DATE: 04.11.2026

1) Consider the following statements regarding Qeshm Island:
   1. It is the largest island in the Persian Gulf, located near the Strait of Hormuz.
   2. It is separated from the Iranian mainland by the Khuran (Clarence) Strait.
   3. It serves as a major trade and transit hub with designated free-zone status.

   Which of the above statements are correct?
   (a) 1 and 2 only
   (b) 2 and 3 only
   (c) 1 and 3 only
   (d) 1, 2, and 3

2) Consider the following statements regarding the *Neil Gehrels Swift Observatory*:
   1. It is a multi-wavelength space observatory dedicated primarily to detecting and studying gamma-ray bursts (GRBs).
   2. The observatory is equipped with a Burst Alert Telescope, an X-ray Telescope, and an Ultraviolet/Optical Telescope as its three primary instruments.
   3. It is an international mission led by NASA in partnership with scientific institutions in the United Kingdom and Italy.

   Which of the statements given above are correct?
   (a) 1 and 2 only
   (b) 2 and 3 only
   (c) 1 and 3 only
   (d) 1, 2 and 3

3) SUVIKALP app, recently seen in the news:
   (a) It is a digital decision-support tool for identifying and ranking suitable alternative uses of closed and abandoned coal and lignite mines.
   (b) It is a financial mechanism for compensating communities displaced by mining activities.
   (c) It is a regulatory framework for monitoring mineral extraction and preventing illegal mining.
   (d) It is a technology for identifying new coal and lignite reserves for future mining.

4) With reference to District Planning Committees (DPCs) in India, consider the following statements:
   1. The Parliament is empowered to determine the composition of District Planning Committees and the manner in which their seats are filled.
   2. At least four-fifths of the members of a District Planning Committee shall be elected from among the elected members of Panchayats and Municipalities in the district, in proportion to the rural–urban population ratio.
   3. The Chairperson of every District Planning Committee forwards the draft development plan directly to the Governor for approval.

   Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
   (a) 1 and 2 only
   (b) 2 only
   (c) 1 and 3 only
   (d) 1, 2 and 3

5) Consider the following statements regarding the Saltwater Crocodile:
   1. It is the second largest living reptile in the world after the Nile Crocodile.
   2. It possesses specialised salt glands that help regulate salt concentration in its body.
   3. It is classified as Least Concern in the IUCN Red List.
   4. In India, it is found in the Bhitarkanika mangroves of Odisha.

   Which of the statements given above are correct?
   (a) There are three correct statements
   (b) There are two correct statements which include statement 1
   (c) There are two correct statements which include statement 3
   (d) There is only one correct statement

Explanation

1) Answer: (D)

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Qeshm Island is the largest island in the Persian Gulf, positioned strategically near the entrance of the Strait of Hormuz.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The Khuran (Clarence) Strait separates the northern shore of Qeshm Island from the Iranian mainland.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The island holds an important economic status as a free-trade zone, featuring industrial infrastructure, ports, and commercial developments.
- **Therefore, option D is the correct answer.**

2) Answer: (D)

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The **Neil Gehrels Swift Observatory** is a space telescope mission specifically engineered to locate and study gamma-ray bursts—the most energetic explosions in the universe.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** It houses three complementary, co-aligned instruments comprising the wide-field **Burst Alert Telescope (BAT)**, the **X-ray Telescope (XRT)**, and the **Ultraviolet/Optical Telescope (UVOT)** to capture both prompt high-energy emissions and multi-wavelength afterglows.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Swift is a cooperative international space mission led by NASA, with major scientific and hardware contributions from the United Kingdom and Italy.
- **Therefore, option D is the correct answer.**

3) Answer: (A)

- **SUVIKALP (Mine Repurposing Tool):** An indigenous digital decision-support platform developed by the **Coal Controller Organisation (CCO)** under the Ministry of Coal.
- **Objective:** To identify, evaluate and rank suitable alternative uses of closed and abandoned coal and lignite mines.
- **Methodology:** Uses the **TOPSIS-based Multi-Criteria Decision-Making (MCDM)** approach to assess and rank potential land-use alternatives.
- **Key Features:**

- Integrates geo-mining conditions, environmental parameters, infrastructure availability and financial factors.
- **RECLAIM Framework:** Integrates community preferences and livelihood priorities into mine-repurposing decisions.
- **PRISM (Post-Mining Repurposing Implementation Strategic Model):** Provides implementation strategies, project concepts, case studies and model Detailed Project Reports (DPRs).

- **Possible Alternative Uses:** Eco-parks, floating solar projects, afforestation, agriculture and industrial hubs.
- **Therefore option A is the correct answer.**

4) Answer: (B)

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** Under **Article 243ZD(2)** of the Constitution, the **State Legislature** (not Parliament) is empowered to make provisions by law regarding the composition of District Planning Committees, the manner in which their seats are filled, their functions, and the selection of their Chairperson.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Article 243ZD(2)(b) provides that **not less than four-fifths (4/5th)** of the total members of a DPC must be elected:
  - By and from among elected members of Panchayats at the district level and Municipalities in the district.
  - In proportion to the ratio between the rural and urban populations of the district.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** Article 243ZD(4) explicitly states that the Chairperson shall forward the development plan, as recommended by the DPC, to the Government of the State.
- **Therefore, option B is the correct answer.**

5) Answer: (A)

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** The Saltwater Crocodile is actually the **largest** living reptile in the world, not the second largest. The Nile Crocodile is the second-largest crocodilian species.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** They possess specialized **lingual salt glands** on their tongues, which actively excrete excess sodium and chloride, allowing them to tolerate and thrive in hyper-saline coastal and marine environments.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** On a global scale, the Saltwater Crocodile is classified as **Least Concern (LC)** on the IUCN Red List because of its wide geographic distribution across the Indo-Pacific and stable populations in regions like Northern Australia.
- **Statement 4 is correct:** In India, the **Bhitarkanika mangroves** in Odisha serve as the primary natural stronghold and key breeding ground for the species (along with the Sundarbans and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands).
- Therefore, **option A** is the correct answer.