

1. The Essential Commodities Act, 1955 was enacted to ensure the easy availability of essential commodities to consumers and to protect them from exploitation by unscrupulous traders. At present, which of the following are covered under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955?

1. Fertilizer
2. Raw jute and jute textile
3. Petroleum products

Select the correct answer using the codes given below

- a) 3 only
- b) 2 and 3 only
- c) 1, 2 and 3
- d) 1 and 2 only

Ans: C

Explanation

- The Essential Commodities Act, 1955 (EC Act) is administered by the Department of Consumer Affairs.
- The Essential Commodities Act, 1955 was enacted to ensure the easy availability of essential commodities to consumers and to protect them from exploitation by unscrupulous traders.
- Exercising powers under the Act, various Ministries/Departments of the Central Government and under the delegated powers, the State Governments/UT Administrations have issued Control Orders for regulating production, distribution, pricing and other aspects of trading in respect of the commodities declared as essential.
- The enforcement/implementation of the provisions of the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 lies with the State Governments and UT Administrations.

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- The Act empowers the central government to add new commodities to the list of Essential Commodities as and when the need arises, and to **remove them from the list once the crisis is over or the situation improves.**
- Under the Act, the government can also **fix the maximum retail price (MRP)** of any packaged product that it declares an “essential commodity”.
- At present, there are seven (7) commodities scheduled under the EC Act, 1955 as essential
  - Drugs
  - Fertilizer, whether inorganic, organic or mixed;
  - Foodstuffs, including edible oilseeds and oils;
  - Hank yarn made wholly from cotton;
  - Petroleum and petroleum products;
  - Raw jute and jute textile;
  - **seeds of food-crops and seeds of fruits and vegetables;**
  - ❖ seeds of cattle fodder and
  - ❖ jute seeds
  - ❖ cotton seed
- In addition to above, the Govt **brings masks and hand sanitizers** under the Essential Commodities Act in March, 2020
- ❖ As part of the **20 lakh crore economic package** recently announced by the central government, Finance Minister has announced a slew of measures for **agriculture and allied activities.** She said the government **will amend Essential Commodities Act (ECA),** after which cereals, edible oil, oilseeds, pulses, onions and potato will be deregulated

<https://consumeraffairs.nic.in/organisation-and-units/division/essential-commodity-regulation-and-enforcement-ecr-and-e/introduction>

<https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/explained-essential-commodity-face-masks-hand-sanitisers-6313916/>

<https://www.livemint.com/news/india/govt-to-amend-essential-commodities-act-agri-foodstuffs-to-be-deregulated-fm-11589542304209.html>

**2. The GOAL (Going Online As Leaders) is an initiative by the Government of India which primarily benefits which among the following?**

- a) Persons with Disabilities
- b) Street Vendors
- c) Self-Help Groups (SHG)
- d) Tribal youth

**Ans: D**

**Explanation**

- **Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA)** has launched the **“GOAL (Going Online As Leaders)”** programme in **partnership with Facebook**
- The GOAL programme is **designed to provide mentorship to tribal youth** through digital mode. The **digitally enabled program** envisages to act as a catalyst to **explore hidden talents of the tribal youth**, which will help in their personal development as well as contribute to all-round upliftment of their society
- The program **intends to upskill and empower 5,000 tribal youths** in the current phase to harness the full potential of digital platforms and tools to learn new ways of doing business, **explore and connect with domestic and international markets**
- The programme has been designed with a long term vision to develop the potential of tribal youth and women to help them **acquire skills and knowledge** through mentorship in

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various sectors including **horticulture, food processing, bee keeping, tribal art and culture, medicinal herbs, entrepreneurship** among others.

- The GOAL programme demonstrates **affirmative action** which will go a long way to **reduce the gap between tribal and non-tribal youth** and will enlist participation of tribal youth in national building
- The Facebook had on its own **run the project on pilot basis** from February 2019 to October 2019 in 5 states with 100 mentees and 25 mentors; which received enthusiastic response. Based on its success, **Facebook approached MoTA for a joint initiative** under affirmative action and help Facebook in selection of mentees, design curriculum and various activities under the program.

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1624021>

**3. Arrange the following as one proceeds from west to east?**

1. Gulf of Bothnia
2. North Sea
3. Gulf of Finland

**Select the correct answer using the codes given below**

- a) 3-1-2
- b) 1-2-3
- c) 2-1-3
- d) 3-2-1

**Ans: C**

**Explanation**

- In order to counter the reeling tourism sector, **three Baltic countries** have come up with an improvised idea to **boost travel** into their countries.

