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TARGET 2024

HISTORY, ART & CULTURE



**MAY 2023 TO
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⌚ May 2023 to December 2023

1. ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)

- The premier organization for the archaeological researches and protection of the cultural heritage of the nation.
- ASI functions under the Ministry of Culture.
- **Functions** - Maintenance of ancient monuments and archaeological sites and remains of national importance.
- Regulates all archaeological activities in the country as per the provisions of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958.
- Regulates Antiquities and Art Treasure Act, 1972.

1.1 Porunai Museum

The Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu has laid the foundation for the 'Porunai Museum' project in Tirunelveli district, Tamilnadu.

- The 'Porunai Archaeological Museum' would come up in Tirunelveli district near Reddiarpatti hillock, Tamil Nadu.
- The museum will showcase the artefacts collected at Porunai excavation site.
- The museum will have three separate sections for exhibiting the artefacts recovered from Korkai, Sivakalai and Aditchanallur excavations.
- **Porunai Civilisation** - Aditchanallur and Korkai (Pandya kingdom's port town) and Sivakalai, in Thoothukudi district are few among the other Porunai sites.
- The entire Tamirabharani watercourse is known as 'Cradle of Civilization of South India'.
- Large quantities of ornaments made of gold and tin-mixed bronze, reflect the life style of people.
- The carbon dating of the rice found in the burial urns in Sivakalai hillock revealed that it is from 1155 BC making the Tamirabharani civilisation 3,200 years old.

Archaeological sites in Tamil Nadu



1.2 Tirunavaya

Pipeline work leads to vast megalithic site in Kerala.

- A large number of megalithic hat stones were found from a single site during a recent archaeological salvage excavation at Nagaparamba in Kuttippuram village, Kerala.
- **Hat stones** – They are popularly called Thoppikkallu in Malayalam, are hemispherical laterite stones used as lid on burial urns during the megalithic period.
- **Burial Sites** – A large number of megalithic burial sites and relics were found at Nagaparamba during the excavation.

1.3 Porpanaikottai

A portion of a circular brick structure has been unearthed by archaeologists at Porpanaikottai, a Sangam-age site, in Pudukottai district of Tamil Nadu.

- Porpanaikottai is situated at Pudukottai, **Tamilnadu**.
- Light Detection and Ranging (**LIDAR**), a remote sensing method, indicated that a fort had existed there in 13th century to 14th century.
- The site had grave goods, conch bangles, fragments of red and black pots engraved, iron fragments, glass beads and bone weapons.
- A golden nose stud or earring weighing 0.2g, a bone point and a fragment of carnelian bead was found at this site.
- A **hero stone** mentioning the name of **Kanangkumaran** who hailed from Adhavanur was found at the site.

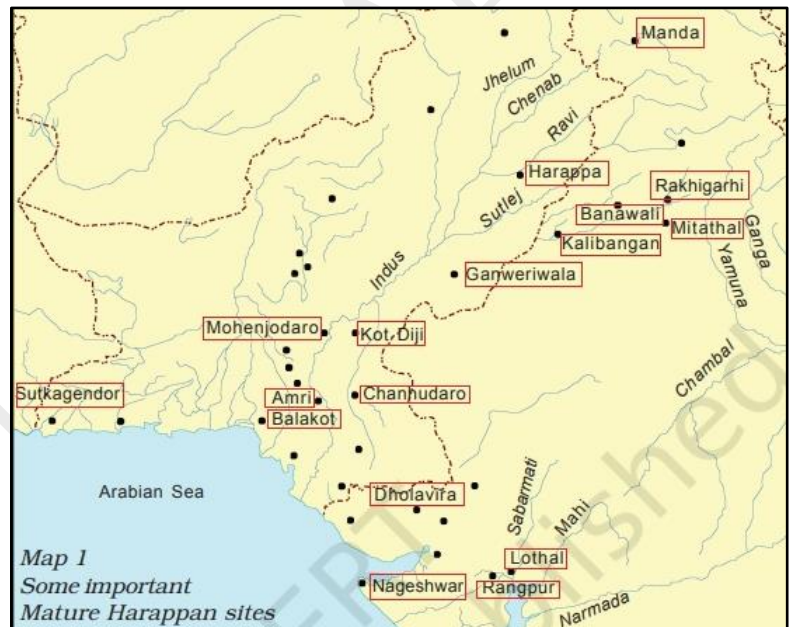
Sangam Age

- Date- **300 BCE to 300 CE**.
- Excavation sites:
 1. Keeladi
 2. Sivagalai
 3. Adichanallur
 4. Kodumanal

1.4 Kutch Harappan Graveyard

A Kutch Harappan graveyard unravels the mystery of the life and times of those buried.

- Khatiya village is located in the outskirts of **Gujarat's Kutch district**.
- This site is considered to be the **largest pre-urban Harappan cemetery**.
- The site demonstrates the transition from earth-mound burials to stone graves.
- A shell bangle, pottery shards, stones blades are also found in this site.
- Another Harappan site **Dholavira in Gujarat** is an **UNESCO World Heritage Site** and one of the biggest metropolises of the Harappan civilisation.
- **Desalpar and Khirsara, Kotda Bhadli and Nadapa** are other well-known Harappan sites in western Kutch.



1.5 Rudragiri Hillock

Rudragiri hillock site unveils a fascinating combination of prehistoric rock paintings from the Mesolithic period and exquisite artwork from the Kakatiya dynasty.

- **Location** - At the Eastern Ghats, in Guntur district of **Andhra Pradesh**.
- It is named after **King Rudra Deva** of the **Kakatiya dynasty**.
- It features 5 naturally formed rock shelters at its foothills which includes 2 natural caves.
- There is evidence that Ramayana scenes depicted at Rudragiri might have drawn inspiration from the artworks at Muppavaram.

Kakatiya Dynasty (1083-1323 CE)

- **Founder** - Rudradeva I
- **Capitals** - Anmakonda (Hanumakonda), Orugallu / Ekasilanagara (Warangal)
- **Languages** - Telugu (preferred language), Sanskrit, Kannada
- **Religion** - Jainism, Hinduism (Saivism)
- **Famous rulers** – Rudradeva, Mahadeva, Ganapatideva I and Rudramadevi
- **Temples** - Thousand Pillar Temple, Ramappa Temple, Warangal Fort, Golconda Fort and Kota Gullu

- **Ganapati Deva Maharaja (1199-1262 AD)**, the founder of Muppavaram temple and a prominent figure of the Kakatiya dynasty, likely patronised the mural heritage at Rudragiri.

1.6 Purana Qila or the Old Fort

The excavations at Purana Qila reveal pre-Mauryan era settlement.

