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ASSOCIATE BANK OF S.B.I. PO EXAM 2011-
ENGLISH LANGUAGE QUESTION PAPER

Directions—(Q. 1–10) Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions given below it. Certain words/phrases have been printed in **bold** to help you locate them while answering some of the questions.

Jagir Singh has sold red onions at a market in South Delhi every day for the past half-century. Perched on an upturned crate, wrapped tight against the chill air, he offers *pyaz*, a staple for much Indian cooking, for 60 rupees a kilo, the most he can remember. Business is brisk but most customers pick up only a small handful of onions. That is just as well—wholesale supplies are **tight**, he says, and the quality is poor.

As India's economy grows by some 9% a year, food prices are soaring. In late December the commerce ministry judged that food inflation had reached 18.3%, with pricey vegetables mostly to blame. Officials have made some attempts to **temper** the rise in the past month—scrapping import taxes for onions, banning their export and ordering low-priced sales at government-run shops. But there is no quick fix.

Heavy rain in the west of India brought a rotten harvest. Vegetables from farther afield—including a politically sensitive delivery from a neighbouring country—are costly to move on India's crowded, potholed roads. Few refrigerated lorries and poor logistics mean that much of each harvest is wasted. Newspapers allege hoarders are **cashing in**.

The biggest problems are structural. Food producers, hampered by land restrictions, **archaic** retail networks and bad infrastructure, fail to meet extra demand from consumers.

It was estimated in October that a 39% rise in income per person in the previous five years might have created an extra 220 million regular consumers of milk, eggs, meat and fish. Supplies have not kept up with this potential demand.

The broader inflation rate may be a less eye-watering problem than the onions suggest. The central bank has lifted interest rates steadily in the past year and is expected to do so again later this month. Headline inflation fell to 7.5% in November, down by just over a percentage point from October, though it is still above the central bank's forecast of 5.5% for March.

1. What is responsible for the increased demand amongst consumers for certain food stuff?

- (A) There has been an increase in the wholesale supplies of this food stuff
- (B) The vegetables in the market are very highly priced
- (C) There has been an increase in the income of people
- (D) There is a lack of availability of vegetables in the market
- (E) There has been a surge in population

2. Which of the following is **not true** in the context of the passage?

- (A) The overall inflation is not as bad as the food inflation in India
- (B) Help from other countries to counter food inflation has proved to be quite encouraging
- (C) Government is banning the export of certain types of vegetables in order to check the food inflation
- (D) Highly priced vegetables are mostly responsible for the increased food inflation
- (E) All the above statements are true

3. Which of the following is/are the reason/s for increase in food/vegetable prices?

- 1. Bad weather
- 2. Land restrictions
- 3. Poor infrastructure for storage and transportation.

(A) Only 2

(B) Only 1 and 3

(C) Only 1 and 2

(D) Only 2 and 3

(E) All 1, 2 and 3

4. Which of the following is/are true in the context of the passage?

- 1. The interest rates are being raised in India.
- 2. India is witnessing a steady economic growth.
- 3. It has been proven that the food inflation is mainly because of hoarding.

(A) All 1, 2 and 3

(B) Only 1 and 2

(C) Only 3

(D) Only 2 and 3

(E) None is true

5. Which of the following is possibly the most appropriate title for the passage?

- (A) Food Inflation in India
- (B) Of Onions and Vendors
- (C) Food Deficit Worldwide
- (D) Food Imports in India
- (E) Benefits to Indian Consumers

6. What can be said about the sale of onions at present as given in the passage?

- (A) Vegetable vendors are unwilling to sell onions
- (B) People are not buying as much as they used to
- (C) The sale of onions has picked up and is unprecedented
- (D) People are buying more onions than they used to
- (E) None of these