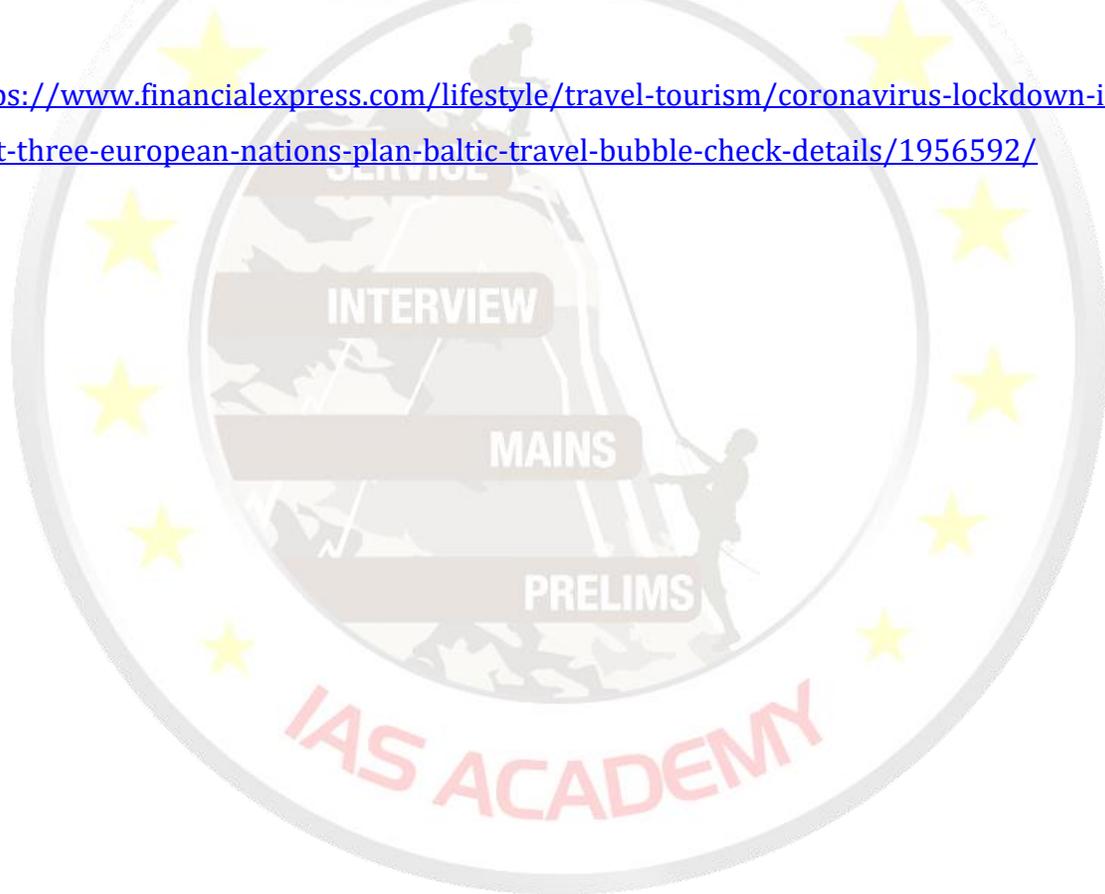
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- The prime ministers of **Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia** have announced that they will **open their borders for citizens of their countries** starting May 15
- They have named the process of easing of border restrictions as **Baltic 'travel bubble.'** Simply put, this 'Baltic travel bubble' may make it possible for citizens of these three countries to **travel within the region without hassles.**
- However, those who are coming from any other than these three countries would be required to follow self-isolation guidelines and stay in quarantine for 14 days

<https://www.financialexpress.com/lifestyle/travel-tourism/coronavirus-lockdown-in-a-first-three-european-nations-plan-baltic-travel-bubble-check-details/1956592/>





4. The term 'EventBot', recently mentioned in news is a

- a) Robotic device used in cloud seeding
- b) Newly created Cryptocurrency
- c) A type of Malware which affects the Android smartphone users
- d) Device which aids Precision Farming

Ans: C

### Explanation

- Recently, the **Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In)** has issued an advisory **warning to people against a trojan called EventBot**, which can **affect Android smartphone users** in the country and steal their personal financial information.
- The EventBot is a **banking trojan or a banker Trojan** that specifically targets the **financial apps on the phone** and the financial data of its victim

### Banking malware EventBot

- It is a “**mobile-banking Trojan** and **info-stealer that abuses Android’s** in-built accessibility features to steal user data from financial applications, read user SMS messages and intercept SMS messages, allowing malware to bypass two-factor authentication
- The EventBot trojan has over 200 different financial applications under its target, including **banking applications, money-transfer services, and cryptocurrency wallets**, or financial applications based in the US and European region

### How to save yourself from EventBot

- CERT-In has suggested **certain counter-measures for Android phone users** to save themselves from the virus infection. These steps include **not downloading or installing applications from untrusted sources** like unknown websites or links sent over mail or SMS
- Users should also **exercise caution while tapping on URLs** and avoid using unsecured or unknown Wi-Fi networks.

### Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In)

- CERT-In is operational since January 2004. CERT-In is the **national nodal agency for responding to computer security incidents** as and when they occur.
  - CERT-In has been designated to serve as the national agency to perform the following functions in the area of cyber security
- Collection, **analysis and dissemination of information on cyber incidents.**

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- Forecast and alerts of cyber security incidents
- Emergency measures for handling cyber security incidents
- Coordination of cyber incident response activities.
- Issue guidelines, advisories, vulnerability notes and whitepapers relating to information security practices, procedures, prevention, response and reporting of cyber incidents.

### Malware

Malware is any **software intentionally designed to cause damage** to a computer, server, client, or computer network. The 5 most common malware types are **viruses, worms, Trojan Horses, spyware, and ransomware**

### Virus

- Viruses are designed to **damage its target computer by corrupting data**, reformatting the hard disk, or completely shutting down the system. They can also be used to **steal information, harm computers and networks**

### Worm

- One of the most common types of malware, **worms spread over computer networks by exploiting operating system vulnerabilities**. It's a **standalone program** that replicates itself to infect other computers, without requiring action from anyone.

### Trojan Horse

- "Trojan", enters the system **disguised as a normal, harmless file** or program to trick users into downloading and installing malware.
- This allows the **cyber criminal to steal data, install more malware**, modify files, monitor user activity, **destroy data, steal financial information**, conduct **denial of service (DoS) attacks** on targeted web addresses, and more.

### Spyware

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- Installed on the computer without the user's knowledge, **spyware is designed to track your browsing habits** and internet activity. Spying capabilities can include activity monitoring, collecting keystrokes, **data harvesting of account information**, logins, and financial data

**Ransomware**

- Ransomware is a **type of malware that hold** the person's data captive and **demands payment to release the data** back to the person.
- It **restricts user access to the computer** by either **encrypting files** on the hard drive or locking down the system and displaying messages that are intended to force the user to pay the attacker to release the restrictions and regain access to the computer

<https://indianexpress.com/article/technology/tech-news-technology/this-banking-trojan-can-steal-money-from-your-phone-what-should-you-do-6413008/>

**5. Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA) report is being released by which of the following?**

- a) Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
- b) United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
- c) United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF)
- d) Global Forest Watch

**Ans: A**

**Explanation**

- **Food and Agriculture Organization's** Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA) provides **essential information for understanding the extent of forest resources**, their condition, management and uses.

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- The latest of these assessments, **FRA 2020**, examines the trends in, **more than 60 forest-related variables in 236 countries** and territories in the period 1990–2020.
- FRA 2020 data were collected using **commonly agreed terms and definitions** through a transparent, traceable reporting process and a **well-established network of officially nominated national correspondents** that covers 187 countries and territories.

**Key findings**

- Africa had the **largest annual rate of net forest loss** in 2010–2020, at 3.9 million ha, followed by South America, at 2.6 million ha
- **Asia had the highest net gain of forest area** in 2010–2020, followed by Oceania and Europe.
- Both Europe and Asia recorded substantially lower rates of net gain in 2010–2020 than in 2000–2010. **Oceania experienced net losses of forest area** in the decades 1990–2000 and 2000–2010.
- An **estimated 420 million ha of forest has been lost worldwide** through deforestation since 1990, but the rate of forest loss has declined substantially.
- In the most recent five-year period (2015–2020), the **annual rate of deforestation** was estimated at 10 million ha, down from 12 million ha in 2010–2015.
- Ninety-three percent (3.75 billion ha) of the forest area worldwide is composed of naturally regenerating forests and 7 percent (290 million ha) is planted
- There is an estimated 726 million ha of forest in protected areas worldwide. Of the six major world regions, **South America has the highest share of forests in protected areas**, at 31 percent
- Most forest carbon is found in the living biomass (44 percent) and soil organic matter (45 percent), with the remainder in dead wood and litter. **The total carbon stock in forests decreased** from 668 gigatonnes in 1990 to 662 gigatonnes in 2020

**The Food and Agriculture Organization**

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- The Food and Agriculture Organization is a **specialized agency of the United Nations** that leads international efforts to **defeat hunger and improve nutrition** and food security.
- The FAO is headquartered in Rome, Italy and maintains regional and field offices around the world, operating in over 130 countries
- It helps **governments and development agencies coordinate their activities** to improve and **develop agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and land and water resources**.
- It also conducts research, provides technical assistance to projects, operates educational and training programs, and collects data on agricultural output, production, and development

<http://www.fao.org/forest-resources-assessment/en/>

<http://www.fao.org/3/CA8753EN/CA8753EN.pdf>

<https://www.downtoearth.org.in/news/forests/deforestation-rate-globally-declined-between-2015-and-2020-fao-report-71107>

