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## ***Tamil Nadu's Shore Temple is now India's First Green Energy Archaeological Site***

### ***What is the news?***

- The Shore Temple at Mahabalipuram, Tamil Nadu, has been designated as the ***India's first Green Energy Archaeological Site***.
- This is an important accomplishment since it illustrates India's commitment to sustainable development as well as its attempts to preserve its cultural legacy.

### ***Where it is located?***

- Mahabalipuram, Tamil Nadu



The Bay of Bengal (map: NormanEinstein, CC BY-SA 3.0)

## ***So, what exactly is a Green Energy Archaeological Site?***

- A Green Energy Archaeological Site is an archaeological site that runs on renewable energy sources. Solar energy, wind energy, and hydropower are all examples of renewable energy.
- Green Energy Archaeological Sites are more environmentally friendly and sustainable than regular archaeological sites, which frequently rely on fossil fuels.

## ***Green Energy Archaeological Sites' Advantages:***

***Green Energy Archaeological Sites have several***

### ***advantages, including:***

- Green Energy Archaeological Sites have a lower environmental impact than standard archaeological sites since they emit fewer greenhouse gases and other pollutants. This contributes to environmental protection and climate change mitigation.
- Increased energy security: Green Energy Archaeological Sites are not dependant on finite fossil fuels. This increases their energy security and makes them less subject to variations in energy prices.
- Cost savings: Green Energy Archaeological Sites can save money on energy expenditures over time. This can free up resources for other vital things like conservation and research.

### ***The Importance of the Shore Temple as a Green Energy Archaeological Site:***

- The **Shore Temple is a UNESCO World Heritage Site** and a renowned tourist site in India. It is also an important archaeological site with a long and illustrious history. The Shore Temple's designation as a Green Energy Archaeological Site is a remarkable achievement for India, demonstrating the country's commitment to sustainable development and efforts to safeguard its cultural legacy.

### ***From an Exam's Perspective on Tamil Nadu's Shore Temple:***

## ***Historical Background:***

- Mamallapuram, also known as Mahabalipuram, was an important port town in early Indian history and a centre of creative production under the patronage of the Pallava monarchs.
- Nrasimhavarman I, also known as Mamalla, ruled for around 38 years beginning in 630 C.E. and commissioned the construction of various rock-cut monuments in Mamallapuram, including cave shrines, monolithic temples, and boulder sculptures.
- While the Pallava kings predominantly worshipped Shiva, they also encouraged the construction of temples dedicated to other Hindu gods and goddesses, as well as religious traditions such as Jainism.
- The Pallava kings were inspired by the rising personal devotional movement known as bhakti, in which believers approach the divine as if it were a cherished child or loved one.
- The creative achievements of Mamallapuram show the Pallava kings' wide religious and cultural influences, highlighting their encouragement of art and desire to establish sacred sanctuaries for many deities.