- **Location- New Delhi.**
- **Built by - Sher Shah Suri (The Lion King) and Mughal emperor Humayun.**
- Humayun built it as a part of his new city of **Dinpanah** in the 16th century.
- A local tradition believes that the area in which the Purana Qila stands today is the site of **Indraprastha**, the capital of the Pandavas of the epic Mahabharata. Hence, it is often called the **Pandavon ka Qila**.
- **The excavations** - The findings include
 - Shards of **Painted Gray Ware pottery** which are usually dated to around 1200 BC to 600 BC.
 - Remains of a 900-year-old Vaikuntha Vishnu from the Rajput period
 - A terracotta plaque of Goddess Gaja Lakshmi from the Gupta period
 - Structural remains of a terracotta ring well from the Mauryan period
 - A 4 room complex from the Sunga-Kushan period dating back to 2,300 years ago, besides beads, seals, copper coins and a bone needle.



1.7 Tughlaqabad

Archaeological Survey of India (Delhi circle) is protecting the ancient Tughlaqabad fortification which has cracks and broken walls.

- It was built by the founder of the Tughlaq Dynasty, **Ghiyas-ud-din-Tughlaq** in 1321 at Delhi.
- Tughlaq's name was **Ghazi Malik**, and he started out as a governor under the rule of Alauddin Khalji.
- It was established as the 3rd historic city of Delhi, which was later abandoned in 1327.
- The fort with 10-15 metres high wall is in two parts, **the citadel** and **palaces** along the southern walls forming one unit and the city to the north the other.
- The fort-city of Tughlaqabad was supposed to have as many as 52 gates, out of which only 13 remain now.
- The **'Tudor' arch**, a slightly-pointed **'Tartar' dome** and the use of beam-and-arch for openings are new features.
- Across the main entrance of Tughlaqabad on the south is **Ghiyathu'd-Din's tomb**.
- It is believed that the fort was cursed by the famous Sufi saint, **Nizamuddin Auliya** who was contemporary of Ghiyas-ud-din-Tughlaq.



7 Historic Cities of Delhi	Founder
LalKot (Qila Rai Pithora)	Anangpal Tomar
Siri	Alauddin Khilji
Tughlaqabad	Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq
Jahanpanah	Muhammad Tughlaq
Ferozabad	Feroz Shah Tughlaq
Dinpanah	Started by Humayun & finished by Sher Shah
Shahjahanabad (Purani Dilli)	Shah Jahan

2. TRIBES & TRIBAL ARTS

2.1 Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas

In India, the Janjatiya Gaurav Divas is celebrated every year on November 15 since 2021 to recognize the efforts of the brave tribal freedom fighters.

- It is to mark the **birth anniversary of Sri Birsa Munda** who is revered as Bhagwan by tribal communities.
- Objective** - To recognize the efforts of the tribals for preservation of cultural heritage and promotion of Indian values of valour, hospitality and national pride.
- India's freedom struggle was strengthened by several movements by tribal communities such as **Santhals, Tamars, Kols, Bhils, Khasis and Mizos** to name a few.

Tribal leaders	Contributions
Birsa Munda (Jharkhand)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formed a new religion, Birsait. Lead Munda Rebellion (Ulgulan Revolt) against British.
Shaheed Veer Narayan Singh (Chhattisgarh)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Looted and distributed grains amongst the poor after the 1856 famine. Attained martyr in the independence struggle of 1857.
Alluri Seetha Ram Raju (Andhra Pradesh)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead Rampa Rebellion against British.
Rani Gaidinliu (Manipur)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revolted against British rule. Joined in Heraka movement for establish Naga Raj (Rule of Nagas).
Sidhu and Kanhu Murmu (Jharkhand and Bengal)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead Santhal Rebellion (Hul Revolt) in 1855-56.
Rani Kamalapati (Madhya Pradesh)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committed 'Jal Jauhar' (ritual suicide) to save her honour. The pride of the Gond tribe and the last Hindu queen of Bhopal.
Tantia Bhil (Madhya Pradesh)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loot the British and distribute the stolen wealth among the needy 'Robin Hood of India'.

2.2 Janjatiya Darpan

The President inaugurated 'Janjatiya Darpan', a gallery to represent the common and connecting cultural traits of various Janjati communities (tribals) in Bharat.

- Janjati heroes** – Gallery consists of different themes such as unsung tribal freedom fighters, traditional natural resource management practices such as Halma, Dokra art, Gunjala Gondi script, and Warli.
- 'Koya Pagide** – The gallery consists of scroll (Koya Pagide) depicting the life history and genealogy of Koya Janjati community from Bhadrachalam.
- Gunjala Gondi Script** – The Script along with its detailed history is put on display at the gallery.
- Navachara** - An Artificial Intelligence enabled gallery developed by Rashtrapati Bhavan in collaboration with Intel India.
- Sutra-kala Darpan** - It is a Textile Collection which shows the remarkable collection of antique textiles of the Rashtrapati Bhavan.

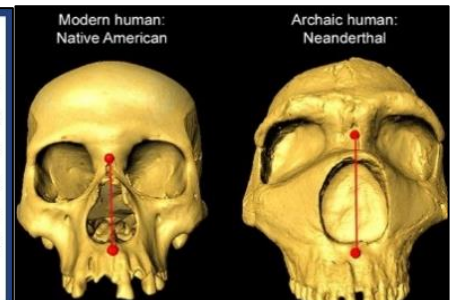
2.3 Neanderthals

A new study by a team of researchers has found some genes responsible for our nasal anatomy may have been inherited from Neanderthals.

- Neanderthals (or Neandertals) are the **closest extinct relatives to humans** (*Homo sapiens*).
- Neanderthals were shorter and stockier with angled cheekbones, prominent brow ridges and wide noses.
- They lived during the **Ice Age** and were equipped with tall noses that could warm and moisten the cold dry air in chilly climates.
- They lived **across Eurasia**, as far north and west as the Britain, through part of the Middle East, to Uzbekistan.
- Neanderthals were **primarily carnivorous**. They had some control of fire and ate cooked vegetables fairly regularly.

Quick Facts

The 2022 Nobel Prize in physiology or medicine has been awarded to a Swedish geneticist who traced the evolution of modern day humans from the DNA of Neanderthals



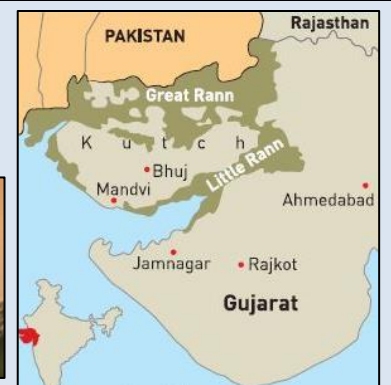
2.4 Agariyas

The forest department wants the Agariyas to leave the Little Rann citing the conservation of endemic wild asses.

- Agariyas** - Agariyas are socially recognized as Chunvaliya Koli, Miyana or Sandhi community and all of them fall in the **De-notified tribe (DNT)** category.
- In their language, **agar means salt** and those who farm it are called Agariyas.
- Salt production** - In **Little Rann of Kutch**, Agariyas make crystal salt called **Vadagaru or Poda**.
- Gujarat is the largest producer of salt** in India and the agariyas produce over 30% of India's entire salt produce from the Little Rann of Kutch.

