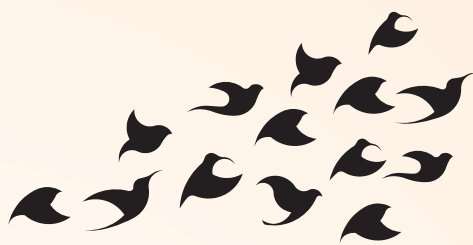




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ARCHITECTURE AND SCULPTURES

GOAT HEAD YOGINI

News: A 10th-century stone idol of Goat Head Yogini that had been illegally removed from a temple in Lokhari, Banda, Uttar Pradesh is being returned to India.

About:

- The sculpture of a goat-headed Yogini was originally part of a group of sandstone deities installed at Lokhari temple.
- These had been the subject of a study by Indian scholar Vidya Dahejia on behalf of the National Museum in New Delhi in 1986 which was later published under the title, "Yogini Cult and Temples: A Tantric Tradition."
- The India Pride project in Singapore and Art Recovery International in London assisted the High Commission of India in identifying and recovering the Statue.
- The Yoginis are a group of powerful female divinities associated with Tantrik worship. They are worshiped as a group, usually 64, and are thought to have infinite powers.
- The Ministry of Culture has been involved in the repatriation of Indian antiquities and artefacts in collaboration with the Ministry of External Affairs.



Similar sculpture:

- The buffalo-headed Vrishanana Yogini, which had been stolen from the same temple in Lokhari village was recovered and returned to India from Paris in 2013. Later it was installed at the National Museum, New Delhi.

SOMNATH TEMPLE

News: Prime Minister inaugurated the new Circuit House at Somnath.

About:

- The Somnath temple, also called Somanātha temple or Deo Patan, is located in Prabhas Patan, Veraval in Gujarat, India, believed to be the first among the twelve Jyotirlinga shrines of Shiva.
- The current temple is built in the Chalukyan style, known as "Kailash Mahameru Prasad" architecture.
- It reflects the skill of Gujarat's master masons, the Sompura Salats.
- Somnath is famous for 'Triveni Sangam' - the confluence of 3 rivers - Hiran, Kapil, and a mythical River Saraswathy.

History:

- Somnath's first temple is said to have existed 2000 years ago.
- King Maitre of Vallabhaneni built and renovated a second temple in place of the original in 649 AD.
- Pratishtha King Nag Bhatt II rebuilt the temple with red stone for the third time in 815 AD.
- In 1026, Mahmud Ghazni lent the precious jewels and property of the Somnath temple.
- Between 1026 and 1042, Solanki Raja Bhimdev built the fourth temple of Bhoj and Anhilwad Patan.

Post-Independence:

- After India's independence, those ruins were demolished and the Somnath temple was reconstructed in the Māru-Gurjara style of Hindu temple architecture.
- The contemporary Somnath temple's reconstruction was started under the orders of the first Home Minister of India Vallabhbhai Patel and completed in May 1951 after his death.
- Presently the Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi is the chairman of Shree Somnath Mandir trust.

KONARK SUN TEMPLE

News: The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) has taken up the complete solarisation of Konark Sun Temple and Konark town in Odisha.

About:

- The scheme intends to build a **10-MW grid-connected solar project** as well as various off-grid solar applications such as solar trees, solar drinking water kiosks, and off-grid solar power plants with battery storage.
- Along with the temple, the **Konark town will be included in the plan.**
- Project has **100% central financial assistance** from the Government of India.

Konark Sun Temple:

- The temple is a **World Heritage Site situated in the state of Odisha**, dedicated to the **Sun God**.
- The alignment of the Sun Temple is in the **east-west direction**.
- Great poet Rabindranath Tagore wrote about Konark: **"Here the language of stone surpasses the language of man."**
- It was referred to by European sailors as **"The Black Pagoda"** as it formed an important landmark for them in their coastal voyage.
- It forms **part of the golden triangle of Odisha**, along with **Puri and Bhubaneswar**.
- It was built by **King Narasimhadeva I** of the Eastern Ganga dynasty from 1238-1250 CE.
- The Sun temple belongs to the **Kalinga School of Indian Temples architecture**.
- It includes **Shikhara** (crown), **Jagmohan** (audience hall), **Natmandir** (dance hall), and **Deula** (tower).
- The walls of both the deul and the Jagmohan are **lavishly sculpted with architectural motifs** and a **profusion of figures**.
- **Examples of Kalinga architecture:** Rajarani temple (Bhubaneswar), Jagannath Temple, Puri.

JAGANNATH PURI TEMPLE

News: The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has asked the Odisha government to tweak its much-vaunted Shree Mandira Parikrama Project (SMPP) — a massive beautification project around the 12th-century Jagannath temple in Puri

About:

- An **important Vaishnavite temple dedicated to Jagannath**
- The present temple was **rebuilt from the 10th century onwards**, by **Anantavarman Chodaganga Deva**, the first king of the **Eastern Ganga dynasty**.
- Jagannath Puri temple is also called **'Yamanika Tirtha'** where, according to Hindu beliefs, the power of **'Yama'**, the god of death has been nullified in Puri due to the presence of Lord Jagannath.
- It is regarded as **"White Pagoda"** and is a **part of Char Dham pilgrimages (Badrinath, Dwaraka, Puri, Rameswaram)**. (Konark temple – Black Pagoda)
- It is famous for its **annual Ratha Yatra, or chariot festival**, in which the three principal deities are pulled on huge and elaborately decorated Rathas.
- The huge temple complex covers an area of over **400,000 square feet** and is surrounded by a **highly fortified wall**, known as **Meghanada Pacheri**.
- Another wall known as **kurma bedha** surrounds the main temple.
- **The temple has four distinct sectional structures, namely:**
 1. **Deula (Rekha Deula), Vimana, or Garba griha** (Sanctum sanctorum) where the triad deities are lodged on the ratnavedi (Throne of Pearls).
 2. **Mukhashala** (Frontal porch);
 3. **Nata mandir/Nata Mandapa**, which is also known as the Jagamohan (Audience Hall/Dancing Hall), and
 4. **Bhoga Mandapa** (Offerings Hall).
- **There are four gates to the temple:**
 1. Eastern **'Singhadwara'** (main gate with two crouching lions)
 2. Southern **'Ashwadwara'**
 3. Western **'Vyaghra Dwara'**
 4. Northern **'Hastidwara'**.
- In front of the entrance stands the **Aruna stambha or sun pillar**, which was **originally at the Sun Temple in Konark**.

Jagannath temple Heritage Corridor Project:

- Redeveloping major portions of the holy town and in the vicinity of the Jagannath temple for visitors and tourists.
- **The project will include:** Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) building redevelopment, a 600-capacity Srimandir reception center, Jagannath cultural center, Badadanda heritage streetscape, beachfront development, Puri lake, Musa river revival plan, etc.

Recent amendments to Sri Jagannath Temple Act of 1954:

- The amendment **delegated authority** to the temple administration and relevant officials for the sale and lease of land in the name of the Jagannath temple.
- Unlike in the past, no approval from the state government is required for this process.
- Furthermore, the **temple can generate additional corpus funds** by selling used and unused land.

LINGARAJA TEMPLE

News: Recently, the Central government has questioned the legislative competence of the Odisha government to bring the 11th-century Lingaraj temple in Bhubaneswar under a special law.

About:

- Lingaraj temple was **built during the 11th century AD, dedicated to Lord Shiva**.
- The temple has been described as **“One of the finest examples of purely Hindu temples in India”**.
- Lingaraj is referred to as **“Swayambhu”** – (self-originated Shivaling).
- The temple marks the **culmination of the temple architecture in Bhubaneswar, Odisha** which was the cradle of the **Kalinga School of Temple Architecture**.
- The sprawling temple complex has **one hundred and fifty subsidiary shrines**.
- The temples are considered a **masterpiece of Indian Architecture** for their detailed plan, proportions, seamless joints, elegant craftsmanship, and impressive dimensions.
- **The temple can broadly be divided into four main halls:**
 1. The **Garbhagriha** (Sanctum Sanctorum).
 2. The **Yajana Mandapa** (the hall for prayers)
 3. The **Natya Mandapa** (dance and music hall)
 4. The **Bhoga Mandapa** (where devotees can have the Prasad (offering) of the Lord).
- The exquisite carvings depicting chores of daily life, and the activity centers, apart from being a place of worship, make the temple a place for social and cultural gatherings, somewhat like a **modern community center**.
- The other attraction of the temple is the **Bindusagar Lake, located on the north side of the temple**.

Other Important Monuments in Odisha:

- Konark Sun Temple (UNESCO World Heritage Site)
- Jagannath Temple
- Tara Tarini Temple

- Udaygiri and Khandagiri Caves

THE FORT OF HALEBIDU

News: The historic fortification which stood for centuries at Halebidu was demolished recently to lay a road.

About:

- It was the **capital of Hoysalas in the state of Karnataka**.
- The place has been **recommended for the World Heritage Site Tag**.
- The Hoysala rulers built the fort using **granite boulders in the 11th century**.
- It served as a protective wall for the capital township, which included temples, including Hoysaleswara, and Shantinath Basadi among other historic structures and monuments.
- The **Hoysaleswara temple is not part of the Swachh Iconic Places (SIP)**.

Swachh Iconic Places (SIP)

An initiative of the **Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation under Swachh Bharat Mission** which aims to take iconic places and their surroundings to higher standards of Swachhata, so that all visitors benefit and also take home the message of cleanliness.

HOYSALA ARCHITECTURE

News: The Union Culture Ministry announced that the Hoysala Temples of Belur, Halebid, and Somnathapura in Karnataka are India's official nominations for the UNESCO World Heritage List for the year 2022-2023.

About:

- The **12th century Hoysala Temple**, also known as the **Hoysaleswara temple** or **‘Halebidu’ temple**, dedicated to **Lord Shiva**, was sponsored by **King Vishnuvardhana**.
- This temple shows a **basic Dravidian style**, but also shows a strong influence of **‘Bhumija’**, which is seen in central India, along with **‘Nagara’** traditions of northern and western India.
- Hoysala temples are **also known as hybrid or Vesara temples** because their unique style appears to be a cross between Dravida and Nagara styles.
- They are made of **soapstone, a relatively soft stone**.
- The temple follows the **Shaivism tradition**, but includes themes from **Vaishnavism, Shaktism**, and images from **Jainism**.

- The **sculptures** inside the temple **depict scenes from the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, and the Bhagavata Purana.**
- The temples are **protected monuments** of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI).
- In the Hoysala temples, **multiple shrines are arranged in the shape of an intricately designed star around a central pillared hall.**
- Among the well-known temples:
 - **Chennakeshava temple in Somnathpura, Karnataka** built around AD 1268 under Narasimha III.
 - **Kesava temple at Belur, Karnataka** built by Vishnuvardhana.

BAPPANADU SRI DURGA PARAMESHWARI TEMPLE

News: Denying reports that Muslim traders were sent away from having their stalls at the ongoing temple fair, Bappanadu Sri Durgaparameshwari Temple authorities said that traders have themselves left the place.

About:

- Sri Durga Parameshwari temple was **built in the Bappanadu village of Mulki town, Karnataka.**
- This temple is situated **on the banks of the Shambhavi River.**
- The **Goddess here is in the form of Linga** and is believed to have emerged in conjunction with the rivers Nandini and Shambhavi at the border of Mulki.
- It is thought to have been built by **Bappa Beary, a Muslim merchant from Kerala, with the assistance of Mulki Swantha (Jain ruler).**
- Along with the Hindu devotees, the temple also has **Muslim devotees who come here to seek blessings from the Goddess, 'Ulladi'.**

BAMIYAN BUDDHAS

News: The Taliban regime in Afghanistan has said it would protect the ancient Buddha statues in Mes Aynak, also the site of a copper mine where the Taliban are hoping for Chinese investment.

About

- The Bamiyan Buddhas were **great examples of a confluence of Gupta, Sassanian, and Hellenistic artistic styles, dating back to the 5th century AD.**
- It was **once the tallest standing Buddha in the world.**

- They were called **'Salsal' and 'Shamama'.**
- **Salsal** means "the light shines through the universe"; **Shamama** is "Queen Mother".
- UNESCO included the remains in **its list of world heritage sites in 2003.**



Taliban's destruction of Bamiyan:

- In the 1990s, **Taliban's rule purportedly reduced lawlessness**, they also instituted so-called **"Islamic punishments"** and a regressive interpretation of Islamic practices, such as a ban on television, public executions, and a lack of schooling for girls aged 10 and up.
- This extremist culture **included the destruction of the Bamiyan Buddhas.**
- The remains of the Bamiyan Buddhas were added to **UNESCO's list of world heritage sites in 2003.**
- The **Salsal statue was "recreated" on March 9, 2021**, with a 3D projection beamed at the corner where it had stood.

Significance:

- Bamiyan is located in the **Hindu Kush highlands of Afghanistan's central highlands.**
- The valley, **which runs along the Bamiyan River**, was once an important part of the Silk Roads, transporting not only merchants but also culture, religion, and language.
- **Bamiyan became a major trade, cultural, and religious center as the Buddhist Kushan Empire spread**, acting as a sort of crucible. The Kushans were able to develop a syncretic culture as **China, India, and Rome sought passage through Bamiyan.**
- The two colossal Buddhas were only part of a larger complex that included stupas, smaller seated and standing Buddhas, and wall paintings in caves spread throughout the surrounding valleys.

Mes Aynak:

- Mes Aynak, also called **Mis Ainak or Mis-e-Ainak**, southeast of



Kabul, **Afghanistan**, located in a barren region of **Logar Province**.

- Mes Aynak contains **Afghanistan's largest copper deposit**, as well as the remains of an ancient settlement with over 400 Buddha statues, stupas, and a 40 ha (100 acres) monastery complex.

CHENNAKESAVA TEMPLE

News: The recital of the Quran marks the beginning of the rathotsava (chariot festival) at the historic Chennakeshava temple in Belur, Karnataka.

About:

- The 12th century Chennakeshava temple was **consecrated by Hoysala King Vishnuvardhana in the Vijayanagar style**.
- He built the temple **to mark his victories in 1116 AD against the Cholas in the Battle of Talakkad and called it the Vijaya Narayana Temple**.
- Temple was built using **soft soapstone** as they were found suitable for intricate carvings.
- **Dasoja and Chavana**, a father and son duo from Balliganve, a centre of Kalyana Chalukya art, constructed the temple.
- **Shantaladevi, Queen of King Vishnuvardhana**, serves as the inspiration for a sculpture in the **Vavaranga - Darpana Sundari** (lady with the mirror).
- This main temple is surrounded by the temples of Kappe Chennigaraya, Soumyanayaki, Andal, and other Vaishnava manifestations.

Belur:

- Beluru (also known as Velapuri, Velur, and Belapur) is situated on the **banks of the Yagachi River**.
- Belur was the **first capital city of the Hoysalas**.
- The city was so revered by the Hoysalas that it is referred to as **"Earthly Vaikuntha" (Vishnu's abode)** and **"Dakshina Varanasi" (southern holy city)** in later inscriptions.

MALCHA MAHAL

News: The Delhi government is about to renovate the **14th-century monument, Malcha Mahal**.

About:

- It was **built in 1325 by the then Sultan Feroz Shah Tughlaq** and was, for a long time, used as a hunting lodge.
- It later became the residence of the descendants of the Nawab of Awadh.

- Also known as **'Wilayat Mahal'** after Begum Wilayat Mahal of Awadh, who claimed that she was a member of the royal family of Oudh. She was given the palace by the government in 1985.

Feroz Shah Tughlaq:

- **Born in 1309** and ascended the throne of Delhi after the demise **Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq**.
- He was the **third ruler of the Tughlaq dynasty that ruled over Delhi from 1320 to 1412 AD**.
- He was the one who **started the imposition of Jaziya**.
 - **Jaziya'or 'Jizya' implies a per capita yearly taxation** historically levied in the form of a **financial charge on permanent non-Muslim subjects of a state governed by Islamic law** to fund public expenditures of the state.
- He provided the **principle of inheritance to the armed forces** where the officers were permitted to rest and send their children to the army in their place. However, they were not paid in real money but by land.
- The British called him the **'father of the irrigation department'** because of the many gardens and canals that he built.

RAKHIGARHI

News: The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) recently excavated the Harappan site of Rakhigarhi, revealing the structure of some houses, lanes, and a drainage system. The ASI excavations turned up copper and gold jewelry, terracotta toys, and thousands of earthen pots and seals.



About:

- Rakhigarhi is the **most extensive Harappan site in India**.

- Harappa, Mohenjodaro, and Ganveriwala in Pakistan, and Dholavira (Gujarat) in India, are other major sites of the Indus Valley Civilization (Harappan civilization).
- Excavations are being conducted at Rakhigarhi to trace its origins and study its **gradual evolution from 6000 BCE (Pre-Harappan phase) to 2500 BCE**.
- ASI's Amarendra Nath excavated the site.
- **Rakhigarhi is one of the five iconic sites** announced by the Union Finance Minister during the 2020 Budget Speech.
 - **Hastinapur** in Uttar Pradesh, **Sivasagar** in Assam, **Dholavira** in Gujarat, and **Adichanallur** in Tamil Nadu are the other such locations.

Site's Key Findings:

- **Settlements:** The **mature Harappan phase**, which was represented by planned townships with mud-brick and burnt-brick houses, as well as a proper drainage system.
- **Seals and pottery:** **Cylindrical seal** with five Harappan characters on one side and an alligator symbol on the other.
 - **Red ware**, which included dish-on-stand, vase, and perforated jar among other things, represented the ceramic industry.
- **Burials and Rituals:** Animal sacrificial pits lined with mud-brick and triangular and circular fire altars on the mud floor have also been excavated, indicating the Harappan ritual system.
 - The excavations have yielded a few extended burials that almost certainly date from the late medieval period.
 - Two female skeletons were discovered buried with a plethora of pottery and adorned jewelry such as jasper, agate beads, and shell bangles.
- **Other antiquities include:** Blades; terracotta and shell bangles, semi-precious stone beads, and copper objects; animal figurines, terracotta toy cart frame and wheel; bone points; inscribed steatite seals and sealings.

MARTAND SUN TEMPLE

News: The **Jammu and Kashmir** Lieutenant Governor participated in a religious ceremony held in the ruins of the **8th century Martand Sun temple, a protected monument under the Archaeological Survey of India**.

About:

- The **eighth-century Martand Temple (Anantnag, J&K)** is one of the **oldest sun temples in India** and a symbol of invaluable ancient spiritual heritage.

- Built by the **third ruler of the Karkota Dynasty, Lalitaditya Muktapida**.
- **Pandou Laidan** is another name for the Martand Sun Temple. **Surya** is known as **Martand in Sanskrit**.
- The temple was **destroyed by Sikandar Shah Miri in the 14th Century AD** and the ruins are now marked as a "site of national importance" by the Archaeological Survey of India.

Lalitaditya Muktapida:

- Lalitaditya was the **third son of Durlabhak-Pratapaditya of Kashmir**, a descendant of Kashmir's Nagvanshi Karkota Kayastha Dynasty.
- **Karkota Kayastha families** have primarily served in the army of Kashmir's kings and for their enormous contribution, the Kings of Kashmir bestowed the **title Sakhasena** upon them.
- **Muktapida was Lalitaditya's birth name**, and his older brothers were Chandrapida and Tarapida.
- Muktapida **seized control of the Kingdom of Kashmir in 724 AD**.
- He **fought against the Tibetan-ruled daradas, kabhojas, and bhuttas of Ladakh**.
- **Lalitaditya and Yashovarman's alliance prevented the Arabs from entering Kashmir**.
- Later, he **invaded Turkestan through Kabul** and also seized control of most of India's western and southern regions.
- After defeating the Chinese, he **expanded his kingdom to central China**. He was then **compared to Alexander the Great**.
- Lalitaditya was a very **liberal King** who, while adhering to Hindu tradition, **respected all religions**.

Karkota Dynasty:

- The Karkota dynasty emerged as a power in Central Asia and northern India after establishing their power in **Kashmir (early 7th century)**.
- The Karkota **rulers were Hindus who built magnificent Hindu temples in Parihaspur (capital)**.
- They also **supported Buddhism**, as evidenced by the presence of stupas, chaityas, and viharas in the ruins of their capital.

KANHERI CAVES

News: Union Minister of Tourism, Culture, and DoNER inaugurates amenities at ancient Kanheri Caves on the occasion of Buddha Purnima.

About:

- The Kanheri Caves are a **group of caves and rock-cut monuments cut into a massive basalt outcrop in the forests of the Sanjay Gandhi National Park**,

on the former **island of Salsette in the western outskirts of Mumbai.**

- It comprises **more than 110 different rock-cut monolithic excavations** and is one of the **largest single excavations** in the country.
- The size and scope of the excavations, as well as the numerous water cisterns, epigraphs, one of the oldest dams, a stupa burial gallery, and an excellent rainwater harvesting system, attest to its popularity as a monastic and pilgrim center.
- These excavations were primarily undertaken **during the Hinayana phase of Buddhism** but also have several examples of the **Mahayana stylistic architecture** as well as a **few printings of the Vajrayana order.**
- The name Kanheri is derived from '**Kanhagiri**' in **Prakrit** and occurs in the Nasik inscription of the Satavahana ruler **Vasisthiputra Pulumavi.**
- They **contain Buddhist sculptures** and relief carvings, paintings, and inscriptions, dating from the 1st century CE to the 10th century CE.
- The earliest reference to Kanheri is ascribed to **Fa-Hein** who visited India during 399-411 CE.
- **Patronage:** Satavahana, Traikutakas, Vakatakas, and Silaharas, as well as donations from the region's wealthy merchants.

QUTUB MINAR

News: The Qutub Minar complex is **not a place of worship** and its character cannot be changed now, the Archaeological Survey of India submitted in a Delhi court recently, while opposing a plea challenging the dismissal of a civil suit seeking "restoration" of Hindu and Jain temples on the premises.

About Qutub Minar:

- It is a **five-storeyed red sandstone tower** (72.5 m high) built by Muslim conquerors in the 13th century to **commemorate their final triumph over the Rajput rulers of Delhi (Qutub means victory)**, while also **serving as a tower** from where muezzins (criers) call for prayer at the **Quwwatu'l-Islam Mosque.**
- A **7 m-high iron pillar** stands in the **courtyard of the mosque.**
- Its surrounding contains the **Alai-Darwaza Gate**, the masterpiece of Indo-Muslim art (built in 1311).
- The **building process of Qutub Minar took about 75 years.** Its construction was started by **Qutub-ud-din Aibak** (1206-1210) in 1193 and finished by **Iltutmish** (1211-1236).
- In 1368, it was **repaired by Muhammad-bin-Tughluq** (1325-51) and **Firuz Shah Tughluq** (1351-88).

- The minar (tower) is engraved with **fine arabesque decorations** on its surface, mainly verses from the Quran.
- Qutub Minar and its monuments were declared a **UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1993.**

Archaeological Survey of India (ASI):

- It is under the **Ministry of Culture.**
- **History:** It was founded in **1861 by Alexander Cunningham**- the first Director-General of ASI.
- **Alexander Cunningham** is also known as the **"Father of Indian Archaeology".**
- It is the **premier organization** for the archaeological research and protection of the cultural heritage of the nation.
- It **carries out surveys** of antiquarian remains, exploration, and excavation of archaeological sites, conservation, and maintenance of protected monuments
- It **administers more than 3650** ancient monuments, archaeological sites, and remains of national importance.

SANT TUKARAM SHILA TEMPLE

News: Prime Minister will inaugurate the Sant Tukaram Shila Mandir in the temple town of Dehu in the Pune district.

About:

- The Shila Mandir is a temple **dedicated to a slab of stone (Shila) on which Bhakti saint Tukaram had meditated for 13 days** when the authenticity of the Abhyangs he had written was challenged.
- Before this, he had immersed **his entire work in the Indrayani River**; the work miraculously reappeared after 13 days, proving their authenticity.
- The very rock where Sant Tukaram Maharaj sat for 13 days is pious and a place of pilgrimage for the **Warkari sect.**
- The Shila is currently on the **Dehu Sansthan temple premises**, and that for centuries has been the starting point of Wari, the annual pilgrimage to Pandharpur.
- The Sansthan decided to **replace the silver cast covering with an image of Sant Tukaram Maharaj on the Shila**, with a temple housing both.

Sant Tukaram:

- Sant Tukaram was a poet and **Warkari saint.**
- Sant Tukaram and his works, **Abhanga** are central to the sect, which is spread throughout **Maharashtra.**
- Tukaram mentions four more people who had a significant influence on his spiritual development:

the previous Bhakti Saints **Namdev, Dnyaneshwar, Kabir, and Eknath.**

- Tukaram's teachings were thought to be **Vedanta-based.**
- **Social Reform:** His message of a casteless society, as well as his rejection of rituals, sparked a social movement.
- His Abhangs became a powerful weapon **against society's Brahmanical dominance.**

Warkari Sect:

- Sant Tukaram and his work are **central to the Warkari sect spread across Maharashtra.**
- His message about a **casteless society** and **his denial of rituals** led to a social movement.
- Sant Tukaram is credited with **starting the Wari pilgrimage.**
- During the Wari, devotees congregate in the temple towns of Dehu and Alandi to **accompany the padukas of Sant Tukaram and Sant Dyaneshwar respectively** as they start for Pandharpur.
- Participants **finish their sowing before they set off.**
- The **pilgrims reach Pandharpur on the day of Ashadi Ekadashi.**

MAHULI GROUP OF TEMPLES

News: The National Monument Authority (NMA) is going to submit a report on the comprehensive development of the Mahuli group of temples to the Ministry of Culture.

About:

- Also known as **Dakshin Kashi**, the Mahuli Group of Temples is located in **Mahuli near Satara in Maharashtra.**
- It is situated at the confluence of the **rivers Krishna and Venna.**
- These are a famous group of **5 temples** belonging to the 11th and 12th CE in the **Hemadpanthi style of architecture.**
- Hemadpanthi style is named after its founder, **Hemadpant**, who was the **Prime Minister at the court of Seuna Yadavas of Devagiri.**
- Vishweshwar Temple side is called **"Sangam Mahuli"** whereas the Rameshwar Temple side is called **"Kshtra Mahuli".**
- This area has the **samadhis of great Maratha queens Rani Tarabai Bhosle and Rani Yesho Bai Bhosle.**

KAMAKHYA TEMPLE

News: The Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) is planning to construct a ropeway from the Kamakhya Railway Station to the Kamakhya temple in Guwahati.

About:

- It is situated on **Nilachal Hill in the western part of Guwahati city in Assam.**
- It is **one of the oldest of the 51 Shakti Peethas** in India.
- The main temple is surrounded by individual temples dedicated to the **ten Mahavidyas**:
 - Kali, Tara, Sodashi, Bhuvaneshwari, Bhairavi, Chhinnamasta, Dhumavati, Bagalamukhi, Matangi, and Kamalatmika.
- It is a centerpiece of the **Tantric Shaktism cult in India.**
- The temple attracts thousands of tantra devotees in an annual festival known as the **Ambubachi Mela.** Another annual celebration is the **Manasha Puja.**

Temple Architecture:

- It had been modeled out of a **combination of two different styles, namely, the traditional nagara or North Indian and Saracenic or Mughal.**
- Thus, an **unusual combination** has been named the **Nilachala Style of Architecture.**
- The reason behind the development of this new type by the transgression of the orthodox nagara tradition is stated in the **Darang-raj vamsavali**, a compilation of **17th century A.D.**

MOHENJO-DARO

News: The Department of Archaeology in Pakistan has warned that heavy rains in Sindh province could jeopardize Mohenjo Daro's World Heritage status.

What is threatening the World Heritage Site?

- Between August 16 and 26, 2022, the archaeological ruins of Mohenjo Daro received a record 779.5 mm of rain, which had resulted in "considerable damage to the site and partial falling of several walls, including the protection wall of the stupa dome".
- The natural disaster has severely damaged the Muneer Area, Stupa, Great Bath, and other important sites of these ruins.
- Because it is feared that the Mohenjo Daro ruins will be removed from the World Heritage list, Sindh authorities have called for immediate attention to conservation and restoration work at the site.

About Mohenjo Daro:

- Mohenjo Daro, literally meaning “**Mound of the Dead**,” is an **important site of the Indus Valley Civilization (IVC)**.
- Sites of the Indus Valley Civilisation have been discovered from **Sutkagen Dor** in Balochistan near the Pakistan-Iran border to **Alamgirpur** in Meerut district of Uttar Pradesh, and from **Manda** in Jammu to **Daimabad** in Maharashtra.
- Mohenjo Daro, along with Harappa, is the **best-known bronze age (3300 BC to 1200 BC) urban civilization site**.
- **Rakhal Das Banerji** of the Archaeological Survey of India established Mohenjo Daro’s prehistoric antiquity in 1922.
- The site is famous for its **intricate town planning, including street grids with brick pavements, developed water supply, drainage, and covered sewerage systems, toilet-equipped homes, and monumental structures such as the Great Granary and the Great Bath**.
- The sprawling city of unbaked brick ruins 510 km northeast of Karachi and 28 km from Larkana in Sindh were **designated a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1980**.

VEER DURGADAS RATHOD

News: Recently, the Defence Minister of India unveiled the statue of Veer Durgadas Rathore, riding on a horse is 12 feet high and made of Ashtadhatu, in Jodhpur.

About:

- Veer Durgadas Rathore, **Rajput General of the Kingdom of Marwar, single-handedly preserved the rule of the Rathore dynasty over Marwar (Jodhpur)** after the death of Maharaja Jaswant Singh in the 17th century.
- In doing so he had to defy Aurangzeb, a Mughal emperor.
- He commanded the Rathore forces during the Rajput War (1679–1707) and played a major role in the Rajput Rebellion (1708–1710) which became one of the main reasons for the decline of the Mughal Empire.
- He was **elected as the leader of the revolt along with Raja Jai Singh II of Jaipur**.
- He won a number of victories against the Mughals and forced many Mughal officers to pay tribute to him in the **form of Chauth**.

AJANTA CAVES

News: The famous paintings of Ajanta caves, widely regarded as the finest surviving examples of ancient Indian art, are under serious threat not so much from age but the rush of visitors.

About:

- Ajanta is a **series of rock-cut caves in the Sahyadri ranges (Western Ghats) on the bank of Waghora river near Aurangabad in Maharashtra**.
- The caves are **30 in number** including the unfinished ones of which **five are Chaitya or prayer halls and the rest are viharas (monastery)**.
- The caves were built in two phases, the **first starting around the 2nd century BCE** and the second occurring from **400 to 650 CE**.
- Reference to the Ajanta caves can be found in the travel accounts of **Chinese Buddhist travelers Fa Hien** (during the reign of Chandragupta II; 380- 415 CE) and **Hieun Tsang** (during the reign of emperor Harshavardhana; 606 – 647 CE).
- The caves were **first discovered in 1819**, when **John Smith**, a British official, accidentally stumbled upon the horse-shoe-shaped rock while hunting a tiger.
- The **fresco painting technique** was employed to create the figures in these caves. The **artworks’ outlines** were painted in **red color**.
- The **scarcity of blue** in the paintings is one of the most remarkable elements.
- Mostly, the **paintings depict Buddhism, including Buddha’s life and Jataka stories**.
- The site is a protected monument in the care of the Archaeological Survey of India and since 1983, the **Ajanta Caves have been a UNESCO World Heritage Site**.

QUTB-SHASHI TOMB

News: Recently, the step wells at the Qutb Shahi tombs of the Golconda fort was awarded **UNESCO’s Asia-Pacific award (2022) for cultural heritage conservation**.

About:

- Built by the **Qutub Shahis**, these tombs are considered to be **among the oldest historical monuments of Hyderabad**.
- Located in the **Ibrahim Bagh (garden precinct)**, one kilometre north of **Golconda Fort** called **Banjara Darwaza**.
- They contain the tombs and mosques built by the various kings of the Qutub Shahi dynasty.

- Qutub Shahi dynasty, (1518–1687), rulers of the kingdom of Golconda in the south-eastern Deccan of India, **one of the five successor states of the Bahmani kingdom**. The founder was Qulī Qutb Shah

Steps of Qutub shahi well:

- **Step wells of Golconda fort, Telangana** is a 16th century well.
- This structure is made in **Persian style**.
- Historians suggest that Elephants used to fetch water from the step well.
- The monument got the **Award of Distinction**.

Other Qutub Shahi Architecture:

Charkaman:	● Charkaman or the Four Arches was constructed in 1592 A.D. ● The Northern arch is called Machli Kaman (fish arch), the Southern arch is Char Minar arch, Eastern arch is the Kali Kaman or Kaman of Shamboo Pershad (the Black arch) and the Western arch is Sher Dil or Sihr Batil.
Mecca Masjid:	● The Mosque may be split into two classes, the great Mosque (Djami) and small Mosque (Masjid). ● A large rectangular court (Sahn) is surrounded by arcades (Riwak) and the flat roof (Sakf) of which rests on arches (Tak) supported by columns (Amud) of stone (Hadjar) or pillars (Rukn) of brick (libn).
Daru-ul-Shifa:	● The double storied building was built in 1595. A.D. It was a hospital as well as a college of Unani Medicine

Golconda Fort:

- Golconda is a **fortified citadel** and an **early capital city of the Qutb Shahi dynasty**.
- The monuments in the complex blend **Persian, Pathan and Hindu** architectural styles and are built with local granite.
- Surfaces of the historic buildings are ornamented with **intricate incised plasterwork and few monuments also bear glazed tile work**.
- The tomb structures are derivations of the **geometrical designs** of the earlier **Bahmani tombs of Bidar**, though the **stucco ornamentation** carried out here is more intricate and on a far greater scale.

CHARMINAR

News: Congress Leader Rahul Gandhi unfurls National Flag at Charminar.

About:

- Built by **Sultan Mohammed Quli Qutb Shah** in 1591, in honour of his wife, **Bhagmati**.

UNESCO's Asia-Pacific award for cultural heritage conservation:

- Programme started in **2000**.
- **The award has 6 categories of recognition:** Award of Excellence, Award of Distinction, Award of Merit, Award for New Design in Heritage News:s, and the Special Recognition for Sustainable Development.
- It recognises the efforts of **private individuals and organizations** in restoring, conserving and transforming structures and buildings of heritage value in the region.

- As per a popular belief, Charminar was **built to acknowledge the elimination of the plague** which had affected the entire city immensely during that era.
- The **four pillars** are also said to be dedicated to the **first four caliphs of Islam**.
- An Iranian architect **Mir Momin Astrawadi** designed Charminar.
- The architectural design of Charminar is inspired from the **Shia "tazias"**.
- These Tazias were built in the **memory of Hussain**, who was the son in law of Prophet Muhammad and had lost his life in the battle of Karbala.
- Charminar has been built with **granite and lime mortar and pulverized marble**.
- On the top floor of Charminar there is a **mosque** which is believed to be the **oldest mosque of Hyderabad city**.
- The Charminar is situated on the **east bank of Musi River**.
- It is listed as an **archaeological and architectural treasure** on the official list of monuments prepared by the Archaeological Survey of India.
- **Charminar, along with the Qutb Shahi Monuments of Hyderabad:** the Golconda Fort, and the Qutb

Shahi Tombs, were included in the “tentative list” of UNESCO World Heritage Site.

KEDARNATH TEMPLE

News: Recently, A section of priests opposed the gold plating done on the sanctum sanctorum of Kedarnath temple.

About:

- Kedarnath Temple is a **Hindu shrine dedicated to Lord Shiva**, an **integral part of the famous Char Dham Yatra**.
- It is located in **Uttarakhand** on the Garhwal Himalayan range **near the Mandakini river**.
- It was **built in the 8th century A.D.** by **Adi Shankaracharya** and is **one of the 12 jyotirlingas** in India.
- The temple is closed during winter, since during the winter season the deity is brought down to a village called **Ukhimat**.
- In the summer, when the weather improves, the deity is carried back to the temple amid much fanfare and rituals.
- A large statue of the Nandi Bull stands guard outside the temple door.

Mandakini river:

- The Mandakini River is a **tributary of the Alaknanda River**.
- The river runs between the Rudraprayag and Sonprayag areas and emerges from the **Chorabari Glacier**.
- The Mandakini River merges with **Songanga river at Sonprayag**.
- At the end of its course, it drains into the Alaknanda, which flows into the Ganges.

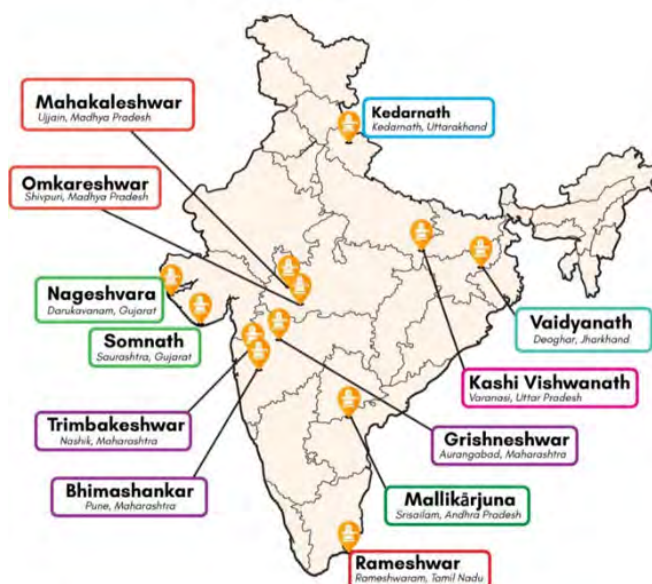
MAHAKALESHWAR TEMPLE

News: The Prime Minister is to inaugurate the Mahakaleshwar Corridor, constructed in Madhya Pradesh's Ujjain.

About:

- Shree Mahakaleshwar Temple dedicated to **Lord Shiva**, is **located in Ujjain, on the bank of river Shipra**.
- Mahakaleshwar, which means the '**Lord of time**'.
- As per Hindu mythology, the Mahakaleshwar temple was **constructed by Lord Brahma**.

Jyotirlingas in India



- The temple in its present form was **built by the Maratha general Ranoji Shinde in 1734 CE**.
- The shrine is revered as **one of the 18 Maha Shakti Peeth in India**.
- The temple is **three-storied**, with **Mahakaleshwar, Omkareshwar, and Nagachandresvara** lingams installed on each level.
- Mahakaleshwar Jyotirlinga is **one of the 12 jyotirlingas**.
- The temple is **administered by the collectorate office of the Ujjain district**.

Mahakal Lok Corridor:

- **Mahakal Maharaj Mandir Parisar Vistar Yojna** is a comprehensive development plan for the expansion, beautification, and decongestion of the Mahakaleshwar temple premises.
- The first phase of the project entails the development of the **Mahakal Lok Corridor** with a visitor plaza having two entrances — **Nandi Dwaar and Pinaki Dwaar**.
- A **900-meter-long pedestrian corridor** has been built connecting Mahakal temple to 108 murals and 93 statues of Lord Shiva along the way

Facts about Ujjain City:

- The city of Ujjain was also **one of the primary centers of learning for Hindu scriptures**, called **Avantika** in the **6th and 7th centuries BC**.
- Astronomers and mathematicians such as **Brahmagupta and Bhaskaracharya** made Ujjain their home.

- As per the **Surya Siddhanta**, one of the earliest available texts on Indian astronomy of 4th century, Ujjain is **geographically situated at a spot where the zero meridian of longitude and the Tropic of Cancer intersect**.
- In the 18th century, an observatory the **Vedh Shala or Jantar Mantar** was built here by **Maharaja Jai Singh II**, comprising 13 architectural instruments to measure astronomical phenomena.

HAMPI & KHAJURAHO TEMPLES

News: The Government plans to include Hampi, Khajuraho as venues to host meetings as part of G20 'culture track' and India's G20 Presidency.

About Hampi:

- The group of monuments at Hampi is **located in the Tungabhadra river basin in Bellary District, Karnataka**.
- Hampi is the **Capital City of the Vijayanagara Empire**, founded by **Harihara and Bukka in 1336**.
- Hampi is also known as the '**World's Largest Open-air Museum**', is classified as a **World Heritage Site** by UNESCO
- Hampi structures belong to **Dravidian architecture**.
- Few important sites in Hampi ruins: **The Krishna temple complex, The Vitthala temple complex, Virupaksha Temple, the Stone chariot Garuda shrine, the Pattabhirama temple complex, and the Lotus Mahal complex**.
- The **Battle of Talikota (1565 CE)** led to a massive destruction of these structures in Hampi.
- The **INR 50 currency note** features the **Stone Chariot of Hampi**.

About Khajuraho:

- Khajuraho temple monuments are located in the **Chhatarpur district of Madhya Pradesh**
- These were built by the **Chandela Dynasty**.
- The **23 temples** form the western, eastern, and southern clusters of the monument and belong to two different religions - **Hinduism and Jainism**.
- The temples are built in **sandstone** and have **nagara-style structures** like **jagati** (highly ornate terraced platform), **jangha** (the body), or **shikhara** (the tower).
- The **famous erotic sculptures** of Khajuraho account for only 10% of all sculptures.
- **Some of the famous temples are:**
 - **Kandariya Mahadeva Temple:** the largest among the group. The **chief deity is Lord Shiva**.
 - **Chitragupta Temple:** dedicated to Lord Surya.

- **Chaturbhuja Temple:** the **only temple in Khajuraho** that **does not have a single erotic sculpture**.
- **Parsvanatha Temple:** Jain temple built using sandstone. It also holds images of Lord Vishnu.
- **Adinatha Temple, Santinatha Temple, and Ghantai Temple** are the other famous Jain temples.

KHANGKHUI CAVE IN MANIPUR

News: The forest officials denied the planned extermination of the colony of bats from a Manipur cave system as stated by the zoological study.

About:

- The Khangkhui Cave is a **natural limestone cave** locally called **Khangkhui Mangsor**.
- Khangkhui Mangsor caves **consists of four major caves**.
- The cave was used as a **shelter by the local people during World War II** after the Japanese forces advanced to Manipur and the adjoining Nagaland.
- The folklore of the **Tangkhu community** believed the cave was the **abode of a protective deity**.
 - **Tangkhu Nagas** are an ethnic group living in the **Indo-Myanmar border** areas of the Ukhrul and Kamjong districts of Manipur.
- The cave **housed large populations of bats** belonging to the Rhinolophidae and Hipposideridae families.
- Researchers recorded **Blyth's horseshoe bat in the Khangkhui cave** which was one of 12 new species added to Manipur's mammals.
- Archaeologists have discovered many **important artefacts**, dating back to the **Palaeolithic culture** from this cave.

Other Paleolithic sites in Manipur:

- Songu Cave in Chandel District
- Machi in Chandel District
- Nongpok Keithelmanbi in Senapati District

BASILICA OF BOM JESUS

News: The Basilica of Bom Jesus in Old Goa, a major tourist attraction, would be closed for visitors for a month for restoration.

About:

- The **Basilica of Bom Jesus is part of the Churches and Convents of Goa** listed under **UNESCO's World Heritage List**.

- It contains the **tomb of St Francis-Xavier**, illustrating the evangelization and spread of Manueline, Mannerist and Baroque art forms in Asia where missions were established.
- It was adapted to **suit native conditions** through use of local materials and artifacts, also known as **Indo-Portuguese styles**.
- It is **one of the Seven Wonders** of Portuguese Origin in the World.

