21. Desertification in the semi-arid regions of India can be mitigated through  
(i) Shelterbelt plantations of trees and shrubs  
(ii) Intensive groundwater extraction for irrigation  
(iii) Regulated grazing to prevent overgrazing  
(iv) Agroforestry-based land management  
Select the correct answer using the codes given below:  
(A) (i) and (iii) only  
(B) (i), (iii) and (iv) only  
(C) (ii), (iii) and (iv) only  
(D) All are correct

Answer 21. (B) (i), (iii) and (iv) only

Explanation:

 Shelterbelt plantations help reduce wind erosion and protect soil moisture.

 Regulated grazing prevents degradation caused by overgrazing.

 Agroforestry integrates trees and crops, enhancing soil health and preventing desertification.

 Intensive groundwater extraction exacerbates desertification by depleting water resources, so (ii) is incorrect.

22. The scholarly works of Sanjib Baruah (author of India Against Itself, In the Name of the Nation) primarily deal with:  
(i) Insurgency and ethnic politics in Northeast India.  
(ii) Federalism and Identity politics.  
(iii) Assam’s Vaishnavite art traditions.  
(iv) Comparative political theory of South Asia.  
(A) (i) and (ii) only  
(B) (ii) and (iii) only  
(C) (i), (ii), and (iv) only  
(D) All are correct

Answer 22. (A) (i) and (ii) only

Explanation:

 Sanjib Baruah’s work mainly focuses on insurgency, ethnic politics, and issues of federalism and identity in Northeast India.

 His scholarship does not cover Assam’s Vaishnavite art traditions or broader comparative political theory extensively.

23. The rapid increase of metropolitan cities in India is largely associated with  
(i) high levels of rural-to-urban migration  
(ii) natural increase in population of urban areas  
(iii) expansion of statutory boundaries of existing cities  
(iv) establishment of new greenfield cities under Smart City Mission  
Select the correct answer using the codes given below.  
(A) (i) and (ii) only  
(B) (i), (ii) and (iii) only  
(C) (ii), (iii) and (iv) only  
(D) All are correct

Answer 23. (B) (i), (ii) and (iii) only

Explanation:

 Metropolitan growth is primarily driven by rural migration, natural population increase, and the expansion of city boundaries.

 Greenfield cities under the Smart City Mission are limited and do not significantly contribute to the rapid increase of existing metropolitan populations.

24. Khelmati village (Lakhimpur district) and Laika-Dadhia villages (Tinsukia district) came into mainstream headlines because  
(i) Khelmati was severely hit during Subansiri-induced flash floods.  
(ii) Laika-Dadhia villagers were displaced due to Dibru-Saikhowa National Park conservation project.  
(iii) Laika-Dadhia was declared Assam’s first model Wetland-Village Cluster.  
(A) Only (i) is correct  
(B) (i) and (ii) are correct  
(C) Only (iii) is correct  
(D) All are correct

Answer 24. (D) All are correct

Explanation:

 Khelmati suffered floods caused by Subansiri River.

 Laika-Dadhia villagers faced displacement linked to Dibru-Saikhowa conservation activities.

 Laika-Dadhia was also officially designated as Assam’s first model Wetland-Village Cluster.

25. Consider the following statements about oil exploration in Upper Assam:  
(i) Major oil fields include Naharkatia, Lakwa, Moran, and Rudrasagar.  
(ii) ONGC operates most of the oilfields in Assam, except Digboi.  
(iii) The Naharkatia oil field was discovered before Digboi.  
(iv) The crude from these fields is transported through pipelines to Barauni refinery in Bihar.  
(A) (i), (ii), and (iv) only  
(B) Only (iii) is correct  
(C) (i), (ii), and (iii) only  
(D) All are correct

Answer 25. (A) (i), (ii), and (iv) only

Explanation:

 Major oil fields in Upper Assam include Naharkatia, Lakwa, Moran, and Rudrasagar.

 ONGC operates these except Digboi, which is run by Assam Oil Company.

 Digboi was discovered earlier than Naharkatia.

 Crude oil from these fields is piped to the Barauni refinery.

26. With reference to Northeast India’s largest cities (Census 2011), arrange the following in descending order of urban population:  
(i) Guwahati  
(ii) Agartala  
(iii) Imphal  
(iv) Shillong  
(A) Guwahati, Agartala, Imphal, Shillong  
(B) Guwahati, Imphal, Shillong, Agartala  
(C) Agartala, Guwahati, Shillong, Imphal  
(D) Guwahati, Shillong, Imphal, Agartala

Answer 26. (A) Guwahati, Agartala, Imphal, Shillong

Explanation:

 Guwahati is the largest city in Northeast India by population, followed by Agartala, Imphal, then Shillong based on 2011 Census data.

27. Match the following plateaus (List-I) with their respective continents (List-II):  
List-I — List-II  
a. Colorado Plateau — 1. North America  
b. Deccan Plateau — 2. Asia  
c. Brazilian Highlands — 3. South America  
d. Kimberley Plateau — 4. Australia  
Select the correct answer using the codes given below.  
(A) abcd → 1234  
(B) abcd → 1324  
(C) abcd → 1243  
(D) abcd → 1342

Answer 27. (A) abcd → 1234

Explanation:

 Colorado Plateau is in North America.

 Deccan Plateau is located in Asia (India).

 Brazilian Highlands are in South America.

 Kimberley Plateau is in Australia.

28. Match the following mountain ranges with the countries they are mostly found in:  
List-I — List-II  
a. Andes — 1. Chile/Peru  
b. Alps — 2. Switzerland/Italy  
c. Rockies — 3. USA/Canada  
d. Atlas — 4. Morocco/Algeria  
Select the correct answer using the codes given below.  
(A) abcd → 1234  
(B) abcd → 1324  
(C) abcd → 1432  
(D) abcd → 1243

Answer 28. (A) abcd → 1234

Explanation:

 Andes primarily span Chile and Peru.

 Alps are mostly found in Switzerland and Italy.

 Rockies run through USA and Canada.

 Atlas Mountains lie in Morocco and Algeria.

29. Which of the following statements about Commonwealth Games is correct?  
(A) The Commonwealth Games were previously known as the British Empire Games.  
(B) India has never hosted the Commonwealth Games.  
(C) Commonwealth Games are held every three years.  
(D) Athletes from all UN member countries participate in them.

Answer 29. (A) The Commonwealth Games were previously known as the British Empire Games.

Explanation:

 The Commonwealth Games were formerly called the British Empire Games.

 India has hosted the Games multiple times (1950, 1982, etc.).

 The Games are held every four years, not three.

 Participation is limited to Commonwealth countries, not all UN members.

30. The BLUE DOT Network is an initiative related to:  
(A) Certification of infrastructure projects based on transparency and sustainability standards  
(B) Maritime surveillance against illegal fishing and deep-sea mining  
(C) A global fisheries conservation program led by the FAO  
(D) None of the above

Answer 30. (A) Certification of infrastructure projects based on transparency and sustainability standards

Explanation:

 The BLUE DOT Network promotes high-quality infrastructure investment by certifying projects that meet transparency, environmental, and social standards.

 It is not focused on marine surveillance or fisheries conservation.