – that of men. Extending the vote to women was premised on the understanding that they would bring the values of the private sphere – of care, responsibility and domesticity, mothering and supporting good citizens – to the public sphere 'without in any way threatening men's exercise of their rights and civic duties', as Jayal puts it. In other words, women are expected to be supporting actors in the public sphere – quiet, unobtrusive, retiring. Given this conceptual history, the public gaze that questions the presence of women outside seems natural and logical.

Is there anything for which women are seen as having a legitimate reason to put themselves out there in the world? The answer I have come up with is sport. Sport enables citizens to perform their patriotism. The high nationalism of sport bestows a certain licence to women to put themselves out there in the world in a way that almost nothing does. In particular, I choose to look at running because it is a basic, full-body, minimal-equipment sport. It doesn't need a team – you can run on your own. It is also public in a way that swimming – also basic, full-body, minimal-equipment – is not. Swimming takes bodies out of view. Running puts them on view.

Sport is an important and substantive part of my project. But running is also a lens for me to examine what it is like to be a woman in India, to put oneself out there, brushing up against the world, so to speak.

I also tell the stories of three Indian athletes who have been challenged and humiliated for their 'defective sex' – Santhi Soundarajan, Pinki Pramanik and Dutee Chand. Their experience underlines the central anxiety of competitive female athletes today: Are they female enough to compete as women? Do they meet the precise requirements of anatomy, chromosomes and hormones? Arguably, no other domain in the contemporary world maintains and polices the distinction between the male and the female as competitive sport does. The notion of fair play has led to two separate categories in sport – male and female – for which the biological markers of sex are closely monitored in women alone. Male athletes are not tested. There is no anxiety that women will sneak into men's competitions because they are biologically less powerful and, hence, not as fast.

**[Extracted, with edits and revisions, from *The Day I Became a Runner: A Women's History of India through the Lens of Sport*, by Sohini Chattopadhyay]**

---



- 
65. Which of the following, if true, would most weaken Niraja Jayal's arguments?
- (A) National movement leaders perpetuated the separation of spheres for the sexes.
  - (B) National movement leaders opposed the notion of separate spheres for the sexes.
  - (C) Sport is a way for women to enter spheres that are otherwise closed to them.
  - (D) Swimming puts female athletes' bodies in the public view more than running does.
- 
66. Assuming Niraja Jayal's arguments reproduced in the extract are correct, which of the following is most accurate as regards extending the vote to women?
- (A) They were expected to demand rights at the cost of men's exercise of their rights.
  - (B) They were not expected to care for men, nor exercise the right to vote.
  - (C) They were not expected to demand rights at the cost of men's exercise of their rights.
  - (D) They were expected to exercise better judgement and discretion in casting their vote.
- 
67. This athlete, holder of the Indian national record for the women's 100 metre sprint, was handed a four-year ban for a doping violation in 2023. Who is this?
- (A) Santhi Soundarajan
  - (B) P.T. Usha
  - (C) Pinki Pramanik
  - (D) Dutee Chand
- 
68. Which of the following conclusions is most strongly supported by the author's arguments?
- (A) Women are generally not as patriotic as men, and that explains why they do not participate in public sports like running as much as men.
  - (B) Women are seen as more caring and responsible and are expected to bring those values to the public sphere of sport.
  - (C) Women who run for pleasure or fitness are not considered as legitimate as those who run for the nation.
  - (D) Women who swim rather than run do so for personal reasons, and do not wish to represent the nation in sports.
-



- 
69. Which of the following most accurately explains how the author responds to Jayal's arguments in the passage?
- (A) The author disagrees with Jayal's arguments and uses the example of sport to show how women's presence in the public sphere is natural.
  - (B) The author agrees with Jayal's arguments and says that it explains how the presence of women outside seems natural and logical.
  - (C) The author says that Jayal's arguments show how the public gaze questioning women's presence outside is harmful and repressive.
  - (D) The author says that recounting of the conceptual history of women's citizenship makes the questioning of women in the public sphere seem natural.
- 
70. Who is the first athlete from independent India to win two medals at the same edition of the Olympics?
- (A) Abhinav Bindra
  - (B) Neeraj Chopra
  - (C) Manu Bhaker
  - (D) Mary Kom
- 
71. Who among the following was elected President of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in March 2025?
- (A) Thomas Bach
  - (B) P.T. Usha
  - (C) Juan Antonio Samaranch Junior
  - (D) Kirsty Coventry
- 
72. Which of the following made its debut as a medal-winning event at the Paris Summer Olympic Games, 2024?
- (A) Skateboarding
  - (B) Karate
  - (C) Breaking
  - (D) Pickleball
-



- 
73. U.S. President Donald Trump signed an executive order on February 5, 2025 targeting transgender athletes in sports. What was the title of the order?
- (A) Keeping Women Out of Men's Sports
  - (B) Making American Sports Great Again
  - (C) Keeping Men Out of Women's Sports
  - (D) A DOGE Approach to Women's Sports
- 
74. If the arguments in the passage are accurate, which of the following is the most plausible explanation for why competitive female athletes are made to undergo tests for biological markers of sex?
- (A) Males are seen as biologically inferior to females, so a female athlete whose biological markers are more strongly female would pose a threat to male athletes and that is why they should be barred from competition.
  - (B) Males are seen as biologically more powerful than females, so a female athlete whose biological markers show they could outperform most females should be barred from competition to ensure they do not outperform males.
  - (C) Females are seen as biologically inferior to males, and a female athlete whose biological markers fall outside what is considered the usual range for females would be even weaker and likely to affect the quality of the competition.
  - (D) Females are seen as biologically equal to males but they participate in different competitive sports than males, so these tests ensure that athletes are slotted into the appropriate sport based on their biological markers.
- 
75. Who among the following won the gold medal in the Women's 66 Kg (Welterweight) Boxing event at the 2024 Summer Olympics at Paris, after a controversy regarding their gender?
- (A) Angela Carini
  - (B) Lin Yu-Ting
  - (C) Imane Khelif
  - (D) Luca Hamori
-

**Appendix II: Provisional Answer Key for Part 'A' of the NLSAT-LLB 2025**

Master Booklet Question Number	Answer	Master Booklet Question Number	Answer
1	B	39	D
2	B	40	A
3	D	41	D
4	D	42	C
5	C	43	B
6	A	44	C
7	B	45	B
8	B	46	C
9	B	47	A
10	C	48	A
11	B	49	A
12	D	50	B
13	B	51	B
14	A	52	D
15	D	53	A
16	C	54	A
17	B	55	B
18	B	56	A
19	B	57	D
20	A	58	D
21	B	59	B
22	A	60	B
23	A	61	A
24	B	62	C
25	D	63	B
26	A	64	C
27	B	65	B
28	C	66	C
29	A	67	D
30	C	68	C
31	D	69	D
32	D	70	C
33	A	71	D
34	B	72	C
35	C	73	C
36	A	74	B
37	B	75	C
38	B		