12000 YEAR OLD ARTIFACTS

News: Archeological Survey of India has discovered 12000-year-old artifacts at **the Vadakkupattu village in Tamil Nadu**.

About:

- The ASI discovered **signs of four civilizations at the Vadakkupattu village in Tamil Nadu**.
- ASI discovered **hand axes, scrappers, cleavers, and choppers** from the **Mesolithic period**. They were recovered 75 cm from beneath the surface.
- They discovered **Sangam era** (almost 2,000 years ago) artefacts including **rouletted pottery, Roman amphora sherds, and glass beads suggesting active commerce with Rome**.
- They have also **discovered sculptures** ranging from the **early Pallava period (275 CE) to the late Pallavas** on the floor inside the surrounding space (897 CE).
- With these discoveries, Vadakkupattu village site has now become a **culturally and archaeologically important site**.

HOLY RELICS OF LORD BUDHA

News: Four Holy Relics of Lord Buddha are being taken from India to Mongolia for an 11-day exposition to coincide with Mongolian Buddha Purnima celebrations.

About:

- The Holy Relics will be **displayed at the Batsagaan Temple** within the **premises of Gandan Monastery in Mongolia**.

- In India, these Holy Buddha Relics are **currently housed in the National Museum**. These relics are known as the '**Kapilvastu Relics**' since they are from a site in Bihar **first discovered in 1898**, which is believed to be the **ancient city of Kapilvastu**.

Sacred Relics of Buddha:

- At the age of 80, Buddha attained **salvation in Uttar Pradesh's Kushinagar district**.
- The **Mallas of Kushinagar** cremated his body with ceremonies befitting a universal king.
- His **relics from the funeral pyre were collected and divided into eight shares** to be distributed among the **Ajathasatrus of Magadha, the Licchavis of Vaishali, the Sakyas of Kapilavastu, Mallas of Kushinagar, Bullies of Allakappa, the Mallas of Pava, the Koliyas of Ramagrama and a Brahmana of Vethadipa**.
- The purpose was to **erect stupas over the sacred relics**.
- Stupas erected **over the bodily relics of Buddha (Saririka stupas)** are the earliest surviving Buddhist shrines.
- It is also said that **Ashoka (272-232 BC)**, being an **ardent follower of Buddhism**, **opened up seven of these eight stupas** and collected a major portion of the relics for enshrinement within **84,000 stupas** built by him in an effort to popularize Buddhism as well as the cult of the stupas.

Kapilavastu:

- Kapilavastu was an **ancient city** on the Indian subcontinent which was the **capital of the clan of the Shakyas**.
- Buddhist texts such as the **Pāli Canon** claim that Kapilavastu was the **childhood home of Gautama Buddha**, on account of it being the capital of the Shakyas over whom his father ruled.

RAKSHAN AND TAJ BIBI

News: The Tourism department of Uttar Pradesh has redeveloped the tombs of Raskhan and Taj Bibi (both devotees of Lord Krishna) as a tourist complex with an open-air theatre.

Raskhan:	• Raskhan or Syed Ibrahim Khan was a 16th-century Sufi Muslim poet born either in Amroha or Hardoi in Uttar Pradesh. • Raskhan was his pen name in Hindi. • He became a follower of Krishna and spent his life in Vrindavan. • His poetry is in the form of Doha, Padawali and Savayya.
Taj Bibi:	• Taj Bibi, also known as the 'Mughal Mirabai' was the daughter of a Muslim nobleman named Padma Khan. • Taj Bibi was married to Emperor Akbar and was appointed by the Mughals to protect the Gokul area. • She wrote poetry during the Mughal time when the ruling class belonged to the Muslim religion.

MAHALAKSHMI (SHRI AMBABAI) TEMPLE

News: A 12th-century inscription in Sanskrit carved on the stone wall of the Mahalakshmi temple here has shed more light on the rich heritage of the temple.

About:

- Mahalakshmi temple is located on the **banks of the Panchganga river in Kolhapur** in the state of **Maharashtra.**
- It is **one of the Shakthi Peeths** mentioned in Hindu Puranas.
- The temple takes its name from **Ambabai/Mahalaxmi**, and it is believed that the **divine couple resides** in the area.
- The temple belongs **architecturally to the Chalukya empire** and may have been **first built in 700 AD.**

NANKANA SAHIB

News: The Union Home Ministry has recently facilitated the visit of Indian Sikh pilgrims to Nankana Sahib on the occasion of Gurupurab.

About:

- Nankana Sahib is a **city in Pakistan's Punjab province**, where **Gurdwara Janam Asthan**, also called Nankana Sahib Gurdwara is located.
- The shrine is built over the site **where Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism, was believed to be born in 1469.**
- Besides Gurdwara Janam Asthan, Nankana Sahib has several important shrines, including **Gurdwara Patti Sahib, Gurdwara Bal Leela, Gurdwara Mal Ji Sahib, Gurdwara Kiara Sahib, Gurdwara Tambu Sahib** — all dedicated to stages in the life of the first Guru.
- There is also a **Gurdwara in memory of Guru Arjan (5th Guru) and Guru Hargobind (6th Guru).** Guru Hargobind is believed to have paid homage to the town in 1621-22.

- The **Janam Asthan shrine** was constructed by Maharaja Ranjit Singh, after he visited Nankana Sahib in 1818-19 while returning from the **Battle of Multan.**

TIRUPATI MEGALITHIC SITE

News: Tirupati district is dotted with anthropomorphic burial sites, said to be the largest as a collection in Andhra Pradesh.



About:

- Anthropomorphic sites are those **marked by a representation of human form above the megalithic burials.**
- The most prominent one is the '**pillared dolmen**' of the megalithic era, found **at Mallayagaripalle**, nestling on a hillock between Chandragiri and Dornakambala, in **Tirupati.**
- The structure locally referred to as '**Pandava Gullu**' or '**Pandavula Banda**' in **memory of the Pandavas**, is estimated to be 2,500 years old.
- There is another endangered megalithic monument in **Palem village near Kallur**, which resembles a **bull's horn**. It is called locally as '**Devara Yeddu**'.
- Another megalithic burial site in **Venkatapuram** is the '**stone circle**', where the tomb is surrounded by round stones arranged in a circle.

Megalithic Sites:

- The word 'Megalith' has been derived from two Greek words '**megas**' meaning **big/large** and '**lithos**' meaning **stone**.
- The megalith is a nomenclature used for a certain burial style which **involves stone erect structures for the dead**.
- In India, megaliths are reported from **Peninsular South, Deccan plateau, Vindhya** and **North West region** of Indian subcontinent.
- **Types of megalithic burial:** Cairn circle, Stone alignment, Urn burial and multiple stone hoods are few of them.
- **Kodaikal and Topikal types** are found in **Kerala** and **Menhirs** are found in Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Kerala.



Nathdwara Painting

- A new book features 60 miniature works from the collection of the late Gokal Lal Mehta and an essay by Amit Ambalal.
- Nathdwara Painting refers to a **painting tradition and school of artists that emerged in Nathdwara, a town in Rajasthan.**
- Nathdwara school is a **subset of the Mewar school of painting** and is seen as an important school in the 17th and 18th-century **miniature paintings.**
- Nathdwara paintings are of **different sub-styles of which Pichhwai paintings are the most popular.**
- Most works produced in this style revolve around the figure of **Shrinathji as a manifestation of Krishna** and refer to the incident of him holding the Govardhan hill on his last finger.
- **Note:** Shrinathji is a form of Krishna, manifested as a seven-year-old child (Balak)

Pahari Miniature Paintings

- It is a **style of miniature painting** and book illustration that developed in the independent states of the **Himalayan foothills** in India.
- Painting in the **Kangra** region blossomed under the patronage of a remarkable ruler, Raja Sansar Chand (1775–1823).
- The Kangra style is by far the **most poetic and lyrical of Indian styles** marked with **serene beauty and delicacy of execution.**
- **Characteristic features** of the Kangra style are **delicacy of line, brilliance of color and minuteness of decorative details.**
- Most popular **themes** that were painted were the **Bhagavata Purana, Gita Govinda, Nala Damayanti, Bihari Satsai, Ragamala and Baramasa.**

Pichhwai Painting

- **Pichhwai** literally meaning '**that which hangs from the back**' are large **devotional Hindu painted pictures**, normally on cloth, which portray Krishna.
- The purpose of Pichhwaits, other than artistic appeal, is to **narrate tales of Krishna to the illiterate.**

Santhali Sohrai Painting



- Santhali communities of **Odisha** and **Jharkhand** are changing their ways of painting traditional Sohrai murals to modernity.
- **Sohrai painting** is an **indigenous art form practiced by tribal women** in the Hazaribagh district of Jharkhand.
- The paintings are **done on mud walls to welcome the harvest and to celebrate the cattle**. The women clean their houses and decorate their walls with murals of Sohrai arts.
- This art form has continued since 10,000-4,000 BC. It was prevalent mostly in caves, but shifted to houses with mud walls.

Key Features of Sohrai Art Form:

- The Sohrai art form can be **monochromatic or colorful**. The people coat the wall with a layer of white mud, and while the layer is still wet, they draw with their fingertips on it.
- Their designs range from flowers and fruits to various other nature-inspired designs. The cow dung that was earlier used to cake the walls of the house is used to add color.
- The personal experience of the artist and their interaction with nature are the biggest influence.
- Sohrai Khovar **painting received the Geographical Indication (GI) tag in 2020**.

Sohrai:

- Sohrai is a **five-day festival of the Santhal, Munda, Prajapati, Khurmi and Oraon tribes** in the Indian states of Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, and West Bengal.
- It is a **Harvest Festival**, also known as **cattle festival** held at the start of the winter harvest season.
- It is celebrated during **Amavasya in Kartik (October-November)** month of the Hindu calendar.

Battle Of Pollilur – Painting



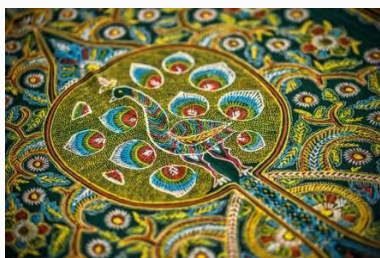
- Titled '**The Battle of Pollilur**', a 32 foot long monumental painting, is another work from the treasury of Tipu Sultan that was published recently.
- Known to be a patron of art, Tipu Sultan commissioned numerous significant paintings.
- It **depicts the victory of the Mysore army led by Haidar Ali and his son Tipu, against the British East India Company forces in the Battle of Pollilur or the Battle of Perambakkam (1780)**.
- The work was commissioned by Tipu Sultan as part of a large mural for the newly built **Daria Daulat Bagh in Seringapatam** in 1784.
- Another memorabilia of Tipu is the "**Magic Box**".

Gond Art Painting



- The art in its visual form is often traced to **Jangarh Shyam**, who in the 1970s and 80s began drawing the largely oral myths and legends of the tribe onto the walls of homes in the village of Patangarh.
- The art form told the tale of their gods and goddesses and as well as the flora and fauna of the deep forests in **Madhya Pradesh**.
- As the form received global recognition, several Gond artists have gained prominence and recognition.
- **The prominent names include:** Bhajju Shyam, Venkat Shyam, Durgabai Vyam, Ram Singh Urveti and Subhash Vyam, among others.

Rogan Painting



- Rogan is a form of **cloth painting** that is considered to be more than four centuries old and is primarily **practiced in Kutch district of Gujarat**.
- The word '**rogan**' comes from **Persian**, meaning **varnish or oil**.
- The craft uses paint made from boiled oil and vegetable dyes, where castor seeds are hand-pounded to extract the oil and turned into a paste by boiling.
- Usually, **only half the fabric is painted, and it is folded to create a mirror image**.
- While **originally only men used to practice** the art form, now several women in Gujarat also pursue it.
- PM Modi had gifted a Rogan painting to the Queen of Denmark, Margrethe II, during his three-day visit to Europe.

Sanjhi Art Form



- Sanjhi panel gifted to US President Joe Biden is based on the theme of **Thakurani Ghat** (It is one of the most famous ghats on the banks of the holy river of Yamuna in Gokul).
- This art form **originated out of the cult of Krishna**.
- It involves **creating stencils** based on incidents from the life of the deity and then hand-cutting these on thin sheets of paper using scissors.
- Sanjhi was **popularized in the 15th and 16th centuries by the Vaishnava temples** and was practiced by Brahmin priests.

Ancient Rock Paintings



- Volunteers have spotted **rock paintings in the Bargur Hills, Erode district, Tamil Nadu**.
- A rock, 30 feet high and 250 feet in length, has paintings in **red ochre and white**.
- A hunting scene in red displays human figures and a herd of deer standing opposite each other, while in some images, deer of various sizes are presented.
- An anthropomorphic painting, four feet high, was seen. It **looks similar to the Mother Goddess megalithic structures** – Two deer and a few animals can be seen beneath the leg of the painting, which depicts the deity blessing humans with resources for hunting.
- The **elephant, tiger, and deer paintings** are seen separately, while the middle row has the **painting of a human**.
- It comprises a man standing on a crescent-shaped object and some other symbols, and is considered to be a picture of a boat ride.
- The bottom layer depicts the racial conflict between people, with three warriors opposing 10.

Mandal Art



- Mandalas **continue to appear in Thangka paintings.**
- It also has a central place in the practice of mainstream artists associated with the **tantric and neo-tantric spiritual movements.**
- In the 1960s **Sohan Qadri and Prafulla Mohanty** gained widespread recognition for their works that were imbued with tantric symbolism, such as mandalas that are also used in the rituals of tantric initiation.
- **Geometric compositions also dominated the works of artists** such as Biren De, GR Santosh, Shobha Broota, and famously SH Raza, who visualized the **Bindu as the center of his universe and the source of energy and life.**

Mandal Arts:

- Residents of Liverpool are amazed over a Mandala the size of one and a half football pitches in length created by artist James Brunt with materials such as leaves and rocks.
- **Mandala literally means “circle” or “center” in Sanskrit.** It is defined by a geometric configuration that usually incorporates the circular shape in some form.
- Mandala patterns are a **centuries-old motif that is used to depict the cosmos and have been adapted by artists the world over.**
- It can also be created in the shape of a square. But a mandala pattern is essentially interconnected.

Origin of Mandala Art:

- It is **believed to be rooted in Buddhism, appearing in the first century BC in India.** Over the next couple of centuries, Buddhist missionaries traveling along the silk road took it to other regions.
- In Hinduism, the **mandala imagery first appeared in Rig Veda (1500 – 500 BCE).**

Elements in Mandala Art:

- There are various elements incorporated within the mandala, each of which has its own meaning. For instance, the eight spokes of the wheel (the dharmachakra) represent the eightfold path of Buddhism, the lotus flower depicts balance, and the sun represents the universe.
- Facing up, triangles represent action and energy, and facing down, they represent creativity and knowledge.



KATHAK

News: Recently, the famous Kathak dancer Pandit Munna Shukla died. His most noted works include the dance-drama Shan-e-Mughal, Inder Sabha, Ameer Khusro, Anga Mukti, Anvesha, Bahar, Tratak, Kraunch Badh, Dhuni, among others.

About:

- Kathak is the **traditional dance form of Uttar Pradesh**. Kathak derives its name from the 'Kathika' or storyteller who recites verses from the epics with music and gestures.
- During the Mughal times, it was **influenced by Islamic features**, especially in costume and dancing style.
- Later in the twentieth century, Lady Leela Sokhey revived the classical style of Kathak.
- It is commonly **identified with the court tradition in North India**.
- In the technique, Kathak follows Vertical lines with no breaks and deflection. Footwork is very important in training dancers.
- Kathak is **based on Hindustani music**.
- It consists of **different gharanas like Lucknow, Jaipur, Raigarh, and Banaras**.
- **Jugalbandi** is one of the main features of Kathak recitals. It shows a competitive play between dancer and tabla player.
- **Gatbhaar is a dance without music or chanting**. Mythological episodes are outlined by this.
- Kathak is **accompanied by dhrupad music**. During the Mughal period, Taranas, Thumris, and Gazals were introduced.
- **Lachha Maharaj, Shambu Maharaj and Birju Maharaj** etc. are the main proponents of Kathak.
- **Other Classical Dances in India:** Bharatanatyam from Tamil Nadu, Kathakali from Kerala, Kuchipudi from Andhra Pradesh, Odissi from Odisha, Sattriya from Assam, Manipuri from Manipur, Mohiniyattam from Kerala.

PERINI DANCE

News: A Perini dance performance by artistes in Hyderabad has left the audience awestruck.

About:

- Perini Sivatanavam is an **ancient dance form from Telangana**, which has been revived in recent times.
- It originated and prospered in **Telangana, during the Kakatiya dynasty**.
- It is performed in **honor of Lord Siva**, the Hindu god of destruction and it is believed that in ancient times this was performed before the soldiers were sent to war.
- One can find evidence of this dance in the sculptures near **Garbha Gudi (Sanctum Sanctorum) of the Ramappa Temple at Warangal**.

Performance details:

- The **Perini Siva Thandavam** is a dance form usually **performed by males**.
- It is called '**Dance of Warriors**'. Warriors before leaving to the battlefield enact this dance before the idol of Lord Śiva (Siva).
- The dance form, **Perini**, reached its **pinnacle** during the **rule of the 'Kakatiyas'** who established their dynasty at Warangal and ruled for almost two centuries.
- It is believed that this dance form invokes '**Prerana**' (inspiration) and is **dedicated to the supreme dancer, Lord Siva**.

KARAKATTAM DANCE

News: Kerala Nattukala Kshema Sabha has demanded that Karakattam (known as Kumbakkali in certain parts) be recognised as an agricultural art form of Kerala.

About:

- Karakattam is an **ancient folk dance of Tamil Nadu** performed in praise of the **rain goddess Mariamman**.
- It's performed in **different parts of Kerala** as well.

- It is performed at **festivals, roadshows** and **primarily at Mariamman festivals**.
- It involves **balancing a large number of pots** of decreasing size on the head of the dancers while dancing and expressing the theme of the dance.
- **Mariamman pooja** is held in the month of Medam after Makarakkoythu (harvest season) in Kerala.

AGNI KANDAKARNAN THEYYAM

News: Ritual dance Agni Kandakarnan Theyyam performing at the Kaliyattam festival has begun in Kannur, Kerala.

About



- Theyyam is a **popular thousand-year-old ritual form of dance worship** in Kerala and Karnataka, India.
- The people of these districts consider **Theyyam itself as a channel to a god and they thus seek blessings from Theyyam**.
- There are about 456 types of Theyyam.
- Theyyam is **performed by males, except the Devakoothu theyyam**; the Devakoothu is the only Theyyam ritual performed by women.
- It is **performed only in the Thekkumbad Kulom temple**.

Major types of performances:

- **Vishnumoorthi** :It is the most popular Vaishnava Theyyam. This theyyam narrates and performs the story of Hiranyakashipu's death by the Lord Vishnu in his avatar of Narasimham.
- **Sree Muthappan Theyyam**: It consists of two divine figures and is considered as the personification of two divine figures— the Thiruvappana or Valiya Muttapan (Vishnu) and the Vellatom or Cheriya Muttapan (Shiva).
- **Padikutti Amma** : She is believed to be the mother of Muthapan. The Padikutti Amma Theyyam is performed in the Palaprath Temple in Kodallur near Parassini Kadavu in the Meenam (a Malayalam month).

GARBA

News: India has nominated the dance form Garba to be inscribed on UNESCO's intangible cultural heritage list. If approved, it will become the first intangible cultural heritage of Gujarat to be listed by UNESCO.

About:

- Garba is a **form of dance** which **originates from the state of Gujarat** in India. Traditionally, it is performed during the nine-day Hindu festival **Navarātri**.
- The word garba comes from the **Sanskrit word for womb** and so implies **gestation or pregnancy** — life.
- Traditionally, the dance is performed around a **clay lantern with a light inside**, called a **Garbha Deep** ("womb lamp"). This lantern represents life and the fetus in the womb in particular. The dancers thus **honor Durga, the feminine form of divinity**.
- Garba is **performed in a circle reflecting the cycle of life**. As the cycle of time revolves from birth, to life, to death and again to rebirth, **the only thing that is constant is the Goddess**, the idol of whom is placed stationary.

4

MARTIAL ART FORMS

Kalaripayattu- Kerala



- Originated in the **4th Century A.D.**
- **Kalari** refers to a specific type of training hall where martial arts are practiced and taught.
- Sage **Paraasurama** built temples and introduced martial arts, starting Kalaripayattu.
- This art form **includes mock duels (armed and unarmed) and physical exercises**. The most important aspect of this style of fighting is not accompanied by drumming or songs.
- Most important key to Kalari is **Footwork**.
- **Kicks, strikes, and weapon-based practice** are also included.
- Even **Women** practice this art.
- It includes several techniques and aspects - **Uzhichil** or the massage with gingli oil, fighting with Otta ('S' shaped stick), **maipayattu** or body exercises, **puliyankam** or sword fight, **Verumkai**, or **bare-handed combat**, **AngaThari**, or the use of metal weapons and **Kolthari sticks**

Silabum



- It is a **kind of staff Fencing, which is a modern and scientific martial art**.
- The record of its origin can be traced to Lord **Murugan and Sage Agastya** who created the art of silambam.
- During the Vedic period training was imparted to young men as a ritual and for an emergency.
- Kings who ruled Tamil Nadu including **Pandiyas, Cholas, and Chera** had promoted it during their reign.
- From a pure defense art, it has transformed into a combat exercise.
- In **Silappadikaram (2nd C A.D)** the reference to the sale of silambam staves, pearls, swords, and armor to foreign traders can be found.
- **Silambam bamboo was one of the most traded items with traders and visitors from Rome, Greece, and Egypt**.
- This **art traveled to Malaysia**, where it is a famous sport apart from being a mode of self-defense.
- **Dress:** players wear langots of different colors m turbans, sleeveless vests, canvas shoes and chest guard and use wickerwork shields.
- **Techniques:** swift movements of the foot, use of both hands to wield staff, use of thrust, cut, chop and sweep to achieve mastery and development of force, momentum, and precision at various levels of the body.

Thang- Ta, Sarit Sarak - Manipur



- Created by **Meitei people of Manipur**.
- **Thang – Ta:** It is an **armed martial art** that finds its mention in most lethal combat forms
- **Sarit Sarak:** It is an **Unarmed art** that uses hand-to-hand combat. Its offensive and evasive action is flawless.
- History can be traced back to the 17th Century when it was used successfully by the Manipur kings to fight the British.
- **Thang** refers to **Sword**, while **Ta** refers to **spear**, thus sword and spear are the two main elements of Thang-Ta.
- The two components of thang-ta and Sarit sarak are together called **Huyen Langlon**.
- These ancient and popular arts use other weapons including axe and shield
- **It is practiced in 3 ways:**
 1. Tantric practices are completely ritualistic in nature.
 2. Mesmerizing performance of spear and sword dances.
 3. Actual techniques of fighting

Cheibi-Gad Ga- Manipur



- Cheibi Gad-ga **involves fighting using a sword and shield**.
- It has now been modified to a stick encased in soft leather in place of a sword and a leather shield.
- The contest takes place in a circle of 7m in diameter on a flat surface. Within the circle, there are 2 lines, 2 meters apart.
- Victory in this contest is achieved according to the point earned during a dual.
- The points are given based on skills and brute force.

Thoda- Himachal Pradesh



- It is a **mixture of martial art, sports, and culture**.
- The name **Thoda** comes from the round wooden piece that is attached to the head of an arrow to reduce its lethal potential.
- It takes place **during Baisakhi every year (14th April)**.
- Number of community prayers are done to invoke the blessings of goddesses Mashoo and Durga, who are principal deities.
- The martial art Relies on a player's **skill of archery**, dating back to the time of Mahabharata when bows and arrows were used in the valleys of Kullu and Manali.
- **Equipment required:** wooden bows and arrows, are prepared by traditionally skilled artisans.
- There are two groups of 500 people each in the game. **The two teams are called Pashis and Saathi** believed to be the descendants of Pandavas and Kauravas.

Parki Khanda - Bihar



- Created by **Rajputs of Bihar**.
- It entails **fighting with a sword and shield**.
- Its steps and techniques are widely used in **Chhau Dance**, which is still practiced in many parts of Bihar.
- This martial art forms the basis of Chhau dance in which all its elements are absorbed.
- The name of this martial art consists of two words, '**Pari**' which means shield while '**Khanda**' refers to the sword, thus the use of both sword and shield in this art.

Gatka - Punjab



- **Weapon-based** martial forms.
- Performed by **Sikhs** of Punjab.
- The name GATKA refers to someone whose freedom is due to grace.
- '**Gadha**' which means mace.
- Gatka features the skillful use of weapons, including stick, **Kirpan, Talwar, and Kataar**.
- The attack and defense in this art form are determined by the various positions of hands and feet and the nature of the weapon used.
- It is displayed at a number of celebrations in the state including fairs.

Mardhani Khel - Maharashtra



- It is **traditional Maharashtrian armed martial art**.
- Widely practiced in the **district of Kolhapur**.
- It focuses primarily on skills of weaponry, swift movements, and use of low stances that are suited to its originating place, the hill ranges
- It is known for the **use of unique Indian Pata (Sword) and Vita (corded lance)**.

Lathi Khela-Punjab & Bengal



- Ancient art form.
- Lathi also denotes one of the **World's oldest weapons** used in martial arts.
- It refers to a 'stick' which is generally 6 -8 feet in length and sometimes metal-tipped.
- Still one of the popular sports in villages of the country.

Inbuan Wrestling - Mizoram



- Native martial art.
- It is thought to have begun in 1750 A.D.
- Stepping outside of the circle, kicking, and knee bending is all prohibited.
- The only way to win this is to knock your opponent off their feet while strictly following the rules.
- It also involves catching the belt by the wrestlers.

Kuttu Varisai - Tamil Nadu



- First mentioned in **Sangam Literature (1st-2ND B.C)**
- It means '**empty hand combat**'
- It is **mainly practiced in T.N**, although it is quite popular in Sri Lanka and Malaysia too.
- It is an **unarmed Dravidian martial art**.
- It is used to advance athleticism and footwork towards starching, yoga, gymnastics, and breathing exercises.
- Grappling, striking, and locking are all important techniques in this art.
- It also **employs animal-themed sets** such as a snake, eagle, tiger, elephant, and monkey.
- It is considered an unarmed **component of Silmbam**.

Musti Yuddha – Varanasi



- Originated in **Varanasi**.
- It is an **unarmed martial art form resembling boxing**.
- It used techniques like kicks, punches, and knee and elbow strikes.
- Although rarely visible now, it was quite popular art during the 1960s.
- It incorporated the development of all three aspects - physical, mental, and spiritual.
- The fight in this art is divided into **4 categories** and is named according to the Hindu gods.
 1. **Jambuvati**: forcing the opponent into submission through locking and holding
 2. **Hanumanti**: technical superiority.
 3. **Bhimseni**: sheer strength
 4. **Jaradandhi**: concentrates on limb and joint breaking

Vajra Musti



- Vajra Mushti is a **distinct Indian martial art that incorporates various hand-to-hand combat techniques** such as grappling, wrestling, and striking techniques.
- Vajra Mushti, which **translates as Thunderbolt Fist**, is distinguished by the use of a knuckleduster, a small metal weapon.
- The **knuckleduster, also known as Vajra Mushti**, is usually made of animal horns and is worn on the fighter's knuckles.
- This Indian martial art form's main goal is to neutralize the opponent and counter his weapon.
- The weapon is also known as **Indra-musti**, which translates to "**Indra's fist**."
- The **vajramushti is typically crafted from ivory or buffalo horn**.

Paika Akhada - Odisha



- It is also **known as Paika Akhara**.
- It is a **peasant military training school in Odisha**.
- It is a **combination of dance and combat**.
- Earlier used by warriors, now practiced as a performing art.
- It is used to perform traditional physical activities.
- This performance art employs rhythmic gestures and weapons swung in time with

Sqay - Kashmir



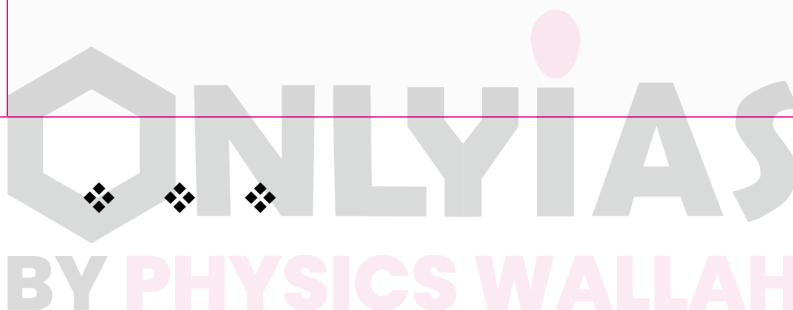
Students Practicing Sqay

- Sqay is a **Kashmiri martial art style**.
- It's **similar to sword fighting**.
- Armed sqay wields a curved single-edged sword and a shield.
- Armed sqay can wield two swords, one in each hand.
- Unarmed tactics include kicks, punches, locks, and chops.
- Sqay employs a variety of approaches. Techniques and lessons for single and double swords in both freehand and sword.

Malla Kamba - Maharastra, Madhya Pradesh



- A gymnast performs **aerial yoga postures** in this traditional Indian sport.
- The **pole used in the sport is referred to as Mallakhamb**.
- Three popular Mallakhamb variations are performed with a Sheesham pole, cane, or rope.
- The name Mallakhamb is derived from the **terms Malla (wrestler) and Khamb (pole)**.
- Mallakhambha was named the **state sport of Madhya Pradesh on April 9, 2013**



YAKSHAGANA

News: Many students from Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Gujarat, and Rajasthan are enrolling for training in Yakshagana theater.

About:

- A traditional theater, developed in Dakshina Kannada, Udupi, Uttara Kannada, Shimoga and western parts of Chikmagalur districts, in the state of Karnataka and in Kasaragod district in Kerala.



- It emerged in the **Vijayanagara Empire** and was performed by **Jakkula Varu**.
- It combines dance, music, dialogue, costume, make-up, and stage techniques with a unique style and form.
- Towards the south from Dakshina Kannada to Kasaragod of Tulu Nadu region, the form of Yakshagana is called as '**Thenku thittu**' and towards north from Udupi up to Uttara Kannada it's called as '**Badaga Thittu**'.
- It is sometimes simply called "**Aata**" or āṭa (meaning "the play"). Yakshagana is traditionally presented from dusk to dawn.
- Its stories are drawn from Ramayana, Mahabharata, Bhagavata and other epics from both Hindu and Jain and other ancient Indic traditions.

BHOOTA KOLA



News: The recent Kannada movie Kantara opens up a controversy relating to the origins of Bhoota Kola, an annual ritual performance where local spirits or deities are worshiped.

About:

- Bhoota Kola is an **annual ritual performance where local spirits or deities are worshiped**.
- It is believed that a **person performing the ritual has temporarily become a god himself**.
- This performer is both feared and respected in the community and is believed to give answers to people's problems, on behalf of the god.
- There are several '**Bhootas**' who are worshiped in the **Tulu-speaking belt of Dakshina Kannada, Uttara Kannada and Udupi districts of Karnataka**.
- It is usually performed in **small local communities and rural areas**.

SHUMANGAL LEELA

News: The 50th All Manipur Shumang Leela Festival 2021-2022 kicked off at **Iboyaima Shumang Leela Shanglen at Palace Compound in Imphal.**

About:

- **Traditional form of theater in Manipur.**
- Arranged in the **form of open-air from four sides.**
- The **roles of female artists are all played by male actors** and **male characters are played by female artists.**
- The present-day Shumang Leelas **address the issues of moral values, unity and integrity.**
- The fostering of bonds of brotherhood and friendship among various communities in the State is also promoted by the theater
- **Note:** In **2017, Shougrakpam Hemanta** was conferred with the prestigious Sangeet Natak Akademi Award in recognition of his contribution to Shumang Leela. With this, he became the **first person to receive the award for this art form.**

CHINTAMANI PADYA NATAKAM

News: The Andhra Pradesh government has brought the curtains down on the popular Telugu play 'Chintamani Padya Natakam', which has enthralled people for almost 100 years.

About:

- It is a **stage play** penned by social reformer, writer and poet **Kallakuri Narayana Rao about 100 years ago.**

- In the play, the writer explains **how people neglect their families** by falling prey to certain social evils.
- It was aimed to **create awareness on the Devadasi system** and how the flesh trade was ruining many families at that particular period.
- **Subbisetty, Chintamani, Bilvamangaludu, Bhavani Shankaram, and Srihari** are some of the characters in the play.

Its performance:

- The play is named after the main character, **Chintamani, a woman born into a family involved in the flesh trade.**
- The play focuses on **how she attained salvation** after repentance.
- **Subbi Shetty**, a character in the play, **loses his wealth to Chintamani** and his character is utilized in a way that engages the audience.
- Chintamani play is **popular across the state.** It has been **performed at thousands of places.**
- The play **continues to engage the audience even today** and has become a must stage play in villages during Dasara celebrations.

Why did it get banned?

- Began as a social sermon, this play has been **increasingly vulgar.**
- Subbi Shetty, who resembles a person of a transgender community, is used to **portray the social group in a bad way.**
- **Obscene dialogues** are added to the play in the name of creativity.



TOYS IN INDIA

News: As per government data, toy import in the country has come down by 70%. The toy industry is primarily an unorganized industry in India.



About:

- PM's call on **"Rebranding the Indian Toy Story"**.
- Under **National Education Policy 2020** toy-making will be introduced to students from the sixth standard onwards.
- **Exemptions:** there are exemptions on standardization for goods and articles manufactured and sold by registered local artisans.

Traditional Indian Toys of Different States:

- **Kerala** - Kathakali dance dolls, animal-shaped toys, and Woodcraft Toys
- **Tamil Nadu** - Thanjavur Thalaiyatti Bommai, Choppu saman Toys
- **Punjab** - Folk toys, Handwai, Chankana, Lattu, Ghuggu
- **Telangana** - Nirmal Toys
- **Madhya Pradesh** - Adivasi Gudia Hastashilpa (Dolls), Betel Nut's Toys, and Tin Toys.

- **Uttar Pradesh** - lacquered toys and miniature utensils Toys.
- **Jammu & Kashmir** - Walnut wood carving toys
- **Chhattisgarh** - Clay & Terracotta, Dhokra Metal Casting, Wood Carving, Metal Craft toys.
- **Daman & Diu** - Tortoise Shell toys and crafts,
- **Andaman & Nicobar Island** - Timber Toys, Coconut shell toys.

TAMBOO ART

News: Wayanad farmer creates Ashoka Chakra using Tambo art.



About:

- Tambo art is an **artistic technique that consists of creating a design with different varieties of rice directly in a rice field.**
- The **origin of this art can be traced to Japan** where people plant paddy of various varieties and hues to create the desired images.
- The image of Ashoka Chakra has been created using four varieties of paddy seeds such as **Nazar bath, Kala bath, Kaki sala and Ramlee.**
- They will ripen in shades that range from brown to golden, light brown to black, green to black and green to white and black.

JHAROKHA

News: Recently, the Ministry of Culture and Ministry of Textiles are organizing “Jharokha-Compendium of Indian handicraft/ handloom, art and culture”.

About:

- Jharokha is a **celebration of traditional Indian handicrafts, handlooms, and art & culture.**
- It will be a pan India celebration that will be held at **16 locations in 13 states and UTs.**
- The **first event** under this celebration is being organized in **Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh.**
- It will be organized at **Rani Kamlapati Railway Station** which is named after the brave and fearless Queen Kamlapati of the Gond kingdom of Madhya Pradesh.



NETTUR PETTI



News: Nettur Petti was recently in the news.

About:

- Nettur Petti or aada petti is a **handcrafted, ornamental box created by traditional craftsmen in Kerala.**
- The Nettur petti is often **made with brass embellishments** and **its lid is shaped like the roof of a traditional house in Kerala.**
- In the past, the lid of the petti was made from a **single piece of wood with no joint at all.** But now, four pieces of wood are joined for the lid.

- In the past, the Nettur Petti was **made only in teak or rosewood**, but now it is made **using jack, wild jack and mahogany also.**
- It was once used by the royals, wealthy families and aristocrats as well as in temples as a **safe box to store valuables and ornaments.**
- Nettur petti derives its name from **Nettur**, a place that **now exists both in Ernakulam and Kannur districts (Kerala) and in Tirunelveli district (Tamil Nadu).**

PATAN PATOLA

News: Prime Minister Narendra Modi gifted ‘Patan Patola Dupatta’ (scarf) to Italian PM Giorgia Meloni.



About:

- The **ancient art of double ikat or Patola woven in pure silk** dates back to the **11th century.** The Patola fabrics bear an **equal intensity of colors and design on both sides.**
- This peculiar quality has its origins in an intricate and difficult technique of **dyeing or knot dyeing**, known as **‘bandhani’**, on the warp and weft separately before weaving.
- One of the major practitioners of the dwindling art form is the **Salvi family from North Gujarat.**
- Patola is woven on **primitive hand-operated harness looms made out of rosewood and bamboo strips.** The loom lies on a slant. The other commonly worn Patola is the **Rajkot Patola**, woven on a flat loom.
- The base price of a Patola saree in the Patan weave **starts from Rs 1.5 lakh up and can go up to Rs 6 lakh.**

MATA NI PACHEDI



- It means 'behind the mother goddess' and is a cloth that constitutes a temple of the goddess.
- The story goes that when the **nomadic Vaghari community from Gujarat** who worship Mata, were not allowed to enter temples, they instead created their own places of worship with illustrations of the Mother Goddess (Mata) on pieces of cloth.
- **Mata ni Pachedi is also called the Kalamkari of Gujarat** due to its resemblance to the art of Kalamkari from South India and the same method of painting, namely using a pen (kalam) made out of bamboo.



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JALLIKATTU

News: Jallikattu has been banned in Vellore and nearby districts in Tamil Nadu as there has been a steep rise in the daily cases of COVID-19.

About	- It is celebrated in the second week of January, during the Tamil harvest festival, Pongal. - Jallikattu is called Eru thazuval or embracing the bull. - It is a bull-taming sport in Tamil Nadu that has traditionally been part of the festival of Pongal. - An ancient reference to Jallikattu is found in a seal discovered at Mohenjodaro which is dated between 2,500 BC and 1,800 BC. The festival also finds a mention in the Sangam literature. - It is a violent sport in which contestants try to tame a bull for a prize; if they fail, the bull owner wins the prize.
Supreme Court stand on Jallikattu	- In 2011, the Centre added bulls to the list of animals whose training and exhibition is prohibited. - In 2014, the Supreme Court banned the Jallikattu on a petition that cited the 2011 notification. - In 2017, Tamil Nadu government passed an amendment to the central government's Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1960 and allowing Jallikattu in the state; this was later ratified by the President. - In 2018, the Supreme Court referred the Jallikattu case to a Constitution Bench, where it is pending now

MAKAR SANKRANTI

News: PM has greeted people across the nation on the occasion of harvest festivals Makar Sankranti, Uttarayan, Bhogi, Magh Bihu and Pongal.

About:	- Makar Sankranti is a festival day in the Hindu calendar, in reference to deity Surya (sun). - Date of observance of Makar Sankranti is observed according to solar cycles. - It is held normally on the 14th of January, or a day before or after. In certain regions celebrations can go on for even four days and vary a lot in the rituals.
It marks the:	First day of sun's transit into the Makara (Capricorn), marking the end of the month with the winter solstice and the start of longer days. - End the inauspicious phase of the preceding month that is called Paush. - Beginning of the end of chilling winter. - Occasion to celebrate the hard work of millions of our farmers and people across the country (it is celebrated as a harvest Festival).

MEDARAM JATHARA

News: Recently, the Ministry of Tribal Affairs has sanctioned funds for various activities pertaining to Medaram Jathara 2022.

About	• Medaram Jathara is also known as Sammakka Saralamma Jathara. • It is a tribal festival honoring the fight of a mother and daughter, Sammakka and Saralamma, with the reigning rulers against an unjust law. • It is celebrated in the state of Telangana. • It is celebrated once in two years in the month of “Magha” (February) on the full moon day. It is the second-largest fair in India, after the Kumbh Mela. • It is organized by Koya Tribe in collaboration with the Tribal Welfare Department, Government of Telangana. • It was declared a State Festival in 1996.
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ATTUKAL PONGAL

News: The Attukal Pongala festival in Kerala will be a muted affair this year with strict Covid-19 protocols limiting rituals to the temple and homes.

About:

- The **Attukal Pongala of Kerala is the world's largest congregation of women for a festival.**
- It is a famous festival celebrated annually at **Attukal Bhagavathy Temple, Thiruvananthapuram in Kerala.**
- It is a 10 days event commencing on the Karthigai star of the Malayalam month of Makaram or Kumbham and closing with the sacrificial offering known as Kuruthitharpanam at night.
- On the 9th day of the festival the Attukal Pongala Mahotsavam takes place.
- Pongala, which means 'to boil over', is the ritual in which women prepare sweet payasam (a pudding made from rice, jaggery, coconut and plantains cooked together) and offer it to the Goddess or 'Bhagavathy'.
- This ritual **can only be performed by women.**
- Attukal Bhagavathi is believed to be an incarnation of Kannaki, the central character of the Tamil epic 'Silappathikaaram'

NAVROZ

News: The Prime Minister of India has greeted the people on the occasion of Navroz or Nowruz (21 March 2022).

About:

- In Persian, 'Nav' stands for new, and 'Roz' stands for the day, which literally translates to 'new day'.

- It is celebrated in March globally (as per the Iranian calendar), Navroz **arrives 200 days later in India** and is celebrated in the **month of August** as the Parsis here follow the **Shahenshahi calendar** which doesn't account for leap years.
- Navroz is the **new year celebrations for Parsis** (Zoroastrians) and **Muslims** (both Shia and Sunni).
- It is celebrated on **21st March every year.**
- In **1079 AD**, a Persian (Iranian) king named **Jalaluddin Malekshah** introduced this festival to generate revenue and collect taxes from people.
- It was observed on **March 21** to mark the beginning of spring and the day of equinox.
- It is inscribed in the **list of UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity of India.**
- In India it is known as **Jamshed Navroz**
- The **Persian king Jamshed** is credited with having created the Shahenshahi calendar.
- Navroz is on the **list of UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity of India.**

Zoroastrianism:

- It is **one of the earliest known monotheistic faiths**, created over 3,500 years ago in ancient Iran by **Prophet Zarathustra.**
- It was the **official religion of Persia** from 650 BCE until the emergence of Islam in the 7th century. With the coming of Islam numerous Zoroastrians fled to India (Gujarat) and Pakistan, thus the name Parsis ('Parsi' is Gujarati for Persian).
- India has one of the largest single groups of Parsis (currently about 61000) in India. The world population is estimated at **2.6 million Zoroastrians.**
- In India, **Parsis are one of the notified minority communities.**

Other new year:

- **Chaitra Shukla Pratipada** (beginning of the new year of the Vedic (Hindu) calendar)
- **Gudi Padwa** and **Ugadi**
- **Navreh** (the lunar new year in Kashmir)
- **Sajibu Cheiraoba** (celebrated by Meiteis (Manipur))
- **Cheti Chand** (by Sindhis)
- **Losoong** (Sikkimese new year)

GUDI PADWA

News: The President of India has sent his greetings to fellow citizens on the eve of Chaitra Sukladi, Ugadi, Gudi Padwa, Cheti Chand, Navreh and Sajibu Cheiraoba.