Indian Wild Ass

- Found only in the **Little Rann of Kutch in Gujarat**, India.
- It is one of the 4 remaining subspecies of Asian Wild Ass.
- In contrast to its closely related family of donkeys and horses, Indian Wild Ass has not been domesticated.
- Habitat** - Variety of habitats including wetland ecosystems, deserts, arid grasslands and shrub lands.
- Currently found in India's Rann of Kutch region.
- IUCN Status** - Near Threatened.



2.5 Zo People

Zoram People's Movement (ZPM), called for a reunification of the Zo people in view of the continuing ethnic violence between the dominant Meiteis and the Kuki-Zomi tribes in the neighbouring state.

- Family** - The Zou / Zo is a **Tibeto-Mongoloid** group of people sub-family of the **Chin-Kuki-Mizo race**.
- Habitat** - They inhabit in areas of **India, Myanmar** and the Chittagong hill tracts of **Bangladesh**.
- In northeastern India, they are present in Nagaland, Mizoram, Manipur and Assam.
- Status** - Zou are officially recognized as one of the **33 indigenous peoples within the state of Manipur**, and are one of the **Scheduled tribes**.

- The sub-tribes and clans such as the Chin, Kuki, Mizo, Lushei, Zomi, Paitei, Hmar, Ralte, Pawi, Lai, Mara, Gangte, Thadou, etc. also included in the zo umbrella.
- **Language** - Tibeto-Burman languages.
- **Religion** - Zo peoples predominantly follow Christianity, minority follow Animism and Buddhism.

Animism is a worldview which states that all beings, humans, animals, plants, lands, and waters, live within an interconnected web of spirituality.

2.6 Paddari Tribe

The Constitution (Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Tribes Order (Amendment) Bill, 2024 was passed by the Parliament.

- The bill seeks to include 'Pahari Ethnic Group, Paddari Tribe, Koli and Gadda Brahmin' communities in the list of STs of UT of Jammu and Kashmir.
- Paddari tribes live in the remote Paddar area of the hilly Kishtwar district.
- **Area** - The Paddari homeland borders Zaskar (Ladakh) in the north and the east, Pangi in Himachal Pradesh in the south, and the rest of J&K in the west.
- **Paddari population** - 21,548 (As per 2011 census), comprising 83.6% Hindus, 9.5% Buddhists, and 6.8% Muslims.
- **Language** - Paddari language
- Click here to know about - [Pahari Tribes](#)

Other Tribes in J&K

- The Gujjars and Bakerwals are the third largest group after Kashmiris and Dogras in J&K.
- They live in the districts of Rajouri, Poonch, Reasi, Kishtwar, Anantnag, Bandipora, Ganderbal, and Kupwara.
- They are nomadic tribes.
- **ST status in J&K** - Gujjars, Bakerwals, Gaddis and Sippis.

2.7 Bihan Mela

A seed festival aims to help tribal Kondh farmers in Odisha return to their agricultural traditions

- Bihan Mela, literally the **seed festival**, participated by farmers from as many as 40 villages in members of the **Kondh tribe** in **Odisha**'s Nayagarh district.
- Preparations begin as soon as farmers have harvested kharif crops,
- Women carefully collect seeds of the indigenous varieties and store them in earthen pots.
- Then, on a designated day in December, they decorate the pots with red and white motifs, place them in a bamboo basket and carry it on head to the village where the fair is being organised.
- The fair mimics a traditional market where farmers used to exchange seeds.
- The festival was introduced to help farmers return to their traditional ways of farming like mixed-cropping.

2.8 Lambani Art

Lambani artisans set Guinness World record for making highest number of embroidery patches at the G20 Culture Working Group meeting held at Bhubaneswar.

- Lambani embroidery is a vibrant and intricate form of textile embellishment characterized by colourful threads, mirror work, and a rich array of stitch patterns.

- It is a traditional art form of **Hampi, Karnataka** predominantly upheld by the skilled women of the Lambani community.
- The stitches followed in the lambani art composes geometric patterns such as squares, circles, triangles, rectangles, diagonal and parallel lines.
- Lambani Tribes** – Lambanis or Lambadis or Banjaras were nomadic tribes.
- The **Sandur Lambani embroidery** got its **Geographic Indication (GI) tag** in 2010.



2.9 Tamil Lambadi Embroidery

Porgai Artisan Association Society of Tamil Nadu has been manufacturing traditional embroidered clothes to ensure awareness and continuity about the art form.

- Lambadi Tribe** – A **nomadic tribe** where men do agricultural trade and pastoralism and women largely does embroidery work.
- They moved to the southern part of India **from Gujarat and Rajasthan** over a period of time. The migration of Lambadi's gained pace around the 17th century, during the reign of Aurangzeb.
- Criminal Act of 1871** halted free movement and thus many Lambadi's settled in Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Telangana, and Tamil Nadu.
- Petia** – It is a traditional **5-piece embroidery dress** of Lambadi people which is now made from **Mushru silk of Kutch**.
- Embroidery designs** – They are all **geometrical patterns** with squares, rectangles, and circles and are done **on cotton and silk fabrics**, using colourful cotton threads.
- Uniqueness** – These are **different from the Banjaras of Andhra Pradesh or the Lambadis of Karnataka**.



Lambadi or Banjara embroidery from Karnataka was listed under UNESCO's list of exclusive and iconic heritage textile crafts of India.

2.10 Sammakka Sarakka Jathara

The Union cabinet has recently approved the establishment of Sarakka Central Tribal University in Mulugu district of Telangana.

- Sammakka-Sarakka**, the mother-daughter duo battled against the local rulers in 13th century against the imposition of taxes on the **Koya people**.
- In the battle, Sarakka died, while Sammakka disappeared and believed to have metamorphosed into a vermillion casket.
- Sammakka Sarakka Jathara** - It is a **biennial festival** conducted in Mulugu district of **Telangana**.
- It was declared as a **State festival** in 1996 and is called as the **Kumbh Mela of the tribals**.
- Medaram is a remote place in the **Eturnagaram Wildlife Sanctuary**, a part of Dandakaranya, the largest surviving forest belt in the Mulugu, Telangana.

The UNESCO World Heritage Site of **Ramappa Temple** is located near Mulugu in Telangana.

2.11 Kui Language

The state cabinet of Odisha has approved a proposal to recommend the inclusion of the Kui language in the 8th schedule of the Constitution of India.

- Kui is also known as Kandh, Khondi, Khond, Khondo, Kanda, Kodu, Kodulu, Kuinga, Kuy.
- It is a **South-Eastern Dravidian language** spoken by the Khond tribes of Odissa.
- It is mostly spoken in Odisha, and written in the **Odia script**.

