

READING COMPREHENSIONS_26

Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions given below it. Certain words have been printed in bold to help you to locate them while answering some of the questions.

Delays of several months in National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme wage payments and work sites where labourers have lost all hope of being paid at all have become the norm in many states. How are workers who exist on the margins of subsistence supposed to feed their families? Under the scheme, workers must be paid within 15 days, failing which they are entitled to compensation under the Payment of Wages Act – upto Rs.3000 per aggrieved worker. In reality, compensation is received in only a few isolated instances. It is often argued by officials that the main reason for the delay is the inability of banks and post offices to handle mass payments of NREGS wages. Though there is a grain of truth in this, as a diagnosis it is misleading. The ‘jam’ in the banking system has been the result of the hasty switch to bank payments imposed by the Central Government against the recommendation of the Central Employment Guarantee Council which advocated a gradual transition starting with villages relatively close to the nearest bank. However, delays are not confined solely to the banking system. Operational hurdles include implementing agencies taking more than fifteen days to issue payment orders, viewing of work measurement as a cumbersome process resulting in procrastination by the engineering staff and non maintenance of muster rolls and job card etc. But behind these delays lies a deeper and deliberate ‘backlash’ against the NREGS. With bank payments making it much harder to embezzle NREGS funds, the programme is seen as a headache by many government functionaries the workload has remained without the “inducements”. Slowing down wage payments is a convenient way of sabotaging the scheme because workers will desert NREGS worksites.

The common sense solution advocated by the government is to adopt the business correspondent model. Where in bank agents will go to villages to make cash payments and duly record them on handheld, electronic devices. This solution is based on the wrong diagnosis that distance separating villages from banks is the main issue. In order to accelerate payments, clear timelines for every step of the payment process should be incorporated into the system as Programme Officers often have no data on delays and cannot exert due pressure to remedy the situation. Workers are both clueless and powerless with no provision for them to air their grievances and seek redress. In drought affected areas the system of piece rate work can be dispensed with

where work measurement is not completed within a week and wages may be paid on the basis of attendance. Buffer funds can be provided to gram panchayats and post offices to avoid bottlenecks in the flow of funds. Partial advances could also be considered provided wage payment are meticulously tracked. But failure to recognise problems and unwillingness to remedy them will remain major threats to the NREGS.

1. What impact have late wage payments had on NREGS workers?

- a) They cannot obtain employment till their dues are cleared
- b) They have benefited from the compensation awarded to them
- c) They have been unable to provide for their families
- d) None of these

2. Which of the following factors has not been responsible for untimely payment of NREGS wages?

- a) Communication delays between agencies implementing the scheme
- b) Improper record keeping
- c) Behind schedule release of payments by banks
- d) Drought conditions prevalent in the country

3. What has the outcome of disbursing NREGS wages through banks been?

- a) Theft of funds by administrative officials responsible for the scheme has reduced
- b) Increased work load for local government officials
- c) Protests by workers who have to travel long distances to the nearest bank to claim their wages
- d) Time consuming formalities have to be completed by workers

4. To which of the following has the author attributed the delay in wage payments?

- a) Embezzlement of funds by corrupt bank staff
- b) Lack of monitoring by the Central Employment Guarantee Council
- c) An attempt to derail the NREGS by vested interests

d) Overworked bank staff deliberately delay payments to protest against extra work

5. Which of the following can be considered a deficiency in the NREGS?

a) Lack of co-ordination among Programme Officers

b) Local officials are unaware of correct operational procedures

c) Workers have no means of obtaining redressal for untimely wage payments

d) Disbursing wages through banks instead of readily accessible post offices

In the following questions, you have one brief passage with five questions. Read the passage carefully and choose the best answer to each question out of the four alternatives.

Although Indians spend less money on allopathic medicines than people in most Asian Countries, more than 40,000 drugs formulations are available here. All manufacturers are required by law to provide information about their product either on the packaging or in a pamphlet inside. But, in many cases, this information is very meagre and hard to understand. Many doctors, too do not tell their patients anything about the drugs they prescribe.

What should we be concerned about when we take drugs? There are two areas: (1) Side effects. Many people taking a drug will notice an undesirable reaction, usually minor. But even the mildest drugs can do harm if taken improperly, long enough or in excessive doses. And everyone responds to a drug differently. (2) Failure to follow directions. Many of us disobey prescription instructions on how much to take and when. It is easy to fall into thinking that more of the drug will speed up the healing. It is more common, however, for people to stop taking a drug when they begin to feel better. This, too, can be dangerous.

What are the steps to be taken for safety? Take a drug only as recommended on the label or by the doctor. (2) If you feel ill after taking a drug, check it with a doctor. (3) Do not mix drugs. (4) Check whether any food or activities are to be avoided.

6. Which one of the following statements is true?

a) Indians use more than 40,000 allopathic drugs

b) Indians hate allopathic medicines

c) Other Asian countries do not have allopathic medicines

d) Indians cannot afford allopathic drugs

7. How are drug users to be instructed by the manufacturers?

a) Doctors should give a manual of instructions.

b) The Chemist should issue an instruction manual.

c) Information should be printed on the carton or in a pamphlet kept inside it.

d) Patients should keep in touch with drug manufacturers.

