

Course correction – Best year ever**As Indian cricket wraps up a spectacularly successful year, key stress tests lie ahead.**

The Indian men's cricket team had an **exceptional** 2017- statistically, its best year ever. **Across** formats, only the all-conquering Australians of 2003, with 38 wins from 47 games, managed more victories than India's 37 in 53 matches this year. Virat Kohli's side didn't **merely consolidate** its hold on the No. 1 spot in Tests; it also routinely **bullied** the opposition in the shorter forms of the game. The **lone blip** came in the Champions Trophy in England, where India **unravelled** against a **feisty** Pakistan. But few will complain when a runner-up finish in a **global** tournament is the year's biggest failure. That match apart, an **inevitability** seemed to accompany India's success: whether it was a Test, a One Day International or a Twenty 20, the team took the field noticeably stronger than its **adversary**, and calmly, **ruthlessly**, set about proving it. It is often said that a side fashions itself in its captain's image. There were certainly moments during the year when Indian played with the glowering **intensity** Kohli is famous for. Ajinky Rahane and Rohit Sharma stepped successfully into the breach when Kohli was absent; and both brought to the job the **subtle** impress of their personality. Besides, the side has leaders all around the pitch. The few times India was threatened in 2017 – and only Australia during the Tests early in the year did it more than once – it **invariably** found a hero.

The one **discordant** note in an otherwise **harmonious** 12 months was the **controversy** over Anil Kumble's exit as coach. The episode should have been handled better, but it is encouraging that it did not **derail** the team. Indeed, the overall system looks **robust** and **fertile** – rate plants such as the quick bowling all-rounder (Hardik Pandya) and the left arm wrist spinner (Kuldeep Yadav) don't take root and flourish otherwise. Nor do specialist Test Batsmen such as M. Vijay and Cheteshwar Pujara or pure glove men such as Wriddhiman Saha. The thrust towards empowering bowlers, vital in a country **smitten** by batsmen, has not weakened. Clearly, the selectors and the team management – both in Kumble's time and now under Ravi Shastri – are on the same page; so is Rahul Dravid, who has played a significant developmental role with the junior and 'A' sides. If there is a **sobering** thought in these **heady** times, it is that the New Year will bring **stiffer** challenges. A lot of 2017 was at home, but 10 tests in 2018 will be played in South Africa, England, and Australia, tours that stress test every fissure and fault line. India will not be **afforded** too many mistakes. Kohli's men have, however, given the team's fans reason to dream.

WORD LIST

1. **Exceptional** : (irregular, excellent, wonderful)
Synonym : extraordinary, notable, noteworthy, odd, phenomenal, rare, remarkable, special, uncommon, unique, unusual.
2. **Across** : (traversing a space, side to side)
Synonym : crosswise, athwart, beyond

3. **Consolidate** : (combine, make firm)
Synonym : build up, centralize, concentrate, develop, fortify, reinforce, secure, solidify, stabilize, strengthen, unify.
4. **Merely** : (slightly, a little)
Synonym : hardly, only, purely, simply, solely, wholly
5. **Bully** : (intimidate, push around)
Synonym : bludgeon, browbeat, coerce, harass, oppress, persecute, terrorise, threaten, torment, torture.
6. **Lone** : (by oneself; only)
Synonym : lonely, sole, solitary, alone
7. **Blip** : (minor shock)
Synonym : glitch, censor, echo, tap, spot
8. **Unravel** : (unfold, solve, untangle)
Synonym : decipher, resolve, solve, undo, untangle.
9. **Feisty** : (spirited, touchy)
Synonym : bubbly, courageous, excitable, fiery, gritty, gusty, high-strung, lively, scrappy, spunky
10. **Global** : (worldwide, all encompassing)
Synonym : comprehensive, international, overall, universal
11. **Inevitability** : (Positive, assurance)
Synonym : confidence, trust, belief, faith, firmness, positiveness.
12. **adversary** : (opponent)
Synonym : antagonist, attacker, competitor, enemy, foe, rival bandit, contestant
13. **Ruthlessly** : (cruelty, without remorse)
Synonym : ferociously, fiercely, mercilessly, relentlessly, savagely, viciously.
14. **Intensity** : (Passion, force)
Synonym : anxiety, concentration, depth, earnestness, emotion, energy, excitement, ferocity, fervour, fury, magnitude, power, severity, strength, tension, vigour.
15. **Subtle** : (nice, quiet, delicate, clever, cunning)
Synonym : exquisite, faint, indirect, ingenious, profound, slight, sophisticated, understand.
16. **Invariably** : (perpetually)
Synonym : always, constantly, customarily, habitually, regularly, unfailingly
17. **Harmonious** : (agreeable, corresponding, friendly)
Synonym : amicable, balanced, congenial, coordinated, cordial, peaceful
18. **Discordant** : (not in harmony; conflicting)
Synonym : cacophonous, clashing, dissonant, divergent, jarring, strident
19. **Controversy** : (debate, dispute)
Synonym : argument, bickering, difference, discussion, fuss, quarrel, squabble, strife, wrangle, wrangling..
20. **Derail**: (go off the rails)
Synonym : crash, hinder, thwart, wreck, defect
21. **Robust** : (healthy, strong)
Synonym : booming, hearty, hefty, potent, powerful, prosperous, sturdy, tough, vigorous
22. **Fertile** : (ready to bear, produce)