About:

- Gudi Padwa is a **spring-time festival that marks the traditional New Year for Marathi and Konkani Hindus**, but is also celebrated by other Hindus as well.
- It is celebrated **in and around Maharashtra, Goa, and the union territory of Daman** on the first day of the Chaitra month, to mark the beginning of the New Year according to the luni-solar method of the Hindu calendar.
- Padava or paadvo comes from the Sanskrit word pratipada, which is the **first day of a lunar fortnight**.
- The spring festival is observed with colorful floor decorations called rangoli, a special **Gudi dvaja (flag garlanded with flowers, mango and neem leaves, topped with upturned silver or copper vessels)**, street processions, dancing & festive foods.
- Gudhi Padva **signifies the arrival of spring and to the reaping of Rabi crops**.
- The festival is linked to the mythical day on which Hindu god Brahma created time and universe.
- To some, it **commemorates the coronation of Rama in Ayodhya after his victory over evil Ravana**.

KARAGA FESTIVAL

News: The centuries-old Karaga (temple fair) festival was recently held at the Dharmaraya Swamy Temple in Bengaluru.

About:

- It is **celebrated annually in the Chaitra month (March/April) according to the Hindu calendar**.
- The festival has found its roots in the **epic Mahabharata**.

- It **honors Draupadi** as the ideal woman and Goddess Shakti.
- The word '**Karaga**' translates to an **earthen pot, supporting a floral pyramid and an idol of Goddess**.
- The Karaga is **carried on the head** of the bearer without touching it.
- The carrier **wears a woman's attire with bangles, mangal-sutra, and vermilion** on his forehead.

Cultural significance of Karaga:

- The Karaga procession makes a **customary halt at Astana e-Hazrat Tawakkal Mastan Shah Saharwardi Dargah** to pay obeisance to Tawakkal Mastan.
- The Dargah, a **symbol of syncretic Sufism**, has been taken care of by the Muzavvar family for several generations.

MAHAVIR JAYANTHI

News: The Prime Minister has greeted people on Mahavir Jayanti, recalling the noble teachings of Bhagwan Mahavir, especially the emphasis on peace, compassion and brotherhood.

About:

- This day marks the **birth of Vardhamana Mahavira**, who was the 24th and the last Tirthankara who succeeded **the 23rd Tirthankara, Parshvanatha**.
- According to Jain texts, **Lord Mahavira was born on the 13th day of the bright half of the moon** in the month of Chaitra.
- As per the Gregorian calendar, Mahavir Jayanti is usually celebrated during the **month of March or April**.
- A procession is called with the **idol of Lord Mahavira called the Rath Yatra**.
- Reciting stavans or Jain prayers, statues of the lord are given a ceremonial bath called **abhisheka**.

Lord Mahavira:

- Mahavir was born to **King Siddhartha of Kundagrama** and **Queen Trishala**, a Lichchhavi princess in the year 540 BC in the Vajji kingdom, identical with modern day Vaishali in Bihar.
- Mahavira belonged to the **Ikshvaku dynasty**.
- There are several historians who believe that he was born in a place called **Ahalya bhumi** and the land has not been plowed for hundreds of years by the family that owns it.
- Lord Mahavir was named **Vardhamana**, which means **"one who grows"**.
- He **abandoned worldly life** at the age of 30 and attained 'kaivalya' or omniscience at the age of 42.

- Mahavira taught **Ahimsa** (non-violence), **Satya** (truth), **Asteya** (non-stealing), **Brahmacharya** (chastity) and **Aparigraha** (non-attachment) to his disciples and his teachings were **called Jain Agamas**.
- Ordinary people were able to understand the teachings of Mahavira and his followers because **they used Prakrit**.
- It is believed that the Mahavira **passed away** and attained moksha (liberation from the cycle of birth and death) at the **age of 72 in 468 BC** at a place called **Pavapuri near modern Rajgir in Bihar**.

BASAVA JAYANTHI

News: The Prime Minister paid tributes to Jagadguru Basaveshwara (Basavanna) on the sacred occasion of Basava Jayanti.

About:

- Basaveshwara was born in Bagevadi (of undivided Bijapur district in Karnataka) **in 1131 AD**.
- He was a **12th-century poet and philosopher** and was the **founder of Lingayatism**. He was a Hindu Shaivite social reformer.
- Not only that, but he **served as a chief minister** during the **reign of the Kalachuri-dynasty king Bijjala I**.
- The **Lingayats** (Followers of Lingayatism) are a **Hindu sect** with a wide following in southern India that worships Shiva as the only deity.

Contributions of Basavanna:

- Believed in a **society free of the caste system**, with equal opportunity for all.
- Preached about **manual hard work**.
- Introduced new public institutions such as the **Anubhava Mantapa (or, the "hall of spiritual experience")**, which welcomed men and women from all socio-economic backgrounds to discuss spiritual and mundane questions of life, in the open.
- Used poetry, known as **Vachanaas**, to **spread social awareness and bring equality** to 12th-century society.

KHARCHI FESTIVAL

News: After A Gap Of Two Years, Kharchi Festival In Tripura Returns.

About:

- Kharchi Puja is a **Hindu festival from Tripura**, the festival involves the **worship of the fourteen gods** forming the dynasty deity of the Tripuri people.

- Tracing its etymology, '**khar**' means sin and '**chi**' means cleaning. Therefore, together the name translates to – **cleaning of sins**.
- The **temple of the 14 gods** was built during the reign of **Maharaja Krishna Manikya**.
- This is an age-old tradition being celebrated from some time around **1760 AD** and since has been an **annual occasion** for the community to come together and soak in the festivities.

BONALU FESTIVAL

News: Bonalu is an annual festival celebrated in twin cities Hyderabad and Secunderabad, and parts of Telangana.

About:

- The festival is dedicated to **Goddess Mahakali**, as per belief, a ferocious avatar of Goddess Durga.
- The word "**Bonam**" signifies a meal or a feast in Telugu.
- During this, the devotees **offer rice cooked with milk and jaggery in an earthen or brass pot**, which is decorated with neem leaves, turmeric and vermilion. Women carry these pots on their heads to temples.
- Apart from Yellamma, during the Bonalu festival, the **different forms of Mahakali are worshiped**, including Mysamma, Dokkalamma, Peddamma, Pochamma, Yellamma, Poleramma and Ankalamma.

BATHUKAMMA

News: The Ministry of Culture has organized the celebration of Bathukamma festival being held at Kartavya Path, India Gate, New Delhi.

About:

- Bathukamma is an **annual festival in Telangana**.
- The festival is **celebrated by the women folk of Telangana**, heralding the beauty of nature in vibrant colors of multitudinous flowers.
- The festival begins a week before the grand '**Saddula Bathukamma**' (the grand finale of the Bathukamma festival) which falls two days before Dussehra.
- During the nine-day annual festival, **women and girls sing and dance** around specially **arranged flowers**. At the end of the festival, they immerse the specially arranged flowers called **Bathukamma in local ponds**.
- Since the formation of Telangana state in 2014, Bathukamma has been **celebrated as the state festival**.

SAO JOAO FESTIVAL

News: Though they don't often eat beef; they eat milk and blood which is harvested by puncturing the loose flesh on the cow's neck with an arrow. Catholics in Goa are celebrating the annual Sao Joao festival, which is a feast of St John the Baptist.

About:

- Sao Joao Festival is celebrated in Goa **every monsoon on June 24th**.
- **Siolim Village in North Goa** is the epicenter of the Sao Joao Festival.
- The **Sao Joao Festival is dedicated to St. John the Baptist**.
- The major draw of the feast is the water bodies - wells, ponds, fountains, rivers, rivulets - in which the revelers take the leap of joy.
- Jumping into the water bodies commemorates the leap of joy taken by St John in the womb of his mother St Elizabeth, when Virgin Mary told Elizabeth about the birth of Christ.

The festival also includes:

- **Wearing the Kopel (crowns made of fruits, flowers and leaves).**
- Playing the traditional musical instruments like the gumott (percussion instrument) and cansaim (cymbal);
- Sao Joao boat festival (started in 1992) held in front of St Anthony's Church in the Siolim village;
- Servings of feni (a spirit produced exclusively in Goa); and
- **A place of pride for new sons-in-law.**
- **Sangodd:** In the North Goa's coastal belt, sangodd is celebrated as a part of the feast of St John the Baptist.
- Two boats are tied together to make a sangodd, which means union, unity and junction. Tying of the boat signifies the unity of the village.

KITTUR FESTIVAL

News: The two-day State-level Kittur Utsav is celebrated in Karnataka which has significance related to the initial phase of Freedom struggle of India against the British in 1824.

About:

- Kittur Utsav is a state-level festival, **celebrated in memory of Kittur Rani Channamma**, who had fought the British **30 years before the First War**

of Independence in 1857 but had not got any recognition at the national level.

Kittur Chennamma

- Kittur Chennamma was born on **23 October 1778, in Kakati**, the **Indian Queen of Kittur**, a former princely state in present-day Karnataka.
- She belonged to the **Lingayat community** and **received training** in horse riding, sword fighting, and archery from a young age.
- She **married Raja Mallasarja** of the Desai family at the age of 15.
- She **led an armed force** against the British East India Company in 1824 in **defiance of the doctrine of lapse** in an attempt to maintain Indian control over the region.
- She **defeated the Company** in the **first revolt** but **died as a prisoner of war after the second rebellion**.
- As one of the first and few female rulers to lead rebel forces against British colonization, she continues to be **remembered as a folk hero in Karnataka**, she is also an important symbol of the Indian independence movement.

SAITAL SASTHI

News: Week-long 'Sital Sasthi' festival is being celebrated in Odisha.

About:

- Sital Sasthi is a **sacred Hindu festival celebrated in Odisha**. This week-long special festival highlights the marriage of **Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati**. According to the Hindu calendar, Sital Sasthi is observed on the **sixth day of the Jyestha month** during the Shukla Paksha.
- People observing this festival believe that **Lord Shiva represents the scorching heat of summer** while **Goddess Parvati signifies the first rain**. So, this holy and lavish wedding is observed for a good monsoon.
- Sital Sasthi is a celebration wherein Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati are **adopted by two families**, and their wedding is solemnized with the involvement of rituals. After the marriage is performed, **the God and Goddess** are then **carried around the city via a procession**
- During the week-long festival, devotees in large numbers take part in the most famous **Sitala Sasthi Yatra** that is conducted at Sambalpur in Western Odisha.

NUAKHAI FESTIVAL

News: Nuakhai agricultural festival begins in Odisha.

About:

- Nuakhai is an **annual harvest festival celebrated in Odisha**.
- In Nuakhai, **Nua means new and Khai means food**. The festival of Nuakhai is celebrated by the farmers after the **harvesting of grain**.
- On this festival, Odia people, even those living in **far-off lands return to their native places to be a part of the celebration**.

AANAYOOTTU RITUAL OF KERALA

News: Anayoottu, an annual ritual at the Sree Vadakkunnathan Temple, Thrissur was recently held.

About:

- The Aanayoottu (gaja pooja/ feeding of elephants) is a festival held in the precincts of the **Vadakkunnathan temple in the City of Thrissur, in Kerala**.
- The festival falls on the **first day of the month of Karkkidakam** (timed against the Malayalam calendar), which coincides with the month of July.
- It involves a **number of unadorned elephants** being positioned amid a multitude of people for being worshiped and fed.
- Crowds throng the temple to **feed the elephants**.

Mythology behind:

- It is believed that offering poojas and delicious feed to the elephants is a **way to satisfy Lord Ganesha**—the god of wealth and of the fulfillment of wishes.
- The **Vadakkunnathan temple**, which is considered to be one of the oldest Shiva temples in southern India, has **hosted the Aanayoottu event for the past few years**.

JOHAR GREETING

News: The 15th President of India, Droupadi Murmu, assumed office with a 'Johar' greeting to the country.

About:

- 'Johar' or 'Juhar' essentially means '**salutation and welcome**' or '**paying respect**'.
- Johar is the **tribal equivalent of namaste**. It is used within the tribal communities of **Jharkhand**, and in **parts of Chhattisgarh and Odisha**.

- Johar is predominantly **used by Santhali, Munda and Ho communities**.
- 'Johar' is also one of the **rituals of Nuakhai**, an agricultural festival celebrated to welcome the new crop.
- **Doboh Johar:** It is a **type of Johar** where the person with a tumbler full of water bows in front of the person of higher standing.
- The person **who bows will touch the earth and in return the other person will wash their hand** (using water in the tumbler) and let the water drop on the earth.

MELA KHEER BHAWANI TEMPLE

News: Kashmiri Hindus, locally known as Pandits, will celebrate the Zyestha Ashtami at the Mata Kheer Bhawani temple at Tulmulla in central Kashmir's Ganderbal.

About:

- The temple is dedicated to the **goddess Ragnya Devi**.
- The festival, known as **Mela Kheerbhawani**, is the largest gathering of Hindus in Kashmir after the annual Amarnath Yatra.
- Situated **30 km from Srinagar city**, it is one of the most sacred pilgrimage sites for Kashmiri Hindus.
- The temple gets its **name from kheer, or milk and rice pudding** that pilgrims pour into the spring inside the temple complex as an offering to the goddess.
- Hundreds of local Muslims, too, **traditionally join the celebrations**.

PALM SUNDAY

News: Believers across Kerala celebrated Palm Sunday, marking the beginning of the holy week ahead of Easter Sunday.

About:

- Palm Sunday is a **Christian moveable feast** that falls on the Sunday before Easter.
- The **feast commemorates Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem**, an event mentioned in each of the four canonical Gospels.
- Palm Sunday marks the **first day of Holy Week**.
- For adherents of mainstream Christianity, it is the **last week of the Christian solemn season of Lent** that precedes the arrival of Eastertide.

OLAKKUDA EZHUNNALLATHU

News: Folkland, an NGO and S.K. Pottakkad Culture Centre hosts the Olakkuda Ezhunnallathu at S.K. Pottekkatt Cultural Centre in Kozhikode.

About:

- Olakkuda Ezhunnallathu, a **festival of palm leaf umbrellas**.
- A first of its kind in India, the festival **not only aims to promote the olakkuda but also reimagine it in ways to make it** a more popular product.

Olakkuda:

- Olakkuda has a **socio-cultural significance in Kerala** given its extensive use in rituals, Theyyam, and other performing arts.
- Olakkuda is an umbrella made using dried **palm leaves, bamboo, and cane**.
- The olakkuda comes in **various shapes, sizes, and designs**.
- **They are of two main varieties of Olakkuda:**
 1. **Thoppikkuda** that fits on the head like a big hat.
 2. **Kalkkuda** that resembles an umbrella.
- **Olakkuda in performing arts** : Olakkuda has significant use in different performing arts like -
 - **Kuchelavritam Kathakali** – A Kathakali play.
 - **Aati Kalinja** - A ritual dance that brings prosperity during the month of Aadi.
 - **Porattu natakam** - A folk theater in Thrissur district

SANGAI FESTIVAL

News: The Sangai festival for the first time organized in at least 13 places to make it an all-Manipur festival and showcase the culture of all communities.

About:

- The 10-day-long Sangai Festival is an **annual cultural extravaganza in Manipur**.
- **Manipur's biggest tourism festival** helps to **promote Manipur as a world class tourism destination**.
- The 11th edition of Sangai festival (2022), themed as '**Festival of Oneness**' is celebrated after 2 years of hiatus due to the pandemic.
- This time the festival will be **held in 13 venues across 6 districts**, making it an all-Manipur festival and showcase culture of all communities.

Sangai deer:

- The festival has been **named after Sangai deer, Manipur's state animal**.
- The Sangai is an **endemic and endangered subspecies** of brow-antlered deer found only in Manipur, India.
- It is found in its natural habitat **only at Keibul Lamjao National Park** over the floating biomass in the south eastern part of Loktak Lake.
- The indigenous **sagol kangjei**, a sport that has now evolved into the modern game of polo, will also be featured during the festival.



IMPORTANT HISTORICAL EVENTS

NAGALAND KOHIMA WAR CEMETERY

News: The United Kingdom-based Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) has listed five sites with unusual features. These sites are associated with World War I and World War II.

About:

- Among 5 sites, Nagaland's Kohima War Cemetery is one of them.
- The Kohima War Cemetery is a **memorial dedicated to the soldiers of the 2nd British Division of the Allied Forces who died in World War II at Kohima in April 1944**. The soldiers died on the battleground of Garrison Hill in the tennis court area of the Deputy Commissioner's residence.

Other unusual sites:

- Among the other unusual sites listed by CWGC are the World War I "crater cemeteries" – **Zivy Crater and Litchfield Crater – in the Pas de Calais region in France**. The craters were caused by mine explosions.
- Another site listed is the **Nicosia (Waynes Keep) Cemetery or the "cemetery in no man's land" in Cyprus**, requiring the presence of armed guards.
- This is because the cemetery is on the border of a patch of land disputed between the southern and northern parts of the island since the 1970s.

Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC):

- It is an **intergovernmental organization of six member-states** who ensure the men and women who died in the wars will never be forgotten.
- The commission was **founded by Sir Fabian Ware and constituted through Royal Charter in 1917 as the Imperial War Graves Commission**.
- **Membership:** Australia, Canada, India, New Zealand, South Africa and the United Kingdom.

100 YEARS OF CHAURI-CHAURA INCIDENT

News: Hundred years of Chauri Chaura incident.

About:

- PM Modi launched Chauri Chaura centenary celebrations. A **postal stamp** commemorating the incident was launched. The Uttar Pradesh government is to **renovate the Chauri Chaura Shaheed memorial** into a heritage tourist spot.
- On **February 4, 1922**, the **volunteers of the Non-Cooperation movement proceeded to a local police station**. They held a procession. The police fired at the procession. In retaliation, the **volunteers set the police station on fire**.
- Some policemen tried to escape the fire. They were caught and beaten to death. This is referred to as the **Chauri Chaura incident**.
- Mahatma Gandhiji launched the **non-cooperation movement on August 1, 1920**. The movement **boycotts foreign goods**. It mainly included machine made clothes. Also, the people refused to assist rulers who misrule the country. Education and administrative institutions were boycotted.

Consequences of the incident:

- Around **172 people were sentenced to death** by the Britishers. But in all **19 were hanged**. Mahatma Gandhiji **condemned the killing** of the policemen. **Chauri Chaura support fund** was created. Gandhiji **stopped the non-cooperation movement**.
- Gandhiji went on a **fast for five days** after the incident. He held himself responsible for the incident.
- He **withdrew the non-cooperation movement** on February 12, 1922.

Why did Gandhiji stop the Non-cooperation movement?

- The movement was **supposed to be non-violent and peaceful**. Under the movement, Gandhiji wanted people to relinquish their government jobs and titles, stop going to government schools, not serve in the British army and not pay taxes.
- He did **not want violence** in the movement. The **violence in the incident forced Gandhiji to stop the movement**.

TARAPUR MASSACRE

News: Bihar will commemorate February 15 as “Shahid Diwas” in memory of the 34 freedom fighters who were killed by the British in Tarapur (1932).

About:

- On **15th February, 1932**, a **group of young freedom fighters** planned to hoist an Indian national flag at Thana Bhawan in Tarapur.
- Police were aware of the plan**, and several officers were present at the spot.
- A **4,000-strong crowd pelted** the police with stones, injuring an officer of the civil administration.
- The police responded by **opening indiscriminate fire** on the crowd. After about **75 rounds were fired**, **34 bodies** were found at the spot, even though there were claims of an even larger number of deaths. But **only 13 of the dead** could be identified.

Causes of protest:

- Arrest of Mahatma Gandhi** following collapse of the Gandhi-Irwin Pact (1932).
- Hanging of Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev, and Rajguru** in Lahore (1931).
- Arrest of Nehru, Patel, and Rajendra Prasad.**

INDIAN HOME RULE SOCIETY

News: Under Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, Government of India organized an event to recall the foundation of IHRS in London on 18 Feb, 1905 which sought to promote the cause of self-rule in British India.

About:

- The organization was founded by **Shyamji Krishna Varma**, with support from a number of prominent Indian nationalists in Britain at the time including **Bhikaji Cama, Dadabhai Naoroji** and **Sardarsinhji Ravaji S. R. Rana**.
- It was intended to be a **rival organization** to the British Committee of the Indian National Congress that was the main avenue of the loyalist opinion at the time.
- The **Indian Home Rule Society was a metropolitan organization** modeled after Victorian public institutions of the time.
- It had a **written constitution** and the stated aims to **secure Home Rule for India** and to **carry on a genuine Indian propaganda** in this country by all practicable means.

- The IHRS was **open for membership to Indians only** and **found significant support amongst** Indian students and other Indian populations in Britain.
- It recruited young Indian activists and maintained close contact with revolutionary movements in India.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi had brought the **ashes of Shyamji Krishna Varma back to India from Switzerland in 2003** when he was Chief Minister of Gujarat.
- Mr Modi got the reinstatement certificate of Shyamji Krishna Varma from the UK when he visited there in 2015.

PAL-DADHVAV MASSACRE

News: On Monday, March 7, the Gujarat government marked 100 years of the Pal-Dadhdvav killings, calling it a massacre “bigger than the Jallianwala Bagh”.

About:

- The Pal-Dadhdvav massacre took place on **March 7, 1922**, in the **Pal-Chitariya and Dadhdvaav villages** of Sabarkantha district, then part of Idar state.
- Villagers from Pal, Dadhdvav, and Chitariya had gathered on the **banks of river Heir** as **part of the ‘Eki movement’**, led by one Motilal Tejawat.
- The movement was to **protest against the land revenue tax** (lagaan) imposed on the peasants by the British and feudal lords.
- The British Paramilitary force was on **hunt for Tehawat**. It heard of this **gathering and reached the spot**.
- Nearly **200 bhils** under the **leadership of Tehawat** lifted their bows and arrows. But, the **Britishers opened fire** on them. Nearly **1,000 tribals (Bhils)** **fell to bullets**.
- Tejwat, however, escaped and later “**returned to the spot to christen it ‘Veer Bhumi’**”.
- Legacy:** A Gujarat government release on the centenary of the massacre described the incident as “**more brutal than the Jalliwala Bagh massacre of 1919**”.

DANDI MARCH

News: Prime Minister paid tributes to Mahatma Gandhi and all the eminent persons who Marched to Dandi (1930) in order to protest injustice and protect our nation’s self-esteem.

About:

- Mahatma Gandhi and 78 others** from his Sabarmati Ashram had embarked on the **Dandi Yatra on March**

12, 1930 to break the law which had imposed tax on salt.

- After **walking for 21 days**, they reached Dandi on April 5 and broke the law.
- After making salt at Dandi, Gandhi headed to **Dharasana Salt Works**, 40 km south, but was **arrested on May 5**.
- The Congress Party in the Lahore session of **December 1929** passed the **Purna Swaraj resolution**. It was proclaimed on 26 January, 1930 and decided that civil disobedience was the way to achieve it.
- Mahatma Gandhi chose the **path of non-violence** to break the salt tax against the British government.

Why was salt chosen?

- Salt was a commodity **used by all people** of every community and the poor people were affected more by the salt tax.
- Until the passing of the **1882 Salt Act**, Indians were **making salt from seawater free of cost**.
- But the **Salt Act** gave **British monopoly over the production** of salt and authority to impose a salt tax. Violation of the **Salt Act** was a criminal offence.
- With the Salt Satyagraha, Mahatma Gandhi tried to **unite Hindu and Muslims** because the cause was common.

Outcomes of Salt March or Salt Satyagraha:

- A **lot of people came together** including women, depressed class.
- The movement showed the **power of non-violence** in fighting against colonialism for the freedom struggle.
- In **1931**, **Mahatma Gandhi was released** and met Lord Irwin who wanted to put an end to the civil disobedience movement.
- As a result, the **Gandhi-Irwin pact** was **signed**, the civil disobedience movement ended and Indians were allowed to make salt for domestic use.

MAPILLA REBELLION OF 1921

News: The Indian Council for Historical Research (ICHR) has deferred its decision on a recommendation to remove the 1921 Malabar Rebellion martyrs, including Variamkunnaathu Kunhahamad Haji and Ali Musliyar, from the list of Is freedom fighters.

About:

- The Mapilla rebellion or Moplah Rebellion (Moplah Riots) of 1921 was the culmination of a **series of riots by Moplahs** (Muslims of Malabar) in the **19th and early 20th centuries** against the British and the Hindu landlords in Malabar (Northern Kerala).

- The year 2021 will mark the **100th year anniversary** of the uprising.

Reasons and outcomes of the revolt

- The resistance which started **against the British colonial rule** and the **feudal system** later ended in **communal violence between Hindus and Muslims**.
- **Gandhiji along with Shaukat Ali**, the leader of the Khilafat movement in India, **visited Calicut** in August 1920 to spread the combined message of non-cooperation and Khilafat among the residents of Malabar.
- In response to Gandhiji's call, a Khilafat committee was formed in Malabar and the Mappilas, under their religious head **Mahadum Tangal of Ponnani** who pledged support to the non-cooperation movement.
- Most of tenants' grievances were related to the **security of tenure, high rents, renewal fees and other unfair exactions** of the landlords.
- The British government responded with much aggression, **bringing in Gurkha regiments** to suppress it and imposing martial law.

Wagon Tragedy:

- A noteworthy event of the British suppression was the **wagon tragedy** when approximately 60 **Mappila prisoners** on their way to prison, **were suffocated to death** in a closed railway goods wagon.

FOUR TRIBAL REVOLTS

News: As she took oath as the 15th President of India, Droupadi Murmu scripted history by becoming the country's first tribal and only the second woman to occupy the country's highest constitutional office.

About:

- **Santhal revolution:** On June 30, 1855, over 10,000 Santhals were mobilized by their leaders — **Kanho Murmu, Chand Murmu, Bhairab Murmu and Sidho Murmu** – to revolt against the East India Company over oppression by revenue officials, zamindars, and corrupt moneylenders.
- **Paika rebellion:** Paika Revolt (1817) – a class of military retainers traditionally recruited by the kings of Odisha – revolted against the British colonial rulers mainly over being dispossessed of their land holdings.
 - Bakshi Jagabandhu Bidyadhar Mohapatra Bharamarbar Rai, the highest-ranking military general of the banished Khurda king, led an army of Paikas to join the uprising of the Kondhs.
- **Kol revolt:** The Kols, tribal people from the Chhota Nagpur area, rose in revolt against the British in

1831. The trigger here too was the gradual takeover of tribal land and property by non-tribal settlers who were aided by new land laws. It led to an uprising led by Buddhu Bhagat, Joa Bhagat and Madara Mahato among others.

- **Bhil uprising:** After the British intruded into the Bhil territory in Maharashtra's Khandesh region, the tribals pushed back fearing exploitation under the new regime in 1818. The revolt was led by their leader, Sewaram and was brutally crushed using the British military might.

SAKA PANJA SAHIB

News: The gurdwara management bodies from both sides of the border — Amritsar-based Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) and Pakistan Sikh Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (PSGPC) — will jointly observe the 100 years of Shaheedi Saka Panja Sahib (martyrdom massacre) at Hasan Abdal city, Punjab province of Pakistan.

About:

- Saka Panja Sahib is a **heroic event that took place on October 30, 1922, at Hasan Abdal railway station close to the sacred shrine of Panja Sahib in Punjab province of Pakistan.**
- On this day, Sikhs from nearby Panja Sahib wanted to serve langar (community kitchen food) to the Sikh prisoners but were told by the station master at Hasan Abdal station that the train would not stop at the station.
- In protest, the Sikhs squatted on the railway tracks and as the train approached, the Sikhs who were determined to halt the train continued to stay, demanding their right to serve langar to the Sikh prisoners.
- The train finally came to a screeching halt, but only after crushing many Sikh protesters — of whom Bhai Karam Singh and Bhai Partap Singh died after sustaining serious injuries.
- Since then, both Sikhs are hailed as martyrs of Saka Panja Sahib who sacrificed their lives fighting for the rights of Sikhs against the British.

About Gurdwara Panja Sahib:

- Gurdwara Panja Sahib is a famous gurdwara located in **Hasan Abdal, Pakistan.**
- The Gurdwara was built on the site believed to be **visited by Sikhism's founder Guru Nanak Dev**, along with his companion Bhai Mardana.

MANGARH MASSACRE OF 1913

News: Ahead of PM Modi's visit to Mangarh Dham in Banswara district, Rajasthan CM has sought the declaration of the memorial for tribals as a monument of national importance.

About:

- **Mangarh Dham** is known for the **massacre of tribals by the British Indian Army in 1913.**
- This place is widely referred to as **Adivasi Jallianwala.**
- About **1,500 Bhil tribals and forest dwellers were killed** at Mangarh on November 17, 1913, when the British Indian Army opened fire on the protesters.
- The people were gathered to **demand the abolition of the bonded labor system and relaxation in heavy agricultural taxes** imposed by the rulers of princely states.
- The tribals in the southern Rajasthan region were **led by social reformer Govind Guru.**

Course of events:

- **Govind Guru** started his movement among Bhils in the **early 1890s.**
- The movement had, as **its religious centerpiece**, the concept of a **fire god**, which required his followers to raise sacred hearths in front of which Bhils pray while performing the purifying havan **called dhuni.**
- In **1903**, the guru set up his **main dhuni on Mangadh Hill.**
- Mobilized by him, the Bhils placed a **charter of 33 demands** before the British by 1910 primarily relating to forced labor, the high tax imposed on Bhils, and harassment of the guru's followers by the princely states.
- The Bhil struggle for justice under Govind Guru took a serious turn after the **British and local rulers refused to accept the demands** and tried to break the Bhagat movement in 1913.

LIBERATION OF HYDERABAD

News: The 50th All Manipur Shumang Leela Festival 2021-2022 has started at Iboyaima Shumang Leela Shanglen at Palace Compound in Imphal, Manipur.

About:

- India had **several princely states.** When the British left India in 1947, they gave the princely states the **option of joining** India or Pakistan or remaining independent.

- **Out of the 565 princely states** that existed at the time, **562 decided to join India**. However, **neither did Hyderabad, Junagadh, nor Kashmir**, three princely states, integrate into India or demonstrate any interest in doing so.
- The state of **Hyderabad was under the Nizam** which included the whole of current-day Telangana, the Marathwada region in Maharashtra and several regions of Karnataka.
- The Nizam of Hyderabad **hoped to retain his sovereignty** and **opposed the idea of merging with India** after Independence. Osman Ali Khan Asaf Jah VII, the last Nizam of the princely state of Hyderabad proclaimed Hyderabad as a **sovereign state** and this added to the tension and led to **communal clashes**.
- The Indian government did not want Hyderabad to remain free fearing that it would **lead to the country's balkanization**.
- The then Home Minister Sardar Patel referred to the concept of an independent Hyderabad as **"an ulcer in the heart of India which needed to be removed surgically."**
- Hence, India decided to annex Hyderabad and named the operation **"Operation Polo"**. **On September 13, 1948, Indian forces attacked Hyderabad**. In a five-day battle, the **Indian Army took Hyderabad and fully integrated it into Indian territory** by decisively defeating Nizam.

QUIT INDIA MOVEMENT

News: On 8th Aug 2022, India completed 80 years of Quit India Movement also known as August Kranti.

About:

- On **8th August 1942**, Mahatma Gandhi called to end British rule and launched the Quit India Movement at the **session of the All-India Congress Committee in Mumbai**.
- Gandhiji gave the call **"Do or Die"** in his speech delivered at the **Gowalia Tank Maidan**, now popularly known as **August Kranti Maidan**.
- **Aruna Asaf Ali** popularly known as the **'Grand Old Lady'** of the Independence Movement is known for hoisting the Indian flag at the Gowalia Tank Maidan in Mumbai during the Quit India Movement.
- The slogan **'Quit India'** was **coined by Yusuf Meherally**, a socialist and trade unionist who also served as Mayor of Mumbai.
- **Note:** Meherally had also coined the slogan **"Simon Go Back"**.

Reasons for the Movement:

- **Failure of Cripps Mission:** The immediate cause for the movement was the **collapse of Cripps Mission**. Under Stafford Cripps, the mission was sent to **resolve the Indian question of a new constitution** and self-government. It failed because it offered India **not complete freedom** but the Dominion Status to India, along with the partition.
- **Indian Involvement in World War II without prior consultation:** The British assumption of **unconditional support from India** to the British in World War II was not taken well by the Indian National Congress.
- **Shortage of Essential Commodities:** The **economy was also in shatters** as a result of World War II.

Demands of the Movement:

- The demand was to **end the British rule in India with immediate effect** to get the cooperation of Indians in World War-II against fascism.
- There was a demand to **form a provisional government** after the withdrawal of the Britishers

ANUSHILAN SAMITI

News: The Union Education Minister has urged NCERT and the Education fraternity to include information about Anusilan Samiti, especially in the upcoming National Curriculum Framework.

About:

- Anusilan Samity was a **prominent secret revolutionary society** operating from Bengal in the 20th century.
- Founded by **Satish Chandra Pramatha Mitra, Aurobindo Ghose** and **Sarala Devi**.
- **Aim:** To **overthrow colonial rule** and give momentum to India's struggle for freedom.
- **The organization had two prominent arms: Dhaka Anushilan Samiti** (centered in Dhaka, modern-day Bangladesh) and **the Jugantar group** (centered in Calcutta).
- **Method:** From its foundation to its dissolution during the 1930s, the Samiti **challenged British rule in India** by engaging in militant nationalism, including bombings, assassinations, and politically-motivated violence.
- **People associated with the Samitis:** Legends like **Deshabandhu Chittaranjan Das, Surendranath Tagore, Jatindranath Banerjee, Bagha Jatin** were associated with Anusilan Samity. Hedgewar was also an alumnus of the Samity.

- Nationalist writings and publications by Aurobindo and Barindra Kumar Gosh including **Bande Mataram** and **Jugantar Patrika** (Yugantar) had a widespread influence on Bengal youth and helped the Anushilan Samiti to gain popularity in Bengal.

CHAPEKAR BROTHERS CASE

News: On 22 June 1897 (125 years ago), the Chapekar brothers assassinated British official W. C. Rand and his military escort Lieutenant Ayerst at Pune, Maharashtra.

About:

- Chapekar Brothers, **Damodar Hari Chapekar**, **Balkrishna Hari Chapekar** and **Vasudeo Hari Chapekar** were Indian **revolutionaries** involved in assassinating W. C. Rand in the late 19th century.
- **Mahadev Vinayak Ranade** was also an accomplice in the assassination.
- This was the first case of **militant nationalism in India after the 1857 Revolt**.
- During **1896-97**, **bubonic plague** was spread in Pune (Poona), also called Poona plague.
- In **1897**, the Government set up a Special **Plague Committee** to handle the menace and control the spread of the disease under **Charles Walter Rand** (W.C Rand).

- **The Commission appointed** more than **800 officers** and soldiers on duty in Pune **rather than employing doctors**.
- **People were denied permission** to conduct funerals of their loved ones.
- **Regular harassment** of the Rand commission had prompted the Chapekar brothers and other members of revolutionary "**Chapekar Club**" to take action against Rand.
- The Chapekar brothers organized an association called "Chapekar Club" for **physical and military training**.

MUMBAI SAMACHAR

News: Prime Minister participated in Dwishatabdi Mahotsav of Mumbai Samachar in Mumbai and released a postal stamp to commemorate the occasion.

About:

- The Gujarati newspaper (office located in Mumbai's Fort area) was first **published in 1822**.
- It was **founded** by a Parsi scholar **Fardoonji Murazban**.
- started as a **weekly edition**, primarily covering the **movement of goods across the sea** and other business news.
- The newspaper has been published **continuously for 200 years**.

LANGUAGE, LITERATURE & AWARDS

SAHITYA ACADEMY AWARDS

News: Sahitya Akademi announced the Sahitya Akademi Award 2021 in 20 languages. The Akademi also announced Yuva Puraskar and Bal Sahitya Puraskar for 2021.

About:

- **Established in 1954.**
- It is a literary honor that is **conferred annually by Sahitya Akademi, India's National Academy of letters.**
- Akademi gives **24 awards annually to literary works in the languages it has recognized and an equal number of awards to literary translations from and into the languages of India.**
- **Besides the 22 languages enumerated in the Constitution of India, the Sahitya Akademi has recognised English and Rajasthani as languages in which its programme may be implemented.**
- The Sahitya Akademi award is the **second-highest literary honor by the Government of India, after the Jnanpith award.**
- The award is presented in the form of a casket containing an engraved copper-plaque, a shawl and a cheque of Rs 1 lakh.

Eligibility:

- The **author must be of Indian Nationality.**
- Book/work eligible for the award must be an outstanding contribution to the language and literature to which it belongs.
- When equal merit for books of two or more are found, certain criteria like total literary contribution and standing of authors shall be taken into consideration for declaring the award.

Other Sahitya Akademi Awards:

- **Sahitya Akademi Yuva Puraskar:** Sahitya Akademi introduced Yuva Puraskar in 2011 to encourage young writers writing in Indian languages and who are below the age of 35.

- **Sahitya Akademi Bal Sahitya Puraskar:** is given to an author based on his/her total contribution to children literature and relates to books first published during the five years immediately preceding the year of the Award.

PRADHAN MANTRI RASHTRIYA BAL PURASKAR

News: Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi interacted and conferred digital certificates to Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar (PMRBP) awardees for 2021-22.

About:

- Bal Shakti Puraskar award was **instituted in 1996.** It was earlier known as the **National Child Award for Exceptional Achievement.**
- **Aim:** To give recognition to children with exceptional abilities and outstanding achievements in the fields of innovation, scholastic achievements, bravery, social service, arts & culture, and sports.
- **The Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar is given under two categories:**
 1. Bal Shakti Puraskar and
 2. Bal Kalyan Puraskar.
- **Eligibility:** A child who is an Indian Citizen and residing in India and is between 5-18 years of age.
- Each awardee is given a medal, a cash prize of Rs. 1,00,000/- and a certificate.
- These awards are **conferred by the Hon'ble President in a ceremony at Rashtrapati Bhawan.**
- The Prime Minister also interacts with these awardees every year.
- The awardees of PMRBP also **take part in the Republic Day parade every year.**
- This year, 29 children from across the country, under different categories of Bal Shakti Puraskar, have been selected for PMRBP-2022.

BAL KALYAN PURASKAR

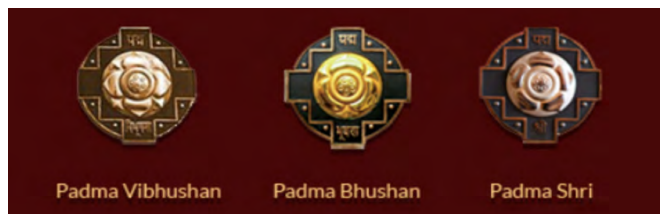
- It was **instituted in 1979** and was earlier known as **National Child Welfare Awards**.
- **Aim:** To give recognition to those who have made outstanding contributions in the fields of Child Development, Child Protection, and Child Welfare.
- **Eligibility:** An individual who is an Indian Citizen residing in India and should have attained the age of 18 years or above (as of 31st August of the respective year). She/he should have worked for the cause of children for not less than 7 years.
- The **institution should not be entirely funded by the government** and should have been in the field of child welfare for 10 years and performing consistently in the field.
- Three awards are given in each of the **two categories - Individual and Institution** - along with cash prizes (Rs. 1,00,000 and Rs. 5,00,000 respectively).

PADMA AWARDS

News: This year the President has approved the conferment of 128 Padma Awards including 2 duo cases (in a duo case, the Award is counted as one).

About:

- Padma Awards are **one of the highest civilian honors of India, announced annually on the eve of Republic Day**.
- The award was **instituted in 1954 along with Bharat Ratna**.
- **Purpose:** The award seeks to recognize achievements in all fields of activities or disciplines where an element of public service is involved.
- **Categories:** The Awards are given in three categories - **Padma Vibhushan (for exceptional and distinguished service)**, **Padma Bhushan (distinguished service of higher order)**, and **Padma Shri (distinguished service)**.



- **Eligibility:** All persons without distinction of race, occupation, position, or sex are eligible for these awards. However, Government servants including those working with PSUs, except doctors and scientists, are not eligible for these awards.

- **Selection for Awards:** All nominations received for Padma Awards are placed before the Padma Awards Committee, which is constituted by the Prime Minister every year.
 - The **Padma Awards Committee is headed by the Cabinet Secretary** and includes Home Secretary, Secretary to the President, and four to six eminent persons as members.
 - The recommendations of the committee are submitted to the Prime Minister and the President of India for approval.
- **Limitations and Exceptions:**
 - The **awardees do not get any cash reward**, but a certificate signed by the President apart from a medallion which they can wear at public and government functions.
 - The **awards are not a conferment of title**, and the awardees are expected to not use them as prefixes or suffixes to their names.
 - A Padma awardee can be given a **higher award only after five years of the conferment of the earlier award**.
 - The **total number of awards** to be given in a year (excluding posthumous awards and to NRI/foreigners/OCIs) **should not be more than 120**.
- **Does the Recipient's Consent be sought before giving the award:** There is no provision for seeking written or formal consent from the recipient before the announcement of the award.

SWADESHI DARSHAN AWARDS

News: The destination of Punaura Dham has been recently included under the PRASHAD Scheme of the Ministry of Tourism.

About:

- Punaura Dham, considered to be the **birthplace of Goddess Sita**.
- The shrine compound has a **Ram Janki temple**, a pond called **Sita Kund**, and a hall.

PRASHAD (National Mission on Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Heritage Augmentation Drive) Scheme:

- **Launched by:** Ministry of Tourism (2014-15).
- **Objective:**
 - **Holistic development** of identified pilgrimage destinations;
 - **Rejuvenation and spiritual augmentation** of important pilgrimage and heritage sites;
 - **Follow community-based development** and **create awareness** among the local communities;

- **Strengthen** the mechanism for bridging the infrastructural gaps.

About Swadesh Darshan Scheme:

- It is a **Central Sector Scheme** launched in **2014 -15**.
- **Objective:**
 - Integrated development of **theme based tourist circuits** in the country;
 - To position the tourism sector as a major engine for job creation
 - The Ministry of Tourism provides Central Financial Assistance (CFA) for infrastructure development of circuits.

NARI SHAKTI PURASKAR

News: On International Women's Day, President Ram Nath Kovind conferred the Nari Shakti Puraskars on 29 outstanding individuals for 2020 and 2021.

About:

- Initiated in the year **1999**, it is the **highest Civilian Honour for Women in India**.
- The awards are given away **by the President of India every year on 8 March, International Women's Day**.
- The **Ministry of Women and Child Development** announces these national level awards for eminent women, organizations and institutions.
- It presents the following annual awards:

Sangeetha Kalanidhi	● Awarded to one person who has contributed to the field of Carnatic music. Since 2005, the Sangeetha Kalanidhi has also received the MS Subbulakshmi Award instituted by The Hindu.
Sangeetha Kala Acharya	● Awarded to two senior musicians who have contributed by bringing several disciples to the concert platform.
Natya Kala Acharya	● Awarded to a senior dancer at the inauguration of the annual dance festival.
Papa KS Venkataramiah award	● Awarded to a Violinist of merit; named after Papa KS Venkataramiah (a great violinist of the past).
TTK Award	● Awarded to two senior musicians who have made a mark in the music field as icons and gurus. It is named after TT Krishnamachari, former Union Minister and industrialist, who was a great patron of the arts and was Vice-President of the Music Academy.
Musicologist Award	● Awarded to a musicologist, a scholar who participates in musical research is a musicologist.
Indira Sivasailam endowment concert and medal	● Awarded during Navratri each year, it is given to the top-ranking performing artist in the concert organized at that time.