## ***Architecture:***



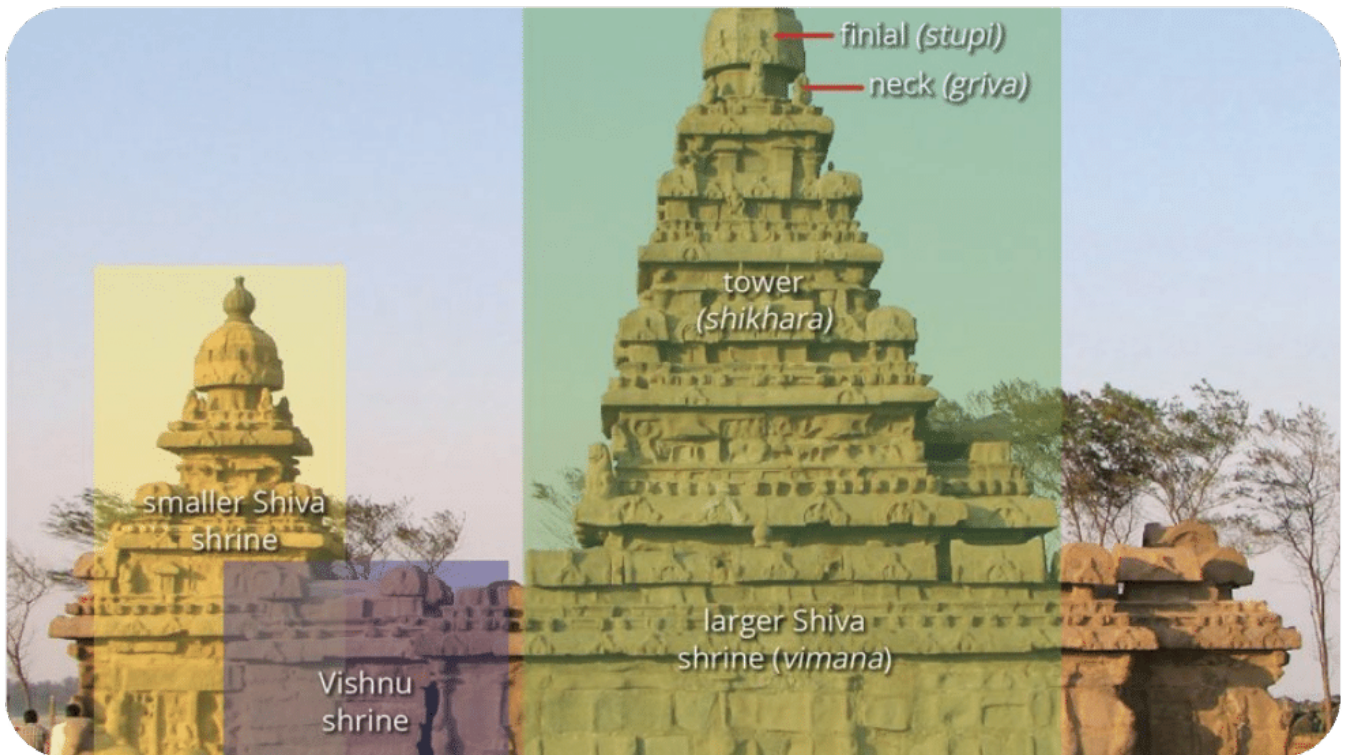
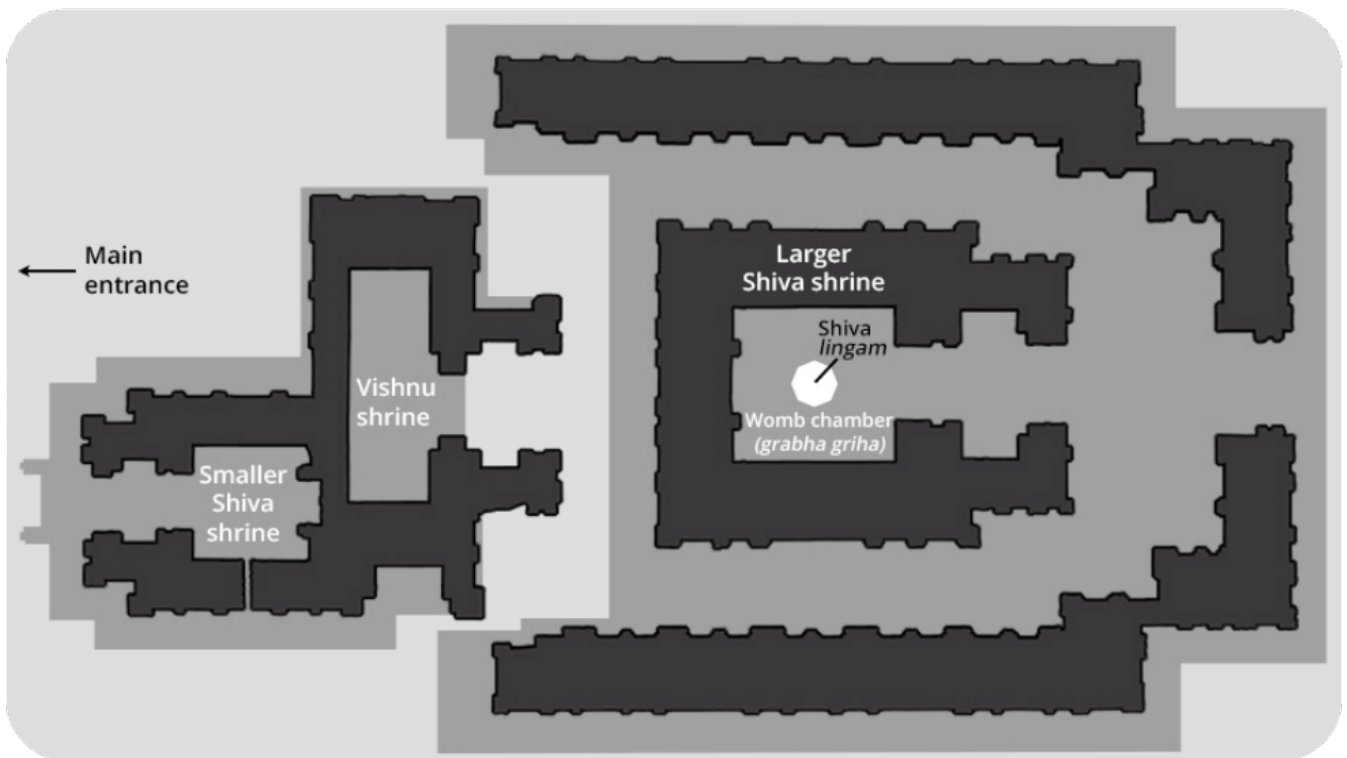


photo: [Bernard Gagnon](#), CC BY-SA 3.0)