Synonym : abundant, arable, fruitful, lush, productive rich.

23. **Smitten** : (enamoured)

Synonym : affected, afflicted, infatuated, taken, stricken.

24. **Sobering** : (as in 'serious' and 'tone down') (crucial weighty)

Synonym : dangerous, deep, difficult, far-reaching, grievous, important, major, meaningful, severe, significant, tough, urgent.

25. **Heady** : (thrilling, intoxicating)

Synonym : exciting, exhilarating, potent, inebriating, overwhelming, powerful, provocative.

26. **Stiff** : (hard, inflexible)

Synonym : arthritic, creaky, rigid, solid, stark, tense, thick, tight, wooden.

27. **Afford** : (able to have or do)

Synonym : allow, manage, bear, incur, spare, stand, support, sustain

Course correction – CLEANING UP

A permanent mechanism is needed to review laws and weed out the obsolete ones

Law making is a long and **tedious** process; it appears that unmaking existing laws is an equally **arduous** task. How else does one explain the fact that until three years ago, a huge number of **obsolete** Acts remained in the law books **despite** losing their **relevance** and utility? It has been only in the last three years that nearly 1,800 obsolete laws have been repealed. In the latest round, 235 out-dated Acts and nine pre-Independence **Ordinances** have been **repealed**. These pieces of legislation may have been relevant and necessary at the time they were introduced, but in the absence of a **periodic** review they continue to burden the **statutory corpus**. These laws are **archaic** mainly because the social, economic and legal conditions that required their **enactment** does not obtain today; they are also not in tune with the progress of democracy since Independence. Among the Acts repealed are the **Prevention of Seditious Meeting Act, 1911**, the **Bengal Suppression of Terrorist Outrages (Supplementary) Act, 1932**, and the **Preventive Detention Act, 1950**. The country still has a body of 'anti-terror' legislation as well as preventive detention laws. Although such laws remain in the **statute** books, these particular enactments are **redundant**. Other questionable legal provisions, for example, those on '**sedition**' or exciting disaffection against the state, remain; so do 'adultery' and 'sex against the order of nature'. Such obsolete concepts and notions that underlie law making also require an overhaul.

In a 2014 **interim** report, the first of the four such reports on obsolete laws, the Law commission noted that the panel had been identifying Acts for **repeal** in many of its reports in the past. Its 96th and 148th Reports recommended a good number of such laws. In 1998, the P.C. Jain Commission recommended the withdrawal of a large body of legislation, and also noted that as many as 253 Acts identified earlier for withdrawal still remained on the statute book. None ordinances issued by the governor General between 1941 and 1946, covering subjects

such as war injuries, war **gratuities** and collective fines, are being removed from the statute book only now. It is odd, even amusing, that the Howrah Offences Act, 1857, the Hackney Carriage Act, 1879, and the Dramatic Performances Act, 1876, have been in force well into the current century. The problem with not removing archaic laws is that they could be **invoked** suddenly against **unsuspecting** and otherwise law abiding citizens. It is a welcome sign for good governance that the present government is updating and trimming the statute book. Give that legislation is quite a prolific activity, especially in the State Assemblies, it would be advisable to have a permanent commission to review the existing body of law and identify those that require repeal as often as possible.