Eligibility Criteria:

- Open to individuals, groups and institutions for outstanding work towards empowerment of women.
- Individual applicants must be at least 25 years of age.
- Institutions must have at least 5 years of relevant experience.
- The Nari Shakti Puraskar carries a cash award of Rs.2 Lakh and a certificate for individuals and institutions.

SANGITA KALANIDHI AWARDS

News: The Music Academy announced Sangita Kalanidhi award winners for the years 2020, 2021 and 2022.

About:

- It plays an important role in **promoting Carnatic Music**.
- **History:** A music conference was **held along with the All India Congress Session held in Madras in 1927** and during the deliberations, the idea of a Music Academy emerged. Next year (1928) MMA was inaugurated. Thus it's an **offshoot of INC madras session, 1927**.

2022 BOOKER PRIZE

News: Shehan Karunatilaka has won the Booker Prize 2022 for his second novel, **The Seven Moons of Maali Almeida**.

About:

- The Seven Moons of Maali Almeida tells the **story of a war photographer** who has woken up dead in what seems to be a celestial visa office.
- He has **'seven moons' to try and solve the mystery of his death** and to help unveil a cache of photos that will rock war-torn Sri Lanka.

Booker Prize:

- The Booker Prize is the world's leading literary award **for a single work of fiction**.
- Founded in the **UK in 1969**, it initially awarded Commonwealth writers and now spans the globe and it is **open to anyone regardless of origin**.
- Each year, the Booker Prize is awarded to what is, in the opinion of our judges, the best sustained work of fiction **written in English and published in the UK and Ireland**.
- The winning book is a work that not only speaks to our current times, but also one that will **endure and join the pantheon of great literature**.

NOBEL PRIZE IN LITERATURE

News: Recently, French author Annie Ernaux has won the Nobel Prize in literature for 2022.

About contributions of Annie Ernaux:

- **Annie Ernaux's works** range from a history of France, her first sexual experience and the shame around it, her mother's illness and death to her abortion to her class-linked shame.
- She uncovered the roots, estrangements and collective restraints of personal memory with clinical acuity and courage.

About Annie Ernaux's literary works:

She has written over thirty literary works. Some of her famous literary works include,

- **'L'occupation' (2002):** In this, she dissects the social mythology of romantic love. She confesses and attacks a self-image built on stereotypes in this work. It was translated into English and was shortlisted for the Man Booker international prize.
- **Happening (2001):** It was based on her abortion. It explains about the illegal abortion in the 1960s. The

book brought limelight about abortion after abortion rights were curtailed in the US.

- **A Girl's Story(2016):** It was built on her own experiences at a children's camp that deals with the shaming an 18-year-old girl is subjected to for her sexuality.
- **Getting Lost (2022):** It talks about her affair with a Russian diplomat, she was divorced, and he was married. It is a rare clear-eyed account of female desire.

Awards & Recognition:

- Her works overall have received the French language prize and the Marguerite Yourcenar prize.
- In 2014, she was awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of Cergy-Pontoise.
- Her work **"The Years"** was shortlisted for the Man Booker International prize.

NANSEN REFUGEE AWARD

News: Angela Merkel, former Chancellor of Germany, has won the 2022 **UNHCR Nansen Refugee Award for protecting refugees** in the Syria crisis.

About:

- Award, established in **1954**, honors **individuals, groups or organizations** who go above and beyond the call of duty to protect refugees, internally displaced or stateless people.
- It is named after Norwegian explorer, scientist, diplomat and humanitarian **Fridtjof Nansen**.
- He was **first High Commissioner for Refugees** for the **League of Nations** and won the **Nobel Peace Prize** in 1922.
- **First Laureate:** Eleanor Roosevelt, first chair of the UN in 1954.

UNESCO FELIX HOUPHOUET- BOIGNY PEACE PRIZE

News: Former German Chancellor **Angela Merkel** has won **UNESCO Felix Houphouet-Boigny Peace Prize 2022** for her 'efforts to welcome refugees'.

About:

- It honors living individuals and active public or private bodies or institutions.
- It is awarded to those who have **made a significant contribution to promoting, seeking, safeguarding or maintaining peace**, in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations and the Constitution of UNESCO.
- This prize was established in 1989.

- **First Felix Houphouet-Boigny Peace Prize** was given to **Nelson Mandela and Frederik W. de Klerk** in 1991.

INDIRA GANDHI PRIZE FOR PEACE, DISARMAMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

News: Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development of **2021** was awarded to **Pratham**, an NGO functioning in the field of education.

About:

- Instituted in memory of **the former prime minister**, it consists of a **monetary award** of ₹25 lakh along with a citation.
- **Accorded annually** by Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust to **individuals or organizations**.
- The award recognises Pratham's work in **ensuring quality education for children**, particularly **during the COVID-19 pandemic**.

PRATHAM:

- Pratham began its work in slum areas in **1995** by establishing community-based pre-schools and providing remedial education to students who were falling behind in their classes.
- Its **Annual Status of Education Report (ASER)**, which was based on a survey of 6,00,000 rural Indian children, is now used as a model to assess education outcomes and learning deficiencies in **14 countries** spread across three continents.
- In response to **ASER's concerns**, Pratham launched its **flagship programme, Read India, in 2007**, with the goal of improving children's learning by strengthening basic reading and arithmetic.

FIELDS MEDAL

News: Ukrainian mathematician Maryna Viazovska became the second woman to win Fields Medal.

About

- The Fields Medal is **often described as the Nobel Prize in mathematics**.
- It is **administered by the International Mathematics Union (IMU)**, an international non-governmental and non-profit scientific organization to promote international cooperation in mathematics.
- It is **awarded every four years to mathematicians under the age of 40**.
- Honor carries a physical medal of 14K gold and cash award of Canadian dollars 15,000.

- Fields Medal Symposium is **organized by Fields Institute, Toronto, Canada**.

TULU

News: Speakers of Tulu and Kodava have opposed the draft of the Kannada Language Comprehensive Development Bill, 2022, which aims to ensure the "extensive use and propagation" of Kannada.

Tulu:

- Tulu is a **Dravidian language**.
- It is mainly spoken in **Udupi, Dakshina Kannada, Kasargod** and **the Western Ghats** had 17,22,768 speakers as per the 2001 census.
- The native speakers of Tulu are referred to as **Tuluva** and the geographical area is unofficially called **Tulu Nadu**.
- **Features:** Separated early from **Proto-South Dravidian**, Tulu has several features not found in Tamil-Kannada. For example, it has the **past perfect and the future perfect**, like French or Spanish, but formed without an auxiliary verb.
- **Status:** At present, Tulu is **not an official language** in the country.
- **Tulu culture:** Tulu has a **rich oral literature tradition** with folk-song forms like **paddana**, and traditional folk theater **yakshagana**.

OL CHIKI SCRIPT

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News: For the first time, the Indian Constitution has been translated in Santali, written in the Ol Chiki script.

About:

- Also known as **Ol Cemet', Ol script and Ol ciki Script**, the **Ol Chiki script** is used for writing Santali.
- **Pandit Raghunath Murmu (Guru Gomke)** is the inventor of the Ol Chiki script.

- In the **novel Bidu Chandan**, he described how god Bidu, and goddess Chandan who appear on Earth as humans had naturally invented the Ol Chiki script to communicate with each other using written Santali.
- One of the interesting features of the Ol Chiki script is that it **makes use of signs and symbols long familiar to the Santals**.
- In **2003**, the **92nd Constitutional Amendment Act added Santhali** (along with the Bodo, Dogri and Maithili languages) to **Schedule VIII** (Official Languages of India) to the Constitution of India.
- This addition meant that the **Indian government was obligated**:
 - To undertake the development of the Santali language and
 - To allow students appearing for school-level examinations and entrance examinations for public service jobs to use the language.
- In 2005, **India's Sahitya Akademi started handing out awards** every year for outstanding literary works in Santali, a move that helped preserve and give more visibility to the community's literature.



DENOTIFIED, NOMADIC AND SEMI-NOMADIC TRIBES

News: A standing committee report of Parliament has criticized the functioning of the development programme for denotified, nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes.

About:

- **De-notified, nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes are communities** who are the **most vulnerable and deprived**.
- Denotified tribes (DNTs) are communities that were 'notified' as being '**born criminal**' during the **British regime** under a series of laws starting with the **Criminal Tribes Act of 1871**.
- Nomadic and semi-nomadic communities are defined as those **who move from one place to another rather than living at one place all the time**.

Measures for their welfare:

- The **National Commission for Denotified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes (NCDNT)** was **constituted in 2006**, headed by **Balkrishna Sidram Renke**.
- **Scheme for economic empowerment of DNT communities:** It has been formulated to **provide coaching, health insurance, facilitate livelihood and financial assistance** for construction of homes for the members of DNT.
- The **Development and Welfare Board for Denotified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Communities (DWBDNC)** has been set up in 2019 under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 under the aegis of **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment** for the purpose of implementing welfare programmes.
- A **committee has been set up by the NITI Aayog** to complete the process of identification.
- **Ethnographic studies of DNCs** are being conducted by the Anthropological Survey of India, with a budget of Rs 2.26 crore sanctioned.

KODAVAS

News: Researchers have published a book titled "**A Place Apart: Poems From Kodagu**". It is a bilingual edition of 21 poems by Appanna. This book will help spread awareness about the endangered Kodava takke language.

About:

- Kodavas are an ethnolinguistic group from the region of **Kodagu (Coorg) in Karnataka**.
- They speak the **Kodava language**.
- They are traditionally **land-owning agriculturists and patrilineal, with martial customs**.
- Kodavas **worship ancestors and weapons**. They are the only ones in India permitted to **carry firearms without a license**.
- **Festivals:**
 1. Kailpoldu (Festival of Arms)
 2. Kaveri Sankramana (worship of river Kaveri)
 3. Puttari (Harvest festival)
- They are a warlike tribe with three main groups as- **Kodava Mophlas or Kodava Mappilas, Kodagu Gowdas, and Bearys**.
- They have unique customs and rituals such as no dowry system, **no role of priest in marriage** etc.

Kodava Takke Language:

- Kodava takke belongs to the **Dravidian group of languages**. This language **doesn't have a script**. But over the years, it has found its way into a written form through Kannada.
- The language has been classified as an **Endangered Language by UNESCO**

HATTIS

News: The Centre is set to consider the Himachal Pradesh government's request for inclusion of the Hatti community in the list of Scheduled Tribes in the state.

About:

- The Hattis are a **close-knit community** who got their name from their tradition of selling homegrown vegetables, crops, meat and wool etc. at small markets called '**haat**' in towns.
- They are **cut off from Sirmaur** by two rivers called Giri and Tons.
- The two clans of the Hattis have **similar traditions**, and **inter-marriages are commonplace**.
- There is a **fairly rigid caste system** among the Hattis - **the Bhat and Khash** are the upper castes, while the Badhois are below them.
- Inter-caste marriages have traditionally **remained a strict no-no**.
- Due to **topographical disadvantages**, the Hattis living in the Kamrau, Sangrah, and Shilliai areas lag behind in education and employment.
- They are **governed by a traditional council** called **Khumbli**, similar to khaps of Haryana, to decide community matters.
- The Khumbli's power has **remained unchallenged** despite the establishment of the panchayati raj system.

SAHARIYA TRIBE

News: The rising food inflation is hurting the weakest in India, including the Sahariya Adivasis of Madhya Pradesh.

About:

- The Sahariya Adivasis are classified as a '**Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group**' (PVTG) by the government.
- They live in around eight districts of **Madhya Pradesh**, in parts of states of **Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal**, and the plain division of **Assam**.
- They speak the **Munda language of the Austro-Asiatic language family**.
- The Saharia farmers use the "**slash and burn**" method of cultivation along the hill slopes.
- Saharia villages generally contain several **quarters** called **longlongs**.
- Each long long is **inhabited by one patrilineage** (the line of descent is traced through the male's side of a family) called a **birinda**.
- They **practice their traditional ethnic religions**. However, they are **aware of Hindu values** and use them in defining their own identity.

BHIL PRADESH

News: The demands for a "**Bhil Pradesh**", a separate state for tribal people in western India, have of late begun to be raised again. Bhils in Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh set an example through '**Jeevan Shala**' which is established and has been running a number of schools in central India's tribal areas for 30 years, despite government opposition.

About Bhil Pradesh:

- It is a demand for a **separate state for tribal people** in western India.
- The demand is to carve out a separate state from 39 districts spread over four states: **16 in Gujarat, 10 in Rajasthan, seven in Madhya Pradesh**, and **six in Maharashtra**.
- Bhil social reformer and spiritual **leader Govind Guru** first raised the demand for a separate state for tribals back in 1913 after the **Mangarh massacre**.
 - The massacre, which took place six years before Jallianwalla Bagh and is sometimes referred to as the "**Adivasi Jallianwala**", saw **hundreds of Bhil tribals being killed by British forces** on November 17, 1913 in the hills of Mangarh on the border of Rajasthan and Gujarat.

Bhils:

- Bhils or Bheels are an **Adivasi ethnic group** in West India, listed as **tribal people** in the states of **Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra** and **Rajasthan**.
- It is one of the largest tribal groups in India.
- They **speak the Bhil languages**.
- The word Bhil is derived from "**Veel**", which means "**bow**" in the **Dravidian language**.
- The Bhil tribe is called "**Dhanush Purush of India**" because they are highly adept at learning Dhanush.
- Bhils have a **rich and unique culture**.
- The Bhilala subdivision is known for its **Pithora painting**.
- **Ghoomar**, a symbol of femininity, a traditional folk dance of the Bhil tribe.
- The young women take art in this dance and declare that they are **stepping into women's shoes**.

MAASAI TRIBES

News: Tension in Tanzania, when police personnel arrived to reportedly evict Maasai tribes in the area in order to make way for Loliondo Game Reserve for the United Arab Emirates (UAE) royal family.

About:

- The Maasai tribes are an **indigenous ethnic group in East Africa**.
- They are **semi-nomadic pastoralists** settled in **Kenya and northern Tanzania**.
- They are among the **foremost African ethnic groups**, due to their distinct traditions, customs and dress and their residence near the many national game parks of East Africa.
- **Language: Maa**, a language derived from **Nilo-Saharan**. They also speak the official languages of Tanzania and Kenya - **Swahili, English**.
- Traditional diet of the Maasai people is **derived mostly from their cattle**.

LIST OF ST

News: The Union Cabinet under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Narendra has approved the addition of four tribes to the list of Scheduled Tribes (ST), including those from Himachal Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Chhattisgarh.

About:

- **The Hatti tribe** in the Trans-Giri area of Sirmour district in **Himachal Pradesh**.
- **The Narikoravan and Kurivikkaran hill tribes** of **Tamil Nadu**.
- **Binjhia tribe** in **Chhattisgarh**. Earlier, the tribe was listed as ST in Jharkhand and Odisha but not in Chhattisgarh.
- Further, the Cabinet approved a proposal to bring the **Gond community** residing in 13 districts of Uttar Pradesh, under the ST list from the Scheduled Caste list.
 - This includes the five subcategories of the Gond community (**Dhuria, Nayak, Ojha, Pathari, and Rajgond**).

List of Scheduled Tribes:

- **Article 342** of the Indian Constitution provides for the **specification of tribal communities or parts of or groups within tribes or tribal communities** which are deemed to be Scheduled Tribes in relation to that State or UT.
- Accordingly, the Scheduled Tribes list is **notified for each State or Union Territory**.
- These lists are **valid only within the jurisdiction** of that State or UT and **not outside**.

Criteria for inclusion in ST List (not mentioned in the Constitution):

- Indications of primitive traits;

- Distinctive culture;
- Geographical isolation;
- Shyness of contact with the community at large;
- Backwardness.

Process for inclusion:

- The process begins with a **recommendation from the respective State governments**. These recommendations are then **sent to the Tribal Affairs Ministry**. After review, the Ministry sends them to the Registrar General of India for approval.
- This is followed by the **approval of the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes** before the list is sent to the Cabinet for a final decision.

STATUS OF ST IN INDIA

News: The Lok Sabha recently passed a bill to amend a constitutional order to include Darlong, a tribal clan in Tripura which was among the generic Halam community till now, in the list of Scheduled Tribes (ST).

About:

- As per **Census-1931**, Schedule tribes are termed as **"backward tribes"** living in the **"Excluded"** and **"Partially Excluded"** areas.
- The **Government of India Act of 1935** called for the **first time for representatives of "backward tribes" in provincial assemblies**.
- **Article 366(25) of the Constitution only provides a process to define Scheduled Tribes:** "Scheduled Tribes means such tribes or tribal communities or parts of or groups within such tribes or tribal communities as are deemed **under Article 342 to be Scheduled Tribes** for the purposes of this Constitution."
- Under **Article 342(1):** The **President may with respect to any State or Union Territory, and where it is a State, after consultation with the Governor, by a public notification, specify the tribes or tribal communities or part of or groups within tribes or tribal communities as Scheduled Tribe in relation to that State or Union Territory**.
- There are over **705 tribes** which have been notified.
- The largest number of tribal communities are found in Odisha.
- **Fifth Schedule:** Provision for Administration and Control of Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes in states **other than Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram**.
- **Sixth Schedule:** Deals with the administration of the tribal areas in **Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram**.

Darlong Community:

- Darlong is a **tribal community of Tripura**, which has a population of 11,000.
- The community has a high prevalence of education and cultural activities and members of the community serve in senior positions in the local administration.
- **Tribes of Tripura:** These include Tripuri or Debbarma, Reangs or Brus, Jamatia, Noatia, Uchoi, Chakma, Mog, Lushai, Kuki, Munda, Kour, Oram, Santhal, Bhil, Bhutia, Chaimar or Sermai, Garo, Khasi, Lepcha and Halam.

KURMI COMMUNITY

News: People belonging to the Kurmi community blocked railway tracks in various parts of Eastern India demanding their inclusion on the list of Scheduled Tribes (ST) and the inclusion of the Kurmal language in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution.

About:

- Kurmi is traditionally a **non-elite tiller caste** in the lower Gangetic plain of India.
- They are present in **southern regions of Awadh, eastern Uttar Pradesh and parts of Bihar.**

Eighth Schedule:

- It lists the **official languages (22 languages)** of the Republic of India.
- **Part XVII** of the Indian constitution deals with the **official languages in Articles 343 to 351.**
- The **Sindhi** language was added by the 21st Amendment Act of 1967.
- **Konkani, Manipuri, and Nepali** were included by the 71st Amendment Act of 1992.
- **Bodo, Dogri, Maithili, and Santhali** were added by the 92nd Amendment Act of 2003.

PAHARI COMMUNITY

News: Paharis of Jammu, one of the communities which has long-standing demand for the Scheduled Tribe status.

About:

- The Pahari community is a **linguistic group mainly residing in the Pir Panjal valley** comprising Rajouri and Poonch districts in J&K.
- Paharis are also spread in **parts of the Kashmir valley.**

- Gujjars, Bakarwals and Paharis are **non-Kashmiri speaking** population of J&K.
- Paharis comprise **both Hindus and Muslims**. The two prominent nomadic clans, **Bakerwals and Gujjars follow Islam.**
- According to **Article 342(1)**, the President of India declares a tribe as a Scheduled Tribe, after consulting with the Governors of respective states.
- **The Gujjar -Pahari rift:** Bakerwals and Gujjars are **given ST status in J&K.**
- At present, there is **10% reservation** in jobs for STs in J&K and they feel this **reservation will be diluted**, if Paharis were granted ST status.
- Bakerwals and Gujjars are arguing that ST status is **not granted on the basis of linguistics** though the Constitution does not define or specify any criteria.

KUTIA KONDH TRIBE

News: Millets are largely propelled by a movement built around the **Burlang Yatra**, a traditional festival of the Kutia Kondh tribe.

About:

- The **Kutia-Kondh is one of the primitive sections of the Kondh tribe** who live in hill tops and valleys.
- The Kutia Kondhs are a **particularly vulnerable tribal group** found in Kalahandi and Kandhamal districts in Odisha.
- The Kondhs **worship nature** like many other tribal groups in the country.
- They are mostly dependent on **shifting cultivation or slash-and-burn agriculture** which the Kondhs call **dongar chaas or podu chaas.**
- The major crops cultivated in the shifting cultivation system are **minor millets like ragi (finger millet), kosala, kangu with arhar as an intercrop.**
- The usual Kutia Kondh settlement has **two rows of houses**, across a rectangular space facing each other.

Burlang Yatra:

- The Burlang Yatra is a **traditional annual festival** of the Kutia Kondh tribe in **Kandhamal district.**
- During this festival, the community, especially the women, **worship and exchange seeds** through a celebratory mode of songs and dances at the village level.
- This event **brings together millet farmers** to share knowledge and practices, including exchange of Indigenous heirloom seeds.
- The large-scale festival **increases the awareness** about millets and gets rid of the inferiority complex prevailing among young tribals.

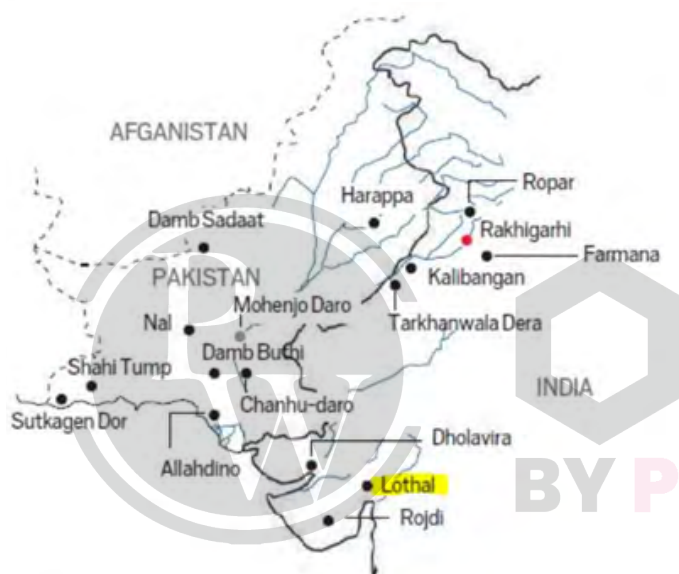
- The **Odisha Government** launched **Millet Mission in 2017** and also started celebrating **Mandia Dibas (Millet Day)** on **November 10** to popularize the crop.



GOVERNMENT PROGRAMMES AND INITIATIVES

NATIONAL MARITIME HERITAGE COMPLEX

News: The Prime Minister has reviewed the work in progress at the site of the National Maritime Heritage Complex at Lothal, Gujarat.



About:

- **National Maritime Heritage Complex (NHMC)** will be developed in **Lothal** region of Gujarat.
- It would be **developed as an international tourist destination**, where the maritime heritage of India from ancient to modern times would be showcased.
- The idea is to **create an edutainment (education with entertainment)** approach for this destination that would be of great interest to the visitors.
- It is going to cover an area of 400 acres, with structures such as **Heritage Theme Park, National Maritime Heritage Museum, Lighthouse Museum, Maritime Institute, eco-resorts**, and more.
- There will also be **many pavilions where all coastal states in India** and union territories can showcase their artifacts and maritime heritage.

Lothal:

- Lothal was one of the prominent cities of the Harappan civilization.
- The site is known for the **discovery of the oldest man-made dockyard which was connected to an old course of the Sabarmati River**.
- Other features include the acropolis, the lower town, the bead factory, the warehouses, and the drainage system.
- The site has been nominated to be enlisted as a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**.

SWADESH DARSHAN

News: The Ministry of Tourism has revamped its Swadesh Darshan scheme as Swadesh Darshan 2.0 (SD2.0) with an aim to develop sustainable and responsible infrastructure at destinations.

About:

- The government launched the Swadesh Darshan Scheme in **2014-15** for the **integrated development of theme-based tourist circuits**.
- It is a **Central Sector scheme** under the **Ministry of Tourism and Culture**.
- The scheme aims to **promote, develop and harness the potential of tourism** in India.
- Under the Swadesh Darshan scheme, **Central Financial Assistance** is provided for the State Governments and Union Territory Administrations for the infrastructure development of circuits.
- The scheme was envisioned to **synergise with other government schemes** such as Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, Skill India and Make in India with the idea of positioning the tourism sector as a major engine for job creation.
- Some of the prominent circuits launched under this were the **Buddhist tourist circle, Ambedkar Tourist Circle and the North-East Tourist Circle**.

Swadesh Darshan 2.0:

- Swadesh Darshan 2.0 is the **revamped version** of the scheme. with the mantra of “**vocal for local**”.
- It moves away from theme-based tourist circuits and **focuses on reviving destination tourism**.
- It aims to **develop sustainable and responsible destinations** with a tourist and destination-centric approach.
- Under the scheme, **two to three destinations** each have been selected from 15 states. Some of the prominent places identified are **Jhansi and Prayagraj in Uttar Pradesh, Gwalior, Chitrakoot and Khajuraho in Madhya Pradesh and Ajanta and Ellora in Maharashtra**.

TRIBAL YOUTH EXCHANGE PROGRAMME

News: The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports in collaboration with the Ministry of Home Affairs organized the 14th Tribal Youth Exchange Programme for the development of Tribal Youth.

About:

- **Organized by** the **Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS)** with the support of the Ministry of Home Affairs since 2006.
- **Aim:**
 - To **sensitize Tribal Youth to the Rich Cultural Heritage of India** and to enable them to appreciate the concept of unity in diversity, **expose them to development activities and industrial advancement**.
 - To help the tribal youth to **develop emotional linkages with their peer groups in other parts of the country** and **enhance their self-esteem**.
- **Benefits:** The tribes who are **residing in the remote corners** of the nation **do not have access** to first-hand information about what is happening elsewhere in the country. With more interaction of students and youth communities with their peer groups in other parts of the country, **the gap can be bridged**. Tribal youth exchange programmes are **designed to facilitate such interactions**

KASHI-TAMIL SANGAMAM PROGRAMME

News: Recently, The Union Government has announced a month-long programme named ‘Kashi-Tamil Sangamam’.

About:

- It aims to rekindle **the civilisational link between the new Kashi and Tamil Nadu** — both deep centres of knowledge.
- The programme would be a part of the ‘**Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat**’, would be held **from November 16 to December 16, 2022**.
- As part of the programme, **2,500 people divided into 12 groups** would be traveling to Varanasi by train during the period.
- The groups would include **students, teachers, artisans and people from various walks of life**.
- The tours would include **seminars, lectures, group meetings and visits to the Kashi Vishwanath temple** and centers of important Tamil cultural heritage in Varanasi.
- The **knowledge partners** for the programme would be **IIT-Madras and the Banaras Hindu University**, while the **Uttar Pradesh government would be the host State**.

ANNABHAU SATHE

News: Recently, Maharashtra’s Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavs unveiled a statue of Lok Shahir (balladeer) Annabhau Sathe at the All-Russia State Library for Foreign Literature in Moscow.

About:

- Tukaram Bhaurao Sathe, popularly known as **Anna Bhau Sathe** was a **social reformer, folk poet, and writer from Maharashtra, born in a Dalit family in 1920 in Maharashtra**.
- In 1930, his family left the village and came to Mumbai.
- During his days at the Matunga Labour Camp, he got to know **R B More, an associate of Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar in the famous ‘Chavdar Lake’ satyagraha at Mahad**, and joined the labor study circle.

Organizations formed by Annabhau Sathe:

- He formed **Dalit Yuvak Sangh**, a cultural group and started writing poems on workers’ protests, and agitations. The group used to perform in front of the mill gates.
- In **1943**, he formed the **Lal Bawta Kala Pathak**. The group toured across Maharashtra presenting programmes on caste atrocities, class conflict, and workers’ rights.

Famous literary works:

- The **prominent Dalit novel in Marathi Fakira (1959)** is among his best-known works and bagged the state government’s top literary award in 1961.

- Some of the other notable works include:
 - **Stalingradcha Powada.**
 - **Majhi Maina Gavavar Rahili**
 - A travelog titled **Majha Russiacha Pravas** (My Travel to Russia).
 - **Bangalchi Hak** (Bengal's Call) on the Bengal famine was translated into Bengali. It was later performed at London's Theatre Royal.
- Sathe also used folk music like '**powada**' (ballad) and the '**lavani**' folk dance of Maharashtra to further popularize his work. In 1939, he wrote his first ballad, **Spanish Powada**.

AMBEDKAR CIRCUIT

News: The Union Ministry of Tourism announced a special tourist train to cover the "Ambedkar Circuit".

About:

- **Ambedkar Circuit or Panchteerth** was first proposed by the government in **2016**.
- This tourist circuit is **one of the 15 tourist circuits identified under the Swadesh Darshan Scheme** in 2014-15.
- **The Panchteerth would include:**
 - **Janma Bhoomi** - Ambedkar's birthplace in Madhya Pradesh's Mhow;
 - **Shiksha Bhoomi** - the place in London where he stayed while studying in the UK;
 - **Deeksha Bhoomi** - the place in Nagpur where he embraced Buddhism;
 - **Mahaparinirvan Bhoomi** - the place of his demise in Delhi; and
 - **Chaitya Bhoomi** - the place of his cremation, in Mumbai.
- The idea behind the circuit is to **attract tourists beyond the Dalit community**, who mostly visit these places as a pilgrimage

TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE DIGITAL LIBRARY

News: The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister has approved the "Widening access of the Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL) database to users, besides patent offices".

About:

- Established in **2001 by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)** and the **Department of Indian Systems of Medicine and Homeopathy (ISM&H, now Ministry of AYUSH)**.

- It is a **first-of-its-kind database** on Indian systems of medicine for preventing bio-piracy and misappropriation of our traditional knowledge.
- The TKDL currently contains **information from existing literature related to Indian Systems of Medicine (ISM)** such as **Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha, Sowa Rigpa and Yoga**.
- The information is documented in a digitized format in **five international languages** which are **English, German, French, Japanese and Spanish**.
- TKDL provides information in languages and formats **understandable by patent examiners at Patent Offices worldwide**, so as to prevent the erroneous grant of patents.

Who can access the TKDL database?

- **Until now**, access to the complete TKDL database is **restricted to 14 Patent Offices worldwide** for the purposes of search and examination.
- But from now on the TKDL database can **also be accessed by users**. This would be through a **paid subscription model** with a phase-wise opening to national and international users.
- This will **help drive research and development and innovation** based on India's valued heritage across diverse fields.

SUTR SANTATI EXHIBITION

News: The Union Minister of Culture has inaugurated the Sutr Santati Exhibition.

About:

- **Organized by: Ministry of Culture and the National Museum** in collaboration with **Abheraj Baldota Foundation**.
- **Purpose:** Sutr Santati literally means the **continuity of yarn**. It is a textile exhibition representing **75 traditional Indian textiles designed** to foster Indian pride using traditional techniques using indigenous natural yarns.
- This exhibition will bring to the **forefront all the craftspeople** from various clusters pan India involved in creating every piece.

National Museum:

- The National Museum was established in **1949**. It holds a **variety of articles ranging** from the prehistoric era to modern works of art.
- The blueprint for establishing the National Museum was prepared by the **Maurice Gwyer Committee in May 1946**.
- Nodal Ministry: **Ministry of Culture**.
- Located in **New Delhi**.

INDIAN KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS (IKS) INITIATIVE

News: Raja mantri chor sipahi, posham pa, gilli danda, etc. are among 75 indigenous games that will be introduced in schools under IKS initiative.

About:

- IKS is an **innovative cell under the Ministry of Education** at All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE).
- It is established to **promote interdisciplinary research** on all aspects of IKS, preserve and disseminate IKS for further research and societal applications.
- It aims to **spread rich heritage and traditional knowledge** in the field of Arts and literature, Agriculture, Basic Sciences, Engineering & Technology, Architecture, Management, Economics, etc.

NATIONAL MONUMENTS AUTHORITY

News: The National Monuments Authority (NMA) has recommended two sites associated with Dr. Ambedkar be declared Monuments of National importance.

About:

- National Monuments Authority (NMA) has been set up under the **Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India**, as per provisions of **The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (Amendment and Validation) Act, 2010**.
- **Functions:** To **protect and preserve monuments and sites** through management of the prohibited and regulated area around the centrally protected monuments.
- One of the important responsibilities of NMA is also to **consider grant of permissions to applicants** for construction related activity in the prohibited and regulated area.

Sites associated with Dr. Ambedkar:

- **Sankalp Bhumi Banyan tree campus in Vadodara:** This is a place where Dr. Ambedkar had taken a **resolve to eradicate untouchability on 23rd September 1917**. This place is more than a hundred years old and a witness to the beginning of the social respect revolution heralded by Dr. Ambedkar.
- **Pratap Rao Bhosale High School in Satara (Maharashtra):** This is a place where Dr. Ambedkar **received his primary education**. The school register still shows with pride a child student, Bhim Rao's

signatures in Marathi. The school now under Zila Parishad is in very bad condition.

NATIONAL CULTURE FUND

News: Recently, The Minister of Culture has informed Lok Sabha about the National Culture Fund.

About:

- Set up as a **Trust in 1996** under the Charitable Endowment Act, 1890.
- **Aim:** To **establish and nurture partnerships in the field of Culture and Heritage** with private and public sectors, government, non-government agencies and mobilize resources for the restoration, conservation, protection and development of India's rich, natural, tangible and intangible heritage.
- **Functions of the Fund:** To administer and apply the Fund for
 - **Conservation, maintenance, promotion, protection, preservation and up gradation** of monuments protected or otherwise,
 - **Training and development of a cadre** of specialists and cultural administrators,
 - **Innovations and experiments** in arts and for documentation of cultural expressions and forms that have lost their relevance in contemporary scenarios.
- **Structure:**
 - NCF is managed by a **(Governing) Council and an Executive Committee**.
 - The **Council is chaired by the Union Minister of Culture**.
 - The **Executive Committee is chaired by the Secretary (Culture)**.
- **Working:**
 - The nature of funding has been **made very flexible** under NCF.
 - For instance, a donor/sponsor while making contributions to NCF may indicate a project along with any specific location/aspect and also an agency for execution of the project.

GOAL PROGRAMME

News: The Union Minister for Tribal Affairs has informed the Lok Sabha about the GOAL Programme.

About:

- **GOAL (Going Online as Leaders)** is a joint initiative of the **Ministry of Tribal Affairs and Meta** (formerly Facebook).

- It aims to **digitally empower** tribal youth and women through the concept of mentor and mentee.
- **Funded by:** The programme is fully funded by **Meta** (Facebook India).
- **Phases:**
 - **1st Phase:** Launched as a **pilot project in May 2020**, and it was completed by Dec 2021. The mentees in the first phase were provided with **training across three-course pillars:**
 - ◆ Communication & Life Skills
 - ◆ Enabling Digital Presence
 - ◆ Leadership & Entrepreneurship
 - **2nd Phase:** Launched in June 2022 with an aim to **digitally upskill tribal youth by promoting entrepreneurship and opening up opportunities for them using digital technology.** There will be a special focus on more than 10 lakh members of 50000 Vandhan Self-Help Groups.

JYOTHIRGAMAYA

News: The Union Minister of Culture has inaugurated Jyotirgamaya – A festival showcasing the talent of unsung performers.

About:

- **Organized by:** Sangeet Natak Akademi.
- **Purpose:** It is a festival to showcase the talent of **rare musical instruments** from across the country, including street performers, train entertainers, performers attached to temples etc.
- **Significance:** The festival envisages **sensitizing people** about the need to safeguard the craft of making as well as the skill of playing rare musical instruments and to give a voice to 'unheard' artistes who hardly ever see the limelight.

About Sangeet Natak Akademi:

- The Sangeet Natak Akademi is **India's national academy for music, dance and drama.**
- It was **created by a resolution** of the (then) Ministry of Education, Government of India, in 1952 with **Dr P.V. Rajamannar as its first Chairman.**
- It is presently an **Autonomous Body of the Ministry of Culture**, Government of India and is fully funded by the Government for implementation of its schemes and programmes.
- The Akademi **establishes and looks after institutions and projects** of national importance in the field of the performing arts. Few important ones are:
 - National School of Drama, New Delhi was set up in 1959,

- Jawaharlal Nehru Manipur Dance Academy in Imphal- 1954,
- Kathak Kendra (National Institute of Kathak Dance) in New Delhi- 1964.
- National Projects of Support to Kutiyattam (Sanskrit theater of Kerala), Chhau dances of eastern India, Sattriya traditions of Assam, etc.

MUSEUM GRANTS SCHEME

News: The Ministry of Culture has granted Rs 3.75 crore under the '**Upgradation of Museums Scheme**' as part of the Museums Grant Scheme for the Rs 5-crore project in Eluru town, Andhra Pradesh.

About:

- **Initiative by:** Ministry of Culture, launched in **2013.**
- **Aim:** To **strengthen and modernize the existing museums** at the Regional, State and District levels. And to develop **at least 1 Central / State Government Museum** located in the State Capital each year.
- Under the scheme, **financial assistance** is provided to State Governments and Societies, Autonomous bodies, Local Bodies and Trusts registered under the Societies Act 1860 **for setting up new Museums.**

Components under the scheme:

- **Establishment and Development of District and Regional Museums:** Under this component, museums have been classified into **two categories:**
 - **Category-I:** Government-owned State level Museums and renowned Museums with exquisite collections and
 - **Category-II:** all other Museums.
 - The maximum amount of financial assistance provided under this Component is **limited to Rs.10 crore.**
- **Development of Museums in State Capitals:** **Financial assistance** under this component is provided to **existing renowned museums** of the Central or State Government located in the Capital cities.
 - The maximum financial assistance under this component is **limited to Rs. 15 Crore per museum.**
- **Establishment and Development of Large-Scale Museums in Public-Private Partnership Mode:** Under this component, it is proposed to establish **large scale museums** as joint ventures with State Governments and civil society in the **Public-Private partnerships Mode.**

- The maximum financial assistance provided under this component is **40% of the project cost** subject to a **maximum of Rs. 20 Crore per museum**.

THE PLACE OF WORSHIP ACT 1991

News: The Supreme Court will hear a challenge to the order of a civil court in Varanasi directing a videographic survey of the Maa Shringar Gauri Sthal in the Kashi Vishwanath temple-Gyanvapi mosque complex.

About:

- **Section 3** of the Act **bars the conversion**, in full or part, of a place of worship of **any religious denomination into a place of worship of a different religious denomination** — or even a different segment of the same religious denomination.
- **Section 4(1)** declares that the **religious character of a place of worship “shall continue to be the same as it existed”** on August 15, 1947.
- **Section 4(2)** says **any legal proceeding** with respect to the conversion of the religious character of any place of worship existing on August 15, 1947, pending before any court, **shall abate** — and **no fresh suit or legal proceedings shall be instituted**.
- The provision to this subsection **saves suits, appeals and legal proceedings** that are pending on the date of commencement of the Act, if they pertain to the conversion of the religious character of a place of worship **after the cut-off date**.
- **Section 5** stipulates that the Act shall **not apply to the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid case**, and to any suit, appeal or proceeding relating to it.
- **Section 6** of the Act prescribes a punishment of a **maximum of three years imprisonment** along with a fine for contravening the provisions of the Act.

INTERNATIONAL MUSEUM DAY 2022

News: International Museum Day is celebrated every year on 18 May.

About:

- This day is observed to **highlight the importance of museums in any culture**.
- Theme for 2022: **“The Power of Museums”**.
- **Background:** The Day was **instituted in 1977** by the International Council of Museums (ICOM).
- **Article 49 of the Indian Constitution:** Protect monuments, places and objects of artistic or historic interest which are declared to be of national importance.

International Council of Museums (ICOM):

- ICOM is a **membership association** and a **non-governmental organization** which establishes professional and ethical standards for museum activities.
- It is the **only** global organization in the museum field.
- It was created in **1946** and is headquartered in **Paris, France**.
- It serves as a **network of museum professionals** (more than 40,000 members in over 138 countries).
- The **ICOM Red Lists** of Cultural Objects at Risk are practical tools to curb the illegal traffic of cultural objects.

CENTRAL ADVISORY BOARD OF ARCHEOLOGY

About:

- To **strengthen contacts** between the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and those in the field of archaeological research.
- To **advise the Centre** on matters relating to archaeology referred to it by its members.
- **Chairman:** Minister of Culture.
- **Members:** It **includes officials from** the Culture Ministry and ASI, MPs, nominees of State governments, representatives of universities, scientists and experts on the Indus Valley script.
- It would also include **five persons nominated** in their personal capacities by the Government of India and **former Director-Generals of ASI**.
- Board Meeting: The Board will **meet once a year**.
- **Note:** The last meeting of the Board was held in **2017**.

MATHRUBHUMI SHOW

News: As part of the Red Fort Festival – Bharat Bhagya Vidhata, the Projection Mapping Show ‘Matrubhumi’ is receiving an overwhelming response.

About:

- It is a **Projection Mapping Show** that showcases the rich and diverse culture of India using light, sound and music with state-of-the-art technology.
- It is being organized as **part of** the Red Fort Festival – **Bharat Bhagya Vidhata**.
- This show will now be a **permanent fixture** at the historic Red Fort and will run throughout the year.

Red Fort Festival – Bharat Bhagya Vidhata:

- It is organized by the **Ministry of Culture** as part of **Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav**.

- It is a cultural festival that aims to **showcase India's rich history and diversity in art, heritage, culture, cuisine and more.**

Do you know

- The Ministry of Culture has collaborated with the Dalmia Bharat Group (DBG) to organize this event as DBG has adopted the Red Fort as its **Monument Mitra** under the 'Adopt A Heritage' project.

Adopt a Heritage Project:

- Launched in **2017**
- It is a collaborative effort by the **Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Culture, Archaeological Survey of India and State/ UTs Governments.**
- Aim: To **ensure quality & inclusive provision of amenities and facilities** across heritage, natural, & tourist sites through active participation of private and public sector organizations and individuals.
- These organizations would be known as "**Monument Mitras**" for their collaboration initiative.

GEO HERITAGE SITES

News: Geological Survey of India (GSI) has identified two geological heritage sites in the Indian Himalayan Region of India. The sites identified are **Siwalik Fossil Park, Himachal Pradesh** and **Stromatolite bearing Dolomite / Limestone of Buxa Formation, Sikkim.**

Siwalik Fossil Park:

- Location: **Himachal Pradesh.**
- The Siwalik Fossil Park displays a **rich collection of vertebrate fossils** recovered from the Siwalik rocks of the area of Plio-Pleistocene age.
- The deposition of Siwalik sediments took place in the **narrow linear depression**, called the '**fore deep**', which started developing in front of the Himalayas since the inception of its uplift in the middle Miocene.

Stromatolite bearing Dolomite / Limestone of Buxa Formation:

- Location: **Sikkim.**
- The Geo-heritage site at Mamley exposes **litho-units of Buxa Formation, Daling Group of Proterozoic age.**
- The dolostones are profusely stromatolitic (Precambrian algal structures).
- This site provides one of the **rare examples of early life in Sikkim Himalaya.**

Geo-heritage Sites:

- Geo-heritage refers to the **geological features** which are **inherently or culturally significant** offering insight to earth's evolution or history to earth science or that can be utilized for education.
- Geological Survey of India (GSI) is the parent body** which is **making efforts towards identification and protection** of geo-heritage sites/national geological monuments in the country.
- With inclusion of these two sites, there are **34 Geological Heritage Sites** in India.

