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Q.1) Consider the following statements about India BPO Promotion Scheme (IBPS)

1. Under the scheme the government provides subsidy of up to Rs 1 lakh for each BPO seat set in a tier-II or tier-III town
2. It is under the aegis of Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology

Select the correct statements

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

Q.1) Solution (c)

The India BPO Promotion Scheme (IBPS) , envisaged under Digital India Programme, seeks to incentivize establishment of 48,300 seats in respect of BPO/ITES operations across the country.

It is distributed among each State in proportion of State's population with an outlay of Rs. 493 Crore. This would help in capacity building in smaller cities in terms of infra & manpower and would become basis for next wave of IT/ITES led growth.

Salient Features:

- Financial Support: Up to 50% of expenditure incurred on BPO/ITES operations towards capital expenditure (CAPEX) and/or operational expenditure (OPEX) on admissible items, subject to an upper ceiling of Rs. 1 Lakh/Seat.
- Special incentives toward employment of women & specially enabled persons.
- Incentive for generating employment beyond target & wider dispersal within state including rural areas.
- Encouragement for local entrepreneurs.
- Special consideration for Hilly states of HP, J&K and UK.

This scheme has potential to create employment opportunities of around 1.5 lakh direct jobs considering three shift operations. It may also create good number of indirect jobs.

Source: <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/small-biz/startups/newsbuzz/government-scheme-for-rural-bpos-creates-more-employment/articleshow/62062755.cms>

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Q.2) SANKALP Project is associated with

- a) Skill Development
- b) Filing of GST returns
- c) Empowerment of Adolescent Girls
- d) Keeping the farmers abreast with crop prices around them

Q.2) Solution (a)

Skills Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion (SANKALP) aimed at providing market relevant training to youths across the country.

It is a centrally sponsored scheme under the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship and supported by World Bank loan assistance.

Source: <http://www.financialexpress.com/economy/million-dollar-job-windfall-for-india-government-inks-250-million-loan-agreement-with-world-bank/972698/>

Q.3) The world's newest island 'Hunga Tonga Hunga Ha'apai' was formed during a volcanic eruption. Where is it located?

- a) Indian Ocean
- b) Pacific Ocean
- c) Atlantic Ocean
- d) Arctic Ocean

Q.3) Solution (b)

In late December 2014, a submarine volcano in the South Pacific Kingdom of Tonga erupted, sending a violent stream of steam, ash and rock into the air. When the ash finally settled in January 2015, a newborn island with a 400-foot (120-meter) summit nestled between two older islands – visible to satellites in space.

The Tongan island is the third "surtseyan" volcanic island in the last 150 years to emerge and persist for more than a few months. Surtsey is an island that began forming during a similar kind of explosive, marine eruption off the coast of Iceland in 1963.

The Tongan island may also help researchers understand volcanic features on Mars that look similar.

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Everything we learn about what we see on Mars is based on the experience of interpreting Earth phenomena. We think there were eruptions on Mars at a time when there were areas of persistent surface water. We may be able to use this new Tongan island and its evolution as a way of testing whether any of those represented an oceanic environment or ephemeral lake environment.

Source: <https://www.nasa.gov/feature/goddard/2017/nasa-shows-new-tongan-island-made-of-tuff-stuff-likely-to-persist-years>

Q.4) Akshara Sagaram, an ambitious literacy programme for coastal areas is associated with which state?

- a) Karnataka
- b) Tamil Nadu
- c) Kerala
- d) Andhra Pradesh

Q.4) Solution (c)

The project is being implemented by Kerala State Literacy Mission Authority (KSLMA) with financial assistance from the Fisheries Department.

The primary objective of the project is to streamline the fourth, seventh and tenth standard equivalent programmes of KSLMA in coastal areas.

Illiterate people, newly literate, school dropouts, physically and mentally-challenged people, and all fisherfolks who have not cleared fourth standard have been identified as potential beneficiaries.

Source: <http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/coastal-literacy-project-to-be-rolled-out-in-3-more-districts/article21617665.ece>

Q.5) Buenos Aires Declaration on Women and Trade is concerned with which of the following?

- a) World Trade Organization WTO
- b) MERCOSUR
- c) Community of Latin American and Caribbean States
- d) Pacific Alliance

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Q.5) Solution (a)

For the first time in the history of the World Trade Organization, WTO members and observers have endorsed a collective initiative to increase the participation of women in trade. In order to help women reach their full potential in the world economy, 118 WTO members and observers agreed to support the Buenos Aires Declaration on Women and Trade, which seeks to remove barriers to, and foster, women's economic empowerment.

Declaration -

https://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/minist_e/mc11_e/genderdeclarationmc11_e.pdf

Source: <http://www.thehindu.com/business/Economy/119-nations-back-move-to-remove-barriers-limiting-womens-participation-in-trade/article21581261.ece>