- The Shore Temple is an 8th century AD structural temple built with granite blocks. It is a pyramidal construction that is 60 feet (18 metres) tall and sits on a 50 foot (15 metre) square platform. The original porch is marked by a tiny temple in front. It is crafted from precisely carved local granite. The Shore Temple is one of Mahabalipuram's most popular temples.
- The Shore Temple is a beautiful piece of Dravidian architecture. The Dravidian architectural style is distinguished by pyramidal towers (shikharas), ornate carvings, and the use of granite stones.
- It is a combination of three shrines. The main shrine is dedicated to Shiva, as is the smaller second shrine. A small third shrine, between the two, is dedicated to a reclining Vishnu and may have had water channelled into the temple, entering the Vishnu shrine.

## Artwork and iconography:



*The Bay of Bengal (map: NormanEinstein, CC BY-SA 3.0)*

- The temple complex consists of a main temple with a garbhagriha (sanctum sanctorum) housing the deity Sivalinga, along with smaller shrines dedicated to Ksatriyasimnesvara and Vishnu.
- The roofs of the temples have decorative finials and are in the Dravidian architectural style.
- The most distinctive feature of the temple is the Dharalinga, a Shivalinga carved out of black basalt stone, with sixteen faces and a damaged top. There is also a Somaskanda panel, depicting Shiva, Uma, and their son Skanda.
- Behind the main temple, there is a smaller Shiva temple with a stepped pyramidal tower and a Somaskanda panel on the back wall. The external walls display two panels: one of Shiva with Brahma and Vishnu, and another of Nagaraja (king of serpents).
- There is also a small rectangular shrine dedicated to

Vishnu, with carvings depicting Krishna slaying the demon Kesi, dancing over Kaliya, and saving Gajendra from a crocodile. The compound wall surrounding the temples is adorned with sculptures of Nandi, Yalis, and Varahas (boars).

### **Significance:**

- The Shore Temple was constructed in the 7th century AD during the rule of the Pallava dynasty. For several centuries, the Pallavas were a great dynasty that ruled over southern India. The Shore Temple is one of the Pallava dynasty's most important monuments. It is a monument to the Pallava artists' skill and craftsmanship.
- The Shore Temple is a notable religious site as well. It is a well-known pilgrimage site for Hindus from all around India. The Shore Temple is another renowned tourist attraction. It is one of Tamil Nadu's most popular archaeological sites.

### **QuizTime:**

***Which of the following is NOT one of the advantages of Green Energy Archaeological Sites?***

- (a) Lessening of environmental impact
- (b) Improved energy security
- (c) Cost savings
- (d) Increased earnings from tourism

*Answer is (d) Increasing tourism revenue*

## ***Mains Question***



***Q: Discuss how the Shore Temple became India's first Green Energy Archaeological Site.***

***Model Answer:***

***The Shore Temple's designation as India's first Green Energy Archaeological Site is notable for the following reasons:***

- It highlights India's commitment to long-term development as well as its attempts to safeguard its cultural legacy.
- It establishes a precedent for future archaeological sites in India.
- It contributes to raising awareness about the significance of environmental conservation and sustainable development.
- It raises awareness of India's cultural heritage and

tourism economy.

- The Shore Temple's designation as a Green Energy Archaeological Site is a positive step forward for India. It demonstrates the country's growing commitment to sustainable development as well as its attempts to safeguard its cultural heritage.

## ***How is the topic addressed within the course syllabus?***

***The Shore Temple is an important topic on the UPSC exam. It is likely to appear in inquiries about the following subjects:***

- Culture and Art
- History
- Architecture
- Tourism
- Heritage culture
- Technology and science

***Here are some specific examples of questions about the Shore Temple that could be asked on the UPSC exam:***

- What exactly is the Shore Temple?
- Where can I find the Shore Temple?
- When was the Shore Temple constructed?
- What architectural style does the Shore Temple have?
- What is the Shore Temple's historical significance?
- Why is the Shore Temple so popular with tourists?

*Click here to read in  
Hindi.*

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# Quiz Time

The profit triples with a doubling of the selling price. Determine the profit percentage.

- Option 1
- Option 2
- Option 3



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