Geological Survey of India:

- Set up in **1851.**
- Purpose:** To **find coal deposits** for the Railways.
- Presently, GSI is an **attached office to the Ministry of Mines.**
- The main functions of the GSI relate to **creation and update of national geo-scientific information and mineral** resource assessment.
- It is headquartered in **Kolkata.**

HUNAR HATTS

News: 40th edition of the 'Hunar Haat' was inaugurated in Mumbai. In this edition, more than a thousand craftsmen and artisans coming from 31 states and Union Territories participated.

About:

- Aim:** To **provide exposure and employment opportunities** to various artisans, craftsmen and traditional culinary experts to display their handmade and indigenous products.
- Purpose:** It is an **exhibition of handicrafts and traditional products** made by artisans from minority communities.
- Organizer:** **Ministry of Minority Affairs** under USTTAD (Upgrading the Skills & Training in Traditional Arts/Crafts for Development) scheme.
- Significance:** Hunar Haat has proved to be **immensely beneficial and encouraging for artisans and craftsmen** as lakhs of people visit the "Hunar Haat" and purchase indigenous handmade products of artisans on a large scale.

USTTAD Scheme:

- Launched by:** Ministry of Minority Affairs in **2015.**
- It is a **100% Central sector scheme.**
- Aim:** To **preserve the rich heritage** of traditional arts/crafts of minorities.
- Objectives:**

- To **build capacity and upgrade the traditional skills** of master craftsmen/artisans,
- To **document identified traditional arts/crafts** of minorities,
- To **train minority youths** in various identified traditional arts/crafts
- To develop **national and international market linkages**.

PROMOTION OF RURAL AND INDIGENOUS / TRIBAL GAMES UNDER KHELO INDIA SCHEME

News: 'Promotion of rural and indigenous/tribal games' component of KIS is specifically dedicated to the development and promotion of rural and indigenous/tribal games in the country.

About:

- KIS aims at **infusing sports culture** and **achieving sporting excellence** in the country thus allowing the populace to harness the power of sports through its **cross-cutting influence**.
- It is the **flagship Central Sector Scheme** of the **Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports**.

SAHITYOTSAV

News: **Sahityotsav, the Festival of Letters** of Sahitya Akademi, India's most inclusive literature festival will be held from 10th to 15th March 2022 in New Delhi.

About:

- Sahityotsav is a **Festival of Letters of Sahitya Akademi**.
- It is **India's most inclusive literature festival**.
- The festival will be a part of the celebrations to commemorate the **75th anniversary of India's Independence**.
- The prestigious **Sahitya Akademi Awards** will also **be presented during the festival**.
- The Exhibition will highlight Akademi's accomplishments and seminal events from the previous year.

Sahitya Akademi or National Academy of Letters of India:

- The **Sahitya Akademi, or National Academy of Letters of India**, is an organization dedicated to the promotion of literature in Indian languages.

- It was **founded on March 12, 1954**, and is supported by, but independent of, the Indian government (Ministry of Culture).
- Its **headquarters are in Rabindra Bhavan in Delhi**.
- It was initially run by executive order, but it was later registered as a society under the **Indian Societies Registration Act of 1860**.

BIPOLAR BHARAT GALLERY

News: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate Biplobi Bharat Gallery at Victoria Memorial Hall, Kolkata on the occasion of **Shaheed Diwas (March 23)**.

About:

- The Gallery displays the **contribution of the Revolutionaries** in the freedom struggle and their armed resistance to British colonial rule.
- The purpose of this new gallery is to provide a **holistic view of the events** that led up to 1947 and highlight the important role played by the Revolutionaries.
- Biplobi Bharat Gallery depicts the **political and intellectual backdrop** that triggered the Revolutionary movement.
- It **showcases** the birth of the revolutionary movement, formation of significant associations by revolutionary leaders, spread of the movement, formation of Indian National Army, contribution of Naval Mutiny, among others.

AMASR ACT OF 1958

News: The Ministry of Culture is working on amendments to the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (AMASR) Act, 1958.

About:

- AMASR Act provides for the **preservation of ancient and historical monuments and archaeological sites and remains of national importance**.
- It also provides for the **regulation of archaeological excavations** and for the protection of sculptures, carvings and other like objects.
- The Act was **amended in 2010** to **declare the 100-meter radius of protected monuments as prohibited areas** and the **next 300-meter radius as regulated areas**. However, this amendment was brought about without any inputs from the Archaeological Survey of India.

Amendments proposed in the AMASR Act:

- It proposes to **change Section 20A of the Act**, which refers to the prohibited area. This amendment would **rationalize the prohibited and regulated areas**.
- An **Expert Committee would decide** the prohibited area around a particular monument, which could be as wide as 500 meters for some sites like the Taj Mahal.
- It **aims to enable the Archaeological Survey of India(ASI) to act against encroachment** by holding the relevant authorities liable in case of illegal buildings at a protected site. This would be similar to the enforcement powers under the Indian Forest Act.

INITIATIVES FOR LADAKH REGION

News: Recently, the Union Minister has announced several initiatives for the Ladakh region.

About:

- **Snow Sculpture** will be **introduced in Ladakh** in a big way from the winter season as a tourist attraction.
- The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research(CSIR) is **promoting “Leh Berry”** which is an exclusive food product of the cold desert and also a means of wide-ranging entrepreneurship as well as self-livelihood.
- **Commercial cultivation of three medicinal plants** will begin this spring season at a height of above 15,000 feet.
- This also includes **“Sanjeevani Booty”**, locally known as **“Sola”** which has **very high life-saving and therapeutic properties**.

BHASHA CERTIFICATE SELFIE INITIATIVE

News: The Ministry of Education launched a campaign ‘Bhasha Certificate Selfie’ under Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat (EBSB)

About:

- It was established to **promote cultural diversity**, and **multilingualism**, and to foster the spirit of EBSB.
- Its goal is to promote the **Bhasha Sangam mobile app**, which was developed by the Ministry of Education and MyGov India.
- On **Rashtriya Ekta Diwas (31st October)2021**, the **Bhasha Sangam mobile app** was launched.
- It aims to ensure that people **acquire basic conversational skills** in Indian languages. To achieve this, a **target of 75 lakh people** acquiring basic conversational skills has been set.
- The ‘Bhasha Certificate Selfie’ initiative is encouraging people to **upload their selfie with the certificate** from their social media accounts.

Bhasha Sangam Initiative:

- It is an initiative that aims to **teach basic sentences of everyday** usage in **22 Indian languages** (Eighth Schedule languages).
- People are encouraged to **learn basic conversational skills** in an Indian language other than their mother tongue.
- It is available through **DIKSHA, ePathshala, and 22 booklets**.

Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat Initiative:

- It is an initiative of the **Ministry of Education** launched in **2015** to promote **engagement amongst the people of different States/UTs** so as to enhance mutual understanding and bonding between people of diverse cultures, thereby securing stronger unity and integrity of India.
- Every State and UT in the country would be **paired with another State/UT for a time period**, during which they would carry out a structured engagement with one another in the spheres of language, literature, cuisine, festivals, cultural events, tourism etc.

PRAVASI BHARATIYA DIVAS

News: Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) is celebrated on **9th January every year** to mark the contribution of the Overseas Indian community in the development of India.

About:

- It is the **flagship event of the Ministry of External Affairs** and provides an important platform to engage and connect with the overseas Indian.
- **Purpose:** To **recognize the overseas Indians** who have contributed to the development of India.
- **Significance of the day:** It is celebrated **every year on January 9th** because **Mahatma Gandhi had returned to India** from South Africa on January 09,1915.
- **Theme:** “Contributing to Atma Nirbhar Bharat”.
- **Pravasi Bharatiya Samman(PBSA):** It is conferred every year on the occasion of Pravasi Bharatiya Divas to **select Indian diaspora** members to **recognize their achievements and honor their contributions to various fields, both in India and abroad**.
- **Youth Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD):** It will also be celebrated virtually on the theme **“Bringing together Young Achievers from India and Indian Diaspora”** and will be anchored by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.

REPUBLIC DAY TABLEAUX

News: Recently, West Bengal's tableau for the Republic Day parade was rejected without assigning any reasons or justifications.

About:

- Tableaux refer to a **group of models or motionless figures** representing a scene from a story or from history.
- On Republic Day, states and different departments and ministries **showcase their achievements in the form of cutting-edge technology and instruments or their history and culture** in their respective tableaux.

Basic Guidelines over the Tableaux:

- The **Defence Ministry** also shared basic guidelines on what all the tableaux can or should include.
- Participating entities are mandated to engage **“young qualified designers from renowned institutions”**.
- They are also asked to **engage moving elements using robotics or mechatronics, electronic display walls** for bright display of images or **content 3D printing for certain elements**, special effects to improve optics & visual effects of the tableau and use of augmented or virtual reality.
- Tableaux of two different states or UTs **cannot be similar**, in a bid to showcase the diversity of India.
- Tableaux **cannot have any writing or use of logos**, except for the name of state, UT or department.

Selection process of the tableaux:

- The selection process is **elaborate** and **time-consuming**.
- The Defence Ministry constitutes an **expert committee of distinguished persons** from fields like art, culture, painting, sculpture, music, architecture and choreography.
- The Committee **examines the proposals** on the basis of theme, concept, design and visual impact before making its recommendations.

BEATING RETREAT CEREMONY

News: Union Minister of Science & Technology has said that Botlab Dynamics Private Limited, a start-up supported by Technology Development Board will light up the sky with 1000 Drones Light Show at 'Beating the Retreat Ceremony'.

About:

- It officially denotes the **end of Republic Day festivities**.
- It is conducted on the **evening of 29 January**, the third day after the Republic Day.
- It is organized by **Section D of the Ministry of Defence**.
- The programme is organized in **front of Rashtrapati Bhawan on Raisina Road**.
- The ceremony marks a **centuries old military tradition**, when the troops ceased fighting, sheathed their arms and withdrew from the battlefield and returned to the camps at sunset at the sounding of the Retreat.
- The **chief guest** during the ceremony is the **President**.
- The ceremony began in **17th century England**, when **King James II ordered his troops to beat drums**, lower flags and organize a parade to announce the end of a day of combat.
- In India, the ceremony traces its origins to the **early 1950s**, when **Major Roberts of the Indian Army indigenously developed** the unique ceremony of display by the massed bands.
- The ceremony is currently **held by Armed Forces in the UK, US, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, and India**, among others.

AMENDMENTS TO FLAG CODE OF INDIA

News: Recently, the centre amended the Flag Code of India.

About:

- The **amendment allows the national flag to be flown both in day and at night** if it is displayed in **the open or in the House of a member of the public**. Earlier, the tricolour could be **hoisted only between sunrise and sunset**.
- The Flag Code of India was earlier amended in **December 2021**, allowing the **use of polyester**, apart from cotton, wool, silk and khadi for making **hand-spun, hand-woven and machine-made flags**.
- The amendment is brought with regards to **the Har Ghar Tiranga campaign**.
- Har Ghar Tiranga is a campaign under the aegis of **Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav** to encourage people to bring the **Tiranga home and hoist it to mark the 75th year of India's independence**.
- The **Department of Posts** has been tasked with utilizing its reach and manpower across the country by making the people aware of the importance of the **'Har Ghar Tiranga' Campaign**.

The Flag Code of India, 2002:

- The Flag Code of India is a **set of laws and conventions about the use, display and hoisting** of the Indian national flag.
- It was brought into effect on **January 26th, 2002**.
- The **National Flag was adopted by the Constituent Assembly of India on 22nd July 1947**.
- It **governs the display** of the National flag by private, public and government institutions.
- **Size and shape of the national flag:** It shall be **rectangular**. It can be of any size but the ratio of the **length to the height of the national flag should be 3:2**

YUVA TOURISM CLUBS

News: CBSE along with the **Ministry of Tourism** has asked its affiliated schools to form YUVA Tourism Clubs.

About:

- **Objective:** is to develop young ambassadors for Indian tourism, make them aware of tourism possibilities in India and appreciate our rich cultural heritage.
- **Initiative:** will also lead to development of soft skills like teamwork, management, leadership and encourage adoption of ecological tourism.



The poster is for the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India. It features a portrait of Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the right. The text on the left reads: "Ministry of Tourism to initiate a campaign towards 'YUVA Tourism'". Below this, it states: "Tourism Club will be established in JNVS from class VI onwards." There are four bullet points with red arrowheads: 1. "To develop interest and imbibe value for tourism at young age." 2. "To educate about diverse natural & cultural heritage of our Villages / Cities / States and the Country." 3. "To teach and propagate responsible tourism practises & appreciate the importance of travel and tourism in education." 4. "To improve physical & mental health through travelling and engaging in adventure tourism." At the bottom left is a portrait of G. Kishan Reddy, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Development of North Eastern Region. The bottom right has the text "BY PHYSICS WALLAH" in large, stylized letters.

Ministry of Tourism
Government of India

Ministry of Tourism to initiate a campaign towards "YUVA Tourism"

Tourism Club will be established in JNVS from class VI onwards.

- ▶ To develop interest and imbibe value for tourism at young age.
- ▶ To educate about diverse natural & cultural heritage of our Villages / Cities / States and the Country.
- ▶ To teach and propagate responsible tourism practises & appreciate the importance of travel and tourism in education.
- ▶ To improve physical & mental health through travelling and engaging in adventure tourism.

G Kishan Reddy Minister of Tourism, Culture and Development of North Eastern Region

BY PHYSICS WALLAH

RANI VELU NACHIYAR

News: Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi has paid tributes to Rani Velu Nachiyar on her birth anniversary.

About:

- Rani Velu Nachiyar was a **queen of Sivaganga estate from c. 1780–1790**.
- She was the **first Indian queen to wage war with the East India Company in India**.
- She is known by Tamils as **Veeramangai** ("brave woman").
- During this period, she formed an army and sought an alliance with Hyder Ali with the aim of launching a campaign against the East India Company in 1780.
- She was trained in war match weapons usage, martial arts like Valari, Silambam (fighting using the stick), horse riding and archery.
- She was a scholar in many languages and she had proficiency with languages like French, English and Urdu.
- **In collaboration with Hyder Ali and Gopala Nayaker**, she waged a war against the British and emerged victoriously.

BIR BIKRAM KISHORE DEBBARMAN

News: The Prime Minister inaugurated the New Terminal Building of Maharaja Bir Bikram Airport in Agartala to strengthen connectivity along with the launch of developmental initiatives.

About:

- Bir Bikram Kishore Debbarman was the **revered ruler of Tripura belonging to the Manikya dynasty**.
- He was **born on August 19th 1908**.
- He became the 184th and the **second last Maharaja of the Kingdom of Tripura in 1923** and ruled till 1947.
- Maharaja Kirit Bikram Kishore Deb Barman succeeded his father Bir Bikram and continued as the nominal

king for two years until the merger of Tripura with India in 1949.

- **Father of modern architecture in Tripura:** During his rule the entire planning of present-day Tripura was initiated.
- **Pioneer in land reforms:** In 1939, he reserved land for the local Tripura tribals. Later, this step was instrumental in the creation of the Tripura autonomous district council.
- He built the first airport in Tripura (Agartala airport).

TAKHT DAMADAMA SAHIB

News: Ahead of the Punjab Assembly elections, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP)-led Delhi Assembly passed an amendment Bill to the Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Act, 1971, recognising Takht Damdama Sahib as the fifth Takht of Sikhs.

About:

- A Takht, which means a throne, is a **seat of temporal authority for Sikhs**.
- The Takhts are **known to issue hukumnamas from time to time** on issues that concern the Sikh community.
- There are **five Sikh Takhts**, three in Punjab and one each in Maharashtra and Bihar.
- **Akal Takht** is located in **Amritsar**, it is the **oldest of the Takhts**, and considered **supreme among the five**. It was set up in 1606 by **Guru Hargobind**.
 - The Akal Takht, a raised platform that he built in front of the causeway leading to the sanctum sanctorum of the Harmandir Sahib (Golden Temple).
 - It symbolized the coming together of the temporal authority and the political sovereignty of the Sikh community (miri) with the spiritual authority (piri).
 - It is seen as the first **marker of Sikh nationalism**.
- The other four Takhts are linked to Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth Sikh Guru.
 1. **Takht Keshgarh Sahib:** Located in **Anandpur Sahib** in Punjab. It was here that Guru Gobind

Singh raised Khalsa, the initiated Sikh warriors, in 1699.

2. **Takht Patna Sahib:** Guru Gobind Singh was born here in 1666.
3. **Takht Hazur Sahib:** In Nanded, where Guru Gobind Singh spent time and where he was cremated in 1708.
4. **Takht Damdama Sahib:** In Talwandi Sabo of Bathinda. Guru Gobind Singh spent several months here.

VEER BAAL DIWAS

News: The Prime Minister has announced that **26th December** shall be observed as '**Veer Baal Diwas**' to mark the martyrdom of Sahibzada Zorawar Singh Ji and Sahibzada Fateh Singh Ji.

Sahibzadas:

- Guru Gobind Singh had four sons – Sahibzada Ajit Singh, Sahibzada Jujhar Singh, Sahibzada Zorawar Singh and Sahibzada Fateh Singh.
- All four of his sons were initiated into the Khalsa and all were executed by Mughal forces before the age of 19.
- Sikhism honors the illustrious martyred sons of Guru Gobind Singh in the prayer of ardas for their valor and sacrifice as '**Char Sahibzade**', that is the four princes of the Khalsa warrior order.

Significance of the day:

- The day marks when **Sahibzada Zorawar Singh and Sahibzada Fateh Singh** attained martyrdom when they were executed by the Mughals (1705).
- The brothers were captured with their grandmother Mata Gujari, the mother of Guru Gobind Singh.
- They were imprisoned with their grandmother and put to death on the orders of Aurangzeb, who attempted to suffocate them inside a brick enclosure.
- At the time of martyrdom, the ages of Zorawar Singh and Fateh Singh were 9 years and 6 years respectively. This sacrifice is seen as the bravest sacrifice for Dharma by any young boys in Indian history.

Guru Gobind Singh:

- Guru Gobind Singh was the **10th Sikh guru**. He was born in Patna, Bihar in 1666. He became the Sikh guru at the age of nine, following the demise of his father, Guru Tegh Bahadur, the ninth Sikh Guru.
- He **founded the Sikh warrior community called Khalsa in 1699**.
- He **introduced the turban** to cover the hair along with the principles of Khalsa or the five 'K's'.

- He laid the rules of Khalsa warriors, like abstaining from tobacco, alcohol, halal meat, and imbibing the duty of protecting innocent people from prosecution.
- He **named Guru Granth Sahib as the religious text of the Khalsa and the Sikhs**.
- He fought against the Mughals in the Battle of Muktsar in 1705.
- He also **wrote the "Zafarnama" which was a letter to the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb**.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

News: The Prime Minister of India has paid tributes to Swami Vivekananda on his Jayanti.

About:

- He was born on **12th January 1863** in a Bengali family in Calcutta and was **originally named Narendranath Datta**. In his honour, the Government of India in 1984 declared his birthday **National Youth Day**.

Contributions:

- Introduced the world to the Indian **philosophies of Vedanta and Yoga**.
- He preached '**neo-Vedanta**', an interpretation of Hinduism through a Western lens, and believed in combining spirituality with material progress.
- Laid the greatest emphasis on education for the regeneration of our motherland.
- Advocated a **man-making character-building education**.
- Best known for his speech at the World Parliament of Religion in Chicago in 1893.
- Spelt out the four pathways of attaining moksha from the worldly pleasure and attachment in his books - Raja-yoga, Karma-yoga, Jnana-yoga and Bhakti-yoga.
- Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose had called Vivekananda the "**maker of modern India**."

Associated Organisations:

- He was the chief disciple of the 19th-century mystic Ramakrishna Paramhansa and **established the Ramakrishna Mission in 1897**.
- Ramakrishna Mission is an organization which works in the area of value-based education, culture, health, women's empowerment, youth and tribal welfare and relief and rehabilitation.
- In 1899, he established the **Belur Math**, which became his permanent abode. He died at Belur Math in 1902.
- **Belur Math**, located in West Bengal, is the **headquarters of Ramakrishna Math & Ramakrishna Mission**.

RAVIDASSIAS

News: The postponement of the Assembly elections in Punjab to February 20 underlines the importance of the Ravidassia community in the state.

Ravidassias:

- The **Ravidassias** are a **Dalit community** of whom the bulk — nearly 12 lakh — live in the Doaba region.
- The **Dera Sachkhand Ballan**, their largest dera with 20 lakh followers worldwide, was founded in the early 20th century by Baba Sant Pipal Das.
- Once closely connected with Sikhism, the dera severed these decades-old ties in 2010, and announced they would follow the Ravidassia religion.
- The dera made the announcement on Guru Ravidas Jayanti in Varanasi.
- From 2010, the Dera Sachkhand Ballan started replacing the Guru Granth Sahib with its own Granth, **Amritbani**, carrying 200 hymns of Guru Ravidas, in Ravidassia temples and gurdwaras.

Guru Ravidas:

- Guru Ravidas was a **mystic poet saint of the Bhakti Movement** from the 15th and 16th centuries, and **founded the Ravidassia religion**.
- It is believed that he was born in Varanasi in a cobbler's family.
- He gained prominence due to his belief in one God and his unbiased religious poems.
- He dedicated his whole life to the abolition of the caste system and openly despised the notion of a Brahminical society.
- His devotional songs made an instant impact on the Bhakti Movement and around 41 of his poems were included in 'Guru Granth Sahib', the religious text of the Sikhs.

HAR GOBIND KHORANA

News: Recently, the 100th birth anniversary of the biochemist and chemical biologist Har Gobind Khorana was observed.

About:

- **Born:** January 9, 1922, Raipur, India [now Raipur, Pakistan]
- **Early Life and Education:** He was born into a poor family and attended the University of Punjab at Lahore, India (now in Pakistan), and the University of Liverpool, England, on government scholarships.

Research and Contribution:

- He began research on nucleic acids during a fellowship at the University of Cambridge (1951) under Sir Alexander Todd.
- He made another **contribution to genetics** in 1970 when he and his research team were able to **synthesize the first artificial copy of a yeast gene**.
- His later research explored the **molecular mechanisms underlying the cell signaling pathways of vision in vertebrates**.
- His studies were concerned primarily with the **structure and function of rhodopsin**, a **light-sensitive protein found in the retina of the vertebrate eye**.
- He also investigated **mutations in rhodopsin** that are associated with retinitis pigmentosa, which causes night blindness.

Awards:

- He shared the 1968 **Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine** with Marshall W. Nirenberg and Robert W. Holley for research that helped to show how the nucleotides in nucleic acids, which carry the genetic code of the cell, control the cell's synthesis of proteins.
- Khorana received the **Albert Lasker Basic Medical Research Award** (1968) and the **National Medal of Science** (1987).
- The Indian government awarded Khorana the **Padma Vibhushan in 1969**.

ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN

News: 20th January marks the death anniversary of Abdul Ghaffar Khan.

About:

- Abdul Ghaffar Khan, also known as **Frontier Gandhi** was born on **6th February 1890** in Utmanzai, Frontier Tribal Areas of Punjab Province.
- He was named **Badshah Khan** at twenty-six by the members of his tribe when his father died.
- Foremost 20th-century leader of the Pashtuns (Pakhtuns, or Pathans; a Muslim ethnic group of Pakistan and Afghanistan).
- As a young boy, he left his high school final exams, aspiring to join '**The Guides**', a corps composed of Sikhs and Pathans.

Roles:

- He met Mahatma Gandhi and **entered politics in 1919 during the agitation over the Rowlatt Act**.
- **Joined the Khilafat movement**.

- He **founded the Red Shirt movement (Khudai Khitmatgar/ Servant of God)** among the Pashtuns.
- It espoused nonviolent nationalist agitation in support of Indian independence and sought to awaken the Pashtuns' political consciousness.
- Started a **monthly journal in Pushto**.
- Received **Bharat Ratna**, the highest Indian honor in 1987.

Did You Know?

- Another non-Indian to receive Bharat Ratna is **Nelson Mandela (1990)**.
- **Mother Teresa**, in 1980, became the **first and only naturalized citizen to be awarded the Bharat Ratna**.

SUBHASH CHANDRA BOSE

News: Recently, the government has decided to install a grand statue of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose at India Gate to commemorate his 125th birth anniversary and as part of the year-long celebrations.

About:

- Subhas Chandra Bose was born on **23rd January 1897**, in Cuttack, Orissa Division, Bengal Province.
- His Jayanti is celebrated as '**Parakram Diwas**' on **23rd January**.
- He was affectionately called **Netaji**.
- In England, he appeared for the Indian **Civil Service competitive examination in 1920** and came out fourth in the order of merit.
- However, Bose was deeply disturbed by the Jallianwalla Bagh massacre and **left his Civil Services apprenticeship midway through to return to India in 1921**.
- He was strongly influenced by **Swami Vivekananda's teachings** and was known for his patriotic zeal as a student.
- He was known in particular for **his militant approach** to independence and his push for socialist policies.
- **Famous Slogans:**
 - "Give me blood, and I shall give you freedom!"
 - "Jai Hind."
- The first person to call Mahatma Gandhi "**Father of the Nation**", in his address from Singapore.
- He is said to have **died in 1945** when his **plane crashed in Taiwan**. However, there are still many conspiracy theories regarding his death.

Contribution to Indian Freedom Movement:

- After returning to India, Netaji joined the Indian National Congress. He started working **under Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das** whom he later acknowledged as **his political guru**.
- **Netaji along with Jawaharlal Nehru opposed the Motilal Nehru Report**, which spoke for dominion status for India. They asserted that they would be satisfied with nothing short of complete independence for India.
- In 1938, Subhas Chandra Bose was elected **President of the Haripura Congress Session**.
- In **1939 at the Tripuri Session**, Netaji again won the presidential elections against Gandhi's candidate Pattabhi Sitaramayya. But due to ideological differences with Gandhi, **Bose resigned and left congress**.
- He then founded a new party named '**the Forward Bloc**'. The purpose was to consolidate the political left and major support base in Bengal.

Subhas Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar:

- The **annual** Subhas Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar has been instituted to **recognize and honor the invaluable contribution and selfless service rendered by individuals and organizations in India in the field of disaster management**.
- The award is announced every year on **23rd January**.
- It carries a cash prize of Rs. 51 lakh and a certificate in case of an institution and Rs. 5 lakh and a certificate in case of an individual.

TIPU SULTAN

News: Tipu Sultan is at the center of controversy in Mumbai with the BJP claiming a Congress leader is planning to rename a playground in a Muslim-dominated locality after the Mysore king.

About:

- Born in **November 1750**, Tipu Sultan was Haidar Ali's son and a great warrior, also known as the **Tiger of Mysore**.
- In the wider national narrative, Tipu has so far been seen as a **man of imagination and courage, a brilliant military strategist** who, in a short reign of 17 years, mounted the most serious challenge the Company faced in India.
- He was a well-educated man **fluent in Arabic, Persian, Kanarese, and Urdu**.

Contributions of Tipu Sultan:

- Fought the **first Anglo-Mysore War (1767-69)** at the age of 17 and subsequently, against the Marathas and in the **Second Anglo-Mysore War (1780-84)**.
- He fought Company forces four times during 1767-99 and was **killed defending his capital Srirangapatnam in the Fourth Anglo-Mysore War**.
- Tipu reorganized his army along European lines, using new technology, including what is considered the first war rocket.
- Devised a **land revenue system based on detailed surveys and classification**, in which the **tax was imposed directly on the peasant**, and **collected through salaried agents in cash**, widening the state's resource base.
- **Modernized agriculture**, gave tax breaks for developing wastelands, built irrigation infrastructure and repaired old dams, and promoted agricultural manufacturing and sericulture. Built a navy to support trade.
- Commissioned a "**state commercial corporation**" to set up factories.
- Tipu **was a great lover of democracy** and a great diplomat who gave his support to the French soldiers at Seringapatam in setting up a **Jacobin Club in 1797**.
- Tipu himself **became a member of the Jacobin Club** and allowed himself to be called Citizen Tipu.
- He planted the "**Tree of Liberty**" at Seringapatam.

PANDIT BHIMSEN JOSHI

News: Recently, the Prime Minister remembered Pandit Bhimsen Joshi on his 100th birth anniversary.

About:

- Born in 1922 in Ron, Gadag district, **Karnataka**, Bhimsen Joshi was the eldest among 16 children born to Gururaj Joshi and Godavaribai.
- He left home at a young age in **pursuit of music and a suitable guru**.
- He found his **guru Pandit Sawai Gandharva** at Kundagol, Dharwad district.
- There he met **Gangubai Hangal**, another disciple of Sawai Gandharva, whom he fondly called 'Akka' (elder sister).
- Gangubai went on to become a doyenne of Hindustani classical music and settled down in Hubballi.
- When All India Radio opened a station in Dharwad in 1950, the inaugural song Vande Mataram was sung by Pandit Bhimsen Joshi, Gangubai Hangal, Mallikarjun Mansur, and Basavaraj Rajguru.

- He organized the **Sawai Gandharva Music festival in Pune**.
- He is **known for the khayal form of singing**, as well as for his popular renditions of devotional music (bhajans and abhangs).
- Bhimsen Joshi **belongs to the Kirana Gharana tradition of Hindustani Classical Music**.
- He received the **Bharat Ratna in 2008**.

SACHINDRA NATH SANYAL

News: The Nation is remembering Revolutionary Sachindra Nath Sanyal on his 80th death anniversary.

About:

- He was the **founder of the Hindustan Republican Association (HRA)** also known as the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association. It was created to **carry out armed resistance** against the British Empire in India.
- Sachindra Nath Sanyal was a **mentor for revolutionaries like Chandrasekhar Azad and Bhagat Singh**.
- He **along with Rash Behari Bose attacked Viceroy Hardinge** and **injured him** while he was entering the new capital of Delhi.
- Sanyal was closely **involved in the plans for the Ghadar Conspiracy**.
- He was **sentenced to life** for his involvement in the conspiracy and was imprisoned at Cellular Jail.
- He was also jailed by the British for his **involvement in the Kakori Conspiracy**.
- Sachindra Nath Sanyal **died in Gorakhpur Jail on 7th February 1942**.

MADHAVACHARYA

News: The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi paid his obeisances to Sri Madhvacharya on the occasion of Madhva Navami.

About:

- Shri Madhvacharya was **born in 1238 near Udupi**, on the auspicious day of Vijayadashami, and he was named **Vasudeva**.
- **He was a third of the trinity of philosophers** who influenced Indian thoughts after the ages of the Vedas and Puranas (**the other two being Shankaracharya and Ramanujacharya**).
- He propounded the philosophy of **Dwaita or Dualism**.
- It was **Achyutapreksha who gave him the title 'Madhva'** by which he was more famously known.

- **Literary works:** He wrote various texts that detailed his philosophy which he called **Tattvavada, or as it is more popularly known, Dvaita**. Some of his works were the **Gita Bhashya, Brahma Sutra Bhashya, Anu Bhashya, Karma Nirnaya, and Vishnu Tattva Nirnaya**.

Dvaita philosophy:

- The basic tenet of Dvaita philosophy is the **refutation of the Mayavada of Sri Shankara**.
- Dvaita emphasizes that **the world is real and not just an illusion**.
- The soul is bound to this world through ignorance.
- The way for the soul to release itself from this bondage is to seek the grace of **Sri Hari**.
- To reach Sri Hari, **one has to practice Bhakti**, there is no other way.
- To practice Bhakti, one **needs to meditate**.
- To meditate, one **needs to clear the mind and attain detachment by studying the sacred texts**.

ADI SHANKARA CHARYA

About

- Adi Shankara was born on May 11, 788 AD in Kaladi, near Kochi, **Kerala**.
- At the age of 33, **he took Samadhi at Kedarnath**.
- He was a **Shiva devotee**.
- **Advaita (Monism) doctrine was advanced**, and many commentaries on the Vedic canon (Upanishads, Brahma Sutras, and Bhagavad Gita) were written in Sanskrit.
- Buddhist philosophers irritated him.
- When Buddhism was gaining popularity, he was largely responsible for reviving Hinduism in India.
- **Shringeri, Puri, Dwaraka, and Badrinath Mathas** were established in the four corners of India to spread Sanathana Dharma.

Major works:

- Brahmasutrabhasya (Bhashya or commentary on the Brahma Sutra).
- The Bhajagovinda Stotra.
- Shatakam Nirvana.
- Granths of Prakaran.

Advaita Vedanta:

- It articulates a **radical non-dualist philosophical position**, a revisionary worldview derived from ancient Upanishadic texts.
- The Upanishads, according to Advaita Vedantins, reveal a fundamental principle of nonduality known as '**brahman**,' which is the reality of all things.

- Brahman, according to Advaitins, transcends individuality and empirical plurality. They seek to establish brahman as the essential core of one's self (atman).
- Advaita Vedanta's central thesis is that the **atman is pure non-intentional consciousness**.
- It has **no second, is non-dual**, has infinite existence, and is numerically identical to brahman.

TILKA MANJHI

News: The Nation is remembering revolutionary freedom fighter and tribal leader Tilka Manjhi on his 272nd birth anniversary.

About:

- He **organized Adivasis into an army and led the famous Santhal Hool in 1784** against the exploitative British.
- In **1770**, there was a **severe famine** in the Santhal region and people were dying of hunger. Tilka Manjhi **looted the treasury** of the Company and **distributed it among the poor and needy**.
- From **1771 to 1784**, Tilka Manjhi **never surrendered**. Tilka Manjhi **attacked Augustus Cleveland**, an East India Company administrator, and fatally wounded him.
- The **British surrounded the Tilapore forest** from which he operated but he and his men held them at bay for several weeks.
- When he was **finally caught in 1784**, he was tied to the tail of a horse and dragged to the Collector's residence at Bhagalpur, Bihar, India. There, his **lacerated body was hung from a Banyan tree**.

Koya Tribe:

- Koya is a tribal group found in **southern India**, especially **Chhattisgarh, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, and Odisha**.
- Koyas speak the **Koya language**, also known as Koya Basha, and is a member of the **Dravidian language family**.
- The Koyas are mainly **settled cultivators and artisans with expertise** in making bamboo furniture including mats for fencing, dustpans, and baskets. They **grow Jowar, Ragi, Bajra, and other millets**.
- **Lord Bhima, Korra Rajulu, Mamili, and Potaraju** are the important deities to Koyas.
- Their main festivals are **Vijji Pandum** (seeds charming festival) and **Kondala Kolupu** (festival to appease Hill deities).

- Koyas perform a **robust colorful dance called Permakok ata (Bison horn dance)** during festivals and marriage ceremonies.

CHENNAVEER KANAVI

News: Celebrated Kannada poet, critic, and professor Channaveera Kanavi, whose poems spoke of simplicities of life and betrayed a yearning for rural idyll, recently passed away.

About:

- Nadoja Chennaveera Kanavi (1928 – 2022) was an **Indian writer**.
- He was considered one of the **major poets and writers in the Kannada language** and received the **Sahitya Akademi Award** for his work **Jeeva Dhvani (Poetry)** in 1981.
- He was popularly known as “**Samanvayada Kavi**” and “**Soujanya Kavi**”.
- In **2011**, he was honored with the **Sahitya Kala Kaustubha Award**

NABIN CHANDRA SEN

News: The nation is remembering revolutionary Bengali poet and writer Nabin Chandra Sen on his 175th birth anniversary.

About:

- He described the battle of Plassey and the arrival of British rule in India as “**A Night of Eternal Gloom**”.
- Nabin Chandra Sen’s novel-in-verse **Bhanumati** and memoir of his travels ‘**Prabaser Patra**’ brought him fame.
- His five-volume autobiography, **Aamar Jiban-My Life** is an important document chronicling the **politics and social aspirations of the Bengali literati** in the late nineteenth century.

LACHIT BORPHUKAN

News: Indian President will inaugurate a year-long celebration of the 400th birth anniversary of Lachit Borphukan.

About:

- Lachit Borphukan was a **commander in the erstwhile Ahom kingdom**.
- He is known for his leadership in the **1671 Battle of Saraighat** which thwarted an attempt by Mughal forces to capture Assam.

- The battle of Saraighat was fought on the **banks of the Brahmaputra in Guwahati**.
- He **defeated the Mughal Army** through brilliant uses of the terrain, guerrilla tactics, clever diplomatic negotiations to buy time, military intelligence, and exploiting the sole weakness of the Mughal forces—its navy.

Significance:

- Lachit Borphukan was the **inspiration behind strengthening India’s naval force** and **revitalizing inland water transport** and creating infrastructure associated with it due to his great naval strategies.
- The **Lachit Borphukan gold medal** is awarded to the best cadet from the National Defence Academy.
- The medal was **instituted in 1999** to inspire defense personnel to emulate Borphukan’s heroism and sacrifices.

VINAYAK DAMODAR SAVARKAR

About:

- He was **born in a Hindu Marathi family in Nashik, Maharashtra on May 28, 1883**.
- He was nicknamed ‘**Veer**’ for his courage from an early age. He, popularly known as **Swatantryaveer Savarkar**.
- **Formed a youth organization: Mitra Mela**, to bring in national and revolutionary ideas.
- He was **against foreign goods** and propagated the idea of Swadeshi.
- He championed **atheism and rationality** and also **disapproved of orthodox Hindu belief**. He even dismissed cow worship as superstitious.
- He also worked on the **abolishment of untouchability** in Ratnagiri. Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar also compared his work to Lord Buddha.

Organizations/institutions he was associated with :

- He was a **president of Hindu Mahasabha from 1937 to 1943**.
- When congress ministries offered resignation on 22nd oct 1939, Hindu mahasabha under his leadership cooperated with Muslim league to form government in provinces like Sindh, Bengal and NWFP.
- In Pune, Savarkar founded the “**Abhinav Bharat Society**”.
- He joined **Tilak’s Swaraj Party**.
- He founded the **Free India Society**. The Society celebrated important dates on the Indian calendar including festivals, freedom movement landmarks, and was dedicated to furthering discussion about Indian freedom.

Important works:

- Book: **The History of the War of Indian Independence.**
- An armed revolt against the Morley-Minto reform.
- Two-nation theory in his book 'Hindutva'.

SAVITRIBAI AND JYOTI RAO PHULE

News: Governor Bhagat Singh Koshiyari has recently received flak for his remarks on the child marriage of the social reformist couple Jyotirao and Savitribai Phule.

Jyotirao Phule:

- Born in **1827 in Satara district of Maharashtra.**
- Phule was **given the title of Mahatma on May 11, 1888, by Vithalrao Krishnaji Vandekar**, a Maharashtrian social activist.
- His work is related mainly to **eradication of untouchability and caste system, emancipation and empowerment of women, and reform of Hindu family life.**
- In 1873, Phule founded the **Satyashodhak Samaj, or the Society of Seekers of Truth**, for the rights of depressed classes, to denounce the caste system and to spread rational thinking.
- **His famous works:** *Tritiya Ratna* (1855), *Gulamgiri* (1873), *Shetkarayacha Aasud*, or *Cultivator's Whipcord* (1881), *Satyashodhak Samajokt Mangalashtakasah Sarva Puja-vidhi* (1887).

Savitribhai Phule:

- Born in **Naigaon in Maharashtra on January 3, 1831.**
- Phule is widely regarded as **one of India's first generation modern feminists** for her significant contributions in ensuring equal education opportunities under the British raj.
- She became the **first female teacher in India in 1848** and **opened a school for girls** along with her husband, social reformer Jyotirao Phule.
- The two also **worked against discrimination** based on caste-based identity, something vehemently opposed by the orthodox sections of society in Pune.
- The couple set up '**Balyata Pratibandak Gruha**', a childcare centre for the protection of pregnant widows and rape victims.
- As an extension to Satya Shodhak Samaj, they started, '**Satya Shodhak Marriage**' where the marrying couple has to take a pledge to promote education and equality.

- Savitribai opened a **clinic in 1897 for victims** of the bubonic plague that spread across Maharashtra just before the turn of the century.
- She organized a **boycott by barbers** against the tradition of head tonsuring of widows.
- In her honor, **University of Pune was renamed Savitribai Phule University in 2015.**

RAJA RAVI VARMA

News: Raja Rai Varma's *Draupadi Vastraharan* is expected to fetch between Rs 15 and Rs 20 crore at an auction.

About:

- Raja Ravi Varma (1848 – 1906) is **considered among the greatest painters in the history of Indian art.**
- His works are held to be among the best examples of the **fusion of European techniques with a purely Indian sensibility.** For example, *Shakuntala Looking for Dushyanta*, *Nair Lady Adorning Herself*, etc.
- Through his **printing press**, Varma's **humanized depiction** of Hindu pantheon traveled beyond the surfaces of costly canvases, and into the prayer and living rooms of working-class homes.
- He was notable for making **affordable lithographs of his paintings** available to the public, which greatly enhanced his reach and influence as a painter and public figure.
- His depictions of **Hindu deities and episodes from the epics and Puranas** have received profound acceptance from the public and are found, often as objects of worship, across the length and breadth of India.
- **Famous works:** *Damayanti Tal Hair*, and *Shantanu and Matsyagandha*.

Awards and Honors:

- In **1904**, the British colonial government awarded Varma with the **Kaiser-i-Hind Gold Medal.**
- In **2013**, a **crater on the planet Mercury** was named in his honor.

BABU JAGJIVAN RAM

News: The Prime Minister paid tributes to freedom fighter Babu Jagjivan Ram on his 115th birth anniversary (5th April).

About:

- Jagjivan Ram (1908 – 1986), known popularly as **Babuji**, was an **Indian independence activist and politician from Bihar.**

- He was instrumental in the foundation of the **All India Depressed Classes League**, an organization dedicated to attaining equality for untouchables, in 1935.
- Jagjivan Ram had organized a **number of Ravidas Sammelans** and had **celebrated Guru Ravidas Jayanti** in different areas of Calcutta (Kolkata).
- In **1934**, he founded the **Akhil Bhartiya Ravidas Mahasabha** in Calcutta.
- In October 1935, Babuji appeared before the **Hammond Commission at Ranchi** and **demanding**, for the first time, **voting rights for the Dalits**.
- Inspired by Gandhiji, Babuji courted **arrest on 10 December 1940**. After his release, he entrenched himself deeply into the **Civil Disobedience Movement and Satyagraha**.
- Babuji was **arrested again on 19 August 1942 for his active participation in the Quit India Movement** launched by the Indian National Congress.
- In **1946**, he became the **youngest minister** in Jawaharlal Nehru's interim government, the **first cabinet of India as a Labour Minister**.
- He was the **Defence Minister of India** during the Indo-Pak war of 1971, which resulted in the creation of Bangladesh.
- He has also served as the **deputy prime minister of India**.
- To propagate his ideologies, the '**Babu Jagjivan Ram National Foundation**', has been set up by the Ministry of Social Justice, Govt. of India in Delhi.

GURU NABHA DAS

News: Punjab government has announced a gazetted holiday on the birth anniversary of Guru Nabha Dass, a 16th century saint, removing it from the list of restricted holidays.