- It is closely related to the Gondi and Kuvi languages.
- According to UNESCO, the Kui language status is **potentially vulnerable**.
- Inclusion in the 8th schedule will help in the preservation, promotion of kui language and culture.

8th Schedule

- The 8th Schedule of the Indian Constitution consists of **22 languages**.
- Of these languages, 14 were initially included in the Constitution.
- Sindhi language was added in 1967 while Konkani, Manipuri and Nepali were included in 1992.
- Subsequently Bodo, Dogri, Maithili and Santhali were added in 2004.
- **English** and **Rajasthani** are not among the 22 languages in the 8th Schedule.

2.12 Kurmi Community

Kurmis, who are recorded as Other Backward Class (OBC) demands Scheduled Tribe (ST) status and want their Kurmal language to be included in the 8th Schedule of the Constitution.

- **Kurmis** – Agricultural community spread throughout **India and Nepal**.
- **Language** – Kurmali, Hindi, Chattisgarhi, Marathi, Konkani, Oriya, Telegu and other south Indian languages.
 - Kurmali language comes under **Indo-Aryan language** family and belongs to Bihari language family by sharing similarities with Maithili and Magahi. It has its own script called "**Kurmi Kudali**", a modified version of Devanagari script.
- **Beliefs** – Mostly Hindus but few Buddhists and Jains are present.
- **Sari and sarana** are their religious practice involving of worshipping nature without idols in a sacred place called guram or than.

Caste status of Kurmis

- Kurmis were not included as ST's in 1931 census.
- They were again excluded from the ST list in 1950.
- In 2004, Jharkhand government recommended ST status.
- However, Tribal Research Institute (TRI) held that they are a sub-caste of Kunbis and not tribals.
- Based on TRI report, the Centre rejected their demand.

Process of inclusion under ST list

The respective **State or Union Territory** shall send the initial proposal for ST status.

It is forwarded to Union Tribal Affairs Ministry and subsequently sent to the **Office of the Registrar General of India (ORGI)**.

If the ORGI approves the inclusion, the proposal is then sent to the **National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST)**.

If the NCST concur, the proposal is forwarded to the **Cabinet** for amendment to the **Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1950**.

3. ART FORMS

3.1 Yakshagana

The Yakshagana team perform charity shows in Germany to help artistes who are economically not sound and to support the education of poor students through scholarships.

- **Origin** - Yakshagana also known as **Bayalatam** is a traditional dance-drama performance.
- It is a rare combination of dance, music, song, scholarly dialogues and colourful costumes.
- **Associated State** - Performed in **Karnataka** and Kasaragod, **Kerala**.
- Traditionally, Yakshagana was performed in the open air by all-male casts. Since the mid-20th century many performances have been held on indoor stages, and women began to train in the tradition.
- **The Act** - Each performance typically focuses on a small sub-story (**known as 'Prasanga'**) from ancient Hindu epics of **Ramayana** or **Mahabharata**.
- **Musical instruments**- Chande (drums), harmonium, maddale, taala (mini metal clappers), flute, etc.
- **The Troupes** (known as Melas) - Saligrama mela, Dharmasthala Mela, Mandarthi Mela, Perduru Mela, etc.
- **The Costumes** – Include large headgear, brightly colored faces, elaborate costumes all over the body, and musical beads on the legs (Gejje).
- Yakshagana is similar to the most notable **Kathakali of Kerala** and **Terukkuttu of Tamil Nadu**.



3.2 Namda Art

The Namda craft of Kashmir is being successfully revived under a Skill India's Pilot Project.

- Namda is a rug (carpet) made of sheep wool in **Jammu and Kashmir**.
- It will be produced through **felting technique**.
- Felting refers to producing a textile or fabric by combining and compressing the loose fibers, wool or hair instead of normal weaving process.
- After a layer is spread, it is sprinkled homogeneously with water and pressed with a tool known as '**pinjra**' (woven willow wicker).

Namda Project - An initiative of Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship under Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana to train candidates



3.3 Pahari painting

- Pahari denotes '**hilly or mountainous**' in origin.
- It is a style of **miniature painting** that developed in the independent states of the **Himalayan foothills** in India.
- The roots of the miniature painting tradition go back to the **Buddhist Pala dynasty**, which ruled Bengal and Bihar from the 8th century until the end of the 11th century.
- Pahari paintings demonstrate challenges in their territorial classification.
- Pahari paintings featured **both religious and secular subjects**.
- Detailed paintings based on religious epics such as Mahabharat and Ramayana, Puranas, and Gita were frequently painted in the style.



- **Basohli painting** is a school of Pahari miniature painting that flourished in the Indian hill states during the late 17th and the 18th centuries, known for its bold vitality of colour and line.

3.4 Pichwai Painting

Chennai hosts an art exhibition, showcasing Pichwai, some dating back 350 years.

- **Origin** - It is a 400-year-old art whose roots are from Nathdwara town in Rajasthan.
- **Theme** – Lord Krishna's life, including his childhood, youth, and adulthood.
- **Paintings** – It is typically done on cloth, usually khadi but now being produced on various mediums such as paper, canvas, and silk.
- **Schools of Pichwai** – Nathdwara, Kishangarh and Bundi in Rajasthan and Deccan school
- **Materials used** – Natural colours made from minerals and plant extracts, Vegetable dyes and stone pigments are used for gold and silver tones.
- **Usage** – They are typically hung behind the idol of Shrinathji, a local form of Krishna and the centre of Pushtimarg worship.



Pushtimarg (The Path of Grace) is a Hindu religious sect founded by **Shri Vallabhacharya** for the love of **Lord Shri Krishna**

3.5 Vajra Mushti Kalaga

Vajra Mushti Kalaga, a martial art form of the Wadiyars was in declining trend.

- The “vajra mushti kalaga” is a **form of wrestling** or a traditional Indian martial art that incorporates various hand-to-hand combat techniques, such as grappling, wrestling, and striking.
- Vajra Mushti matches are still held during the annual **Mysore Dasara festival** at Mysore Palace.
- The tradition dates back to the **Wadiyar dynasty** in 1610.
- It entails two jettys taking a swipe at each other's head with a small metal weapon called a **knuckleduster**.
- Modern combatants use knuckle-dusters with blunt studs called **Indra-musti**.
- Whosoever draws the blood from the opponent's head first is declared the winner.
- Medieval travellers from Portuguese noticed this form of wrestling during the Navaratri celebrations in **Vijayanagar Empire** and have left detailed accounts of it.



3.6 Chavittu Natakam

Recently at a stampede in Cochin University of Science and Technology, 4 students were killed including an artist who perform Chavittu Natakam.

- It is a colourful, vigorous theatre form that flourished in Kodungalloor, Kerala with the spread of Christianity.
- **Portuguese** are considered to have introduced this art form in Kerala.
- The influence of the western visual art opera and art forms like Kathakali and Kalaripayattu can be recognized in it.
- **'Stamping Drama'** is the most attractive feature where the artists produce resonating sounds by stamping the floor while dancing.
- This folk-drama dance takes place on a stage that is referred to as 'thattu' which is laid with planks of wood.