WORD LIST

1. **Tedious** : (dull, monotonous)
Synonym : annoying, banal, boring, dreary, endless, exhausting, humdrum, laborious, tiresome, tiring, uninteresting
2. **Arduous** : (difficult, hard to endure)
Synonym : backbreaking, burdensome, exhausting, formidable, gruelling, onerous, painful, rigorous, strenuous, tiring, uphill.
3. **Obsolete** : (no longer in use, in vogue)
Synonym : antiquated, archaic, out of date, outmoded
4. **Despite** : (in spite of, regardless of)
synonym : against, even with, in contempt of, even though, although
5. **Relevance** : (Pertinence)
synonym : importance, applicability, purpose, congruity.
6. **Ordinance** : (Law, rule)
synonym : authorization, canon, code, command, decree, dictum, edict, enactment, fiat, mandate, order
7. **Repeal** : (declare null and void), cancellation
synonym : abolish, abrogate, annul, cancel, dismantle, invalidate, lift, nullify, revocation, withdrawal.
8. **Periodic** : (at fixed intervals)
synonym : annual, intermittent, monthly, occasional, recurrent, recurring, repeated, seasonal, sporadic, weekly, yearly, routine, periodical.
9. **Statutory** : (Sanctioned)
synonym : lawful, legal, judicial, rightful
10. **Corpus** : (body of text)
synonym : bulk, collection, compilation, core, mass, entirety, oeuvre, staple, substance, whole
11. **Archaic** : (Very old)
synonym : ancient, antiquated, obsolete, old-fashioned, outmoded, primitive, bygone.

12. **Enactment** : (Playacting), (law, authorization)
synonym : achievement, acting, depiction, execution, impersonation, performance, personation, personification.
13. **Prevention** : (stop, avoidance)
synonym : blockage, deterrent, forestalling, halt, hindrance, impediment, inhibitor
14. **sedition** : (Rebellious)
synonym : anarchistic, bellicose, defiant, disloyal, disobedient, disorderly, dissident, iconoclastic, insurgent, mutinous, radical, rebel.
15. **Statute** : (rule, law)
synonym : act, bill, decree, edict, measure, regulation, assize, enactment, ordinance, percept.
16. **Redundant** : (excessive; repetitious)
synonym : superfluous, unnecessary, bombastic, diffuse, extravagant, inessential, loquacious, padded.
17. **Sedition** : (rebellion)
synonym : insubordination, insurrection, mutiny, treason, agitation, revolt, revolution.
18. **Interim** : (temporary, interval)
synonym : provisional, acting, makeshift, stopgap, improvised.
19. **Overhaul** : (redo, restore)
synonym : fix, improve, modernise, rebuild, reconstruct, re-examine, renew, repair, revamp.
20. **Repeal** : (cancellation (n), declare null and void (v))
synonym : abolition, abrogation, annulment, nullification, revocation, withdrawal.
21. **Gratuity** : (gift, tip)
synonym : bonus, fringe benefit, perk, alms, boon, bounty, largesse, contribution, donation, salve, reward.
22. **Invoke** : (call upon, put into effect)
synonym : appeal to, conjure, adjure, beseech, crave, entreat, implore, petition, plead, request, solicit, summon
23. **Unsuspecting** : (gullible)
Synonym : innocent, confiding, credulous, easy, inexperienced, ingenuous, naïve, off guard, trusting, trustful

SOME IMPORTANT IDIOM AND PHRASES

1. The failure of crops in successive years put the farmers in a tight corner.
- (a) In a closed room
(b) In a small field
(c) In a difficult situation
(d) In a meadow