About:

- Guru Nabha Dass was born on **April 8, 1537**, at village Bhadrachalam on the bank of Godavari river in Khammam district, which falls in the **present-day Telangana**.
- He belonged to **Mahasha** also known as **doom or dumna community**, which is one of the Schedule Caste communities.
- Since childhood, orphaned Guru Nabha Dass, whose original name was **Narayan Dass**, had an inclination towards **spirituality**.
- Two religious gurus — **Agar Dass and Keel Dass** — who were passing through his village took the orphan child to a temple at **Ghalta Dham**, which is now the main pilgrimage of Nabhadassias, at Jaipur.

- People from this community are also known as **Nabhadassias**. They are known for **making baskets and grain storage containers with bamboo**.
- Guru Nabha Dass wrote '**Bhagatmal**' in **1585**.
- It has the life history of around **200 saints**.
- He **died in 1643**.
- **His connection with Punjab** - Guru Nabha Dass used to visit village Pandori in Gurdaspur district where people of Doom community live

ALLURI SITARAMA RAJU

News: The then Vice President, Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu visited the birthplace of noted freedom fighter and revolutionary, Shri Alluri Sitarama Raju in Pandrangi village near Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh.

About:

- Alluri Sitarama Raju (1897 – 1924) was an **Indian revolutionary** who waged an armed campaign against British colonial rule in India.
- Born in present-day Andhra Pradesh, he became **involved in anti-British activities** in response to the **1882 Madras Forest Act**, which effectively restricted the free movement of Adivasis (tribal communities) in their forest habitats and prevented them from practicing a traditional form of agriculture known as podu.
- Rising discontent towards the British led to the **Rampa Rebellion of 1922**, in which he **played a major part as a leader**.
- He was nicknamed "**Manyam Veerudu**" (Hero of the Jungle) by local villagers for his heroic exploits.

Rampa Rebellion:

- The Rampa Rebellion is also known as the **Manyam Rebellion**.
- It was a **tribal uprising**, led by Alluri Sitarama Raju in Godavari Agency of Madras Presidency, British India.
- The Rampa administrative area was home to about **28,000 tribes**. These tribes followed the '**Podu**' system of **cultivation** whereby every year some amounts of forest tracts were cleared for cultivation, as it was their only source of food.
- While for the tribes, the **forests were essential for their survival**, the Britishers wanted to evict them so that they could plunder these areas for wood, which would eventually **help in building their railways and ships**.
- To get the forests cleared, '**The Madras Forest Act, 1882**' was passed, thereby **restricting the free movement** of the tribal communities and prohibiting

them from engaging in their traditional Podu agricultural system.

- This **oppressive order** was the beginning of the Rampa Rebellion.
- The rebellion **began in August 1922** and lasted until the capture and killing of Raju in **May 1924**.

GURU TEJH BAHADUR

News: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will address the nation on the 400th Parkash Purab of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji at the Red Fort in New Delhi on 21st of April, 2022.

About:

- Guru Tegh Bahadur (1621 – 1675) was the **ninth of ten Sikh Gurus** and the leader of Sikhs from 1665 until his beheading in 1675.
- He was **born in Amritsar**, Punjab, India in 1621 and was the youngest son of Guru Hargobind, the sixth Sikh guru. His **115 hymns** are included in Sri Guru Granth Sahib, the main text of Sikhism.
- He was **originally named Tyag Mal but was later renamed Tegh Bahadur** after his gallantry and bravery in the wars against the Mughal forces.
- He built the city of **Anandpur Sahib**.
- Guru Tegh Bahadur was **executed on the orders of Aurangzeb**, the **sixth Mughal emperor, in Delhi**.
- Sikh holy premises **Gurudwara Sis Ganj Sahib** and **Gurdwara Rakab Ganj Sahib** in Delhi mark the places of execution and cremation of Guru Tegh Bahadur respectively.

VEER KUNWAR SINGH

News: The Government pay tribute to freedom fighter Veer Kunwar Singh (1777-1858) on his birth anniversary (23rd April)

About:

- He belonged to a **family of the Ujjainiya clan of the Parmar Rajputs of Jagdispur**, currently a part of Bhojpur district, Bihar.
- He was the **chief organizer of the fight against the British in Bihar**. He is popularly known as **Veer Kunwar Singh**.
- He **led the Indian Rebellion of 1857 in Bihar**. He was nearly eighty and in failing health when he was called upon to take up arms.
- He was assisted by both his brother, **Babu Amar Singh** and his commander-in-chief, **Hare Krishna Singh**. Some argue that the latter was the real reason behind Kunwar Singh's initial military success.

- He gave a good fight and harried British forces for **nearly a year** and remained **invincible until the end**.
- He passed away on **26th April 1858**.
- To honor his contribution to India's freedom movement, the Republic of India issued a **commemorative stamp** on 23th April 1966.
- The Government of Bihar established the **Veer Kunwar Singh University, Arrah** in 1992.
- In 2017, the **Veer Kunwar Singh Setu**, also known as the **Arrah-Chhapra Bridge**, was inaugurated to connect north and south Bihar.
- In 2018, to celebrate the 160th anniversary of Kunwar Singh's death, the government of Bihar relocated a statue of him to Harding Park. The park was also officially renamed as **'Veer Kunwar Singh Azadi Park'**.

PARASHURAMA

News: Karnataka Government will release ₹1.5 crores to the Parashurama theme park coming up at Karkala.

About:

- Parashurama is the **traditional founder of Malabar** and is said to have bestowed land there on members of the priestly class whom he brought down from the north to expiate his slaughter of the Kshatriyas.
- He is the **sixth incarnation among the Dashavatara of the god Vishnu in Hinduism**.
- He is believed to be **one of the Chiranjeevi's** (Long-Lived Ones or Immortal Ones), who will appear at the end of the Kali Yuga, to be the guru of Vishnu's tenth and last incarnation, Kalki.

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

News: The birth anniversary of India's first Nobel Award winner Rabindranath Tagore was observed on May 7th.

About:

- He was born on **7 May 1861** to Debendranath Tagore and Sarada Devi in Kolkata (Calcutta).
- He is popularly known as **'Gurudev'**.
- He was primarily known as a **writer, poet, playwright, philosopher and aesthetician, music composer, choreographer, and painter**.
- He was **influenced by the classical poetry of Kalidasa** and started writing his own classical poems.
- In 1913, he became the **first Indian to receive a Nobel Prize in Literature** for his novel 'Geetanjali'.

Writings:

- He released his first collection of poems under the pen name '**Bhanusimha**' at **16 years of age**.
- His notable works include **Gitanjali, Ghare-Baire, Gora, Manasi, Balaka, Sonar Tori**.
- He is also remembered for his song '**Ekla Chalo Re**'..
- He wrote the **National Anthems of India and Bangladesh**.
- He wrote the song **Banglar Mati Banglar Jol** (Soil of Bengal, Water of Bengal) to unite the Bengali population after the Bengal partition in 1905.
- He also wrote the famed '**Amar Sonar Bangla**' which helped ignite a feeling of nationalism amongst people.

Role in the freedom struggle:

- He started the **Rakhi Utsav** where people from Hindu and Muslim communities tied colorful threads on each other's wrists.
- He **denounced British imperialism**, yet he did not fully support or agree with Gandhi in the Non-cooperation Movement.
- He viewed British rule as a **symptom of the overall "sickness"** of the social "disease" of the public.
- He **renounced the knighthood** that had been given to him by Lord Hardinge in 1915 in protest of the violent Jallianwala Bagh massacre.

GOPAL KRISHNA GOKHLE

News: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 9th May paid his tributes to Gopal Krishna Gokhale on his birth anniversary.

About:

- Gokhale **became a member of the Indian National Congress in 1889**. He was the **leader of the moderate faction** of the Congress party.
- In **1905**, he was **elected president** of the **Benares Session of INC**.
- He played a **leading role in bringing about Morley-Minto Reforms**, the beginning of constitutional reforms in India.

Contribution:

- He established the **Servants of India Society in 1905** for the expansion of Indian education.
- He was also associated with the **Sarvajanik sabha journal started by Govind Ranade**.
- In 1908, Gokhale **founded the Ranade Institute of Economics**.
- He launched the English weekly newspaper named **The Hitavada** (The people's paper) in 1911.

- As a **liberal nationalist**, he is regarded by Mahatma Gandhi as his political guru.
 - **Gandhi** wrote a book in **Gujarati** dedicated to the leader titled '**Dharmatma Gokhale**'.

DEVASAHAYAM PILLAI

News: Devasahayam Pillai was declared Saint by Pope Francis (Catholic Church) at The Vatican.

About:

- He had converted to **Christianity in the 18th century** in the then Kingdom of Travancore.
- Devasahayam had become the **first Indian layman to get sainthood** for what The Vatican calls '**enduring increasing hardships**'.
- He was born in **1712** in the **village of Nattalam in Tamil Nadu's Kanyakumari District**.
- He grew up in an upper caste family of temple priests and was known as **Nilakanda Pillai**.
- He was **baptized in 1745**, and assumed the name '**Lazarus**', meaning '**God is my help**'.
 - **Baptism** is a Christian sacrament marked by ritual use of water and admitting the recipient to the Christian community.
- His **conversion did not go well with the heads of his native religion**.
- False charges of treason and espionage were brought against him and he was divested of his post in the royal administration.
- He went on to **fight against Caste discrimination** prevalent in the country and was persecuted and then killed.
- On 14th January, 1752, Devasahayam was **shot dead in the Aralvaimozhy forest**.
- He is widely **considered a martyr**, and his mortal remains were interred inside what is now **Saint Francis Xavier's Cathedral in Kottar, Nagercoil**.
- The Vatican in 2012 **recognised his martyrdom** after a rigorous process.

PANDIT MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

News: Union Minister of Education Dharmendra Pradhan pitched in with an idea of a "**Malaviya Mission**" to develop an enabling ecosystem across the country for teacher education/faculty development.

About:

- Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya (1861 – 1946) was an **Indian educationist and a Freedom Fighter**.

- He was conferred the **title of 'Mahamana'** by **Mahatma Gandhi**.
- During his school days he started writing poems under the **pen name 'Makarand'** which were published in journals and magazines.
- **Role in Freedom Movement:**
 - He was a **moderate leader**.
 - He was elected as the **president of Indian National Congress four times in 1909, 1918, 1932 and 1933**, but owing to his arrest by the Government of India, he could not preside over the 1932 and 1933 sessions which had been banned.
- He founded **Banaras Hindu University (BHU)** at **Varanasi in 1916**, which was created under the B.H.U. Act, 1915. He was **Vice Chancellor of Banaras Hindu University from 1919–1938**.
- **Journalism:**
 - He started the '**Abhyudaya**' as a Hindi weekly in 1907 and **made it a daily in 1915**.
 - He also started the '**Maryada**', a **Hindi monthly** in 1910.
 - He started the '**Leader**' an **English daily** in 1909.
 - He was the **Chairman of the Board of Directors** of the '**Hindustan Times**' from 1924 to 1946.

RAJA RAM MOHAN ROY

News: Union Culture Ministry will commemorate the 250th Birth Anniversary of Raja Ram Mohan Roy till 22nd of May next year under the aegis of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav'.

About:

- Ram Mohan Roy (1772 – 1833) was an **Indian reformer**.
- He is considered to be the "**Father of the Bengal Renaissance**" by many historians.
- He **crusaded against Hindu customs** such as sati, polygamy, child marriage and the caste system. He demanded **property inheritance rights for women**.
- In **1830**, Ram Mohan Roy traveled to the United Kingdom as an ambassador of the Mughal Empire to **ensure that Lord William Bentinck's Bengal Sati Regulation, 1829** banning the practice of Sati was **not overturned**.
- He was one of the founders of the **Brahmo Sabha in 1828**, the precursor of the **Brahmo Samaj**, a social-religious reform movement.
- In **1817**, in collaboration with David Hare, he set up the **Hindu College at Calcutta**.
- His most popular journal was the **Sambad Kaumudi**.
- He was given the **title of Raja by Akbar II**, the Mughal emperor.

PRITHVIRAJ CHAUHAN

News: There is controversy around a new Akshay Kumar film called 'Prithviraj', with both the Gujar and Rajput communities of Rajasthan laying claim over the 12th century king.

About:

- Prithviraj belonged to the **Chauhan** or **Chahamana dynasty of Ajmer** which emerged after the decline of the Pratihara empire in the 11th century AD.
- He ascended the **throne in 1177 or 1178**, and very quickly expanded his kingdom, defeating many of the smaller Rajput states.
- However, he **struggled against the Chalukyas of Gujarat**, and was forced to look towards the Ganga valley instead.
- While Prithviraj's army was able to decisively **defeat the invading Ghurids in the First Battle of Tarain** (present-day Haryana) in **1191**, he was **defeated in the Second Battle of Tarain** in the following year.
- The battle marked a **watershed moment** in the history of medieval India, paving the way for the establishment of the **Delhi Sultanate** and the **beginning of Muslim rule**.
- Prithviraj was **depicted in 'Prithviraj Raso'**, a poem in Braj Bhasha attributed to **Chand Bardai**, which is thought to have been composed in the 16th century.

ANANGPAL II: TOMAR DYNASTY

News: The National Monuments Authority (NMA) has planned to erect a statue of Anangpal Tomar II somewhere in central Delhi and develop it into a tourist spot.

About:

- Anangpal II, popularly known as **Anangpal Tomar**, belonged to the **Tomar dynasty**.
- The Tomar dynasty ruled parts of **present-day Delhi and Haryana** between the 8th and 12th centuries.
- He was **succeeded by his grandson Prithviraj Chauhan**, who was defeated by the Ghurid forces in the Battle of Tarain (present-day Haryana) after which the Delhi Sultanate was established in 1192.
- The Tomar dynasty shifted its capital to **Dhillikapuri (Delhi)** during the reign of Anangpal II.
- The **Vishnu Garud Dhvaj** (iron pillar) in the Qutub complex was also brought by King Anangpal Tomar II.

Tomar Dynasty:

- Tomar dynasty is one of the **minor early medieval ruling houses** of northern India.
- According to bardic tradition, the dynasty was **one of the 36 Rajput tribes**.
- The history of the family spans the **period between the reign of Anangpal**, who **founded the city of Delhi** in the 11th century CE, and **the incorporation of Delhi within the Chauhan (Chahamana) kingdom** in 1164.
- Although Delhi subsequently became **decisively a part of the Chauhan kingdom**, **numismatic and comparatively late literary evidence** indicates that Tomara kings such as Anangapala and Madanapala continued to **rule as feudatories**, presumably until the final conquest of Delhi by the Muslims in 1192–93.

BABA BANDA SINGH BAHADUR

News: Minister of State for Culture in an event organized by the National Monuments Authority (NMA) released 'Banda Singh Bahadur Martyrdom Monument Poster' ahead of his 306th Martyrdom Day on 9th June.

About:

- Banda Singh Bahadur (**born Lachman Dev**) (1670 – 1716), was a **Sikh warrior** and a **commander of the Khalsa army**.
- At age 15 he left home to become a Hindu ascetic, and was given the name **"Madho Das"**.
- He **established a monastery at Nanded**, on the bank of the river Godāvari, where in 1708 he became a **disciple of Guru Gobind Singh**, who gave him the new name of Banda Bahadur.
- He came to Khanda in Sonipat and **assembled a fighting force** and led the struggle against the Mughal Empire.
- His first major action was the sacking of the Mughal provincial capital, **Samana**, in November 1709.
- After establishing his authority and Khalsa rule in Punjab, he **abolished the zamindari system**, and **granted property rights to the tillers of the land**.
- Banda Singh was captured by the Mughals and tortured to death in **1715-1716**.
- His glorious martyrdom validates **Bhagat Kabir's rendition in Guru Granth Sahib**.
- **Baba Banda Singh Bahadur War Memorial** is at **Chappar Chiri, Mohali** which is a tribute to the brave Sikh warrior under whose command the Battle of Chappar Chiri was fought between the Sikhs and the forces of the Mughal Empire led by Wazir Khan in May 1710.

- With a decisive victory in this war, Sikh rule was established **from Lahore to Delhi**.

SANT KABIR

News: Indian President inaugurated the Sant Kabir Academy and Research Centre Swadesh Darshan Yojana and paid tribute to the Bhakti saint Kabir at Maghar (Uttar Pradesh).

About:

- Sant Kabir was **born in Varanasi** and lived between the **years 1398 and 1448**, or till the year 1518.
- He was from a community of **'lower caste'** weavers of the **Julaha caste**, a group that had recently converted to Islam.
- He was a member of the **Nirguni tradition**, a school within the Bhakti movement. In this tradition, God was understood to be a **universal and formless being**.
- Kabir is also believed to be a **disciple of the famous guru Ramananda**, a 14th century Vaishnava poet-saint.
- Kabir is in modern times portrayed as a figure that **synthesized Islam and Hinduism**.
- Kabir's beliefs were **deeply radical**, and he was known for his **intense and outspoken voice** which he used to attack the dominant religions and entrenched caste systems of the time.
- Instead of God being an external entity that resided in temples or mosques, Kabir argued that **God existed inside everyone**.
- In many of his verses, Kabir proclaimed that people of all castes have the **right to salvation** through the bhakti tradition.
- In the Sikh tradition he is seen to have **influenced Guru Nanak**, for Hindus he is a **Vaishnavite**, and is revered by Muslims as a Sufi saint.

Compositions:

- Kabir's compositions can be classified into 3 literary forms:
 1. **Dohas** (short 2 liners),
 2. **Ramanas** (rhymed 4 liners),
 3. Sung compositions of varying length, known as **padas** (verses) and **sabdās** (words).
- He composed his **verses orally** and is generally assumed to be **illiterate**.
- Kabir's own **humble origins** and his radical message of egalitarianism fostered a community of his followers called **the Kabir Panth**.
- According to legends, Kabir is said to have **departed the mortal world in Maghar**.

SHAHU MAHARAJ

News: The death centenary (May 6th, 1922) of legendary king Shahu Maharaj was observed by the State of Maharashtra.

About:

- Shahu Maharaj was born in **Kolhapur District**, to Jaisingh Rao Appasaheb Ghatge (Father) and Radhabai (Mother) in **June, 1874**.
- He was a **descendant of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj**, the founder of the modern Maratha Empire.
- Originally named **Yashwantrao Ghatge**, he was adopted into the **Bhonsale dynasty** and became the ruler of Kolhapur in 1894.
- **Vedokta controversy:** 'Vedokta' refers to Vedic religious rites which are supposedly the right of all the **twice-born castes** (Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaisyas), as opposed to the '**Puranokta**' (from the Puranas) rites which all Shudras were entitled to perform.
- The controversy arose on account of the **contested Kshatriya status of the Marathas**.
- In 1899, Shahu Maharaj staked his claim to **Vedokta**.
- His royal priest, however, **refused to oblige him since Shahu Maharaj**, in his view, was a Shudra.
- This turned out to be a **Brahmin versus non-Brahmin fight**.
- Association with Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: He **provided financial support** to Ambedkar to **complete his study**. In 1920, together they organized a conference for the betterment of the untouchables. In this conference Shahu Maharaj declared Dr. Ambedkar "the true leader of the oppressed classes in India".
- He also financed **Dr Ambedkar's newspaper 'Mooknayak** (Leader of the Dumb)'.

His key contributions in making of the modern India:

- **Education:** He took following initiatives **to promote education for all:**
 - Established the **Miss Clarke Boarding School** for the socially quarantined segments of the community.
 - Introduced several scholarships for the **poor but meritorious students** from backward castes.
 - It was the beginning of what came to be called '**reservation**' or '**affirmative action**'.
- **Political reform:** He established the **Deccan Rayat Association in Nipani during 1916**. The association sought to secure political rights for non-Brahmins and invited their equal participation in politics.

- **Economic reforms:** He introduced a number of projects like **spinning and weaving mills**, dedicated **market places**, **establishment of co-operative societies** for farmers, and established the **King Edward Agricultural Institute** to teach the farmers to **increase crop yield** and related technologies.
- He initiated the **Radhanagari Dam** in **1907** (the project was completed in **1935**).
- **Freedom Fight:** On **Bal Gangadhar Tilak's suggestion**, he helped the **Shivaji Club**, who undertook **revolutionary activities**, with **money and weapons**.

SWAMI RAMANUJACHARYA

News: The Union Home Minister has unveiled the Statue of Peace of Swami Ramanujacharya in Srinagar in Jammu and Kashmir.

About:

- Born in **Tamil Nadu** in Vikram Samvat 1074. He was the child of Keshavacharya and Mata Kantimani.
- He is known to have **revolted against the discrimination of untouchability** and played a role in bringing a **big change in society**.
- Sri Ramanuja named subjugated classes as "**Thirukkulathar- Born Divine**".
- Seeing his compassion towards the oppressed, his delighted guru honored him with the coveted title "**Em-perum- anar**"- you are ahead of us.
- He is believed to be the **first Hindu acharya** to initiate women into '**sanyasa**'.
- The Yathiraj Math of Yadugiri located in the **Mandya district of Karnataka** is the **only original Math in Melkot** that has existed since the time of Ramanujacharya. This math was established by Ramanujacharya on the orders of **his Guru Yamunacharya**.
- **Narsi Mehta**, the famous poet of Gujarat, composed '**Vaishnav Jan To Tene Kahiye Je Peer Parai Jaane Re**', with the message of Ramanujacharya.
- He was an inspiration for mystic poets like **Kabir, Meerabai, Annamacharya, Bhaktha Ramdas, Thyagaraja and many others**.

SHYAM PRASAD MUKHERJEE

News: The Union Home Minister paid tribute to Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee on his birth anniversary.

About:

- Shyama Prasad Mukherjee was born on **6th July 1901** in a **Bengali family**.

- He was an **Indian politician, barrister, and academician** who served as the **Minister for Industry and Supply** in Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru's cabinet.
- At the age of 33, Shyama Prasad Mukherjee became the **youngest vice-chancellor of Calcutta University** in 1934.
- During His term as Vice-Chancellor, **Rabindranath Tagore delivered the university convocation address in Bengali** for the first time, and the **Indian vernacular was introduced as a subject for the highest examination**.
- He **demanding the partition of Bengal in 1946** to prevent the inclusion of its Hindu-majority areas in a Muslim-dominated East Pakistan.
- He also **opposed a failed bid for a united but independent Bengal made in 1947** by Sarat Bose, the brother of Subhas Chandra Bose, and Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy, a Bengali Muslim politician.
- He **founded the Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS)**, the predecessor of the modern-day Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).
- After he left the Indian National Congress due to difference of opinion with the then-Prime Minister Dr Jawaharlal Nehru on Jammu and Kashmir issues, he co- founded **Janata Party in the year 1977-1979**, which later on became the **Bharatiya Janata Party**.
- In 1953, to **protest against the special status given to Kashmir** he tried to enter Kashmir without seeking permission and was arrested. He died in mysterious circumstances during detention.

PRAFULLA CHANDRA RAY

News: Ministry of Culture along with the Department of Chemistry, University of Delhi, and Vijnana Bharati (VIBHA) organized a curtain-raiser for two days International Conference on the "Contributions of Acharya Prafulla Chandra Ray as a Chemist and Freedom Fighter".

About:

- Prafulla Chandra Ray (1861 – 1944) was an **eminent Indian Bengali chemist** who is regarded as the **father of chemical science in India**.
- He was the founder of **Bengal Chemicals & Pharmaceuticals**, India's first pharmaceutical company.

Scientific Research:

- In 1896, he published a **paper on preparation of a new stable chemical compound: mercurous nitrite**.

- He also proved that the **pure ammonium nitrite is indeed stable** by bringing to pass a lot of experiments and explained that it can be sublimed even at 60 °C without decomposition.

Literary works:

- He authored the '**History of Hindu Chemistry – From the Earliest Times to the Middle of the Sixteenth Century AD**', a book that documented India's indigenous chemical practices starting from the Vedic era.
- His autobiography '**Life and Experience of a Bengali Chemist**' in 1932.

Awards constituted:

- In 1922, he donated money to establish the **Nagarjuna Prize to be awarded for the best work in chemistry**.
- In 1937, another award, named after **Ashutosh Mukherjee**, to be awarded for the best **work in zoology or botany**, was established from his donation.
- The **Royal Society of Chemistry** dedicated its coveted **Chemical Landmark plaque to Ray**, the first non-European to be conferred the honor, in 2011 on his 150th birth anniversary.

MAHARAJA SERFOJI

News: A rare 19th-century painting of Raja Serfoji and his son Sivaji, which was stolen from Saraswathi Mahal, Thanjavur has been traced to the US Museum.

About:

- Maharaja Serfoji was the **last of the Bhonsle Rajas of Thanjavur**. He was born in 1777 and died in 1832.
- His **only son Shivaji ruled until 1855**. However, he had **no male successor**.
- Due to this, Thanjavur became a casualty of Lord Dalhousie's infamous '**Doctrine of Lapse**' and it got **absorbed into British Ruled Indian provinces**.

Contributions of Maharaja Serfoji:

- **Library:** The **Sarasvati Mahal Library** was founded as a **Palace Library** by the Nayak Kings of Thanjavur (1535–1675), it was however Serfoji who enriched it with priceless works, maps, dictionaries, coins and artwork.
- **Educational Reforms:** Serfoji founded a school called **Navavidhya Kalanidhi Sala** where languages, literature, the sciences and arts and crafts were taught in addition to the Vedas and shastras.
- Serfoji is also credited with **installing a hand press with Devanagari type in 1805**, the first of its kind in South India. He also established a **stone-type press** called "**Nava Vidhya Kalanidhi Varnayantra Sala**".

- **Medicine:** Serfoji established the **Dhanavantari Mahal**, a research institution that produced herbal (indigenous medicine) medicine for humans and animals.

PINGALI VENKAYYA

News: The Ministry of Culture organized “**TirangaUtsav**” to celebrate the contributions of Pingali Venkayya to the nation on the occasion of his 146th Birth Anniversary.

About:

- Pingali Venkayya was a **freedom fighter, designer of India's National Flag** and a follower of Gandhian principles.
- He was **born on 2nd August 1876** into a Telugu Brahmin family in Bhatlapenumarru, Madras Presidency, British India (today's Machilipatnam in Andhra Pradesh).
- He was also known as **Patti Venkayya** because of his research into Cambodia Cotton. Patti means ‘cotton’, which was **very important for Machilipatnam**, a former port city that became famous for its Kalamkari handloom weaves.

Contribution to National Flag:

- Venkayya designed several models of national flag starting from the one **designed in 1921** which was **approved by Mahatma Gandhi at a Congress meeting in Vijayawada**.
- This version consisted of **two red and green bands**; the two bands represented the two major religious communities — the Hindus and the Muslims. The flag also had a **charkha which represented Swaraj**. On the advice of Mahatma Gandhi, Venkayya added a **white band** which represented peace.
- In **1931**, concerns were raised about the religious aspect of the flag. Keeping that in mind, a **Flag Committee was set up**.
- The committee **replaced** the red with saffron and changed the order of the colors with saffron on top followed by white and then green. The **charkha was placed on the white band in the middle**.
- The colors now **stood for qualities and not communities**; the saffron for courage and sacrifice, white for truth and peace and green for faith and strength. The charkha stood for the welfare of the masses.
- Post-Independence, a **national flag committee under President Rajendra Prasad** replaced the charkha with the **Ashok Chakra**.

AURABINDHO GHOSE

News: 150th birth anniversary of Aurobindo Ghose will be observed on 15th August.

About:

- Born on **August 15, 1872**.
- At the age of 7 he was taken to **England for education**.
- Popularly known as **yogi Rishi Aurobindo**. A revolutionary, nationalist, poet, educationist and philosopher.
- **Contributions**
 - He became a **state service officer** on his return to India in **1893**.
 - He worked as a **professor at Baroda College**.
- **Revolutionary:**
 - He also **joined a revolutionary society** and took a leading role in secret preparations for an uprising against the British Government in India.
 - He was the first political leader in India to openly put forward, in his **newspaper Bande Mataram**, the idea of complete independence for the country.
 - He was the **first proponent of 'Purna Swaraj'** more than 20 years before the Indian National Congress' declaration in 1930.
- **Literary works:**
 - He was also a journalist and his first philosophical magazine called **Arya was published in 1914**.
 - Among his many writings are **The Life Divine, The Synthesis of Yoga and Savitri**.

LORD CURZON

News: The Bardhaman municipality in West Bengal has decided to erect a statue of an erstwhile maharaja in front of the landmark Curzon Gate in the city.

About:

- Born in **1859**, **George Nathaniel Curzon** was a British conservative politician who was **educated at the elite institutions of Eton and Oxford**.
- He served as **Under-Secretary of State for India (1891-1892)**, and for Foreign Affairs (1895-1898).
- He was the **Viceroy of India** from the year **1899 to 1905**.
- **Actions taken by Curzon as viceroy of India:**
 - In 1899, he passed the **Calcutta Municipal Amendment Act** which reduced the number of elected representatives in the Calcutta Corporation.
 - In 1900, **Curzon** famously stated, “**We could lose all our [white settlement] dominions and still**

survive, but if we lost India, our sun would sink to its setting.”

- Curzon created a separate Muslim majority province of the North-West Frontier Province.
- He also sent a British expedition to Tibet and established a separate police service in India.
- He was also responsible for establishing the Archaeological Survey of India, in order to study and protect historical monuments.
- In 1904, he passed the Universities Act (1904) that placed Calcutta University under government control, and the Indian Official Secrets Amendment Act that reduced the freedom of the press even further.
- He is the one who partitioned Bengal in 1905, and triggered a wave of Bengali nationalism that contributed to the wider Indian national movement.

PANDURANG KHANKHOJE

News: Lok Sabha Speaker will be traveling to Mexico where he will unveil statues of Swami Vivekananda and Maharashtra-born freedom fighter and agriculturalist Pandurang Khankhoje (1883-1967).

About:

- Pandurang Khankhoje (1884 – 1967) was an Indian revolutionary, scholar and agricultural scientist.
- He was one of the founding members of the Ghadar Party, established by Indians living abroad in 1914, mostly belonging to Punjab. Its aim was to lead a revolutionary fight against the British in India.

Connection between Pandurang Khankhoje and Mexico:

- Pandurang Khankhoje decided to go abroad for further training in revolutionary methods and militaristic strategy. He joined the Mount Tamalpais Military Academy in the US.
- At the military academy, he met many people from Mexico. The Mexican Revolution of 1910 had led to the overthrow of the dictatorial regime and this inspired Khankhoje.
- Along with the Indian workers, militant action was planned by Khankhoje in India, but the outbreak of the First World War halted these plans. He then reached out to Bhikaji Cama in Paris, and met with Vladimir Lenin in Russia among other leaders, seeking support for the Indian cause.
- However, as he was facing possible deportation from Europe and could not go to India, he sought shelter in Mexico.

- In Mexico, he was appointed as a professor at the National School of Agriculture. He researched corn, wheat, pulses and rubber, developing frost and drought-resistant varieties and was part of efforts to bring in the Green .

V.O CHIDAMBARAM

News: The Prime Minister paid tributes to freedom fighter V. O. Chidambaram Pillai on his birth Anniversary.

About:

- Valliyappan Ulaganathan Chidambaram (V.O.C.) was born in 1872 in Ottapidaram, Tirunelveli district of Tamil Nadu.
- He is also known as Kappalottiya Tamizhan or ‘The Tamil Helmsman’.
- He was a prominent lawyer, trade union leader, an Indian freedom fighter, and leader in the Indian National Congress (INC).
- He mobilized the workers of the Coral Mills, thereby expanding the social base of the Swadeshi movement.
- In 1906, he established the Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company (SSNC), which competed with the monopoly of the British India Steam Navigation Company.
- He purchased two steamships, S.S. Gallia and S.S. Lawoe for SSNC and commenced first Indian shipping service between Tuticorin and Colombo against the opposition of the British Government and traders.
- He was charged with sedition by the British colonial government and was sentenced to life imprisonment. His barrister license was revoked.

Political Life:

- Chidambarapillai supported Bal Gangadhar Tilak and the militant wing of the INC.
- He participated in the 1907 Surat Congress with Subramania Bharati.
- He was one of the earliest to start the ‘Dharmasangha Nesavuchalai’ for hand-loom industry and the ‘Swadeshi Stores’ for the sale of India made things to the people.
- He played a lead role in many institutions, like the “National Godown,” “Madras Agro-Industrial Society Ltd.,” and “The Desabimana Sangam”.
- One of India’s major ports, Tuticorin Port Trust, is named after him.

DARA SHIKOH

News: The Vice President calls Dara Shikoh a torchbearer of social harmony.

About:

- He was the eldest son and heir-apparent of the **Mughal emperor Shah Jahan**.
- In **1655** his father and Mughal emperor Shah Jahan **declared him the Crown Prince**; he was assassinated by his younger brother, Aurangzeb, in a bitter struggle for the throne on August 30, 1659.
- Dara was designated with the title **Padshahzada-i-Buzurg Martaba** (Prince of High Rank) and was favored as a successor by his father and his older sister, Princess Jahanara Begum.
- In the war of succession which ensued after Shah Jahan's illness in 1657, Dara was **defeated by his younger brother Prince Muhiuddin** (Aurangzeb).
- Dara Shikoh is described as a **"liberal Muslim"** who tried to find commonalities between Hindu and Islamic traditions.

Works:

- He had a **deep understanding and knowledge of major religions, particularly Islam and Hinduism** is known as a pioneer of the academic movement for interfaith understanding in India.
- He strove to develop **cordial relationships between people** by finding commonalities between Hinduism and Islam and bringing their cultures into dialogue.
- His most important works, **Majma-ul-Bahrain (Mingling of Two Oceans)** and **Sirr-i-Akbar (Great Mystery)** are devoted to the cause of establishing connections between Hinduism and Islam.
- He not only discovered commonalities but even said that the foundation of the two religions is the same, which is the belief, **"One Reality and One God"**. He had a **pluralistic outlook and understood India's syncretic culture**.
- Dara Shikoh acquired **proficiency in Sanskrit and Persian**, which enabled him to play a key role in popularizing Indian culture and Hindu religious thought. He **translated the Upanishads and other important sources of Hindu religion** and spirituality from Sanskrit to Persian.
- Dara Shikoh had a **keen interest in the fine arts and architecture**. An album he dedicated to his wife is a treasure of Indian art.
- A **rare miniature painting** showing him with his spiritual masters is preserved in the library of the Aligarh Muslim University (AMU). As a talented

architect, he designed the beautiful **Pari Mahal Garden Palace in Srinagar** and many other monuments.

- He wrote '**Risala-i-haq Numa**' (The Compass of the Truth), the 'Shathiyat or **Hasanat-ul-Arifin**' and the '**Iksir-i-Azam**'.
- He also commissioned the '**Jug Bashist**' and the '**Tarjuma-i-Aqwal-i-Wasili**'.

ARATTUPZHA VELAYUDHA PANICKER

News: The recently-released Malayalam film Pathonpatham Noottandu ('Nineteenth Century'), has earned both critical acclaim and audience approval. It is based on the life of Arattupuzha Velayudha Panicker, a social reformer from the Ezhava community in Kerala.

About:

- He was a **social reformer** from the Ezhava community in Kerala who **lived in the 19th century**.
- He was one of the **most influential figures** in the reformation movement in the state. He **challenged the domination of upper castes** or '**Savarnas**' and brought about changes in the lives of both men and women.
- He was given the title of 'Panicker' by the then-king of Travancore in 1869.

Contributions:

- He is credited with **building two temples** dedicated to the Hindu god Shiva, in which **members of all castes and religions were allowed entry**.
- In 1858, he led the **Achippudava Samaram strike** at Kayamkulam in Alappuzha. This strike aimed to earn women belonging to oppressed groups the right to wear a lower garment that extended beyond the knees.
- In 1860, he led the **Mukkuthi Samaram** at Pandalam in the Pathanamthitta district for the rights of lower-caste women to wear 'mukkuthi' or nose-ring and other gold ornaments.
- He led the first-ever strike by agricultural laborers in Kerala named **Karshaka Thozhilali Samaram**.
- He also **established the first Kathakali Yogam** (area-based schools for the classical dance form Kathakali) for the Ezhava community in 1861.

BHAGAT SINGH

News: Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced that the Chandigarh international airport would be named after freedom fighter Bhagat Singh.

About:

He is regarded as one of the **most powerful revolutionaries** of the Indian Nationalist Movement.

Born on **September 28, 1907**.

He attended **Dayanand Anglo Vedic High School**, which was operated by Arya Samaj and then National College.

Roles during Freedom struggle:

He became involved in a **variety of revolutionary organizations** and was a key figure in the Indian National movement.

He became a member of the **Hindustan Republican Association**.

He founded the **Naujawan Bharat Sabha** in Lahore in 1926,

'**Why I am an Atheist**' is an essay written by Bhagat Singh in 1930 while he was imprisoned in the Lahore Central Jail.

Along with his fellow nationalist B.K. Dutt, he **threw a bomb in the Central Legislative Assembly on 8 April 1929**. The aim was not to kill but, "**to make the deaf hear**", to remind the foreign government of its callous exploitation.

He was **arrested and charged in the Saunders murder case, along with Rajguru, Sukhdev and others**.

Bhagat Singh was **tried and executed at the age of 23**.

SHYAMJI KRISHNA VARMA

News: Prime Minister has paid tributes to Shyamji Krishna Varma on his Jayanti.

About:

He was born on **4th October, 1857** in Mandvi town of Kachchh district of Gujarat.

He was one of the **foremost freedom fighters** in the history of the freedom movement of India with a **high sense of patriotism and selfless service** for the nation. He had organized a revolutionary center in "**India House**" at London and propagated the cause of India's independence through his writings in his publication journal called "**The Indian Sociologist**".

He **inspired Veer Savarkar** who was a member of India House in London.

He became the **first President of Bombay Arya Samaj**, was an admirer of Dayanand Saraswati

Verma also served as the **Divan of a number of states** in India.

NADAPRABHU KEMPEGOWDA

News: A 108-ft bronze statue of Nadaprabhu Kempegowda will be unveiled soon at the premises of the Kempegowda International Airport (KIA), Bengaluru.

About:

Nadaprabhu Kempegowda is a **16th century chieftain** of the Vijayanagara Empire.

He initially ruled **from his ancestral land of Yelahanka**, and later moved south to construct and rule from the **fort of Bengaluru**.

Nadaprabhu is credited to be the **founder of Bengaluru**. He conceived the **idea of a new city** while hunting with his minister, and later marked its territory by erecting towers in four corners of the proposed city.

Kempegowda is also known to have developed around **1,000 lakes** in the city to cater to drinking and agricultural needs.

About Statue of Prosperity:

The Statue of Prosperity is **the bronze statue of Nadaprabhu Kempegowda** in a 23-acre heritage park on the airport premises.

The Statue of Prosperity is also known as the '**Pragatiya Prathime**' and named in lines with the Statue of Unity.

The statue is **108-ft high and** made of bronze. It has a **4,000 kg sword**.

The statue holds the record in the **World Book of Records** for the first and tallest bronze statue of a founder of a city

AFZAL KHAN

News: The Maharashtra Government completed the demolition of all alleged encroachments around the 17th Century tomb of Afzal Khan in Satara.

About:

Afzal Khan was a general from **the Adil Shahi dynasty of Bijapur Sultanate**, in Maharashtra's Satara.

He played an **important role in the southern expansion** of the Sultanate by defeating the Nayaka chiefs who took control of the former Vijayanagara territory.

Khan was **defeated and killed by Chhatrapati Shivaji** in November 1659 in the Battle of Pratapgad.

The day (November 10) Chhatrapati Shivaji killed Afzal Khan in the battle of Pratapgad is celebrated as '**Shiv Pratap Din**'.

The **tombs of Khan and his bodyguard Sayyid**, an expert swordsman lie near the **Pratapgad fort (close to Mahabaleshwar)**.

Later Shivaji built the tomb and a tower in his honor,

which is still known by the name 'Afzul Buruj' at Pratapgad.

SRIMAD RAM CHANDRA MISSION

News: The Prime Minister of India inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of various projects of the Shrimad Rajchandra Mission worth more than 300 crore rupees at Dharampur in Gujarat.

About:

Shrimad Rajchandra Mission Dharampur is a **spiritual movement** for inner transformation through wisdom, meditation and selfless service.

Founded by **Pujya Gurudevshri Rakeshji**, the organization works through 196 centers in five continents.

Shrimad Rajchandraji:

He was a **self-realized saint, a reformer of Jainism**, and a remarkable poet-philosopher of the late 19th century.

He gave the **world a rich heritage** that guides generations of seekers.

He was a **visionary** who laid the foundations of spirituality for a new era.

Honored as **Yugpurush**, He gave the world a rich heritage that continues to guide generations of seekers, in a short span of 34 years.

His life and works are an **invitation to turn within and discover the eternal truths.**

LALA LAJPATH RAI

News: The Prime Minister paid tribute to Lala Lajpat Rai on his Jayanti. Lala Lajpat Rai's birth anniversary is celebrated on 28th of January every year.

About:

Lala Lajpat Rai was born at **Dhudike near Ludhiana in Punjab** in 1865. He studied law at the **Government College, Lahore**.

He was a follower of **Dayanand Saraswati**, the founder of the Arya Samaj.

In **1881**, he **joined the Indian National Congress** at the age of 16.

Contribution of Lala Lajpat Rai:

- **Dayanand Anglo-Vedic School:** He founded the school in **1885 in Lahore** and remained a **committed educationist** throughout his life.
- **Hindu Relief Movement:** He founded **Hindu Relief movement in 1897** to provide **help to the famine-stricken people** and thus preventing them falling into the clutches of the missionaries.

- **Swadeshi movement:** Lala Lajpat Rai, Tilak and Bipin Chandra Pal (called **Lal-Bal-Pal**) **advocated the use of Swadeshi goods and mass agitation** in the aftermath of the controversial Partition of Bengal in 1905 by Lord Curzon.
- **Indian Home Rule League of America:** He founded **Indian Home Rule League of America in New York City in 1917**.
- **Indian National Congress:** In **1920**, he was **elected President of the Indian National Congress** during its Special Session in Kolkata which saw the launch of Mahatma Gandhi's Non-cooperation Movement.
- **Simon Commission:** In **1928**, he **opposed the Simon Commission**, a British-appointed group of lawmakers who arrived in India to study the implementation of the Government of India Act, 1919 (the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms).
- **Literary:** His important literary works include **Young India, England's Debt to India, Evolution of Japan, India's Will to Freedom, Message of the Bhagavad Gita, Political Future of India, Problem of National Education in India, The Depressed Classes**, and the travelog 'United States of America'.

SARDAR VALLABHAI PATEL

News: National Unity Day or Rashtriya Ekta Diwas is celebrated on October 31, every year since 2014 to mark the birth anniversary of the Iron Man of India, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

About:

- Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was appointed as the **first Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister of India from 1947 to 1950**.
- Sardar Vallabhbhai **merged 565 princely states** to make India one nation. This is the reason why National Unity Day is celebrated on his birth anniversary.
- He is also remembered as the '**Patron saint of India's civil servants**' as he established the modern all-India services system.
- **Role in Framing Constitution:** He **headed various Committees** of the Constituent Assembly of India, namely:
 - Advisory Committee on Fundamental Rights.
 - Committee on Minorities and Tribal and Excluded Areas.
 - Provincial Constitution Committee.

Major Contributions:

- He worked extensively **against alcohol consumption, untouchability, caste discrimination** and **for women emancipation** in Gujarat and outside.

