



## Konark Sun Temple to Run on Solar Energy

**For Prelims:** Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), Konark Sun Temple, Kalinga Architecture, UNESCO world heritage site.

**For Mains:** Indian Culture - Salient aspects of Art Forms, Steps taken for Renewable Energy.

### Why in News?

**Konark** is going to be the **first model town in Odisha** to shift from **grid dependency to green energy**.

- The Odisha government has issued a **policy guideline in this regard**.
- In May 2020, the **central government launched a scheme for solarisation of Konark Sun Temple and Konark town in Odisha**.

### What are the Guidelines of the Policy?

- Under the guidelines, the state has **targeted to generate 2,750 megawatt (MW) from renewable energy** sources like the sun, wind, biomass, small hydro and waste-to-energy (WTE), etc. by 2022-end.
- The state also targets to **generate 2,200 MW from solar energy** and a part of it will be **utilised to run the Sun Temple and Konark town** on solar energy.
- Konark's transition to renewable energy is part of an **ambitious plan by the Union Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE)**.

### How is this step a significant Step and what are related Challenges?

- The shifting from grid to solar energy will **help reduce the electricity consumption** of the Sun Temple.
- The financial benefit from solar energy will **help divert spending on other developmental work of the temple**.
- Odisha faces many challenges in setting up huge solar power plants.
  - The state has **480 km of coastline** and is prone to regular cyclones. It has so far encountered 10 cyclones including **Super Cyclone, Phailin, Hudhud, Titli, Amphan and Fani in 22 years**.
- Besides this, **land acquisition is another major challenge** in setting up solar power plants.
  - While coastal areas are cyclone-prone, some parts of Odisha have dense forests whereas land is expensive in densely-populated areas.

### What do we Know about Konark Temple?

- Konark Sun Temple, **located in the East Odisha near the sacred city of Puri**.
- Built **in the 13<sup>th</sup> century by King Narasimhadeva I** (AD 1238-1264). Its scale, refinement and conception represent the strength and stability **of the Eastern Ganga Empire** as well as the

value systems of the historic milieu.

- The **Eastern Ganga dynasty** also known as **Rudhi Gangas or Prachya Gangas**.
  - It was the large Indian royal dynasty in the medieval era that reigned from Kalinga from as early as the 5th century to the early 15th century.
  - The beginnings of what became the Eastern Ganga dynasty came about when Indravarma I defeated the Vishnukundin king.
- The temple is designed in the shape of a **colossal chariot**.
  - It is **dedicated to the sun God**.
  - The Konark temple is **widely known not only for its architectural grandeur** but also for the intricacy and profusion of sculptural work.
    - It marks the highest point of achievement of Kalinga architecture depicting the grace, the joy and the rhythm of life in all its wondrous variety.
  - It was declared a **UNESCO world heritage site** in 1984.
  - There are two rows of 12 wheels on each side of the Konark sun temple. Some say the wheels represent the 24 hours in a day and others say the 12 months.
  - The seven horses are said to symbolise the seven days of the week.
  - Sailors once called this **Sun Temple of Konark, the Black Pagoda** because it was supposed to draw ships into the shore and cause shipwrecks.
  - Konark is the invaluable link in the history of the diffusion of the cult of Surya, which originating in Kashmir during the 8th century, finally reached the shores of Eastern India.



## Other Important Monuments in Odisha

- [Jagannath Temple](#)
- [Tara Tarini Temple](#)
- [Udaygiri and Khandagiri Caves](#)
- [Lingaraja Temple](#)

**Source: DTE**