8. Only one of the following sentences is right identify it.

a) All medicines produce reactions of various degrees in their users

b) Even mild drugs are not always safe

c) Medicines should be discontinued as soon as we feel better

d) More than the prescribed dose brings quicker recovery

9. Drug manufacturers _____

a) do not give instructions

b) give all necessary instructions

c) give very little and unintelligible information

d) give information only when asked

10. Which one of the following is true?

a) Throw away the drug that produces side effects and try another

b) Drugs may be taken with all kinds of foods

c) Drugs do not inhibit our normal life style

d) Drugs should be used only according to prescription

Read the following passage carefully and answer the given questions. Certain words have been given in bold to help you locate them while answering some of the questions.

On attending a conference, which focused on the role of the services sector in Indian economy I was amazed. The conference gave a very interesting **perspective** on the role of the service sector in the growth of Indian economy in relation to growth

rates in agriculture and industry. The current situation in India is that the growth rate of services has overtaken both agriculture and industry and is now contributing to more than 50% of GDP. The services sector has the highest growth rate and is the least **volatile** sector. Growth is particularly marked in public services, IT and financial services. In some areas, the growth rate of the services sector is 40-50% due to increased use of mobile technologies. India, therefore has, a services oriented economy. It hasn't followed traditional growth models as in China. However, in the process of doing so it has skipped the manufacturing stage and has jumped straight from the agriculture stage to service stage which is also the main reason for the expansion of the service sector. In fact, the situation now is such that the growth in the service sector can and will support in the agriculture and industrial sectors.

However, the only setback for Indian economy is the lack of growth in the manufacturing sector, which causes dependence on other countries, which is not so desirable in terms of job creation and increased prosperity.

Population is also a major concern of the Indian economy. As the population of India grows so also does the number of dependents in the population in both the lower and higher age groups. In such a scenario of increasing population, especially in an economy which still recovering from crisis, growth becomes difficult. For such an economy to grow it has to invest.

Currently, the public sector invests more than it saves. The household sector saves in surplus, but it is not increasing so it cannot continue to support private and public sectors. There is a **massive** need to spend on agriculture and infrastructure development of the country. Apart from that health and education should also be the priority of the government particularly the education of women in order to reduce the birth rate.

11. Choose the word which is most opposite in meaning to word given in **bold** as used in the passage.

Volatile

- a) Erratic
- b) Impatient
- c) Stable
- d) Solid

12. What does the author mean by the statement, "... a growth window' for India will open."?

- a) In the coming years, the Indian economy will grow as the service sector of the country would be booming due to the focus of the government in that sector.
- b) In the next two decades, Indian economy will have an opportunity to grow as the working population of India will be high as compared to the dependent population.
- c) There would be only a small period of time in which the economy of India has to grow and if it fails to do so it will never be able to recover from the economic downfall.
- d) Only upto the next two decades would Indian people be interested in finding jobs in the country beyond which they would search for jobs abroad thus hampering the growth of Indian economy.

13. Choose the word which is most similar in meaning to the word given in bold as used in the passage.

Prerequisites

- a) Requirements
- b) Instincts
- c) Prohibitions
- d) Acknowledgements

14. What does the author mean by the statement, "to change the bad sectors to good sectors."?

- a) In order to deal with the problem of poverty it is important to distinguish between good and bad sectors and encourage people to start searching for jobs in the good sectors.
- b) The government should make efforts to improve the sectors that are not functioning well in order to create greater job opportunities in those sectors and in turn eradicate poverty.
- c) Poverty alleviation is possible only if the government understands the importance of good sectors and provides it with necessary opportunities.

d) The bad sectors of the country should be identified and such jobs should be outsourced to other underprivileged countries in order to eradicate poverty from those countries.

15. Choose the word which is most similar in meaning to the word given in bold as used in the passage?

Perspective

- a) View point
- b) Prospect
- c) Attitude
- d) Agreement

16. Which of the following is true as per the passage?

- a) India has not followed the conventional model of growth and has moved directly from the agriculture sector to the service sector.
- b) The service sector of the country is yet to make a mark on the IT and financial sectors of the country.
- c) With availability of labour and growth in human skills, the service sector of Indian economy is booming limitlessly as there is no restriction on movement of labour.
- d) India has become self reliant and does not have to depend on other countries because of the development in the manufacturing sector

17. According to the author, which of the following can be said about the growth of service sector in India?

- a) India is essentially an agrarian economy and is not yet ready to shift focus from agriculture sector to service sector
- b) The expansion of service sector in India was seen mainly because of the growth in the agricultural sector
- c) Indian economy cannot run only on the basis of service sector i.e., without further development in the agriculture and the industrial sector
- d) The growth of service sector in India is facilitated by the improvement in technology

18. Choose the word which is most opposite in meaning to the word given in bold as used in the passage.

Massive

- a) Prominent
- b) Proactive
- c) Short
- d) Little

Answer:-

1. Option D
2. Option D
3. Option B
4. Option C
5. Option C
6. Option A
7. Option C
8. Option B
9. Option C
10. Option D
11. Option A
12. Option B
13. Option D
14. Option C
15. Option A
16. Option D
17. Option D
18. Option D