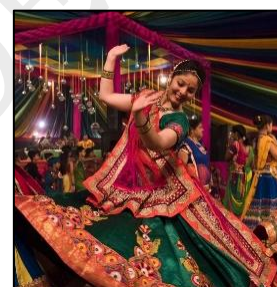
- The exquisite costumes of the artistes portray the characters on stage. Generally, the costumes resemble ancient Greek-Roman soldiers and European kings.
- Instruments like Chenda, Padathamber, Maddalam and Ilathalam, provides background music. These days Tabala, Fiddle, Flute and Bulbul are also played.
- The Chavittunatakam performance opens with an invocation and the opening sequence is in the form of a **Virutham**, a humming which is followed by a scene of a durbar and the play begins.

3.7 Garba Dance

Recently, India's Garba dance was included in the Intangible Cultural Heritage list by the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of UNESCO.

Garba is the 15th cultural item from India to make it to the UNESCO list.

- It is a ritualistic and devotional dance performed in **Gujarat**.
- It is celebrated for **9 days during Navaratri** and is dedicated to the worship of the **feminine energy or Shakti**.
- It is included based on provisions of **2003 Convention for Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH)**.
- ICH includes oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe or the knowledge and skills to produce traditional crafts.
- **Significance of inclusion** – Helps ensure the viability of Garba and inspires the community to continue with the skills and oral traditions associated with it.



TANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE SITES IN INDIA

Cultural Sites

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Agra Fort (1983) | 19. Qutb Minar and its Monuments, Delhi (1993) |
| 2. Ajanta Caves (1983) | 20. Rani-ki-Vav (the Queen's Stepwell) at Patan, Gujarat (2014) |
| 3. Buddhist Monuments at Sanchi (1989) | 21. Red Fort Complex (2007) |
| 4. Champaner-Pavagadh Archaeological Park (2004) | 22. Rock Shelters of Bhimbetka (2003) |
| 5. Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus (formerly Victoria Terminus) (2004) | 23. Sun Temple, Konârak (1984) |
| 6. Churches and Convents of Goa (1986) | 24. Taj Mahal (1983) |
| 7. Elephanta Caves (1987) | 25. The Jantar Mantar, Jaipur (2010) |
| 8. Ellora Caves (1983) | 26. Archaeological Site of Nalanda Mahavihara (Nalanda University) at Nalanda, Bihar (2016) |
| 9. Fatehpur Sikri (1986) | 27. The Architectural Work of Le Corbusier (2016) |
| 10. Great Living Chola Temples (1987) | 28. Historic City of Ahmadabad (2017) |
| 11. Group of Monuments at Hampi (1986) | 29. Victorian Gothic and Art Deco Ensembles of Mumbai (2018) |
| 12. Group of Monuments at Mahabalipuram (1984) | 30. Jaipur city, Rajasthan (2019) |
| 13. Group of Monuments at Pattadakal (1987) | 31. Kakatiya Rudreshwara (Ramappa) Temple, Telangana |
| 14. Hill Forts of Rajasthan (2013) | 32. Dholavira: A Harappan City (2021) |
| 15. Humayun's Tomb, Delhi (1993) | 33. Santiniketan (2023) |
| 16. Khajuraho Group of Monuments (1986) | 34. Sacred Ensembles of Hoysalas (2023) |
| 17. Mahabodhi Temple Complex at Bodh Gaya (2002) | |
| 18. Mountain Railways of India (1999) | |

Natural	Mixed
35. Great Himalayan National Park (2014) 36. Kaziranga National Park (1985) 37. Keoladeo National Park (1985) 38. Manas Wildlife Sanctuary (1985) 39. Nanda Devi & Valley of Flowers National Parks (1988) 40. Sundarbans National Park (1987) 41. Western Ghats (2012)	42. Khangchendzonga National Park (2016)
INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE LIST	
1. Kutiyattam, Sanskrit theatre (2008) 2. Ramlila, the traditional performance of the Ramayana (2008) 3. Tradition of Vedic chanting (2008) 4. Ramman, religious festival and ritual theatre of the Garhwal Himalayas (2009) 5. Novruz, Nowrouz, Nooruz, Navruz, Nauroz, Nevru (2009) 6. Chhau dance (2010) 7. Kalbelia folk songs and dances of Rajasthan (2010) 8. Mudi yettu, ritual theatre and dance drama of Kerala (2010)	9. Buddhist chanting of Ladakh: recitation of sacred Buddhist texts in the trans-Himalayan Ladakh region, Jammu and Kashmir, (2012) 10. Sankirtana, ritual singing, drumming and dancing of Manipur (2013) 11. Thatheras of Jandiala Guru, Punjab (2014) 12. Yoga (2017) 13. Kumbh Mela (2017) 14. Durga Puja in Kolkata (2021) 15. Garba of Gujarat (2023)

3.8 Ramlila

- Ramlila, means Rama's play, is a **performance of Ramayana epic** in a series of scenes that include song, narration, recital and dialogue.
- It is performed across northern India during the festival of **Dussehra**.
- This staging of the Ramayana is based on the **Ramacharitmanas**, composed by **Tulsidas** in the 16th century in a form of Hindi in order to make the Sanskrit epic available to all.
- Ramlila recalls the battle between Rama and Ravana and lasts 10 to 12 days or even upto a month.
- Ramlila is featured in the list of the **Intangible Cultural Heritage of UNESCO**.



