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Passage No. 109

Direction: Study the following information carefully and answer the question given below.

Paragraph 1: While there is general acceptance that the Indian judicial system suffers from case delay and the use of **antiquated** methods, the discourse on judicial reform remains focussed on areas such as appointments and vacancies. It is time that organisational barriers and court processes that also contribute to case delay are studied. We focus on two areas that greatly affect court efficiency: case listing practices and court infrastructure.

Paragraph 2: The need to scientifically determine how many cases should be listed per day cannot be stressed enough. It is not uncommon to see over 100 matters listed before a judge in a day. When a judge is pressed for time, not only does the quality of adjudication suffer but it also means that several cases will inevitably go unheard. Matters listed towards the end (usually cases near the final stage of hearing) tend to be left over at disproportionate rates and often end up getting stuck in the system.

Paragraph 3: The second issue is infrastructure: from inadequate support staff for judges to the **dearth** of basic courtroom facilities. Without research and secretarial support, judges are unable to perform their functions in a timely manner. For instance, in a private interview, a judge said that even though he managed to hear close to 70 cases in a day, it took two days for the stenographers to finish typing the orders. A 2016 report published by the Supreme Court showed that existing infrastructure could accommodate only 15,540 judicial officers against the all-India sanctioned strength of 20,558. The lack of infrastructure also raises serious concerns about access to justice. A recent Vidhi study on district courts in the National Capital Region found that even basic needs such as drinking water, usable washrooms, seating and canteen facilities are often not available in court complexes. Solutions for such challenges will require a fundamental shift in how courts are administered.

Paragraph 4: Courts must become more open to applying management principles to optimise case movement and judicial time. In this, external support agencies competent in strategic thinking should be allowed to work with judicial officers to understand and help the institution function better. This is already a widely-adopted practice in executive departments across the country. Courts have partially realised this need and created dedicated posts for court managers (MBA graduates) to help improve court operations. But more often than not, court managers are not utilised to their full potential, with their duties restricted to organising court events and running errands.

Questions:

1. Which of the following is/are synonyms of **dearth**?

- I. Prompt
- II. Tardy
- III. Inefficient
- IV. Scarcity

- A. Only IV B. Only II and IV C. Only I, II and IV D. Only II, III and IV
E. Only I, III and IV

2. Which of the following is/are antonyms of **antiquated**?

- I. Outdated
- II. Primitive
- III. Modern
- IV. Mossy

- A. Only II B. Only I and III C. Only III D. Only I, III and IV
E. Only II, III and IV

3. Which of the following is/are true as per the passage?

- I. The existing court infrastructure is adequate for the current sanctioned strength at all-India levels.
- II. It is not uncommon to see over 100 matters listed before a judge in a day.
- III. The Indian Judiciary needs to be modernized.

- A. Only III B. Only II and III C. Only I and II D. Only I and III
E. None of the above

4. As per paragraph 1, which among the following are the focus areas of judicial reforms?

- I. Framework for filling vacancies
- II. Case Listing procedure
- III. Infrastructure of courts

- A. Only II B. Only I and II C. Only I D. Only II and III
E. Only I and III

5. What could be some possible consequences of the issues mentioned in paragraph 2?

- I. There is uncertainty about when the cases would come up for hearing next and hampers the efficacy of lawyers in preparing for their cases in a better manner.
- II. There is a better chance of winning the case in case of frequent changes in the hearing dates.
- III. Frequent re-listing impacts the efficiency of the court administrative staff.

- A. Only II B. Only I and II C. Only II and III D. Only I and III
E. All of the above

6. Which of the following is an example of the statement in paragraph 3- 'Without research and secretarial support, judges are unable to perform their functions in a timely manner.'?

- A. A particular judge is able to hear only 40 cases per day and this leaves his support staff idle for almost one-third of the day.
B. Even though a judge managed to hear close to 70 cases in a day, it took two days for the stenographers to finish typing the orders.
C. Most of the present support staff lacks the necessary qualifications and there are frequent mistakes in the orders typed out by the stenographers.
D. Both A and B
E. Both B and C

7. After reading paragraph 4, what could be some other solutions to the problems mentioned in the passage?

- I. Recording and analysing court-related data so as to prepare a database.
- II. Digitization of court records with file-tracking and knowledge management systems.
- III. Regular auditing of judicial infrastructure

- A. Only I B. Only III C. Only I and II D. Only II and III
E. All of the above

Correct Answers:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	C	B	C	D	E	E

Explanations:

1. **Dearth:** a scarcity or lack of something.

Eg: There is a dearth of evidence.

Tardy means *delayed*.

Prompt means *on time*

Inefficient means *incompetent*.

Only *Scarcity* matches well.

Hence, option A is correct.

2. **Antiquated** means old-fashioned or outdated.

Eg: This antiquated central heating system.

I, II and IV are synonyms are incorrect.

Only III is the antonym.

Hence, option C is correct.

3. Refer to:

‘A 2016 report published by the Supreme Court showed that existing infrastructure could accommodate only 15,540 judicial officers against the all-India sanctioned strength of 20,558.’

I is incorrect.

‘The need to scientifically determine how many cases should be listed per day cannot be stressed enough. It is not uncommon to see over 100 matters listed before a judge in a day.’

II is correct.

The entire passage corroborates statement III and is correct.

Only II and III are correct.

Hence, option B is correct.

4. Refer to: ‘, the discourse on judicial reform remains focussed on areas such as appointments and vacancies.’

As per the statement above, only I is correct. The other two are areas where *there should be more focus*.

Hence, option C is correct.

5. I is correct. The uncertainty around which cases will come up for hearing means neither judges nor lawyers can plan their preparation and this also compels lawyers to waste time waiting in court.

III is correct as the administrative staff must manage the task of re-listing leftover matters in an already bulging docket, instead of streamlining case flow.

II is incorrect. There is no logic and guarantee that court cases would be won if there are frequent changes in hearing dates.

Hence, option D is correct.

6. Option A is incorrect as here, the *issue is not with the support staff* but with the judge’s capabilities to hear adequate number of cases.

Options B and C are correct and showcase the issues with the Support Staff which hampers the judges from performing their tasks.

Hence, option E is correct.

7. All of the statements mentioned convey points which can be used to improve the existing condition of the judiciary.

Hence, option E is correct.



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