- He integrated the farmer's cause in **Kheda Satyagraha (1918)** and **Bardoli Satyagraha (1928)** with the national freedom movement.
- Women of Bardoli bestowed the title '**Sardar**' on Vallabhbhai Patel, which means 'a Chief or a Leader'.
- During the **1930 Salt Satyagraha** (prayer and fasting movement), Sardar Patel served three months imprisonment.
- In March 1931 Patel **presided over the Karachi session (46th session)** of the Indian National Congress which was called upon to **ratify the Gandhi-Irwin Pact**.

PASUMPON MUTHURAMALINGA THEVAR

News: The Prime Minister of India paid tributes to freedom fighter Pasumpon Muthuramalinga Thevar on 30th October.

About:

- He was born on **30th October 1908** in Pasumpon in Ramanathapuram district in Tamil Nadu.
- He was a **freedom-fighter** cum spiritual leader and was seen as a **deity among the Mukulathor community**.
- The people of the Mukulathor community **still make offerings as is done for the deities in temples** to the statue on his birthday and guru pooja celebrations.
- He did not accept traditional Hinduism because it supported the '**Varnashrama**'. He regularly **fought against the evils of the Hindu religion**.
- Thevar became a full-time member of the Congress party and attended the 1927 Congress session at Madras as a volunteer when he was just 19.
- **Connection with Subhash Chandra Bose:** Being a socialist and a colleague of Subhash Chandra Bose, he **served as the national deputy chairman of All India Forward Bloc (AIFB) from 1952**. He was elected **three times** to the national parliamentary constituency of AIFB.
- In **1939**, he **assisted activist A. Vaidyanatha Iyer** to take Dalits to the Meenakshi Temple in Madurai.
- He was instrumental in getting the **Criminal Tribes Act (CTA) repealed** after continuous efforts in 1946.

ELA BHAT

News: Elaben Bhatt, noted Gandhian and leading women's empowerment activist passed away in Ahmedabad.

About:

- Popularly known as **Elaben**.

- After graduation, Elaben joined the **Textile Labour Association** (or Majoor Mahajan).
- She was also a **Member of the Rajya Sabha and of the Planning Commission of India** in the 1980s.

Achievements:

- Founded **Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA)** as a small organization in 1972.
- Pioneering work in **organizing the informal sector for self-employment and empowerment of women** not only in India but across South Asia.
- Served as an **advisor to the World Bank**, and addressed the United Nations General Assembly.
- Was the **Chairperson of Sabarmati Ashram** and **the Chancellor** of Mahatma Gandhi-founded Gujarat Vidhyapith.

National and International Awards:

- Padma Bhushan,
- Ramon Magsaysay Award,
- Indira Gandhi Peace Prize.

JANAKI AMMA

News: The 125th birth anniversary of Janaki Ammal was recently observed.

About:

- Janaki Ammal was born in **1897**.
- She was a **pioneering botanist** and the first Indian woman to be **awarded a PhD** in the botanical sciences.
- **Contributions:** She is known widely for her contributions to science – in the field of **genetics, cytology, evolution and more**.
- She worked on making **several intergeneric and interspecific hybrids** involving sugarcane and related grass species. These works were highly significant as they have been responsible for **creating sugarcane hybrids** that yielded sweeter sugar.
- She was invited by the then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru to **reorganize the Botanical Survey of India in 1951**, which explores the plant resources of the country and identifies plant species with economic virtue.
- She served as the **head of the Central Botanical Laboratory in Allahabad** and as an **Officer of Special Duty at the Regional Research Laboratory in Jammu and Kashmir**.
- **Her association with the Save the Silent Valley movement** – a campaign to stop a hydroelectric project from flooding the Silent Valley forest in Palakkad district of Kerala is also well-known.

KANDUKURI VEERESALINGAM

- Kandukuri Veeresalingam Pantulu was an **Andhra Pradesh social reformer and writer**.
- In Telugu, he is known as the **Father of the Renaissance Movement**.
- He was an early social reformer who encouraged women's education, widow remarriage, which was not supported by society at the time, and fought against the dowry system.
- In 1874, he also **established a school in Dowlaiswaram**.
- In Andhra Pradesh, he **built the 'Brahmo Mandir' in 1887 and the 'Hitkarini School' in 1908**.
- His novel **Rajasekhara Charitramu** is regarded as the first novel in Telugu literature. He was the first person in Andhra Pradesh to conduct a widow remarriage and the first to establish a co-educational school.
- He is the **first person in Andhra Pradesh to perform a widow remarriage and the first to open a co-educational school**.
- He was the **first Telugu writer to write an autobiography**, the **first to write a history of Telugu poets**, and the **first Telugu writer to translate scientific books**.

GURU NANAK

News: The President of India, Smt. Droupadi Murmu has greeted fellow-citizens on the eve of birthday of Guru Nanak Dev Ji.

About:

- Guru Nanak is the **first Guru of Sikhs**.
- Guru Nanak was born in a **Hindu merchant family in Nankana Sahib Village** near the river Ravi in Punjab (present day Pakistan).
- He traveled widely before establishing a **center at Kartarpur** (Dera Baba Nanak on the river Ravi).
- **Ideology** : He **rejected sacrifices, ritual baths, image worship, austerities and the scriptures** of both Hindus and Muslims.
- For Baba Guru Nanak, the **Absolute or 'Rab' had no gender or form**. He emphasized the importance of the
- worship of one God.
- He proposed a simple way to connect to the Divine by **remembering and repeating the Divine Name**, expressing his ideas through **hymns** (shabad in Punjabi).
- **Gurdwara**: Baba Guru Nanak organized his followers into a **community** and **set up rules for congregational worship** (sangat) involving collective recitation.

- Irrespective of their former creed, caste or gender, his followers ate together in the **common kitchen (langar)**.
- The **sacred space** thus created by Guru Nanak was known as **Gurdwara**.
- **Successor**: He appointed one of his disciples, **Angad (2nd Guru)**, to succeed him as the guru.

Guru Granth Sahib:

- The 5th preceptor, **Guru Arjan**, compiled **Guru Nanak's hymns** along with those of his **four successors** in the **Adi Granth Sahib**.
- **Adi Granth Sahib** also has hymns written by other religious poets like **Baba Farid, Ravidas and Kabir**.
- The Mughal emperor **Jahangir** ordered the **execution of Guru Arjan** in 1606.
- The 10th preceptor, **Guru Gobind Singh**, included the compositions of the **9th guru, Guru Tegh Bahadur**, and this scripture was called the **Guru Granth Sahib**.
- **Guru Granth Sahib** is the **holy scripture of the Sikhs** written in **Gurmukhi script**.

ACHARYA KRIPALANI

- Acharya Kriplani was **born in 1888 in Hyderabad, Sindh**. He was an independence activist, an Indian politician and an Educationist.
- **Independence movement**: He was **actively involved in movements** like Non-Cooperation Movement, Quit India Movement, and Salt Satyagraha.
- He served in the **Interim Government of India (1946-1947)** and the **Constituent Assembly of India**.
- As an educationist - Kripalani was also well-known for his work in the field of education, environment and other social movements.
- He earned the **moniker 'Acharya'** title around 1922 when he was **teaching at the Gujarat Vidyapith**, founded by the Mahatma a couple of years before.
- **Political Career** : He became one of the **founders of the Kisan Mazdoor Praja Party (KMPP)** after independence leaving congress.
- He was elected to the Lok Sabha in **1952, 1957, 1963 and 1967** as a member of **Praja Socialist Party**.
- He moved the **first-ever No confidence motion** in Lok Sabha in 1963, immediately after the India-China War (1962).
- He was **arrested** during the Emergency in 1975.
- His autobiography **"My Times"** was published posthumously in 2004.

SIR CP RAMASWAMY IYER

News: Recently senior BJP leader Prakash Javadekar and state education minister V Sivankutty traded allegations over erstwhile Travancore Diwan Sir CP Ramaswamy Iyer.

About:

- Sir Chetput Pattabhiraman Ramaswamy Iyer, popularly known as '**Sir CP**', was the **Diwan of the erstwhile Travancore princely state from 1936 to 1947**.
- He was a **lawyer** who served as the Advocate-General of Madras Presidency from 1920 to 1923.
- Serving as **Adviser to the prince** between 1931 and 1936, Sir CP was personally requested by Sri Chithira Thirunal in 1936 to be the **Diwan of Travancore**, an offer he accepted and served at the position for 10 years.
- **Maharaja Sri Chithira Thirunal, who wished to stay independent** when Britain announced its intention to quit India on June 3, 1947, was **supported by Sir CP**, who declared his intention of forming an independent state of Travancore that would be open to the idea of signing a treaty with the Indian union.
- His policies led to a **massive uprising, the Punnappara-Vayalar revolt**, which was suppressed by the Travancore army and navy.
- The anger and discontent culminated into an **assassination attempt on Sir CP on July 25, 1947**, at a concert commemorating the anniversary of Swati Thirunal.
- **On July 30, 1947**, Travancore joined India.

Independent Travancore mission:

- Britain announced its intention to leave India on June 3, 1947, while also accepting demands for the country's partition.
- Following this, the Indian Independence Act of 1947 gave princely states the option of joining the newly divided territories of India or Pakistan, or remaining independent sovereign states.
- **Sir CP supported Maharaja Sri Chithira Thirunal**, who declared his intention of forming an independent state of Travancore that would be open to the idea of signing a treaty with the Indian union.

BIRSA MUNDA

News: On the occasion of the birth anniversary of tribal leader Birsa Munda, the Centre marked the second Janjatiya Gaurav Divas on November 15 to celebrate the contributions of tribal communities to Indian culture.

About:

- Born on **November 15, 1875**, Birsa spent much of his childhood moving from one village to another with his parents.
- He belonged to the **Munda tribe** in the Chota Nagpur Plateau area.
- Birsa Munda was a **tribal freedom fighter, religious leader**, and **folk hero** who belonged to the Munda tribe.
- **New faith 'Birsait' against religious conversion :**
- The **impact of Christianity was felt** in the way he came to relate to religion later.
- Having gained awareness of the British colonial ruler and the efforts of the missionaries to **convert tribals to Christianity**, **Birsa started the faith of 'Birsait'**.
- Soon members of the **Munda and Oraon community started joining the Birsait sect** and it turned into a challenge to British conversion activities.
- The Mundas called him Dharati Aaba, the father of earth.

The Ulgulan:

- The Great Tumult or Ulgulan was a movement **started by Birsa Munda against the exploitation and discrimination against tribals** by the local authorities.
- Although the **movement failed**, it did result in the **Chotanagpur Tenancy Act** which forbade tribal lands passing to non-tribals, protecting their land rights for the foreseeable future.

Death:

- On March 3, 1900, Birsa Munda was **arrested by the British police** while he was sleeping with his tribal guerilla army at Jamkopai forest in Chakradharpur.
- He **died in Ranchi jail** on June 9, 1900, at the young age of 25.
- **Creation of Jharkhand.**
- Birsa Munda's achievements are known to be even more remarkable by virtue of the fact that he **came to acquire them before he was 25**.
- In recognition of his impact on the national movement, the **state of Jharkhand was created** on his birth anniversary in 2000.

UDA DEVI

News: On November 16, events to commemorate the martyrdom of Uda Devi, a freedom fighter from the Pasi community, were held at various places in Uttar Pradesh.

About:

- Uda Devi is remembered not only for her **stories of valor but also for her skill as a leader** who managed to mobilize people — especially Dalit women — **to take up arms against the British**.
- Born in **Ujirao, Lucknow**, she was part of the royal guard of Begum Hazrat Mahal of Awadh.
- Her husband, **Makka Pasi**, worked as a foot soldier in the army of Awadh's Nawab, Wajid Ali Shah.
- Hazrat Mahal's palace had several women belonging to marginalised communities, and their occupation was mostly
- to take care of the needs of the royalty.
- Some of them, who showed promise, were also **trained as warriors**. Uda Devi was **one of them**.

RANI LAKSHMI BAI

News: Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi paid tributes to Rani Lakshmibai, the Jhansi queen known for her role in the 1857 Mutiny, on her 187th birth anniversary.

About:

- Rani Lakshmibai, **one of the warriors** of India's struggle for Independence, was **born as Manikarnika Tambe in Varanasi**.
- Lakshmibai got **married to Gangadhar Rao Newalkar**, the Maharaja of Jhansi and got the name of Rani Lakshmibai.

- Then Lakshmibai and Gangadhar Rao **adopted Rao's cousin's son, Anand Rao**, who was later **renamed as Damodar**. Soon after they adopted Anand, Maharaja died due to an illness.
- The East India Company took advantage of the Maharaja's death and **applied the Doctrine of Lapse**.

Doctrine of Lapse:

- It was an annexation policy **followed widely by Lord Dalhousie** when he was India's Governor-General **from 1848 to 1856**.
- According to this, any princely state under the direct or indirect (as a vassal) control of the East India Company where the **ruler did not have a legal male heir would be annexed by the company**.
- As per this, **any adopted son of the Indian ruler could not be proclaimed** as heir to the kingdom. This challenged the Indian ruler's long-held authority to appoint an heir of their choice.
- So, due to the Doctrine of Lapse, Britishers did **not accept Damodar Rao as the legal heir**. The plan of the Britishers was to annex Jhansi. They **seized the state jewels**, granted her an annual pension of Rs 60,000 and asked her to leave the fort forever.
- Dalhousie annexed the states of Satara (1848 A.D.), Jaitpur and Sambalpur (1849 A.D.), Baghat (1850 A.D.), Udaipur (1852 A.D.), Jhansi (1853 A.D.), and Nagpur (1853 A.D.) using the doctrine of lapse (1854 A.D.)

CHANGING THE NAME PROCEDURE

- To rename a village, town, city, or station, the State legislature must pass an executive order with a **simple majority**, whereas changing the name of a state requires a constitutional amendment with a majority in Parliament.
- It is worth noting that the **Union Home Ministry** approves the proposal to change the name of any railway station or location after receiving no objections from the **Ministries of Railways, Posts, and Survey of India**.

DEVAYATANAM

News: Recently, the Union Culture Minister inaugurated Devayatanam, a one-of-a-kind conference on temple architecture of India, at Hampi, Karnataka.

About:

- It is organized by the **Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) of the Ministry of Culture**.
- It is a conference on the **journey of Indian Temple Architecture**.
- Around ten of India's 40 UNESCO World Heritage Sites are Hindu Temples of various architectural styles, patterns, and symmetry.

Aim:

- To **deliberate upon** the philosophical, religious, social, economic, technical, scientific, art and architectural aspects of the temple.
- To **initiate a dialogue** on the evolution and development of the various styles of temple architecture such as the Nagara, Vesara, Dravida, Kalinga and others.

Key highlights from the conference:

- Hindu temples are a combination of **art and science** which includes Shilpa sastra, vasthu sastra, geometry and symmetry.
- For instance, **Temples of Hampi** are already featured in the World Heritage List of UNESCO. Further, the

Government has proposed **Hoysala temples of Belur and Somnathpur** to the UNESCO World Heritage List.

- Major Styles of Temples:** There are three major styles of setting up temples in India known as **Nagara, Dravidian** and **Vesara**.
- Dashavatara Temple in Deogarh (UP)** is of Nagara style which is prevalent between the Himalayas and the Vindhya mountains.
- Kailasanathar temple in Kanchi (Tamil Nadu)** is Dravidian style temple, developed on the land of Krishna and Kaveri River and
- Papanatha temple from Karnataka** is one of the examples of Vesara style (Vesara is a hybrid form of Nagara and Dravidian style).

PRADHAN MANTRI SANGRAHALAYA

News: The Pradhanmantri Sangrahalaya has received over 1 lakh visitors till 30th September.

About:

- The Pradhanmantri Sangrahalaya is a **tribute to every Prime Minister of India** since Independence and a narrative record of how each one has contributed to the development of our nation over the last 75 years.
- Located at Delhi's Teen Murti Complex.**
- Logo:** The logo of the museum shows hands **holding the dharma chakra**, symbolizing the nation and democracy.

Key Features:

- People can witness the memorable speeches given by the Prime Ministers at the Red Fort.
- The Sangrahalaya has a state-of-the-art 360-degree immersive room – without shadows, which ushers into the world of Indian Prime Ministers, showcasing their key contributions that shaped the nation.
- The entrance of the Sangrahalaya is adorned with a 3D-printed levitating National Emblem, rotating in the air.
- Significance:** Pradhan Mantri Sangrahalaya is a living reflection of the shared heritage of each government.

- It gives confidence to the youth of the country that even a person born in an ordinary family can reach the highest position in the democratic system of India.

CHOLA DYNASTY

News: Recently, **Tamil Nadu Idol Wing CID** submitted documents to US officials through the Central government to **retrieve six exquisite Chola-era bronze idols**.

About:

- The Imperial Chola dynasty was founded by King **Vijayalaya**, a feudatory of the Pallavas.
- The Chola kingdom stretched across present-day **Tamil Nadu, Kerala, and parts of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka**.
- The period of Cholas was around **9th to 12th century AD**.
- The **Rashtrakutas** of the Deccan and the **Chalukyas** of the Andhra Pradesh **were contemporaries** of the Cholas.
- The **naval supremacy of the Cholas**, allowed them to conquer lands as far as Malaysia and the Sumatra islands of Indonesia.
- The reign of the Cholas began in the **9th century when they defeated the Pallavas** to come into power.
- This rule stretched over for over **five long centuries until the 13th century**.
- The Early periods of the Chola rule saw the **onset of the Sangam literature**.

Developments:

- One of the **longest-ruling dynasties** in the southern regions of India.
- The medieval period was the **era of absolute power and development for the Cholas**.
- Cholas made South Asia and South-East India into **military, economic and cultural power**.
- **Prominent Rulers:** Vijayalaya, Aditya I, Rajaraja Chola I, Rajendra Chola I, Rajadhiraja Chola, Virarajendra Chola, and Kulothunga Chola I.

Rajaraja Chola:

- Under **Rajaraja Chola (985–1014 AD)**, the massive **Brihadishwara temple at Thanjavur** was built.
- The temple has a huge structure, square in plan, encompassed by a massive **colonnaded perimeter wall (prakara)** with shrines dedicated to deities of direction (**ashatadikpalas**).
- Other prominent features include the main entrance with a **tower (gopura)**, an entrance porch, two adjoining **prayer halls (mandapas)**, **vestibule**

(**antarala**), the **main temple tower (vimana)**, and **inner sanctum (garbhagriha)** with many sculptures of Shiva and other personalities

Rajendra Chola I:

- Succeeded the mighty Rajaraja Chola.
- Rajendra I was the **first to venture to the banks of the Ganges**. He was popularly called the **Victor of the Ganges**.
- Built new capital called the **Gangaikondacholapuram** where he received the title of '**Gangaikonda**'.
- He built the **Brihadisvara Temple** and upgraded several others.
- His period is referred to as the **golden age of the Cholas**.

Administration:

- The **king remained the central authority** who would make the major decisions and carry out the governance.
- The massive kingdom was **divided into provinces** which were known as **mandalams**.
- **Separate governors** were held in charge of each mandalam.
- These were further **divided into districts** called **nadus** which consisted of tehsils.
- The system of rule was such that each village acted as a **self-governing unit** during the era of the Cholas.

Architecture:

- They constructed **grand trunk roads and public ferries**, in addition to grand temples.
- The Cholas are more prominent in making **structural temples**.
- The **Great Living Chola Temples** have been classified as World Heritage Sites by UNESCO.
- The site includes **three great 11th- and 12th-century temples**:
 - the Brihadisvara temple,
 - the Gangaikondacholisvaram, and
 - the Airavatesvara temples
- The grand Brihadeeswara temple of Thanjavur, **built by Rajaraja I**, was the **largest building in India** in that period.
- **Rajendra Chola**, the son of Rajaraja, also known as **Gangaikonda Chola** (the Chola who conquered Ganga) **built the Chola capital at Gangaikondacholapuram**.
- The medieval Chola Empire began to **decline in 1070 CE**, after the death of Virarajendra Chola, the son of Rajendra Chola.

Sculpture:

- The Chola period is well **known for its metal sculpture**. Chola bronze sculptures were made **using the cire perdue or lost-wax casting technique** that is still practiced today in India and elsewhere.
- **It is a method of metal casting in which a molten metal is poured into a mold that has been created by means of a wax model.**
- Once the mold is made, the wax model is melted and drained away.
- **Chola Bronze Nataraja sculpture**, dancing Shiva, the **presiding deity of Chola dynasty**, is world famous for its beauty and spiritual meaning. It has the following features:
 - Shiva **holds in his upper right hand the damaru (hand drum that made the first sounds of creation).**
 - His upper left hand holds **agni (fire that will destroy the universe).**
 - With his **lower right hand, he makes abhaya mudra (a gesture that allays fears).**
 - **A Dwarflike figure** being trampled by his right foot **represents apasmara purusha (illusion, which leads mankind astray).**
 - Shiva's **front left hand**, pointing to his raised left foot, **signifies refuge for troubled souls.**

Literature:

- Several devotional literatures took shape during this period.
- **Jain and Buddhist writings** also got appreciation and recognition during this phase.
- The popular compilation of 4000 Tamil verses is from this period.

KONGU CHOLA ERA HERO STONES

News: Archaeological enthusiasts have recently discovered three hero stones likely from the 11th or 12th Century CE, during the rule of Kongu Cholas, at Annur in Coimbatore district of Tamil Nadu.

About:

- Of the three hero stones, one is a **'Thalaibali sirpam'**. The hero is depicted as sacrificing himself with two swords as part of a ritual.
- In Tamil Nadu, hero stones are memorials erected for those **who lost their lives in the battles and in cattle raids.**
- As cattle were an **important source of wealth, raiding cattle owned by adjoining tribes and clans** was common practice in a pastoral society.

- During the Sangam Age, **the Mullai landscape** followed the pastoral way of life.
- Tradition of hero stones might have begun in the **Iron Age or even before.**
- **Sangam literature describes** such hero stones as **objects of worship.**
- Tholkappiyam describes the **procedures for erecting hero stones.**
- Hero stones of the Sangam Age were found with **Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions.** Those of the Sangam Age discovered till now do **not have images or sculptures.**
- Hero stones of the **post-Sangam Age** and the **Pallava period** **occur** in large numbers in pastoral regions. These hero stones have inscriptions and the images of warriors and names of heroes.

Kongu Cholas:

- There is a hypothesis that the Kongu Cholas were the **descendants of Kandaraditya** (950-947 A.D.) the son of Parintaka Chola I of the Imperial Chola line.
- The identification of **Kandaraditya with Kokkandan of the Rajakisari Peruvali inscription** is the mainstay of this hypothesis.
- The first Kongu Chola ruler was **Vira Chola 1** (942-980 A.D.).

ROSETTA STONE

News: According to a Reuters report, the UK is being asked to return the Rosetta Stone.

About:

- The **Rosetta Stone** is a large stone slab with inscriptions that is thought to be a fragment of a larger rock.
- It has **inscriptions in three scripts**, each conveying a decree or public message.
- The decree is written three times: once in hieroglyphs (suitable for a priestly decree), once in **Demotic** (the cursive Egyptian script used for daily purposes, meaning 'language of the people,' and once in Ancient Greek (the language of administration - after Alexander the Great's conquest, Egypt's rulers were Greco-Macedonian).
- This is similar to how King Ashoka in Ancient India issued stambhas or edicts inscribed with messages from Buddha's teachings and news of a war victory.
- These were then displayed to the public throughout the kingdom.
- Its discovery aided in the development of the specific field of ancient Egypt studies known as **Egyptology.**

- The engraving was created during the reign of **King Ptolemy V, who reigned from 204 to 181 BC**, according to the British Museum.
- This stone was rediscovered during the reign of Napoleon Bonaparte, who led an expedition to **Egypt from 1798 to 1801**.
- Following Napoleon's defeat at the hands of the British, the **Treaty of Alexandria (1801)** resulted in its transfer to the British Museum, where it has remained ever since.

Significance of Rosseta stone:

- It holds the key to **understanding Egyptian hieroglyphs**
- **Archeological significance:** stone's age is well over **2,000 years**.

UNESCO GLOBAL NETWORKING OF LEARNING CITIES

News: Warangal from Telangana and Thrissur and Nilambur from Kerala have joined the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC).

About:

- It is an **international network** consisting of cities that successfully **promote lifelong learning across their communities**.
- The network **supports the achievement of all 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** in particular **SDG 4** ('Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all') and **SDG 11** ('Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable').

Features of a learning city:

- There are **six features** that define a learning city.
- These include cities that 1) **Effectively mobilize** their resources in every sector to advocate inclusive learning, 2) **Revitalizes learning** in families and communities, 3) **Facilitate learning** for and at workplaces, 4) **Extend the use** of modern learning technologies, 5) **Augments quality and excellence** in learning and 6) **Fosters a culture** of learning throughout life.

About Thrissur, Warangal, Nilambur:

- **Thrissur:** Popularly known as the **cultural capital of Kerala**. Thrissur is home to **academic and research institutions**. It is also known for its **jewelry industry**, especially gold. The city has been included because of its initiatives focusing on vulnerable groups.
- **Warangal:** It has a **rich cultural heritage**. The city is a **major tourism venue**. The city has been included

for its **good practices** such as advocating healthy environments for children and caregivers, free training for the transgender community and self-help groups.

- **Nilambur:** It is an **ecotourism destination** in Kerala. It is a city with various **socio-economic patterns** marked by an urban and rural mix. The majority of the population depends on **agriculture and allied industries**.

UNESCO ASIA PACIFIC AWARDS

News: The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation 2022 were recently announced, with four Indian winners. Afghanistan, China, India, Iran, Nepal, and Thailand were among the thirteen projects recognised for awards.

About:

- **India's performance:**
 - **Award of Excellence:** Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya, Mumbai
 - **Award of Distinction:** Stepwells of Golconda, Hyderabad
 - **Award of Merit:** Domakonda Fort, Telangana, and Byculla Station, Mumbai
- **Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya, Mumbai:**
 - The museum is a part of the Victorian Gothic and Art Deco Ensembles of Mumbai's world heritage property.
 - It was established as the Prince of Wales Museum of Western India in 1922.
- **Byculla Station, Mumbai:**
 - The station was built in 1853. The first train of the country passed through Byculla station almost one-and-a-half centuries ago. It has been restored to its original Gothic, heritage, architectural glory.
- **Domakonda Fort, Telangana:**
 - The Domakonda Fort is private property and was built in the 18th century with an amalgam of styles including stucco work, arched pillars, flat ceiling, and a courtyard with a water garden pond.

CONVENTION FOR SAFEGUARDING OF INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE (ICH)

News: India was **elected** to the Intergovernmental Committee of **UNESCO's 2003 Convention for Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH)**.

About:

- **Committee consists of 24 members** and is elected according to principles of equitable geographical representation and rotation.
- **India has been elected** (overall third time) **for the 2022-2026 cycle**.
- Earlier, India was **also elected to UNESCO's World Heritage committee** (2021-2025).
- **Some of the core functions** of the Committee include **promoting objectives of Convention, providing guidance on best practices**, and making recommendations for safeguarding of ICH.
- It also **examines requests for inscription of intangible heritage** on Lists. Committee is also in charge of **granting international assistance**

About UNESCO's 2003 Convention for safeguarding of ICH:

- It aims for **Safeguarding of Intangible Heritage**
- along with traditions and living expression.
- **It has 4 primary goals:** Safeguard ICH, Ensure respect for ICH, Raise awareness of the importance of ICH, Provide for international cooperation and assistance.
- **Following 2003 Convention, ICH list has been classified into five broad domains:**
 1. Performing arts
 2. Social practices, rituals and festive events
 3. Oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of ICH
 4. Knowledge and practices concerning nature and universe
 5. Traditional craftsmanship.

About ICH:

- It means **practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills** – as well as the **instruments, objects, artifacts and cultural spaces** associated with them that communities, groups, individuals recognize as a part of their cultural heritage.

- **There are 14 Indian elements** on the ICH list with **Durga Puja (2021), Kumbh Mela (2017), Yoga (2016)** being the latest.

G.I (GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION) TAG

News: Government of India organized a **Virtual Networking Meet for Agri and Food Geographical Indication (GI)** products in association with the Embassy of India, Doha and Indian Business and Professionals Council (IBPC) Qatar.

About:

- Geographical Indication (GI) is an **indication used to identify goods** having special characteristics originating from a definite geographical territory.
- The **Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999** seeks to provide for the registration and better protection of geographical indications relating to goods in India.
- It is **governed and directed by the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS)**.
- It was decided and **also stated under Articles 1 (2) and 10 of the Paris Convention** that the “protection of industrial Property and Geographical Indication are elements of Intellectual Property”.
- It is primarily an agricultural, natural or a manufactured product (handicrafts and industrial goods).
- **Validity:** This tag is **valid for a period of 10 years following which it can be renewed**.

Benefits:

- **Once a product gets this tag, any person or company cannot sell a similar item under that name.**
- GI registration of a product provides it **legal protection and prevention against unauthorized use by others**.
- GI tag helps in promoting the exports of the product.
- It also provides comfort to customers about the authenticity of that product.

Mithila Makhana	- Recently, Bihar's Mithila Makhana has been awarded the Geographical Indication (GI) Tag by the Union Government. - Mithila Makhana is locally known as Makhan in Mithila. Its Botanical name is Euryale Ferox Salisb. Region associated: This special variety of Aquatic Fox Nut is cultivated in the Mithila region of Bihar and adjoining areas of Nepal. Micro-nutrients: Fox Nuts are rich in protein and fiber and have various micronutrients such as magnesium, calcium, phosphorus and iron. - The Maithili Brahmin community extensively uses and distributes Makhana during the Kojagara Puja festival. - This move is expected to help growers get the maximum price for their premium produce. Fifth Product: This is the fifth product from Bihar which is awarded the GI Tag. - Bhagalpur's Jardalu Mango, Katarni Dhaan (rice), Nawada's Maghai Paan and Muzaffarpur's Shahi Litchi have got GI tag prior to this.
Kai Chutney	- The Kai Chutney made from Red Ants by the tribals of Mayurbhanj district in Odisha are seeking a Geographical Indications (GI) tag. - The Kai Chutney is prepared from the Weaver ants and is popular in Odisha's Mayurbhanj district among the people, mostly tribals. - When required, leafy nests of ants are plucked from their host trees and collected in a bucket of water before sorting and separation from leaves and debris. - It helps in getting rid of flu, common cold, whooping cough, to increase appetite, enhance vision and eyesight naturally. - The tribal healers also prepare medicinal oil, which is used as baby oil and externally used to cure rheumatism, gout, ringworm and other skin diseases. - So, it is the only panacea for the tribes.
Alibaug's White Onion	- The White Onion of Alibaug in Maharashtra's Raigad district has received a 'Geographical Indication', giving it a unique identity and wider markets. - Alibaug is a coastal town in the Raigad district of Maharashtra. The soil of Alibag taluka has low sulphur content. - Due to this, onions here have low pungency, sweet taste, 'no tear' factor, low pyruvic acid, high protein, fat and fiber content, besides high antioxidant compounds (quercetin). - It boosts immunity, helps with insomnia, blood cleaning, blood pressure and heat-related ailments.
Panruti Cashew	- Cashew Processors and Exporters based in Tamil Nadu have sought GI tag for Panruti Cashews. - Known as the 'goldmine' of Cuddalore, demand for Panruti Cashew is huge because of its unique taste and quality.

Narasinghapettai Nagaswaram	- Narasinghapettai nagaswaram, a wind musical instrument of Tamil Nadu, has been granted the Geographical Indication tag. - The nagaswaram is a wind instrument that is an integral part of Carnatic concerts, weddings, festivals and temple ceremonies. - The unique feature of the nagaswaram is its production process - it is handmade in Narasingapettai village in Thanjavur, unlike the other machine-made ones. - Artisans of the nagaswaram choose the wood wisely, a type of ebony, ensuring it is 200 years old, and which does not absorb moisture. The top portion has a metal staple into which a small metallic cylinder is inserted to hold the mouthpiece made of reed. The reeds are made from the leaves of a locally grown plant called 'naanal' (a variety of bamboo). - The GI tag will now honour the nagaswaram artisans.
Nicobari Hodi Craft	- The Nicobari Hodi craft is the first application seeking GI tag from Andaman & Nicobar Islands. - The hodi is the Nicobari tribe's traditional craft (a boat). - Hodi is an outrigger canoe, very commonly operated in the Nicobar group of islands. - The hodi is built using either locally available trees or from nearby islands, and its design varies slightly from island to island. - The technical skills for building a hodi are based on indigenous knowledge inherited by the Nicobarese from their forefathers. Specifications: The length of the finished canoe has to be 12 times that of its width. - A 60 to 80 year old tree with a straight trunk or one having a slight incline to one side is preferred. - The trunk selected has to be free of branches along the required length of 15 times of this width. - Hodis are used for transporting people and goods (like coconuts) from one island to another and also used for fishing and racing purposes. - Hodi races are held between islands and villages in Nicobar.

NIZAM SWORD

News: Nizam's Sword is an item being set to return to India from the Glasgow Life museums.

About:

- Nizam's tulwar (sword) is a **14th century ceremonial sword** of Indo-Persian design possible from around 1350 CE.
- The sword is **shaped like a snake**. It has serrated edges and a damascene pattern, with gold etchings of an elephant and tigers.
- The sword was **exhibited by Mahbub Ali Khan, Asaf Jah VI, Nizam of Hyderabad** (1896-1911) at the 1903 Delhi or Imperial Durbar.
- The sword was **purchased in 1905 by General Sir Archibald Hunter**, Commander-in-Chief, Bombay Command, from Maharaja Kishen Pershad Bahadur Yamin us-Sultanat (the Prime Minister of Hyderabad).

CARBON DATING

News: The District Court in Varanasi allowed a petition seeking Carbon Dating of the structure inside the Gyanvapi mosque that the Hindu side has claimed is a 'Shivling'.

About:

- It is a widely-used method applied **to establish the age of organic material, things that were once living**.
- Living things **have carbon** in them in various forms.
- The dating method makes use of the fact that a particular isotope of carbon called **C-14**, with an **atomic mass of 14**, is radioactive, and decays at a well-known rate.
- The **most abundant isotope** of carbon in the atmosphere is **carbon-12** or a carbon atom whose atomic mass is 12.
- A **very small amount of carbon-14** is also present.

- **Process:** Plants get their carbon through the **process of photosynthesis**, while animals get it mainly **through food**. Because plants and animals get their carbon from the atmosphere, they **too acquire carbon-12 and carbon-14 isotopes** in roughly the same proportion as is available in the atmosphere.
- when they die, the interactions with the atmosphere stop.
- Now, **carbon-12 is stable and does not decay**, while carbon-14 is radioactive. **Carbon-14 reduces to one-half** of itself in about 5,730 years. This is what is known as its '**half-life**'.
- So, after a plant or animal dies, the ratio of carbon-12 to carbon-14 in the body, or its remains, **begins to change**.
- This **change can be measured** and **can be used to deduce the approximate time** when the organism died.

Application:

- Though extremely effective, carbon dating **cannot be applied in all circumstances**.
- Specifically, it **cannot be used to determine the age of non-living things**, like rocks, for example. Also, the age of things that are more than 40,000-50,000 years cannot be arrived at through carbon dating.
- There are **other methods to calculate the age** of inanimate things, but carbon dating can also be used indirectly in certain circumstances. For example, the age of the ice cores in glaciers and polar regions is determined using carbon dating by studying the carbon dioxide molecules trapped inside large ice sheets.

ASI AT BANDHAVGARH FOREST RESERVE

News: Recently, the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) discovered remarkable archaeological remains in Madhya Pradesh's Bandhavgarh Forest Reserve.

About:

- **26 caves** which are mostly Buddhist. Remains of the **Mahayana sect of Buddhism** like chaitya-shaped doors and cells containing stone beds.
- **26 ancient temples/relics of Kalachuri period** (9th century CE to 11th Century CE).
- A **large Varaha sculpture** datable to the 9th – 13th century CE. It appears to be the world's largest sculpture. **24 Brahmi inscriptions** (2nd century CE to 5th century CE)
- **Important kings of the era mentioned in the inscriptions:** Shri Bhimsena, Maharaja Pothasiri, and Bhattadeva.

ADICHANALLUR

News: Recently, the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) unearthed a gold diadem from a huge burial urn while excavating the museum site at Adichanallur, Tamil Nadu.

About:

- Adichanallur is located on the lower valley of the **Tamirabarani river** in the present-day Thoothukudi district in southern Tamil Nadu.
- Korkai, an ancient **seaport mentioned in Sangam literature**, is about 25 km from Adichanallur.
- Tamil Nadu at around 1000 BC:
- Skeleton found at **Adichanallur megalithic burial** site is said to be of different **ethnic origins**.
- Most skeletons were **non- Indians**. This indicates the presence of **global traders**.

ACCULTURATION

News: Recently the term "Acculturation" was in the news.

About:

- The concept of acculturation was **coined in 1880** by American geologist **John Wesley Powell**. He defined it as the **psychological changes induced** in people **due to cross-cultural imitation**, resulting from the interaction with different cultures.
- At present, it is defined as the process in which a person or group from **one culture comes in contact with another culture, adopting the values and practices of the other while still retaining their own distinct identity**.
- Sociologists understand acculturation as a **two-way process**, wherein the minority culture adopts aspects of the majority to fit in and the culture of the majority is also influenced by that of the minority.
- Outcomes of acculturation: Acculturation **affects various aspects of life**, including dietary patterns, fashion, art, architecture, work culture, and literature.
- Acculturation allows us to **learn and understand new aspects** of various cultures and appreciate their differences.

AMARNATH YATRA

News: After being suspended for two years due to the coronavirus pandemic, the Amarnath Yatra in the Himalayas of South Kashmir will begin on June 30 this year.

About:

- Amarnath Yatra is an annual pilgrimage visit to the **Amarnath cave shrine of Lord Shiva high up in the Himalayas**.
- **Location:** The cave is located at an **altitude of 3,888 meters** above sea level and is only accessible by foot or on a pony through a steep path in Sonmarg in Kashmir.
- **Importance of Cave:** According to legend, **when Lord Shiva decided to tell Parvati the secret of his immortality** (Amar Katha), he chose the Amarnath cave deep in the Himalayas in South Kashmir.
- **Discovery of the cave:** According to lore, the cave was discovered by a Muslim shepherd named **Buta Malik in 1850**. He also discovered the **famous ice lingam at the cave**.

How does Ice lingam form in the cave?

- The ice lingam, **representing Lord Shiva, is formed by a trickle of water** from a cleft in the roof of the cave. The water freezes as it drips, forming over time, a tall, smooth ice stalagmite. The Shiva lingam gets its **full shape in May every year** after which it begins to melt. By August, it is just a few feet in height.
- On the left of the Shiva lingam are **two smaller ice stalagmites**, representing **Parvati and Lord Ganesh**.

FIRST TIME TRANSLATION OF BIBLE

News: First copy of Tamil Bible stolen from Saraswathi Mahal Library traced to London.

About:

- The first Tamil translation of the Bible was printed in **1715 by Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg**, a missionary.
- It was presented to **Tulaji Rajah Serfoji by Schwartz**, another missionary and a close friend of the King.
- After the takeover by the Tamil Nadu government, the antiquarian book became an exhibit in the Saraswati Mahal Museum for public viewing.

Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg:

- Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg was born in Saxony in **1682**. He was a **Danish missionary**.
- In **1706**, he **arrived in Tranquebar (Tharangambadi)**, a tiny Danish colony on the east

coast, close to Nagapattinam in Tamil Nadu, on the southeast coast of India, as the **first Protestant missionaries** in that country.

- He soon set up a **printing press** and **published studies of the Tamil language** and Indian religion and culture. He died in 1719, at age 37.
- He left behind a **Tamil translation of the Bible**, many brief writings in Tamil, two church buildings, the seminary and baptized Christians.

AUSTRALOPITHECUS

News: The fossils of our earlier human ancestors, located in a cave in South Africa, are a million years older than previously understood according to a new study published in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Science on June 27.

About:

- Australopithecus, meaning **“southern ape”**, was a **group of hominins or now-extinct early humans**, that was closely related to and almost certainly the ancestors of modern humans.
- They inhabited the planet **4.4 million to 1.4 million years ago**, likely encompassing a time period longer than our own genus, **Homo**.
- Their fossils have been found across sites in **eastern, northern, central and southern Africa**.

What are the Sterkfontein caves?

- The **“Cradle of Humankind”** is a 47,000-hectare paleoanthropological site, declared a **World Heritage Site by UNESCO**. Located 40 km northwest of Johannesburg, it contains a **complex system of limestone caves**, where a significant number of hominin fossils have been found.
- Within this complex lies **Sterkfontein**, a complex system of caves that holds a long history of hominin occupation and contains the largest number of Australopithecus fossils in the world.

MANGARH HILLOCK

News: Mangarh hillock in Rajasthan as a monument of National Importance.

About:

- Mangarh Hillock is located in **Banswara District, Rajasthan**. It is situated in the Aravali mountains on the Rajasthan-Gujarat border.
- It is a **site of a tribal uprising** where a massacre of over 1500 Bhil tribal freedom fighters took place in

1913. Hence, this place is also known as the **Adivasi Jallianwala**.

What had happened at Mangarh Hillock?

- **Govind Guru**, influenced by social reformers like Dayanand Saraswati, launched the **Bhagat movement among the Bhil Tribals** asking them to adhere to vegetarianism, and abstain from all types of intoxicants.
- The movement slowly took on a political hue and turned into a movement **against the oppressive policies of the British**.
- The Bhils began **opposing taxes** imposed by the British and **forced labour** imposed by the princely states of Banswara, Santrampur, Dungarpur and Kushalgarh. Worried by the tribal revolt, the Britishers and princely states decided to **crush the uprising**.
- From October 1913, Govind guru asked his followers to **gather at Mangarh hill** from where they would conduct their operations.
- The British **asked them to vacate Mangarh hill** by November 15, but they **refused**. On November 17, 1913, the tribals were gathering for a meeting when the British forces **opened fire** from cannons and guns on the crowd.
- Over **1500 people were killed** and **Govind guru was captured** and exiled from the area. He was imprisoned in Hyderabad jail and released in 1919 on grounds of good behavior. But as he was exiled from his homeland, he settled in Gujarat where he died in 1931.

NATIONAL EMBLEM OF NEW PARLIAMENT

News: Recently, The Prime Minister has unveiled the National Emblem cast on the roof of the New Parliament Building.

About:

- The National Emblem is **made of bronze** with a total weight of 9500 Kg and is 6.5 m in height. It has been cast at the **top of the Central Foyer of the New Parliament Building**.
- A **supporting structure of steel** weighing around 6500 Kg has been constructed to support the Emblem.
- **Note:** This new Parliament Building is part of the **Central Vista Project which also includes** a joint central secretariat, revamp of the Rajpath, a new Prime Minister's residence, a new Prime Minister's Office, and a new Vice-President's enclave.

National Emblem of India:

- The National Emblem is an adaptation from the **Sarnath Lion Capital of Ashoka** which is preserved in the Sarnath Museum.

- The Lion Capital has **four lions** mounted back-to-back on a **circular abacus**. The frieze of the abacus is adorned with sculptures in high relief of an **elephant, a galloping horse, a bull and a lion separated by intervening Dharma Chakras**.
- The words '**Satyameva Jayate**' from **Mundaka Upanishad**, meaning '**Truth Alone Triumphs**', are inscribed below the abacus in the Devanagari script.
- The emblem of India was adopted on **January 26, 1950** – the same day when the constitution of India came into force.