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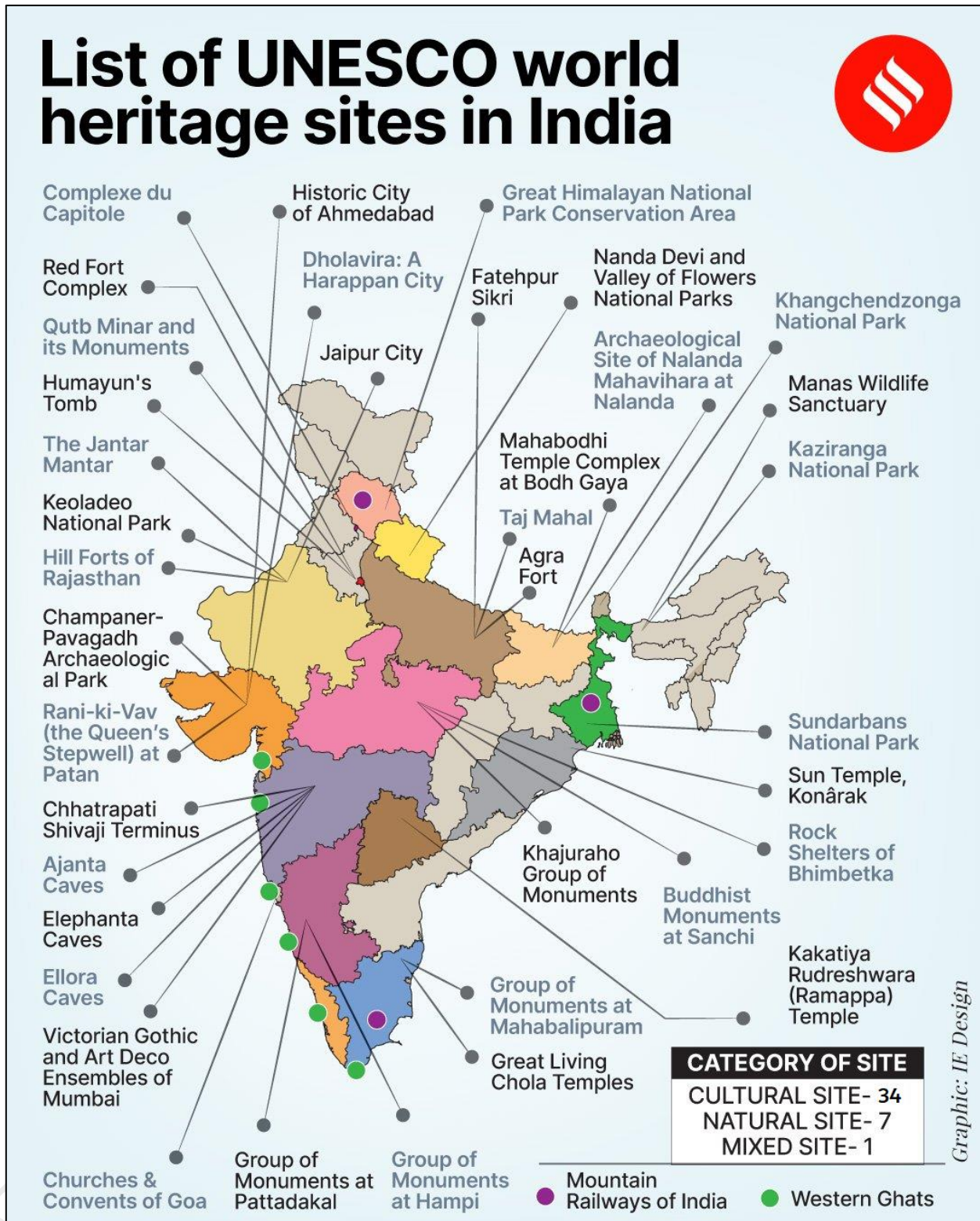
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3.9 Zardosi Embroidery

Zardosi artisans made two lakh car hangers designed like a crown for King Charles III's coronation.

- Zardozi comes from two Persian words - zar or zarin meaning '**gold**', and dozi meaning '**sewing**'.
- It is a type of heavy **metal embroidery** on a silk, satin, or velvet fabric base using **gold and silver threads** and can incorporate pearls, beads, and precious stones.

- Other names
 - **Zardozi** - Bhopal, Delhi, Hyderanad and Uttar Pra desh
 - **Kamdani or badla** – Lucknow
 - **Danka and gotta-patti** – Rajasthan
 - **Tilla** - Jammu & Kashmir and parts of western India.
- Historically, it was used to embellish the attire of the royals.
- It is found in Iran, Azerbaijan, Iraq, Kuwait, Syria, Turkey, Central Asia, India, Pakistan and Bangladesh.
- **Main Centers in India** - Lucknow, Farrukhabad, Chennai, Bhopal, etc.
- Zardosi embroidery has been in existence in India from the time of the **Rig Veda** but attained its zenith in the 17th century, under the patronage of **Mughal Emperor Akbar**.
- Under the rule of Aurangzeb, the royal patronage stopped and this led to the decline of the craft.
- In 2013, the Geographical Indication Registry accorded GI registration to the **Lucknow zardozi**.

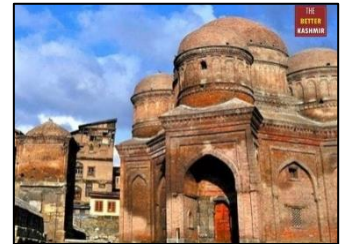


4. ARCHITECTURE

4.1 Dogra architecture

Srinagar Smart City Limited and the Kashmir chapter of INTACH have joined hands to conserve vernacular elements of Kashmiri architecture recently.

- It is a distinct culture that formed in **Jammu**, where cultures mixed together.
- Dogra Dynasty of Hindu Rajputs ruled J&K from 1846 to 1947.
- Some examples of Dogra architecture include:
 - **Mubark mandi** – Has jharokha style of balcony.
 - **Rani Charak Mahal** - A mahal with phenomenal architecture and interiors.
 - **Maharaj Gunj** - A market area with colonial and vernacular architecture established by **Maharaja Ranbir Singh** along the bank of **River Jhelum** with taq or dhajji dewari style



4.2 Hoysala Temples in World Heritage List

Hoysala-era temples were added to UNESCO's World Heritage List thus becoming the 42nd site from India.

- **World Heritage Site (WHS)** – These are the sites are designated as having “outstanding universal value” under the **Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage**.
- It was adopted by **UNESCO** in 1972 and formally took effect in 1975.
- The list of WHS is maintained by the **International World Heritage Programme**, administered by the **UNESCO World Heritage Committee**.
- The 3 types of sites are Cultural, Natural, and Mixed.

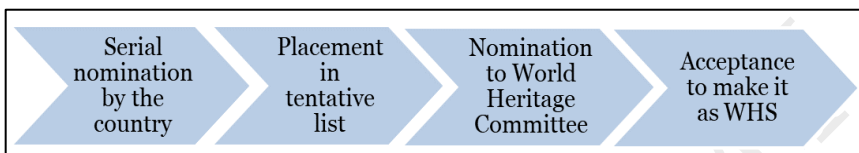
Procedure for including a site in WHS list


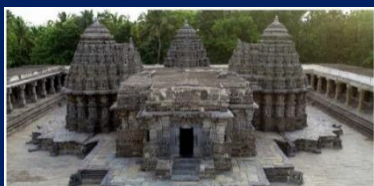

- **Selection** - To be included on the World Heritage List, sites must be of outstanding universal value and meet **at least one out of 10 selection criteria** of UNESCO.

World Heritage List of India

- **First WHS from India** - Tajmahal, Agra Fort, Ajanta and Ellora caves all listed in 1983.
- **Latest addition** - Sacred Ensembles of Hoysala Temples, **Santiniketan** in 2023.
- Dholavira in Gujarat is the only site of Indus valley civilisation from India.
- India has 6th highest number of WHS (Italy is 1st with 58).