7. The usage of the phrase '**cashing in**' in the passage can possibly mean—

(A) Profiting

(B) Running Away

(C) Paying Money

- (D) Bailing out
(E) Buffering
8. Which of the following is **most similar** in meaning to the word '**Tight**' as used in the passage?
(A) Firm (B) Loose
(C) Limited (D) Taut
(E) Tense
9. Which of the following is **most similar** in meaning to the word '**Temper**' as used in the passage?
(A) Displeasure (B) Anger
(C) Rage (D) Horness
(E) Control
10. Which of the following is **most opposite** in meaning to the word '**Archaic**' as used in the passage?
(A) Simple
(B) Straightforward
(C) Modern
(D) Lively
(E) Ancient
- Directions—(Q. 11–15)** Which of the phrases (A), (B), (C) and (D) given below each sentence should replace the phrase printed in **bold** in the sentence to make it grammatically correct? If the sentence is correct as it is given and no correction is required, mark (E) as the answer.
11. Seeing that there was an ongoing sale in one of her favourite stores, Seeta **made a bee-line** for it immediately after entering the Mall.
(A) made a bee's line for
(B) make bees lined to
(C) made bee - line to
(D) make bee - line to
(E) No correction required
12. Sharon made it to work in the **nicks of times**, or else she would have missed the meeting.
(A) nick of time
(B) nicked time
(C) nick of timeliness
(D) nick and time
(E) No correction required
13. Varun was **on cloud nine** after having stood first in his class.
(A) in ninth cloud
(B) on nine clouds
(C) a cloudy nine
(D) cloud on nine
(E) No correction required
14. Vithal had a habit of **pass the buck** when it came to important issues at work.
(A) pass to bucking
(B) passing buck
(C) passing the buck
(D) pass buck
(E) No correction required
15. Puneet **raked his brains** and tried to find an answer to a tricky question given in the paper but couldn't find one.
(A) rake his brain
(B) racked his brains
(C) racked brains
(D) raked brain
(E) No correction required
- Directions—(Q. 16–20)** Each question below has two blanks, each blank indicating that something has been omitted. Choose the set of words for each blank which best fits the meaning of the sentence as a whole.
16. The water transport project on the west coast is to get a shot in the arm with a new plan in which the Road Development Corporation will build the infrastructure and.....a private party to operate the service.
(A) scheduled - let
(B) verge - permit
(C) set - sanctions
(D) slated - allow
(E) bound - task
17. As the weekend finally rolled around, the city folk were only happy to settle down and laugh their cares
(A) just - afar
(B) too - away
(C) extremely - off
(D) very - up
(E) so - on
18. The flood of brilliant ideas has not only us, but has also encouraged us to the last date for submission of entries.
(A) overwhelmed - extend
(B) enjoyed - stretch
(C) dismayed - decide
(D) scared - scrap
(E) happy - boundary
19. about prolonged power cuts in urban areas, the authorities have decided to..... over to more reliable and eco-friendly systems to run its pumps.
(A) Worried - shift
(B) Frantic - move
(C) Troubled - jump
(D) Concerned - switch
(E) Endangered - click
20. The high cutoff marks this year have college admission-seekers to either for lesser known colleges or change their subject preferences.
(A) cajoled - ask
(B) pressured - sit
(C) forced - settle
(D) strained - compromise
(E) entrusted - wait
- Directions—(Q. 21–35)** Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions given below it. Certain words/phrases have been printed in **bold** to help you locate them while answering some of the questions.
- India is rushing headlong towards economic success and modernisation, counting on hightech industries such as information technology and biotechnology to **propel** the nation to prosperity. India's recent announcement that it would no longer produce unlicensed inexpensive generic pharmaceuticals bowed to the realities of the World Trade Organisation while at the same time challenging the domestic drug industry to compete with the multinational firms. Unfortunately, its weak higher education sector constitutes the **Achilles' heel** of this strategy. Its systematic disinvestment in higher education in recent years has yielded neither world-class research nor very many highly trained scholars, scientists or managers to sustain high-tech development.
- India's main competitors - especially China but also Singapore, Taiwan, and South Korea—are investing in large and **differentiated** higher education systems. They are providing access to large numbers of students at the bottom of the academic system while at the same time building some research-based universities that are able to compete

with the world's best institutions. The recent *London Times Higher Education Supplement* ranking of the world's top 200 universities included three in China, three in Hong Kong, three in South Korea, one in Taiwan, and one in India. These countries are positioning themselves for leadership in the knowledge-based economies of the coming era.

There was a time when countries could achieve economic success with cheap labour and low-tech manufacturing. Low wages still help, but contemporary large-scale development requires a sophisticated and at least partly knowledge based economy. India has chosen that path, but will find a major **stumbling block** in its university system.

India has significant advantages in the 21st century knowledge race. It has a large higher education sector the third largest in the world in student numbers, after China and the United States. It uses English as a primary language of higher education and research. It has a long academic tradition. Academic freedom is respected. There are a small number of high quality institutions, departments, and centres that can form the basis of quality sector in higher education. The fact that the States, rather than the Central Government, exercise major responsibility for higher education creates a rather **cumbersome** structure, but the system allows for a variety of policies and approaches.

