DATE: 12.11.2026

1) Consider the following statements regarding Sales Tax in India:
   1. Sales tax is an indirect tax imposed on the sale of goods and services.
   2. The burden of sales tax is generally borne by the final consumer.
   3. Before the introduction of GST, sales tax was primarily imposed by State Governments.

   Which of the statements given above is/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 countries bordering the Persian Gulf:
   1. Iran
   2. Kuwait
   3. Jordan
   4. Oman
   5. Saudi Arabia

   How many of the above countries share a coastline with the Persian Gulf?
   (a) Only two
   (b) Only three
   (c) Only four
   (d) All five

3) With reference to Equity Mutual Funds in India, consider the following statements:
   1. They pool money from multiple investors to invest predominantly in equity and equity-related instruments.
   2. They are required to invest a minimum of 65% of their corpus in equity and equity-related instruments.
   3. Their primary objective is to guarantee fixed returns to investors.

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

4) With reference to the International Booker Prize, consider the following statements:
   1. It is awarded annually to a work of fiction originally written in English.
   2. The prize is shared equally between the author and the translator(s) of the winning work.
   3. The winning work must have been published in the United Kingdom and/or Ireland.
   4. *Taiwan Travelogue*, translated from Taiwanese Mandarin by Lin King, won the International Booker Prize in 2026.

   Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
   (a) 1 and 2 only
   (b) 2, 3 and 4 only
   (c) 1, 3 and 4 only

(d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

5) Consider the following:

Assertion (A): Gravitational waves can travel through cosmic dust, gas and other intervening matter with negligible scattering or absorption.

Reason (R): Gravitational waves enable scientists to study dark objects, such as merging black holes that do not emit detectable electromagnetic radiation.

Which one of the following is correct in respect of the above statements?

(a) Both Assertion (A) and Reason (R) are correct, and Reason (R) is the correct explanation of Assertion (A).
(b) Both Assertion (A) and Reason (R) are correct, but Reason (R) is not the correct explanation of Assertion (A).
(c) Assertion (A) is correct, but Reason (R) is incorrect.
(d) Assertion (A) is incorrect, but Reason (R) is correct.

Explanation

1) Answer: (B)

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** Historically in India, **Sales Tax (and later Value Added Tax / VAT) was levied exclusively on the sale of goods**, not on services. The taxation of services fell under a separate levy called **Service Tax**, which was introduced in 1994 and administered by the Central Government. (It was only after the introduction of GST in 2017 that the taxation of goods and services was unified into a single tax).
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Sales tax is an **indirect tax**. While the seller or retailer is legally responsible for collecting and remitting the tax to the government, the financial burden is passed on to the end consumer as part of the purchase price.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Under the Seventh Schedule of the Indian Constitution (Entry 54 of the State List), the power to levy taxes on the intra-state sale or purchase of goods (Sales Tax/VAT) rested primarily with **State Governments**. *(Note: Inter-state sales were governed by the Central Sales Tax Act, 1956, though the tax was still collected and retained by the originating State).*
- **Therefore, option B is the correct answer.**

2) Answer: (B)

The seven countries bordering the Persian Gulf are:

- Iran
- Kuwait
- Saudi Arabia

Jordan and Oman are not Persian Gulf littoral countries. Oman borders the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea. **Therefore, option B is the correct answer.**

3) Answer: (A)

- **Statement 1 is correct:** An equity mutual fund is a collective investment vehicle that pools capital from multiple investors and invests predominantly in shares (equity) and equity-related instruments of publicly listed companies.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Under Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) mutual fund regulations, a scheme must invest at least 65% of its total assets in

equity and equity-related instruments to be classified and taxed as an equity-oriented mutual fund.

- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** Equity mutual funds are market-linked instruments subject to market volatility. Their primary objective is long-term capital appreciation, and they never guarantee fixed returns.
- **Therefore, option A is the correct answer.**

4) Answer: (B)

- Statement 1 is incorrect: The International Booker Prize is for fiction **translated into English**, not originally written in English; that criterion applies to the regular Booker Prize.
- Statement 2 is correct: The award recognises both the author and the translator(s), and the prize money is divided between them.
- Statement 3 is correct: Eligible works must be published in the UK and/or Ireland.
- Statement 4 is correct: *Taiwan Travelogue* by Yáng Shuāng-zǐ, translated by Lin King, won the 2026 International Booker Prize; it was the first winner translated from Taiwanese Mandarin.
- **Therefore, option B is the correct answer.**

5) Answer: (B)

- Gravitational waves **interact extremely weakly with matter**. Therefore, they can travel through cosmic dust, gas and other intervening matter with negligible scattering or absorption.
- Gravitational waves enable scientists to **study objects such as merging black holes that do not emit detectable electromagnetic radiation**. This is because gravitational waves are generated by the motion and acceleration of massive objects, rather than requiring them to emit light.
- However, **Reason (R) is not the correct explanation of Assertion (A):** The ability of gravitational waves to pass through intervening matter is due to their extremely weak interaction with matter. Their ability to reveal dark objects is a separate observational advantage.
- **Therefore, option B is the correct answer**