

1. Consider the following statements about the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI).

1. ASI functions under the Ministry of Culture.
2. ASI declares ancient monuments which are of historical, archaeological or artistic interest and which have been in existence for not less than 1000 years as Monuments of national importance.

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

Answer: A

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), under the **Ministry of Culture**, is the premier organization for the archaeological research and protection of the cultural heritage of the nation.
- Maintenance of ancient monuments and archaeological sites and remains of national importance is the prime concern of the ASI.
- Besides, it regulates all archaeological activities in the country as per the provisions of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958. It also regulates the Antiquities and Art Treasure Act, 1972.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** According to the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958, an "Ancient Monument means any structure, erection or monument, or any tumulus or place of interment, or any cave, rock-sculpture, inscription or monolith which is of historical, archaeological or artistic interest and which has been in existence for **not less than 100 years.**"

<https://www.businessinsider.in/india/news/over-800-asi-monuments-which-have-places-of-worship-will-open-from-june-8/articleshow/76245582.cms>

2. Strait of Hormuz is located at

- A. Between the Gulf of Oman and the Persian Gulf
- B. Between the Malay Peninsula and the Indonesian island of Sumatra
- C. Between the Black Sea to the Sea of Marmara
- D. Between Djibouti and Yemen

Answer: A

Explanation:



- Strait of Hormuz is a choke-point between the Persian Gulf and the open ocean. A third of crude oil exports transported via ships pass through the Strait, which makes it the world's most important oil artery.
- If the Strait is closed or if the flow of oil and gas is disrupted, it would have a serious impact on global energy stability and thereby on the world economy.

Other important straits:

- Strait of Malacca which lies between the Malay Peninsula and the Indonesian island of Sumatra.
- Bosphorus strait which connects the Black Sea to the Sea of Marmara.
- Kerch Strait connecting the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov.
- Bab el-Mandeb strait is located between Djibouti and Yemen that links the Red Sea to the Indian Ocean.

<https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/in-persian-gulf-littoral-cooperative-security-is-key/article31774318.ece>

3. 'Mission Sagar' is related to

- Initiative to assist island nations in Eastern Indian Ocean amidst the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.
- Initiative to substantially increase access to contraceptives and family planning services in high fertility districts.
- Initiative to fully digitize and automate the entire process of land acquisition for highways.
- Initiative to create an ecosystem for availing home delivery of 40 essential public services.

Answer: A

Explanation:

- The 'Mission Sagar' Government of India's initiative to assist island nations in Eastern Indian Ocean amidst the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.
- The Mission is being coordinated by the **Ministry of External Affairs and Ministry of Defence**.
- Under the Mission, India has sent Indian Naval Ship Kesari to Maldives, Mauritius, Madagascar, Comoros and Seychelles, carrying on board two Medical Assistance Teams, consignments of Covid related essential medicines and essential food items.
- The deployment is in consonance with the Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of Security and Growth for All in the Region 'SAGAR' promulgated in March 2015.
- SAGAR highlights the importance accorded by India to relations with her neighbouring countries and further strengthens the existing bond.
- Option B is related to Parivar Vikas.
- Option C is related to Bhoomi Rashi portal.

4. Consider the following actions by the Government

1. Cutting the tax rates
2. Increasing the government spending
3. Rationalising subsidies

Which of the above actions can be considered a part of the "fiscal consolidation" package?

- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 1 and 3 only
- C. 3 only
- D. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: C

Explanation:

- Fiscal Consolidation refers to the policies undertaken by Governments (national and sub-national levels) to reduce their deficits and accumulation of debt stock.
- Cutting the tax rates and Increasing the government spending increases the government's debt stock.
- Abolishing subsidies helps the government to reduce its expenditure and improve its fiscal position. **Hence, option C is correct.**

<https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/explainspeaking-when-will-indias-economy-recover-shape-of-its-recovery-6447775/>

5. Consider the following statements.

1. The State governments have the sole authority to declare a species as vermin within their respective jurisdictions.
2. Any wild animal listed in Schedule I to IV of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 can be declared as a vermin.

3. Wild animals declared as vermin will be included in Schedule V of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, depriving them of protections under that law.

Which of the following statements are correct?

- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 1 and 3 only
- C. 2 and 3 only
- D. 3 only

Answer: D

Explanation:

- The Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 divides species into 'schedules' ranked from I to V. Schedule I members are the best protected with severe punishments meted out to those who hunt them.
- Wild boars, nilgai and rhesus monkeys are Schedule II and III members, it is also protected, but can be hunted under specific conditions.
- **Statements 1 & 2 are incorrect:** Under Section 62 of WPA, the **Central Government** may, on the requests from the respective States, declare any wild animal **other than those specified in Schedule I & Part II of Schedule II** (that lists most endangered and iconic species like tigers, leopards, and elephants) of the law to be vermin for any area for a given period of time for selective slaughter.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** As long as the notification is in force such wild animals shall be included in Schedule V of the law, depriving them of any protection under that law.
- A species is declared as vermin
 - if they have become dangerous to human life or property, or
 - if they have become so disabled or diseased as to be beyond recovery.

<https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/addressing-the-elephant-in-the-room/article31773338.ece>