- **Only countries that have signed the World Heritage Convention** can submit nomination proposals for properties on their territory to be considered for inclusion in UNESCO's World Heritage List.
- **Tentative List** – The first step a country must take is to make an 'inventory' of its important natural and cultural heritage sites located within its boundaries, known as the Tentative List.
- **Evaluation**- A nominated property is independently evaluated by
 - The International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS)
 - The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
 - The International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM)
- **Deciding authority** - World Heritage Committee



The Sacred Ensembles of Hoysalas	
The Chennakeshava temple 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location – Belur in Hassan District • Major shrine of– Lord Vishnu • Time period – Consecrated around 1117 AD • Built by – Hoysala king Vishnuvardhana • Nickname - Vijaya Narayana temple as it was built by the king to mark his victories against the Cholas
The Kesava Temple 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location –Somanathapura village (Mysore district) • Time period – 1268 C.E • Built by – Somanatha, a General of Hoysala King Narasimha III • Major Shrine - Vaishnava shrine
The Hoysaleswara temple 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location – on the banks of Dwarasamudra tank, Halebidu (Hassan district) • Time period – 12th Century C.E. • Major Shrine – Lord Shiva • It is believed to be the largest Shiva temple built by the Hoysalas. • Halebidu was sacked by Malik Kafur, a general of the then Delhi Sultan Alauddin Khalji in the early 1300s.

Uniqueness of Hoysala architecture

- **Unique confluence of styles** – These temples are amalgamation of 3 distinctive temple styles of India.
 - **Dravidian** style represented in Pallava and Chola temples
 - **Vesara** style, the variant of the Dravida style that emerged in the Chalukya and Rashtrakuta temples
 - **Nagara** style of North India
- **Construction material** – The use of **soapstone**, a malleable stone has made it

Hoysalas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Origin – Provincial governors under Western Chalukyas established themselves as rulers, as Western Chalukyas and Cholas, crumbled. • Geography – Karnataka • Time period – 10th century to 14th century • Capital – It was Belur earlier and moved to Halebidu or Dwarasamudra later. • Hoysala Emblem - Figure representing Sala attacking the tiger

easy to carve and contributed to abundant intricate sculptures on the temple walls.

- **Elevated platforms** – The temples are generally built on **stellate (star-shaped) platforms**.
 - Kesava temple in Somanathapura is built in the shape of a 16-point star.
- **Sculptures** – The themes include animals, scenes of daily life, depictions from the epics and the Puranas.
- **Differentiated Pillars** – The total number of pillars in Chennakesava temple at Belur is 46.
- All of them, except the four in the central bay are of different designs.
- **Signed temples** - The temples are given with information of the sculptors and masons who were involved in its construction.
- **Religious significance** – These Vaishnava and Shaivya shrines were built at the time Jainism was prominent in the region. It marks a turn towards Hinduism.
- **Social significance** – The jewellery, clothes, etc. of the sculptures give an idea of the society of the times.
- One of the sculptures, ***Darpana Sundari*** (lady with the mirror), is modelled on Shantala Devi, the queen of Vishnuvardhana who had the built the Chennakesava temple.
- **Other details**– No known monuments other than temples like palaces or forts, survive from this period.
- The non-temple buildings were all built in either mud or brick or wood and not stone.
- So, except for some ruins in Hampi, nothing has survived in the form of architecture of Hoysalas.

Santiniketan on UNESCO's World Heritage List

- | Location – West Bengal | Visva-Bharati University |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment - Established in <u>1901</u>, by poet and philosopher <u>Rabindranath Tagore</u>, lovingly known as <u>Gurudev</u>. • It was originally an ashram built by <u>Debendranath Tagore</u>, where anyone, irrespective of caste and creed, could spend time meditating the one Supreme God. • Popularly known as - University Town | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sole Central University of West Bengal. • Founded by - Rabindranath Tagore • Declared as a Central University & an <u>Institution of National Importance</u> by an Act of Parliament. • Chancellor - Prime Minister |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It served as a residential school and centre for art based on ancient Indian traditions and a vision of the unity of humanity transcending religious and cultural boundaries. • In 1921, a 'world university' was established at Santiniketan to recognise the unity of humanity or <u>Visva Bharati</u>. | |

Santiniketan becomes the 41st UNESCO World Heritage Site in India and the 3rd in West Bengal, after Sundarbans National Park and Darjeeling Mountain Railways. In 2022, West Bengal's Durga Puja was placed on the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity list by UNESCO.

4.3 Srimukhalingam Temple

ASI assures to send note to UNESCO over inclusion of Srimukhalingam temple in Andhra Pradesh in world heritage structures' list.

- Shiva lingam appear as **Mukha (Face) Avatar**.
- **Location** - On the banks of **River Vamsadhara**, which was the capital of Kalinga Ganga Kings for over 600 years.
- **Construction** - 8th century by **Kamarnava-II** when the region was under the control of the **East Ganga Dynasty**.
- The temple is known as **Dakshina Kaasi** (Varanasi of South India).
- **Trinity** – It houses 3 ancient temples at one location - Madhukeswara, Someswara and Bheemeswara Temples.

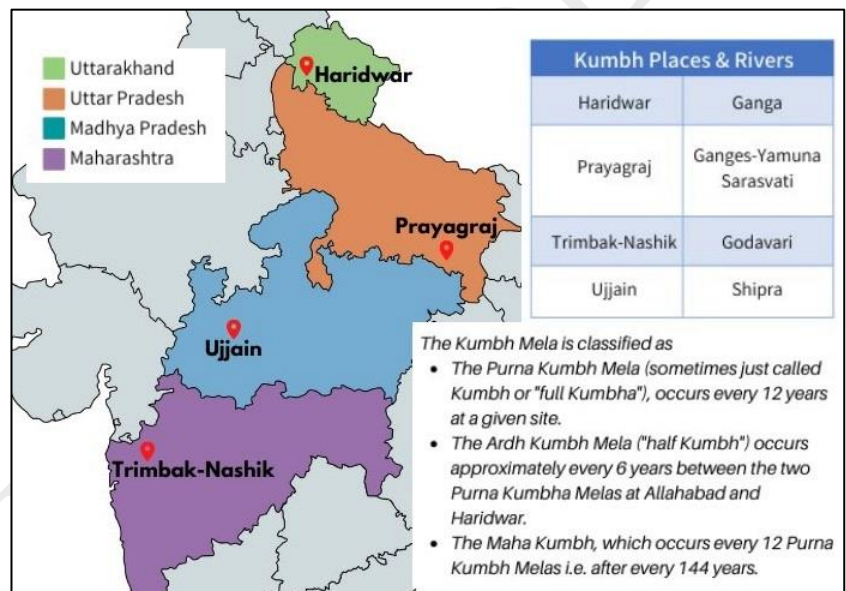


- **Architecture** - Similar to [Lingaraja temple](#) located in Bhubaneswar of Odisha.
- There has been a long-standing request to add the temple to the UNESCO Heritage List.

4.4 Trimbakeshwar Temple

Shri Trimbakeshwar temple in Maharastra witnessed communal tensions for the past 6 months.