Yet the weaknesses far outweigh the strengths. India educates approximately 10 per cent of its young people in higher education compared with more than half in the major industrialised countries and 15 per cent in China. Almost all of the world's academic systems **resemble** a pyramid, with a small high quality tier at the top and a **massive** sector at the bottom. India has a tiny top tier. None of its universities occupies a solid position at the top. A few of the best universities have some excellent departments and centres, and there are a small number of outstanding undergraduate colleges. The University Grants Commission's recent major support of five universities to build on their recognised strength is a step toward recognising a differen-

tiated academic system and **fostering** excellence. These universities, combined, enroll well under 1 per cent of the student population.

21. Which of the following is **true** in the context of the passage ?
- (A) The top five universities in India educate more than 10 per cent of the Indian student population
- (B) India's higher education sector is the largest in the world
- (C) In the past, countries could progress economically through low manufacturing cost as well as low wages of labourers
- (D) India has recently invested heavy sums in the higher education sector leading to world class research
- (E) All are true
22. What does the phrase '**Achilles' Heel**' mean as used in the passage ?
- (A) Weakness
- (B) Quickness
- (C) Low Quality
- (D) Nimbleness
- (E) Advantage
23. Which of the following is/are India's strength/s in terms of higher education ?
1. Its system of higher education allows variations.
 2. Medium of instruction for most higher learning is English.
 3. It has the paraphernalia, albeit small in number, to build a high quality higher educational sector.
- (A) Only 2
- (B) Only 1 and 2
- (C) Only 3
- (D) Only 2 and 3
- (E) All 1, 2 and 3
24. Which of the following are Asian countries, other than India, doing to head towards a knowledge based economy ?
1. Building competitive research based universities.
 2. Investing in diverse higher education systems.
 3. Providing access to higher education to a select few students.
- (A) Only 1
- (B) Only 1 and 2
- (C) Only 2 and 3
- (D) Only 2
- (E) All 1, 2 and 3
25. Which of the following is possibly the most appropriate title for the passage ?
- (A) The Future of Indian Universities
- (B) Methods of Overcoming the Educational Deficit in India
- (C) India and the Hunt for a Knowledge Based Economy
- (D) Indian Economy Versus Chinese Economy
- (E) Indian Economy and its Features
26. What did India agree to do at the behest of the World Trade Organisation ?
- (A) It would stop manufacturing all types of pharmaceuticals
- (B) It would ask its domestic pharmaceutical companies to compete with the international ones
- (C) It would buy only licensed drugs from USA
- (D) It would not manufacture cheap common medicines without a license
- (E) None of these
27. Which of the following is/are India's weakness/es when it comes to higher education ?
1. Indian universities do not have the requisite teaching faculty to cater to the needs of the higher education sector.
 2. Only five Indian universities occupy the top position very strongly, in the academic pyramid, when it comes to higher education.
 3. India has the least percentage of young population taking to higher education as compared to the rest of the comparable countries.
- (A) Only 1 and 2
- (B) Only 2
- (C) Only 3
- (D) Only 1 and 3
- (E) All 1, 2 and 3

