

1. Consider the following statements regarding the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

1. It is an international legally-binding treaty with an overall objective to encourage actions which will lead to a sustainable future
2. It was adopted at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in 2002

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans: A

Explanation

- **Statement 2 is incorrect** The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is an **international agreement** adopted at the **Earth Summit, in Rio de Janeiro, in 1992**.
- The Rio Earth Summit was the **largest international environmental meeting ever**. At the meeting, world leaders agreed that it was **important to protect the environment** for all people, including future generations. The leaders decided to create three conventions to achieve this goal
- Three conventions emerged from the Rio Earth Summit
 - **The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)**
 - The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
 - The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)
- The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is an **agreement between countries based on natural and biological resources**. The CBD has three main goals: to protect

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biodiversity; to use biodiversity without destroying it; and, to **share any benefits from genetic diversity equally**.

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is an **international legally-binding treaty** with a overall objective to encourage actions which will lead to a sustainable future.
- The **Conference of the Parties is the governing body of the Convention**, and advances implementation of the Convention through the decisions it takes at its periodic meetings.
- From 1994 to 1996, the Conference of the Parties held its ordinary meetings annually. Since then these meetings have been held somewhat less frequently and, following a change in the rules of procedure in 2000, will now be held every two years

Rio+10 summit

- The **World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) was held in Johannesburg** in 2002 to review progress since the Rio conference in 1992, and to agree a new global deal on sustainable development.
- Since it was convened 10 years after the first Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, it was informally nicknamed as "**Rio+10**"
- ❖ **International Day for Biological Diversity 2020** is being celebrated on 22 May with the theme "Our solutions are in nature."

<https://www.cbd.int/ibd/2008/youth/cbd/>

<https://www.cbd.int/cop/>

2. Recently, the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) was formulated as a specific response to the unprecedented situation caused by COVID-19. It primarily benefits which among the following?

- a) Small and marginal farmers

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b) Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)

c) Street vendors and daily wage earners

d) Sanitary workers

Ans: B

Explanation

- Under the Scheme, **100% guarantee coverage to be provided by National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company Limited (NCGTC)** for funding of up to Rs.3 lakh crore to **eligible MSMEs and interested MUDRA** borrowers, in the form of a Guaranteed Emergency Credit Line (GECL) facility
- For this purpose, **corpus of Rs. 41,600 crore** shall be provided by Government of India spread over the current and the next three financial years.
- The Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) has been formulated as a **specific response to the unprecedented situation caused by COVID-19** and the consequent lockdown, which has severely impacted manufacturing and other activities in the MSME sector.
- The main aim of this scheme is to provide an **incentive to Member Lending Institutions (MLIs), i.e., Banks, Financial Institutions (FIs) and Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs)** to increase access to, and enable availability of additional funding facility to MSME borrowers, in view of the economic distress caused by the COVID-19 crisis, by providing them 100 per cent guarantee for any losses suffered by them due to non-repayment of the GECL funding by borrowers.

The salient features of the Scheme include

- The entire funding provided under GECL shall be provided with a **100% credit guarantee** by NCGTC to MLIs under ECLGS.
- Tenor of loan under Scheme shall be **four years with moratorium period of one year** on the principal amount.

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- **No Guarantee Fee shall be charged** by NCGTC from the Member Lending Institutions (MLIs) under the Scheme.
- **Interest rates under the Scheme shall be capped at 9.25% for banks** and FIs, and at 14% for NBFCs

Impact

- In view of the **critical role of the MSME sector in the economy and in providing employment**, the proposed Scheme is expected to provide much needed relief to the sector by incentivizing MLIs to provide additional credit of up to Rs.3 lakh crore to the sector at low cost, thereby enabling MSMEs to meet their **operational liabilities and restart their businesses**.
- By supporting MSMEs to continue functioning during the current unprecedented situation, the Scheme is also expected to have a **positive impact on the economy** and support its revival.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/small-biz/sme-sector/cabinet-approves-rs-3-lakh-cr-emergency-credit-line-for-msme-loans-at-9-25-rate/articleshow/75846650.cms?from=mdr>

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1625306>

3. With reference to Konark sun temple, consider the following statements

1. The temple was built by the rulers of the Eastern Ganga dynasty
2. It is a classic illustration of the Kalinga architecture
3. The Sun Temple of Konark has been declared a world heritage site by UNESCO

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

d) 2 and 3 only

Ans: C

Explanation

- The Sun Temple at Konark, located on the eastern shores is one of the **outstanding examples of temple architecture** in India.
- The Konark Sun temple is **dedicated to the Hindu sun god Surya**, and it is the most famous of the few sun temples built in India. It is located about 35 km northeast of the city of Puri on the coastline in the state of Odisha
- **Statement 2 is correct:** It is directly and materially **linked to Brahmanism and tantric belief systems**. The Sun Temple is the **culmination of Kalinga temple architecture**, with all its defining elements in complete and perfect form.
- **Statement 1 is correct** It was built by **King Narasimhadeva I (1238-1264 CE)** of the **Eastern Ganga dynasty (8th century CE - 15th century CE)**.
- The Konark is the **third link of Odisha's Golden Triangle**. The first link is Jagannath Puri and the second link is Bhubaneswar (Capital city of Odisha)
- The Konark temple is constructed as a **gigantic chariot with 24 wheels** about three meters high and pulled by 7 horses, housing the Sun God within.
- The entrance is guarded by two huge lions, each **killing a war elephant** and beneath the elephant is a man. The lions **represent pride, elephants represent wealth** and both of them consumes man
- This temple was also **known as 'Black Pagoda'** due to its **dark color and used as a navigational landmark** by ancient sailors to Odisha
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The Sun Temple of Konark has been declared a **world heritage site** by **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)** in 1984.