AHMEDABAD

News: The Union Home Minister has congratulated countrymen on the inclusion of India's first UNESCO World Heritage City, Ahmedabad in the list of the "World's 50 Greatest Places of 2022" by Time Magazine.

About:

- Ahmadabad was founded by **Sultan Ahmad Shah in 1411 AD** on the eastern bank of the Sabarmati River. It continued to flourish as the **capital of the State of Gujarat** for six centuries.
- In 2017, Ahmedabad was declared as a **UNESCO World Heritage City**.
- The city presents a **rich architectural heritage** from the sultanate period, notably the **Bhadra citadel, the walls and gates of the Fort city and numerous mosques and tombs** as well as important **Hindu and Jain temples of later periods**.
- The urban fabric of the city is made up of **densely-packed traditional houses (pols)** in gated traditional streets (puras) with characteristic features such as **bird feeders, public wells and religious institutions**.

VARANASI

News: The city of Varanasi, showcasing India's culture and traditions over the ages, will be declared the first "Cultural and Tourism Capital" of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation.

About:

- Varanasi or Banaras or Kashi is **one of the oldest living cities in the world**.
- It is located in **Uttar Pradesh** and is located on the left bank of the Ganges (Ganga) River.
- It is India's ancient city, which is **one of the seven sacred cities of Hinduism**.

- Seven sacred cities of Hinduism are **Ayodhya, Mathura, Haridwar, Varanasi, Kanchipuram, Ujjain, and Dwarka.**
- **History:** Varanasi's early history is that of the **first Aryan settlement in the middle Ganges valley.**
- Varanasi was the **capital of the kingdom of Kashi** during the time of the Buddha (6th century BCE), who gave his first sermon nearby at Sarnath.
- It remained a **center of religious, educational, and artistic activities** as attested by the Chinese Buddhist pilgrim **Xuanzang**, who visited it in about 635 CE.
- Varanasi subsequently **declined during 3 centuries** of Muslim occupation, beginning in 1194.
- It became an **independent kingdom in the 18th century**, and under subsequent British rule it remained a commercial and religious center.
- **Note:** The Beijing-headquartered **Shanghai Cooperation Organisation** will rotate the **title of Cultural and Tourism Capital among the member states every year.**

PYTHAGOREAN GEOMETRY IN VEDIC-ERA TEXTS

News: A position paper by the Karnataka government on the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has described Pythagoras's theorem as "fake news". It has referred to a text called the Baudhayana Sulbasutra, in which a specific shloka refers to the theorem.

About:

- Evidence suggests that the **Greek philosopher** (around 570–490 BC) did exist.
- There is an element of mystery around him, largely because of the **secretive nature of the school/society he founded in Italy.**
- Relatively **little is known** about his mathematical achievements, because there is nothing today of his own writings.

Pythagoras' Theorem:

- The Pythagoras theorem describes the **relationship connecting the three sides of a right-angle triangle** (one in which one of the angles is 90°); $a^2 + b^2 = c^2$.
- If any two sides of a right triangle are known, the theorem **allows one to calculate the third side.**

How do we know that the Indian Vedic Mathematician knew this theorem?

- **Baudhayana Sulbasutra:** There are references of Pythagoras in the **Sulbasutras**, which are **texts pertaining to fire rituals** (yajanas) performed by

Vedic Indians. The oldest of these is the **Baudhayana Sulbasutra.**

- The period of Baudhayana Sulbasutra is **uncertain.** It is estimated based on linguistic and other secondary historical considerations. In recent literature, Baudhayana Sulbasutra is taken to be **from around 800 BCE.**
- Baudhayana Sulbasutra contains a statement of what is called the **Pythagoras theorem** (it was known rather as a geometric fact, and not as a 'theorem').
- For instance, the yajna rituals involved the **construction of altars (vedi) and fireplaces (agni) in a variety of shapes** such as isosceles triangles, symmetric trapezia, and rectangles. The sulbasutras describe steps towards the construction of these figures with prescribed sizes.

ANCIENT CITY OF IRAQ UNEARTHED

News: The ruins of a 3,400-year-old lost city have been unearthed in Iraq after extreme drought severely depleted water levels in the country's largest reservoir.

About:

- The settlement is thought to be the **ancient city of Zakhiku**, once a buzzing political center in the region.
- The **Bronze Age settlement, long engulfed by the Tigris River**, emerged earlier this year in the Mosul Dam.
- The city is located in the **Kurdistan region at a site known as Kemune.**
- The settlement was likely a key hub during the **Mittani Empire, from 1550 to 1350 B.C.**
- An earthquake likely destroyed much of the city in around 1350 B.C., but some of its ruins are preserved underneath collapsed walls.

MAYA TECHNIQUE OF RICE FORTIFICATION

News: A study has thrown light on how Maya people fortified their maize with the chemical process known as 'nixtamalization' and also built indoor toilets in pits they dug into the limestone bedrock of the Yucatan peninsula in Mesoamerica.

About:

- Maya civilization was a **Mesoamerican civilization.** The civilization originated in the **Yucatan Peninsula.**
- The civilization developed in the area that today comprises **southeastern Mexico, all of Guatemala and Belize and the western portions of Honduras and El Salvador.**

- The civilization was known for its **monumental architecture** and an **advanced understanding of mathematics and astronomy**.
- The civilization flourished **between 600 and 800 AD**. However, between 800 and 950 AD, many of the cities of civilization were abandoned. This period is called the **collapse of the Classic Maya civilisations**.

Nixtamalization Technique used by Mayas:

- Nixtamalization is a method by which the ancient peoples of Mesoamerica like the Maya **used to soak and cook their maize in an alkaline solution and make it more palatable, nutritious and non-toxic**. Nixtamal is derived from the Nahuatl word **nextamalli**, meaning 'nixtamalized maize dough'.
- Maize is the **primary crop of the Americas** and has been cultivated in the region for millennia. **Maize, beans and squash** are called the '**Three Sisters**' and formed the basis of diets throughout pre-Columbian North and Mesoamerica.
- The researchers noted that the key reason for the spread of maize in the Americas was **nixtamalization**.
- The process ensures that the **maize contains amino acids, calcium and Vitamin B2**, which can be utilized by the human body. It also **eliminates certain mycotoxins** (toxins produced by certain molds (fungi) and can be found in food) present in maize.
- Without this treatment, maize-dependent populations were at **elevated risk of pellagra** (Vitamin B2 deficiency), **calcium deficiency** and **mycotoxin poisoning**.
- Nejayote, wastewater from nixtamalization, may have been **used to lime the chultunes** while they were **used as latrines**. This was done **to control odors and inhibit insect and microorganism growth** like it is done today.

EXCAVATIONS OF IRON IN TAMIL NADU

News: Recent carbon dating of excavated finds in Tamil Nadu pushes evidence of iron being used in India back to 4,200 years ago.

About:

- The excavations are from **Mayiladumparai near Krishnagiri in Tamil Nadu**.
- Mayiladumparai is an important site with cultural material dating back between the **Microlithic (30,000 BCE)** and **Early Historic (600 BCE)** ages.
- This site was discovered by **Prof Rajan in the 1990s**.

What did the researchers find at this site?

- Researchers **recovered Iron Items** from this site. The carbon dating of these iron items pushes evidence of iron being used in India back to **4,200 years ago**.
- Before this, the earliest evidence of iron use was from **1900-2000 BCE for the country** and **from 1500 BCE for Tamil Nadu**. The latest evidence dates the findings from Tamil Nadu to 2172 BCE.
- Iron is **not known** to have been **used in the Indus Valley**, from where the use of copper in India is said to have originated (1500 BCE).

When did the use of Iron started?

- In 1979, the use of iron was **traced to 1300 BCE at Ahar in Rajasthan**.
- Later, samples at **Bukkasagara in Karnataka** indicated iron production dated back to **1530 BCE**.
- The date was subsequently pushed back to **1700-1800 BCE** with excavations finding evidence of iron **smelting at Raipura in the Mid-Ganga valley** and **then to 1900-2000 BCE** based on investigations in sites at Malhar near Varanasi and Brahmagiri in North Karnataka.
- A series of dating results on finds from various parts of India have shown evidence of iron-ore technology before 1800 BCE.

What is the significance of these findings?

- With the latest evidence tracing **India's Iron Age to 2000 BCE from 1500 BC**, one can assume that **Tamil's cultural seeds** were laid in 2000 BCE.
- The benefit of these **socio-economic changes** and **massive production triggered** by the iron technology gave its first fruit around 600 BCE — the Tamil Brahmi scripts.

LUMBINI

News: On the occasion of Buddha Jayanti on May 16, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Nepalese counterpart Sher Bahadur Deuba laid the foundation stone for the India International Centre for Buddhist Culture and Heritage in Lumbini, Nepal.

About:

- The Lord Buddha was said to be **born in 623 BC** in the sacred area of Lumbini located in the **Terai plains of southern Nepal**.
- It is described in Buddhist literature as a **Pradimokshavana** (sin-free forest).
- It was built by **Anjana, king of the Koliya clan**, for his queen Rupa Devi or Rummindei.

- The Indian emperor **Ashoka** had erected **one of his commemorative pillars there**.
- The site is now being developed as a **Buddhist pilgrimage center**, where the archaeological remains associated with the **birth of the Lord Buddha form a central feature**.
- According to Buddhist literature, Lumbini was **located on an ancient trade route passing through** Kapilavastu (present location uncertain), Kushinagar (in modern-day Uttar Pradesh), and Vaishali, Pataliputra, Nalanda, and Rajgriha (all in today's Bihar).

UNESCO's Heritage Sites Related to Buddhism:

- Archaeological Site of Nalanda Mahavihara at Nalanda, Bihar
- Buddhist Monuments at Sanchi, MP
- Mahabodhi Temple Complex at Bodh Gaya, Bihar
- Ajanta Caves Aurangabad, Maharashtra.

SAINT TROPEZ

News: During his official visit to the Cannes Film Festival in France, Union Minister Anurag Thakur paid a visit to the Allard Square in Saint-Tropez.

About:

- General Jean-François Allard was **born in Saint-Tropez**.
- He **served in the Napoleon army and fought in the Battle of Waterloo**.
- Forced into exile after Napoleon's downfall, he **served under Maharaja Ranjit Singh** in Punjab.

Saint- Tropez:

- It is a **coastal town on the French Riviera in France**.
- It was a **military stronghold and fishing village** until the beginning of the 20th century.
- It was the first town on its coast to be liberated during World War II as part of '**Operation Dragoon**'.
- After the war, it became an internationally known **seaside resort** because of the influx of artists of the French New Wave in cinema.
- It later became a **resort for European and American jet-setters and tourists**.

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR MONUMENTS AND SITES

News: Every year, the United Nations marks April 18 as the International Day for Monuments and Sites.

About:

- **Official name:** The International Day for Monuments and Sites.
- Common name - **World Heritage Day**.
- **Date of observance** - **Annually on April 18**.
- **History** - The world heritage day was proposed by the **International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) in 1982** and approved by the General Assembly of UNESCO in 1983.
- **Objective** - To **raise awareness** about monuments and other sites which form a part of our history and culture.
- The theme for World Heritage Day 2022 is "**Heritage and Climate**".

World Heritage Site:

- These sites are officially **recognised by the UN and the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation, also known as UNESCO**. UNESCO believes that the sites classified as World Heritage are **important for humanity, and they hold cultural and physical significance**.
- The list is **maintained by the international World Heritage Programme administered by the UNESCO World Heritage Committee**, composed of 21 UNESCO member states which are elected by the General Assembly.
- Each World Heritage Site remains **part of the legal territory of the state** wherein the site is located and UNESCO considers it in the interest of the international community to preserve each site.
- **Eligibility** : To be selected, a World Heritage Site must be an **already classified landmark**, unique in some respect as a geographically and historically identifiable place having **special cultural or physical significance**.

Heritage sites in India:

- India is home to **40 UNESCO World Heritage Sites**.
- Harappan city of **Dholavira in Gujarat** as India's 40th world heritage site.
- **Khangchendzonga National Park**, Sikkim has been inscribed as India's first and the only "**Mixed World Heritage Site**".

CYCLOPEAN WALL OF RAJGIR

News: Recently, The Bihar government has sent a fresh proposal to the Archaeological Survey of India(ASI) to get the Cyclopean wall listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

About:

- It is a **40 km long wall** of stone built in Rajgir, Bihar.
- It was built to **encircle the ancient city of Rajgir** to protect it from external enemies and invaders.
- **Built by:** It is believed to have been **built in the pre-Mauryan era** (before the 3rd century BC) using massive undressed stones.
- **Significance:** The walls are **mentioned in the Buddhist works**. Moreover, the wall is already a Nationally protected monument under the ASI.

Why should it be included as a UNESCO World Heritage Site?

- It is among the **oldest examples** of cyclopean masonry in the world.
- It is believed that the Cyclopean Wall at Rajgir is similar to “**Frontiers of the Roman Empire**” that runs through Germany, the UK and Northern Ireland which was already included on UNESCO’s world heritage list in 1987.
- **Also Remember:** Bihar is currently home to two UNESCO World Heritage Sites namely:
 1. Archaeological Site of Nalanda Mahavihara at Nalanda and
 2. Mahabodhi temple of Bodhgaya.

MEGALITHIC STONE JARS IN ASSAM

News: The discovery of a number of megalithic stone jars in Assam’s Dima Hasao district has brought to focus possible links between India’s Northeast and Southeast Asia, dating back to the second millennium BC.

About:

- Megalithic Stone Jars were **first sighted in Assam in 1929** by British civil servants James Philip Mills and John Henry Hutton. They recorded its presence in **six sites in Dima Hasao district, Assam**.
- These discoveries were followed up only in 2014 when a study was again undertaken. The study discovered **two more sites in 2016 and six more in 2020**.
- For instance, at one site, **Nuchubunglo**, as many as **546 stone jars** were found. This is arguably the **largest stone jar site in the world**.
- Some jars are **tall and cylindrical**, while others are partly or fully buried in the ground.
- Some of them spanned up to **three meters high and two meters wide**. Some of the jars feature decorative carvings, while others are plain.
- **Significance:** The study published in Asian Archaeology, calls for more research to understand the “**likely cultural relationship**” between Assam

and Laos and Indonesia, the only two other sites where similar jars have been found.

GLOBAL SILK CITY NETWORK

News: Recently, Bengaluru has become the first Indian city to become a member of the Global Silk City Network.

About:

- Global Silk City Network **helps artisans and craftsmen to exchange knowledge**, build trade relations and understand various craftsmanship techniques.
- Currently, **13 best silk-producing cities** and **nine countries** are members of this network.

Bengaluru included in the Global Silk City Network:

- There are **historical reasons** why Bengaluru has been included in the Silky City Network. The **International Sericultural Commission** was held at Lyon in the 1950s and came to Bengaluru in 2013.
- Also, Bengaluru is the **Silicon Valley of India** and Lyon has a big cluster of innovation and IT.

Which other Indian Cities are in line to join the Global Silk City Network?

- West Bengal’s **Murshidabad district** — known to **produce fine silk over the past 300 years** — may join the Global Silk City Network in future.
- The **history of silk weaving in Murshidabad goes back to the early eighteenth century during the Mughal rule**, when the Nawab of Bengal, Murshid Quli Khan, shifted his capital from Dhaka to a town on the east of the Bhagirathi river and named it Murshidabad.

CITY OF LITERATURE

News: Kozhikode was proposed by the Kerala Institute of Local Administration (KILA) to be branded as a ‘City of Literature’ with the help of UNESCO.

About:

- UNESCO’s City of Literature programme is **part of the wider Creative Cities Network**.
- The Network was **launched in 2004**, and now has member cities in seven creative fields.
- The other creative fields are: **Crafts and Folk Art, Design, Film, Gastronomy, Media Arts, and Music**. A city designated as ‘Creative City of Literature’ must have a sufficient number of institutions taking care of its literary life.

Indian Cities on UNESCO Creative Cities Network:

- **Srinagar** - Crafts and Folk Arts (2021)
- **Mumbai** – Film (2019).
- **Hyderabad** – Gastronomy (2019).
- **Chennai**- Creative city of Music (2017).
- **Jaipur**- Crafts and Folk Arts (2015).
- **Varanasi**- Creative city of Music (2015).

UNESCO:

- It is a **specialized agency** of the United Nations (UN). It seeks to build peace through international cooperation in Education, the Sciences and Culture.
- It was founded in **1945** and is located in **Paris, France**.
- **Reports:** UNESCO Science Report, Global Education Monitoring Report, State of the Education Report for India.

MAYA CIVILIZATION

News: A new study has unveiled the mystery behind Maya civilization's sudden fall from glory.

About:

- The Maya civilization originated in the **Yucatan Peninsula**.
- The Maya are an **indigenous people of Mexico and Central America** who have continuously inhabited the lands comprising modern-day Yucatan, Quintana Roo, Campeche, Tabasco, and Chiapas in Mexico and southward through Guatemala, Belize, El Salvador and Honduras.
- This civilization was a **Mesoamerican civilization** developed by the Maya peoples.
- They are noted for its **logosyllabic script** as well as for its **art, architecture, mathematics, calendar, and astronomical system**.
- Known for its **monumental architecture** and an **advanced understanding of mathematics and astronomy**, it flourished between **600 and 800 AD**.
- But then, suddenly, between 800 and 950 AD, many of the **southern cities were abandoned**.
- This period is called the **collapse of the Classic Maya civilisations**.

Other Ancient Civilizations:

The Incan Civilization	Ecuador, Peru, and Chile
The Aztec Civilization	Mexico
The Roman Civilization	Rome
The Persian Civilization	Iran
The Ancient Greek Civilization	Greece
The Chinese Civilization	China
The Ancient Egyptian Civilization	Egypt
The Indus Valley Civilization	Northeast Afghanistan to Pakistan and northwest India
The Mesopotamian Civilization	Iraq, Syria and Turkey.

STATUE OF EQUALITY

News: The Prime Minister is all set to unveil the statue of Equality in Hyderabad, Telangana.

About



- Statue of Equality is a **216-foot-tall** statue dedicated to **11th-century social reformer and saint, Ramanujacharya**. The statue will be in a **sitting position**.
- The **world's second tallest statue** in a sitting position is made up of '**panchaloha**', meaning a combination of five metals i.e. gold, copper, silver, brass and zinc. The tallest is the **Great Buddha in Thailand** at 302 ft.
- The inner sanctum deity of Sri Ramanujacharya is **built of 120 kilos of gold**. This commemorates the 120 years the saint spent on earth.

Sri Ramanujacharya:

- Born in **1017 CE in Tamil Nadu**.
- He is the most respected Acharya in the **philosophy of Sri Vaishnavism**.
- He is famous as the chief proponent of **Vishishtadvaita subschool of Vedānta**. He was also referred to as **Ilaya Perumal**, which means the radiant one.
- He worked tirelessly **against casteism and social hierarchies**, proclaiming that all living beings had the right to Realization.
- He also enacted **several reforms in temple administration**. For instance, at one time the entire administration in the Srirangam Temple in Tiruchirappalli was controlled by a specific caste. He included persons from different castes in the Temple administration. A number of responsibilities were given to women also.
- He wrote nine works that came to be known as the **Navratnas** including three major commentaries, the **Vedartha-Sangraha**, the **Sribhasya** and the

Bhagavad Gita-bhashya aimed at providing a philosophical foundation for devotional worship.

Vishishtadvaita:

- It is a **non-dualistic school** of Vedānta philosophy. It is non-dualism of the qualified whole, in which **Brahman alone exists, but is characterized by multiplicity**.
- It can be described as **qualified monism** or **qualified non-dualism** or **attributive monism**.
- It is a school of Vedānta philosophy that **believes in all diversity** subsuming to an **underlying unity**.

ABIDE WITH ME

News: Mahatma Gandhi's favourite hymn — Abide With Me — which used to be played at the end of the Beating the Retreat ceremony on 29 January, has once again been dropped from the ceremony this year.

About Abide With Me:

- It is the **Christian hymn**.
- Penned in the **pre-modern world** by **Henry Francis Lyte**, a Scottish Anglican minister and son of a naval captain, the hymn, which is known for its **simplicity and somber theme**, is often **sung to English composer William Henry Monk's evocative tune Eventide**, and has been a fixture in the Indian Beating Retreat ceremony since 1950.
- It is always the **last piece to be played by the brass bands** before the troops recede up Raisina Hill to the tune of poet Allama Iqbal Saare Jahan se achha.
- **Abide with me Hymn in India**; It is **one of the favourite hymns of Mahatma Gandhi**. It was **sung in Sabarmati Ashram**. It was the only cross religion hymn to be sung in the Ashram.

NO BLAME IN SHIFTING THE FLAME

News: Some sections of the society are against the merging of the Amar Jawan Jyoti flame with the torch at the National War Memorial.

About Amar Jawan Jyoti:

- It was a tribute to the **3,483 martyrs of the 1971 Bangladesh War**.
- The then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi had inaugurated it **on Republic Day 1972**, after India defeated Pakistan in December 1971.
- The eternal flame at the Amar Jawan Jyoti underneath **India Gate in central Delhi** was an **iconic symbol of the nation's tributes to the soldiers** who have died

for the country in various wars and conflicts since Independence.

- **India Gate:** it was built as a tribute to the **fallen soldiers who fought under the British flag** in World War I and the Third Anglo-Afghan War.

The National War Memorial:

- It was inaugurated in **2019**. It is intended as a **homage to martyrs of conflicts after Independence**.
- The layout of the structure comprises **four concentric circles**, named:
 - the **"Amar Chakra"** or Circle of Immortality,
 - the **"Veerta Chakra"** or Circle of Bravery,
 - the **"Tyag Chakra"** or Circle of Sacrifice and
 - the **"Rakshak Chakra"** or Circle of Protection.

Reasons for the Relocation:

- The names inscribed on the India Gate are of only some martyrs **who fought for the British in World War 1** and the **Anglo Afghan War** & thus is a **symbol of our colonial past**.

- The names of all Indian martyrs from all the wars, including **"1971 and wars before and after it are housed at the National War Memorial**.

PICTORIAL BOOK ON INDIA'S WOMEN UNSUNG HEROES OF FREEDOM STRUGGLE

News: Union Minister of State for Culture Smt. Meenakshi Lekhi released a pictorial book on India's Women Unsung Heroes of Freedom Struggle as part of Azadi ka Mahotsav.

About:

- The book has been released in **partnership with Amar Chitra Katha** which is a household name in India.
- The book **celebrates the lives of some of the women** who led the charge and lit the flame of protest and rebellion throughout the country.
- The book seeks to **make the youth understand** the history of freedom struggle through an Indian perspective rather than the colonial one.

Other important personalities:

Rani Abakka	She was the Queen of Ullal, Karnataka. She fought and defeated the mighty Portuguese in the 16th century.
Velu Nachiyar	She was the Queen of shivaganga and was the first Indian queen to wage war against the British East India Company.
Matangini Hazra	She was a brave freedom fighter from Bengal, who laid down her life while agitating against the British.
Subhadra Kumari Chauhan	One of the greatest Hindi poets, who was also a prominent figure in the freedom movement.
Gulab Kaur	She was a freedom fighter who abandoned her own hopes and dreams of life abroad to fight for and mobilize the Indian people against the British Raj.
Chakali Illamma	She was a revolutionary woman, who fought against the injustice of Zamindars during the Telangana rebellion in the mid-1940s
Durgawati Devi	Brave woman who provided safe passage to Bhagat Singh after the killing of John Saunders and much more during her revolutionary days.
Sucheta Kripalani	A prominent freedom fighter who became the independent India's first women chief minister of the UP Government.
Accamma Cherian	She is an inspirational leader of the freedom movement in Travancore, Kerala. She was given the name 'Jhansi Rani of Travancore' by Mahatma Gandhi.
Aruna Asaf Ali	She was an inspirational freedom fighter who is perhaps best remembered for hoisting the Indian National flag in Mumbai during the Quit India Movement in 1942.
Durgabhai Deshmukh	She was a tireless worker for the emancipation of women in Andhra Pradesh and was also an eminent freedom fighter and member of constituent Assembly.

Rani Gaidinliu	Naga spiritual and political leader, she led an armed uprising against the British in Manipur, Nagaland, and Assam.
Usha Mehta	She was a freedom fighter from a very young age, who is remembered for organizing an underground radio station during the Quit India Movement in 1942.
Parhati Giri	She was one of Odisha's prominent women freedom fighters who was called the Mother Theresa of Western Odisha for her work in the Upliftment of her people.
Tarakeshwari Sinha	She was a prominent freedom fighter during the Quit India Movement, she went on to become an eminent politician in the early decades of Independent India.
Snehalatha Varma	She was a freedom fighter and tireless worker for the education and upliftment of women in Mewar, Rajasthan.
Tileshwari Baruah	She was one of India's youngest martyrs, she was shot at the age of 12 by the British during the Quit India Movement when she and some freedom fighters tried to unfurl the Tricolour at the top of the police station.
Jhalkari Bai	She was a women soldier who grew to become one of the key advisors of Rani of Jhansi and a prominent figure in the First War of Indian Independence, 1857.
Padmaja Naidu	She was the daughter of Sarojini Naidu and a freedom fighter in her own right, who would later become Governor of West Bengal and a humanitarian after Independence.
Bishni Devi Shah	She inspired a large number of people in Uttarakhand to join the freedom movement.

NUMISMATICS IN INDIA

News: The recent discussion on putting images of Gods and Goddesses on coins and banknotes has renewed interest in the Numismatic history of India.

About:

- Numismatics is **the study and collection of coins, tokens, and other coin-like objects** that people used as currencies **throughout history**.
- The term may also refer to the **study of money and other payment methods** that people use to pay for goods and services and to settle debts.
- Sources of historical information through inscription:** Coins are **part of archaeological sources and are** as important as the inscription in history. They **confirm the information** derived from the literature.

Major Numismatic stages of India:

- Ancient India coinage:** Starting with 'Punch marked' coins, this era includes coins attributed to 'Janapadas' as well as the Mauryan period. The motifs found on these coins were mostly **drawn from nature** like the sun, various animal motifs, trees, hills, etc. and some were **geometrical symbols**.
- Dynastic Coins:** These coins relate to those of the **Indo-Greeks, the Saka-Pahlavas, and the Kushans**. **Hellenistic traditions** characterize the silver coins of the Indo-Greeks, with Greek gods and goddesses figuring prominently, apart from the **portraits of the issuers**. This stage also includes coinage from the Gupta, Post-Gupta, and South Indian Empires of Cholas, Cheras, Pandyas, Pallavas, and Hoysalas among others.
- Coins of the Medieval period:** With the emergence of **Turkish Sultans** of Delhi in the 12th Century, existing motifs were gradually replaced by **Islamic devices, largely calligraphy**. The unit of account came to be consolidated and was referred to as the '**tanka**' with the '**jittals**' as the **smaller value coins**.
- British Indian Coinage:** Enactment of the **Coinage Act of 1835** led to **uniform coinage** with effigies of Prince William IV and Queen Victoria. The act was succeeded by the **Indian Coinage Act of 1906**.

Coins of modern India:

- The **first Rupee coin** of the Republic of India was minted in 1950.
- Other denominations of **coins of modern India** were also produced like the 1/2 Re, 1/4 Re, 2 Anna, 1 Anna, 1/2 Anna & 1 Pice coins which are also referred to as **Anna series or pre-decimal coinage**.
- In 1957, India shifted to the **decimal system**.
- Special coins were minted in memory of important events or personalities**. These are referred to as **commemorative Indian coins**.
- Some commemorative coins include coins depicting **Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira Gandhi, B. R. Ambedkar, Rajiv Gandhi, Saint Dnyaneshwar, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Subhas Chandra Bose**, etc.

BHARAT GAURAV TRAIN

News: Maiden Service of Bharat Gaurav Train commenced under Bharat Gaurav Scheme from Coimbatore North to Sainagar Shirdi.

About:

- Bharat Gaurav Trains are **theme-based trains launched by Indian Railways in November 2021.**
- **Objective:** To showcase India's rich cultural heritage and magnificent historical places to the people of India and the world.
- **Aim:** Leverage the core strengths of the professionals of the tourism sector to run theme-based trains to tap India's vast tourist potential.
- Bharat Gaurav Scheme guidelines apply to **already running tourist circuit trains by IRCTC as well such as Buddhist Circuit Tourist Train.**

THOMAS CUP

News: India won its maiden Thomas Cup title beating Indonesia 3-0 in the final.

About:

- The Thomas Cup trophy represents world dominance in the sport of badminton.
- It is a **16-nation team competition.**
- **Background and Management:** Sir George Thomas donated the cup in 1939 for a series of men's international team competitions to be managed by the International Badminton Federation (IBF), of which Thomas was president at the time.
- **First tournament:** The first tournament was held in 1948-49, and Malaya won. The Thomas and Uber Cup is a biennial international badminton championship in which men's and women's national teams compete.
- **India's Victory:** Only five countries have won the tournament's championship in its seven-decade history: China, Malaysia, Indonesia, Japan, and Denmark. With its victory, India became only the sixth country in history to join this exclusive club.

EVENTS OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE

News: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has notified a fresh list of sporting events of national importance.

About:

- These are **notified under Sports Broadcasting Signals (Mandatory Sharing with Prasar Bharati) Act.**

- The Act mandates the broadcasting rights holders of these sporting events to share live feeds with public broadcaster Prasar Bharati.
- **Following events are declared as events of national importance:** all Olympics Games, Commonwealth Games, and Asian Games, various sports events like cricket, tennis, hockey, football, badminton, Kabaddi, etc

SARAS FOOD FESTIVAL

News: Recently, the Saras Food Festival, 2022 has been organized in New Delhi to promote ethnic and home-made handicrafts, paintings, toys, etc., prepared by women of Self-Help Groups (SHGs).

About:

- **Organized by:** Union Ministry of Rural Development as an effort to empower women on a large scale.
- **Aim:** To **give women SHGs an opportunity to showcase their skills** in the field of food making and introduce people to the food culture of our country.
- **Participation:** Women from self-help groups formed under the flagship program 'National Rural Livelihoods Mission' of the Union Ministry of Rural Development are participating in this festival.
- The government will also take steps to **establish Saras stalls** by women SHGs in all State capitals, major cities and metros, airports and railway stations for widening the reach of marketing.

NATIONAL TRIBAL DANCE FESTIVAL

News: Raipur hosted the 3rd National Tribal Dance Festival as part of Chhattisgarh State Foundation Day.

About:

- **Organized by:** The 3rd National Tribal Dance Festival was organized **by the Government of Chhattisgarh.**
- The tribal festival increased the scope for the **spread and exchange of tribal culture.**
- **More than 1,500** tribal performers from India and ten other nations performed at the event.
- **Lambadi dance :**
 - It is a folk dance of the **Banjara tribe**
 - Lambadi folk dance is performed mainly **by women to seek blessing from god** for a good harvest.
 - Lambadi is a **mix of Rajasthan and Telangana cultures.**
- **Banjara Tribe :**
 - Banjara or Lambadi is a **nomadic trading tribe.**

- They have **roots in Rajasthan** but settled in several states of India.
- They speak **Lambada dialect** (a combination of Sanskrit, Rajasthani and Gujarati).
- **Siddi Tribe :**
 - Also performed a cultural dance at the festival.
 - Siddi Tribe is an **African-origin tribe** settled in India.
 - They came to India **850 years ago**.
 - Siddis are found in Karnataka and Gujarat

TRIBAL COMMUNITY HUTS

News: To showcase the heritage of tribal communities, the Anthropological Survey of India (AnSI) has recreated the huts of several communities at its different regional centers.

Which tribal communities huts were recreated?

- **Jarawas :** Jarawas are indigenous people of the **Andaman Islands** in India. They live in **parts of South Andaman and Middle Andaman Islands**. The traditional Jarawa hut is called a **chadda**.
- **Shompen or Shom Pen :** They are the **indigenous people** of the interior of **Great Nicobar Island**, part of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- Both the Jarawa and Shompen communities are **Particularly vulnerable tribal groups (PVTGs)** living in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. While the population of Shompen people is said to be **less than 300**, there are about 500 members of the Jarawa tribe.
- **Khasis :** Khasi people are an **ethnic group of Meghalaya** in north-eastern India with a significant population in the bordering state of **Assam and in certain parts of Bangladesh**.
- The Khasi people form the **majority of the population of Meghalaya** and is the state's largest community. They are among the few **Austroasiatic-speaking peoples** in South Asia. A cultural tradition of the Khasi people is that they follow the **matrilineal system**.
- **Dorla :** Dorla also called **Dora** are a tribal people community found mainly in **Bastar area of central India**. They are mainly found in Dantewada and Bijapur districts of present-day Chhattisgarh.
- **Betta Kuruba :** Betta Kuruba (Betta meaning 'Hill', Kuruba meaning 'shepherd') tribe lives in the **hilly regions of Karnataka** and is one of the few indigenous communities of the Nilgiris.

Anthropological Survey of India (AnSI):

- Anthropological Survey of India is the **only research organization to pursue anthropological research** in a governmental setup.
- Its genesis was from the Zoological and Anthropological section of the Indian Museum which became the **Zoological Survey of India in 1916**.
- In **1945**, the Anthropology section of the Zoological Survey was carved out to eventually become the **Anthropological Survey of India (An.S.I.)**.

MAHUA

News: Recently a herd of elephants in Odisha drank the fermented water to make mahua and went into a deep sleep.

About:

- The flowers of the Mahua tree (*Madhuca longifolia*) are fermented to **produce an alcoholic drink** also called **Mahua**.
- **Tribal men and women** in various parts of India traditionally make this liquor.
- It is found in **West Bengal, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Bihar**, in parts of northern and central India, in Maharashtra, Gujarat, Telangana, Tamil Nadu and Kerala.
- Mahua is **considered holy** amongst the tribes of India.
- It is called the '**Tree of Life**'. Not just the flower, each and every part of the tree is used for something or the other. Even the shell of the fruit is used at the time of funeral rites.

Mahua Nutra beverage:

- TRIFED in association with Foundation for Innovation and Technology Transfer (FIIT) has developed this value added product **Mahua nutra beverage** made out of Mahua flower so that the **tribals can benefit maximum** from the value addition of MFPs and development of technologies.
- This is the first of its kind of initiative in the **State of Jharkhand and the country by TRIFED**.
- The Mahua Nutra beverage in its improvised form is **blended with Pomegranate fruit juice**, which enhances the nutritional value and masks the flavor of Mahua beverage by **improving its aroma and texture**.

GORSHEY

News: Delhi's Tibetans gather together at Majnu Ka Tila to participate in Gorshey as part of the White Wednesday routine.

About:

- Gorshey is a **traditional dance of Tibetans performed in circles**.
- 'Gor' means **circle** and 'shey' means **dance**.
- They dance to the **traditional music played** on the occasion mostly originated in Tibet.
- Both **men and women** perform Gorshey dances.
- The gripping circle dance is done on **Lhakar** or **White Wednesdays**.

Lhakar:

- Lhakar or White Wednesdays are recognised as **auspicious for the Dalai Lama** and have held special importance for Tibetans.
- Lhakar is a traditional day for Tibetans to **express devotion to their spiritual leader and pray for his long life**.
- However, in recent years, the spiritual observance of the day has grown into a world-wide movement to **embrace Tibetan identity and culture**.

BEYPORE URN

News: Recently, the District Tourism Promotion Council, Kozhikode has applied for a Geographical Indication (GI) tag for the famous Beypore Uru (boat).

About:

- An uru is a **wooden dhow (ship)** mainly made of Malabar teak in Beypore town of Kerala. It is probably the **biggest handicraft in the world**.
- **Origin** : Uru making in Beypore is a **centuries-old tradition** that was established since India began its maritime trade with Mesopotamia.
- **Making process** :
 - Beypore urus are **purely made of wood, without using any modern techniques**, and traditional methods are used to launch this ship into the water. The carpenters **manually join each piece of wood** to build the large boat.
 - Artisans responsible for making Uru : The **Khalasis** are the traditional artisans responsible for the manufacture of the Uru.
 - They are the ones **who launch these urus into the water, setting them ready for travel**.

- It takes **at least four years** and the effort of over forty Khalasis to build an Uru.
- **Note:** Beypore is an ancient port town located on the banks of the Chaliyar River in Kerala.

Communities Involved in Uru-making:

- **Odayis:**
 - They oversee the technical aspects of shipbuilding.
 - Their surname is derived from Odam (a small ship that was previously used in interactions/trade between the Malabar coast and Lakshadweep).
- **Khalasis:**
 - They are also known as Mappila Khalasis because the majority of them are Mappila Muslims.
 - They are well-known throughout the world for their skill and expertise in launching the completed Urus into the water using only traditional methods.
 - The Khalasis are regarded as forefathers of the ship-building industry, and Arab traders were particularly enamored of them, becoming among the first major patrons of these vessels.

IDUHATTI ROCK SITE

News: Researchers observed that the five symbols that comprise a rock art site in Iduhatty, Nilgiris district closely resemble geometric signs of Ice Age Europe.



About:

- There are said to be **10 rock art sites in the Nilgiris** including the largest rock site Karikiyoor rock site.
- The rock art site in Iduhatty is around **20 km from Udhagamandalam town in Nilgiri**.
- The site has **20 unique symbols** in vibrant red painted in ochre.

- Researchers observed that **5 of those symbols - the circle, cordiform, dot, finger fluting and quadrangle - closely resemble** the symbols used at rock and cave painting sites in Europe of the Ice Age.
- The resemblance could point to the **arrival of modern humans** to the Nilgiris during the **end of the last Ice Age** (between 10,000 and 40,000 years ago).
- **Note:** Ochre is a **natural pigment**, predominantly just an **iron oxide with varying degrees of water molecules**, which gives different sorts of colors, from yellow to black.

NYINGMA SECT

News: The Nyingma sect has identified a boy from Spiti in Himachal Pradesh as the reincarnation of the late Taklung Setrunga Rinpoche.

About:

- The Nyingma sect is the **oldest of all Buddhist sects in Tibet**.
- The Nyingma sect is the second **largest** out of the 4 Buddhist sects in Tibet.
- The sect emphasizes the **mystical aspects of the Vajrayana tradition**.
- They closely **follow Padmasambhava's teachings**, emphasizing Tantric ritual, worship, and Yoga.
- Guru Padmasambhava is the **founder of the Nyingma Lineage of Tibetan Buddhism**, who came to Tibet in the 8th century C.E.
- The followers of the sect are spread across **Tibet, Bhutan, Ladakh, Sikkim and other Himalayan Buddhist pockets**.
- The 4 schools of Tibetan Buddhism are **Nyingma, Kagyu, Sakya, and Gelug or Gelugpa**.

DHAMMA DIPA INTERNATIONAL BUDDHIST UNIVERSITY (DDIBU)

News: Shakya Gasan, chief monk of the World Buddhist Pope Association of South Korea, will lay the foundation stone for the International Buddhist University at Manu Bankul in Sabroom of South Tripura district on November 29.

About:

- The Dhamma Dipa International Buddhist University (DDIBU) is expected to become the **first Buddhist-run university in India to offer Buddhist education** along with courses in other disciplines of modern education as well.

- This university will set a precedent in the history of Indian-Buddhism in **promoting and reviving Buddhist culture in India**, the birthplace of Buddhism.
- It will be the **first Buddhist University in India to be headed by Buddhist monastics and run and monitored by Buddhists**.
- The word, **Dhammadipa**, describes both a **core principle** and a **guiding force**, which seeks the light of Dharma, its international scope and measure.
- The University contributes to the highest level of knowledge and education.
- DD IBU hopes to **better engage the contemporary world** through the insight and depth of Buddhist words.
- At the same time, it is keen to prepare students and youth with **knowledge and skills**, so that they can live healthy, peaceful and contented lives, able to lead the way of life.
- Students **from 31 countries** will get a chance to study as well as carry out research on Buddhist literature, culture and tradition in the proposed varsity.

MANIPUR'S IMA MARKET

News: External Affairs minister S Jaishankar recently tweeted pictures of his visit to Manipur's Ima market, calling it a "great example of nari shakti (women's power) powering economic growth".

About:

- Ima Keithel, or Mothers' Market, is an **all-women market**, said to be the **largest such shopping complex in Asia**.
- It is a unique all women's market, having **3,000 "Imas" or mothers** who run the stalls, it is split [into] two sections on either side of the road.
- **Vegetables, fruits, fish and household groceries** are sold on one side and **exquisite handlooms and household tools** on the other hand. Not far away is a street where beautiful wicker works and basketry are sold.
- Male vendors and shopkeepers are **barred** here.
- In **2018**, the state government announced that **legal action would be taken under the Manipur Municipalities Act, 2004 if any male vendor** was found selling goods at the market.

History:

- The Ima Market is **centuries-old**, and has its origins in **Lallup Kaba**, an ancient bonded labor system.
- Under the system, **Meitei men had to compulsorily serve some time working in the military** and on other civil projects, keeping them away from home.

- The **women**, thus, were **left to manage on their own**, and they developed a market system which is today the Ima Keithel.
- While the system is centuries-old, it had **continued till the time of the British**.
- Policies of the **British government had interfered** with the functioning of the Ima market too, but were met with stiff resistance from the women.

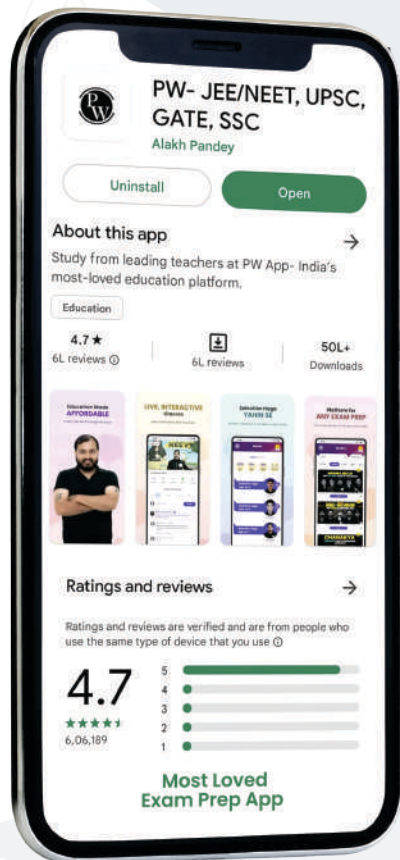
SHADANI DARBAR

News: Pakistan issued 100 visas to Indian pilgrims, to allow them to participate in the 314th birth anniversary celebrations of Shiv Avtari Satguru Sant Shadaram Sahib, in Sindh province. The pilgrims will visit Shadani Darbar, in Hayat Pitafi, from November 22 to December 3.

About:

- Under the Pakistan-India Protocol on Visits to Religious Shrines Of 1974, pilgrims from both countries are allowed to travel to some shrines across the border every year.
- Located in Hayat Pitafi, Ghotki district, Shadani Darbar is believed to be the biggest Hindu temple in Pakistan's Sindh province.
- It was founded in 1786 by Sant Shadaram Sahib, whose anniversary the pilgrims are traveling to celebrate.
- According to the temple's website, Sant Shadaram was born in a Lohana khatri family in Lahore in October
- It is believed that anyone who takes the blessings of the Dhuni Sahib and drinks the water of the well is delivered from his sufferings and misfortunes.





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