28. Which of the following, according to the passage, is/are needed for economic success of a country?
1. Cheap labour
 2. Educated employees
 3. Research institutions to cater to development.
- (A) Only 1 and 2
(B) Only 2
(C) Only 3
(D) Only 2 and 3
(E) All 1, 2 and 3
- Directions—(Q. 29–32)** Choose the word/group of words which is **most similar** in meaning to the word/group of words printed in **bold** as used in the passage.
29. **FOSTERING**
- (A) Safeguarding
 - (B) Neglecting
 - (C) Sidelining
 - (D) Nurturing
 - (E) Ignoring
30. **PROPEL**
- (A) Drive
 - (B) Jettison
 - (C) Burst
 - (D) Acclimatize
 - (E) Modify
31. **MASSIVE**
- (A) Lump sum
 - (B) Strong
 - (C) Little
 - (D) Gaping
 - (E) Huge
32. **STUMBLING BLOCK**
- (A) Argument
 - (B) Frustration
 - (C) Advantage
 - (D) Hurdle
 - (E) Fallout
- Directions—(Q. 33–35)** Choose the word/group of words which is **most opposite** in meaning to the word/group of words printed in **bold** as used in the passage.
33. **CUMBERSOME**
- (A) Handy
 - (B) Manageable
 - (C) Breathtaking
 - (D) Awkward
 - (E) Difficult
34. **RESEMBLE**
- (A) Against
 - (B) Similar to
 - (C) Mirror
 - (D) Differ from
 - (E) Unfavourable to
35. **DIFFERENTIATED**
- (A) Similar
 - (B) Varied
 - (C) Harmonized
 - (D) Synchronized
 - (E) Discriminated
- Directions—(Q.36–40)** Rearrange the following six sentences (1), (2), (3), (4), (5) and (6) in the proper sequence to form a meaningful paragraph; then answer the questions given below them.
1. Its prevalence reflects very badly on a society that is not able to stop this evil.
 2. Though elimination of child labour is an impossible task considering the current socio-economic scenario of these poor families, the Indian government is committed to the task of ensuring that no child remains illiterate, hungry and without medical care.
 3. Therefore, unless the socio-economic status of the poor families is improved, India has to live with child labour.
 4. The members of these households have to send their children to work, even if the future of these innocent children is ruined, as that is the only choice open for them to survive in this world.
 5. Child labour is, no doubt, an evil that should be done away with at the earliest.
 6. But in a society where many households may have to suffer the pangs of hunger if the children are withdrawn from work, beggars can't be choosers.
36. Which of the following should be the **FIRST** sentence after rearrangement?
- (A) 1
 - (B) 5
 - (C) 3
 - (D) 6
 - (E) 4
37. Which of the following should be the **THIRD** sentence after rearrangement?
- (A) 2
 - (B) 1
 - (C) 3
 - (D) 6
 - (E) 5
38. Which of the following should be the **SECOND** sentence after rearrangement?
- (A) 1
 - (B) 6
 - (C) 4
 - (D) 2
 - (E) 3
39. Which of the following should be the **FIFTH** sentence after rearrangement?
- (A) 5
 - (B) 1
 - (C) 6
 - (D) 3
 - (E) 4
40. Which of the following should be the **SIXTH (LAST)** sentence after rearrangement?
- (A) 1
 - (B) 3
 - (C) 5
 - (D) 4
 - (E) 2
- Directions—(Q. 41–50)** In the following passage there are blanks, each of which has been numbered. These numbers are printed below the passage and against each, five words are suggested, one of which fits the blank appropriately. Find out the appropriate word in each case.
- Around the world, forests are being ...**(41)**... at a rate of about thirteen million hectares a year and deforestation accounts for an estimated 17%–20% of all global emissions. In addition, forests and other terrestrial carbon sinks play a ...**(42)**... role in preventing runaway climate change, soaking up a full 2-6 Gt of atmospheric carbon every year. The destruction of forests, therefore, not only emits carbon—a staggering 1-6 Gt a year, which severely ...**(43)**... forests' capacity to absorb emissions from other sources—but also drastically ...**(44)**... the amount of forested land available to act as a carbon sink in the future.
- However, the effects of deforestation extend beyond carbon. Rainforests ...**(45)**... a wide variety of ecosystem services, from regulating rainfall to purifying groundwater and keeping fertile soil from ...**(46)**...; deforestation in one area can seriously damage food production and ...**(47)**... to clean water in an entire region. The value of global ecosystem services has been estimated at 33 trillion USD each year (almost half of global GDP), but these services have been taken for granted without a mechanism to make the market reflect their value. Rainforests are also a home and ...**(48)**... of income for a huge number of people in Africa, Asia, and South

America. ...**(49)**... this, economic pressures frequently drive both local communities and national governments in the developing world to ...**(50)**... these forests in ways that are unsustainable, clear-cutting vast areas for fuel, timber, mining, or agricultural land.

41. (A) ended (B) destroyed
(C) extinct (D) killed
(E) wasted
42. (A) tough (B) important
(C) vital (D) biggest
(E) effective
43. (A) affect (B) diminish
(C) increases (D) alternates
(E) impairs
44. (A) plagues (B) develops
(C) reduces (D) shortens
(E) influences
45. (A) sell (B) offers
(C) give (D) provide
(E) earns
46. (A) transforming
(B) decoding
(C) erupting
(D) draining
(E) eroding
47. (A) handiness (B) excess
(C) availability (D) access
(E) supply
48. (A) beginning (B) source
(C) ways (D) reference
(E) measure
49. (A) Despite (B) Also
(C) In spite (D) Apart
(E) Beside
50. (A) exploit (B) encompass
(C) nurture (D) work
(E) improve