2. The effort to trace the culprit was a wild goose chase.
 - (a) Fruitful hunting
 - (b) Futile search
 - (c) Ideal seeking
 - (d) Genuine effort
3. The story does not hold water.
 - (a) Does not deserve appreciation
 - (b) Does not fulfil the requirements
 - (c) Cannot be believed
 - (d) Cannot be valued
4. Raj couldn't pay the bill, so he asked the owner to put it on the cuff.
 - (a) On credit
 - (b) Against his credit card
 - (c) In his bank account
 - (d) In his friend's account
5. His statement is out and out a lie.
 - (a) Totally
 - (b) Simply
 - (c) Merely
 - (d) Slightly
6. The luxury car that they bought turned out to be a white elephant.
 - (a) A rare article
 - (b) Useful mode of transport
 - (c) Costly or troublesome possession
 - (d) A proud possession
7. If you are fair and square in your work, you will definitely prosper.
 - (a) Active
 - (b) Honest
 - (c) Business like
 - (d) Authoritative
8. There is no love lost between any two neighbouring countries in the world.
 - (a) Stop loving
 - (b) Not on good terms
 - (c) Forming a group
 - (d) Have good understanding
9. The heavy downpour played havoc in the coastal area.
 - (a) Caused destruction
 - (b) Caused diseases
 - (c) Caused floods
 - (d) Caused hardship
10. To have a green thumb means
 - (a) One's nails are painted green
 - (b) One is artistic
 - (c) To have a natural interest in gardening
 - (d) One has a green tattoo on the thumb
11. He went on sowing wild oats, he reaped suffering in his later life.
 - (a) Inviting troubles as a boy
 - (b) Warning others as a young man
 - (c) Irresponsible pleasure seeking in young age
 - (d) Sowing grains called oats when young

12. I don't know why she has become stand-offish recently.
- (a) Angry
 - (b) Hilarious
 - (c) Indifferent
 - (d) Unmanageable
13. Why don't you put an end to blowing your own trumpet?
- (a) Playing your own trumpet to produce music
 - (b) Making too much noise
 - (c) Praising your own abilities and achievements
 - (d) None of the above
14. I knew he had an axe to grind and turned down his offer of help.
- (a) A blunt axe
 - (b) A sharp tongue
 - (c) A private interest to serve
 - (d) A tendency to fight
15. The saint's life was an open book.
- (a) An uncomplicated one
 - (b) One that held no secrets
 - (c) An example to all
 - (d) An interesting biography
16. Reading between the lines I realized that my friend wanted to keep something from me.
- (a) Looking for meanings that are not actually expressed.
 - (b) Reading carelessly
 - (c) Reading with anxiety
 - (d) Glancing over the lines
17. Sometimes, it happens that we have to give the devil his due.
- (a) To give credit to even a notorious person
 - (b) To give encouragement even to the friend
 - (c) To invite the devil
 - (d) To stand in the way of the devil
18. The king had been made to eat humble pie.
- (a) To eat slowly
 - (b) To have an excellent dish
 - (c) To eat a good pie
 - (d) To have to apologise
19. He has a very nice manner, but you would better take what he says with a grain of salt.
- (a) To listen to something with considerable doubt
 - (b) To talk sensibly
 - (c) To criticise
 - (d) To complement
20. Gopi works by fits and starts.
- (a) Consistently
 - (b) Irregularly
 - (c) In high spirits
 - (d) Enthusiastically

21. I cannot put up with your misconduct any longer.
(a) Excuse (b) Refuse (c) Accept (d) Tolerate
22. I did not mind what he was saying, he was only talking through his hat.
(a) Talking nonsense
(b) Talking ignorantly
(c) Talking irresponsibly
(d) Talking insultingly
23. He is so furious that he would go through fire and water to revenge himself on his foe.
(a) Approach everybody for help
(b) Avail himself of any opportunity
(c) Use any conceivable method
(d) Undergo any risk
24. The watchdogs were asleep when the bulls ran riot.
(a) Behaved cleverly
(b) Acted without restraint
(c) Wandered aimlessly
(d) Had the best of time
25. In spite of the immense pressure exerted by the militants, the government has decided not to give in.
(a) Accede (b) Yield (c) Oblige (d) Confirm

ANSWER KEYS

- 1 c 14 c
2 b 15 b
3 c 16 a
4 a 17 a
5 a 18 d
6 c 19 a
7 b 20 b
8 b 21 d
9 a 22 a
10 c 23 d
11 c 24 b
12 c 25 b
13 c

☞ "I don't regret the things I've done.

I regret the things I didn't do when I had the chance." ☞