Eastern Ganga Dynasty & Odisha Temple Architecture

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- The Eastern Gangas established their kingdom in the **Kalinga region** in eastern India (present-day Odisha state) at “the beginning of the eighth century CE”
- The greatest king of this dynasty was **Anantavarman Chodaganga (1077 - 1147 CE)**, who ruled for about 70 years. The great temple of the **god Jagannatha at Purr**, begun by him, 'stands as a brilliant monument to the artistic vigour and prosperity of Orissa during his reign'
- His successors continued the tradition, with the most **notable being Narasimhadeva I** who not only completed the construction of the Jagannatha temple but also the temple at Konarak
- ❖ Recently, the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) has taken up the **complete Solarisation of Konark sun temple** and Konark town in Odisha.
- ❖ The Scheme envisages **setting up of 10 MW grid connected solar project** and various solar off-grid applications like solar trees, solar drinking water kiosks, off-grid solar power plants with battery storage etc with a 100% Central Financial Assistance (CFA) support of around Rs. 25 Crores from Government of India through Ministry of New & Renewable Energy (MNRE).

World Heritage Site

- It is a location having an “**Outstanding Universal Value**”. According to the World Heritage Convention’s Operational Guidelines, an Outstanding Universal Value signifies “cultural and/or **natural significance which is so exceptional** as to transcend national boundaries and to be of common importance for present and future generations of all humanity.”
- The Sites fall into three categories: **cultural heritage, natural heritage, and mixed heritage (cultural as well as natural).**

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- The **UNESCO World Heritage Committee** meets at least once every year, generally in June/July, to deliberate the addition, removal, or modification of items on the **list of World Heritage Sites**.

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1625340>

<https://indianexpress.com/article/cities/delhi/centre-launches-scheme-to-solarise-entire-konark-temple-konark-town-6419807/>

<https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/246/>

4. The term 'Sonic boom' recently mentioned in news is associated with which of the following?

- a) It is a loud noise associated with volcanic eruption underneath the Earth's surface
- b) It is the low frequency sounds through which most of the faunal species communicate with each other
- c) Sonic boom occurs when an aircraft breaks the sound barrier and travels faster than the speed of sound
- d) None of the above

Ans: C

Explanation

- A sonic boom is said to occur when an object **travels through the air faster than the speed of sound and creates shock waves**. This can lead to a **huge emission in energy**, usually in the form of sound, which can be similar to an explosion of thunderclap.
- The sonic boom is a **continuous sound** which is emitted by the aircraft all the while it is travelling at a supersonic speed. If the aircraft is flying at a low altitude, the **sonic boom may also lead to tremors similar to earthquakes and shattering of glass**

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- Sonic boom phenomenon occurs when an **aircraft breaks the sound barrier and travels faster than the speed of sound**. The sonic boom causes a **large amount of sound energy** and sounds like an explosion to the human ear. Sometimes the **sonic boom created by supersonic aircraft is so loud that it may cause damage to some structures**.
- When such aircraft fly at a low altitude, the sonic boom can become intense enough to cause glass to crack or cause health hazards.
- ❖ Recently, a 'loud sound' was heard in Bengaluru, which **puzzled lakhs of city dwellers**, was revealed to have emanated from an **IAF test flight involving a supersonic profile**. The sound effect caused due to such high-speed flights is known as '**sonic boom**'.
- ❖ The defence ministry clarified that the 'sonic boom' heard over the Bengaluru skies have been caused due to **Indian Air Force's routine testing** of aircraft involving supersonic profile

<https://www.indiatoday.in/education-today/grammar-vocabulary/story/what-is-sonic-boom-meaning-and-examples-of-the-phenomenon-1680095-2020-05-20>

<https://www.nasa.gov/centers/armstrong/news/FactSheets/FS-016-DFRC.html>

<https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/what-is-the-sonic-boom-that-rattled-bengaluru-6421289/>

5. Consider the following pairs

Port		Located in
1. Mongla	-	Myanmar
2. Trincomalee	-	Sri Lanka
3. Jeddah	-	Iraq

Which of the above given pairs is/are correctly matched?

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

Ans: B

Explanation

- The **Port of Mongla** is the second busiest seaport of **Bangladesh**. It is located in Bagerhat District in the southwestern part of the country and lies 62 kilometres north of the Bay of Bengal coastline
- **Trincomalee is a seaport** situated on the northeastern coast of **Sri Lanka**
- **Jeddah Port** is a **Saudi Arabian port**, located in the middle of an international shipping route between east and west. It is the **second-largest and second-busiest port in the Arab world**

- ❖ Recently, the second Addendum to the **Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade** was signed between India and Bangladesh. The Protocol will further facilitate the trade between two countries with improved reliability and cost effectiveness.
- The People's Republic of **Bangladesh** and the Republic of **India** have a long standing and time-tested Protocol on **Transit and Trade through inland waterways of both countries**. This Protocol, which was first signed in 1972 (immediately after independence of Bangladesh), is a reflection of shared history and friendship between the two countries.
- It was last renewed in 2015 for five years with a provision for its automatic renewal for a further period of five years giving **long term assurance to various stakeholders**.
- The Standing Committee on the Protocol and the Shipping Secretary level Talks are the institutional arrangements between the two friendly neighbors to discuss and make the Protocol more effective.

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- During the discussions between India and Bangladesh at these meetings held in October, 2018 in New Delhi and in December, 2019 in Dhaka, **key decisions were taken on the extension of protocol routes, inclusion of new routes and declaration of new Ports of Call to facilitate trade** between the two countries.

Port of Call

- A port of call is an **intermediate port where ships customarily stop for supplies, repairs, or transshipment of cargo**

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetailm.aspx?PRID=1625342>