- **Location** - Nashik City, **Maharastra** near the mountain named Brahamagiri from which the river Godavari flows.
- There are 3 hills surrounding this temple – Brahmagiri, Nilagiri and Kalagiri.
- **History** - It was constructed by **3rd Peshwa Balaji Bajirao** also known as **Nana Saheb**, in the mid-18th century (1740-1760).
- **Special features** - The entire temple is built with **black stone**.
- Trimbakeshwar Jyotirlinga is only **one of the 12 jyotirlingas** in India.
- **Lord Shiva, Lord Vishnu and Lord Brahma** exist within the hollow space within the Shivalinga and hence the name Trimbakeshwara (3 Lords).
- They are covered by a jewelled crown that is believed to date to the era of the Pandavas.
- Jyotirlinga means **column or pillar of light**.
- The temple has a well called **Amritavarshini**, believed to be the source of the Godavari.
- **Trimbakeshwar Simhastha** - The famous pilgrimage festival, **Kumbh Mela**, occurs here once every 12 years.



4.5 Chausath Yogini Temple

The old parliament building is said to be inspired from the Chausath Yogini temple in Mitaoli, Madhya Pradesh.

The Old Parliament building

- **Designed by** - British architects **Edwin Lutyens and Herbert Baker**.
- The building first housed the **Imperial Legislative Council** (From January 18, 1927 to August 15, 1947).
- After Independence, it served as the Constituent Assembly of India, and once the Constitution was adopted, it became the Parliament of India, housing the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha.
- The building is believed to be inspired from the Chausath yogini temple.

*The old parliament building is renamed to **Samvidhan Sadan** and the new parliament building is named as the **Sansad Bhavan**.*

Chausath Yogini Temple

- It is located in **Madhya Pradesh** (also known as **Ekattarso Mahadeva Temple**)
- **Built by** – Kachchhapaghata king Devapala, belonged to the Pala dynasty.
- The temple was the venue of providing education in astrology and mathematics based on the transit of the Sun.
- The Mitaoli temple has 64 chambers dedicated to the 64 yoginis.



4.6 Naganathaswamy Temple

The Tamil Nadu Department of Archaeology is set to take up restoration of the 1,000-year-old Chola-era Temple at Manambadi in Thanjavur district.

- **Also known as** - Kailasamudaiyar Temple.
- **Built by** - Rajendra Chola I (1012-1044CE).
- **Dedicated to** - Lord Shiva
- The temple has been declared as a **protected monument** in 2014 under the Tamil Nadu Ancient and Historical Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1966.
- **Features** - It has exquisite stone sculptures, distinctive makara thoranas (ceremonial arches) and important inscriptions.
- It consists of an ekatala vimana and a mukha mandapa.
- **Inscription of Rajendra Chola I** - It refers to a grant of land free of taxes by the nagarattar of Ilaichikkudi for raising a flower garden named after the king for the use of the temple.
- **Inscriptions of Kulotthunga I** - It is called as Tamizh Koothu and refers to a grant of land called as **"Koothu kaani"**.

Dravidian vimanas can be classified as one-story (called ekatala), two-story (dvi-tala), three-story (tri-tala), and so on.

Koothu or Therukoothu (theatre of the street) refers to the folk theatre art form in Tamil Nadu.

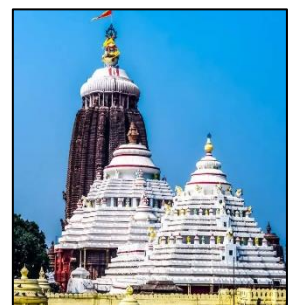
4.7 Puri Jagannath Temple

Demands to open the Ratna Bhandar gained strength after the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) gave a requisition for repair/conservation of the chamber.

- The Ratna Bhandar is the treasury of the Puri Jagannath Temple in Odisha, India.
- The precious ornaments of sibling deities **Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra and Goddess Subhadra** given by devotees and erstwhile kings over centuries, are stored in this 12th century shrine.
- The outer chamber is opened regularly but the inner chamber has not opened in the past 38 years.

Puri Jagannath Temple

- Jagannath Temple in Puri, Odisha, is a revered temple where Lord Krishna is worshipped as Lord Jagannath.
- Lord Jagannath is present in this temple along with brother Lord Balabhadra and sister Goddess Subhadra.
- It's a circular temple that was built during the Kachchhapaghata Dynasty. It's the only circular temple in India.
- It's known for its annual **Ratha Jatra**, or chariot festival. The temple is one of the 4 great **'Char Dham'** pilgrimage sites.
- The temple's design is believed to have inspired the Indian Parliament building.
- The temple is called the **"White Pagoda".**



4.8 Yogmaya Temple

- It is an ancient Hindu temple built by a noble named Lala Sidhu Mal in the court of Mughal Emperor Akbar II.
- The temple is located in Mehrauli, Delhi.
- The Yogmaya temple is dedicated to Goddess Yogmaya, sister of Lord Krishna.
- The Jogmaya Temple is one of the 5 surviving temples of the Mahabharata period and is the only temple belonging to the pre-sultanate period, which is still in use.
- **Phoohwalon ki Sair** is a festival, celebrated for 7 days jointly by the Hindu and the Muslim community.



4.9 Sharda Peeth

- It is located in the **Neelam Valley of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir** along the Line of Control (LoC).
- It's situated on the banks of the **Kishanganga River**.
- It is regarded as one of the **18 Maha Shakti Peethas** and a major centre of learning.

4.10 Butler Palace

- It is a mix of **Rajasthani and Indo-Mughal styles** built on the banks of the **Gomti River** in Lucknow, **Uttar Pradesh** in 1915.
- After the Indo-Pak war in 1965, Butler Palace was declared **enemy property** by the Government of India.
- Enemy property is property left behind in India by people who took Pakistani or Chinese citizenship.



4.11 Sinhagad fort

- The **Watch and Earn initiative** is a project to protect the **Sinhagad fort**, an ancient hill fortress located at Pune in **Maharashtra**.
- The fort is previously known as **Kondhna** and it is known for the **Battle of Sinhagad**, held in 1670 between Tanaji Malusare, a Maratha commander and Udaybhan Rathore, a fort keeper under Jai Singh I.



4.12 Chaturmukha Brahmeswara Temple

- It is dedicated to Lord Brahma and is located in Chebrolu, Guntur district of **Andhra Pradesh**.
- The temple sits in the middle of a pond.
- Chaturmukha Brahmeswara along with temples such as Bhimeswara, Adikesava and Nageswara in the town forms **Trinity in Hinduism**.
- Trinity in Hinduism includes Lord Brahma along with Lord Vishnu and Lord Siva.



4.13 Udayarpalayam Palace

- **Location** - Udayarpalayam in Ariyalur district, **Tamil Nadu**
- Built in **18th century** by the then Zamindars.
- **Architecture** - **South Indian secular architecture**.
- The foundation is made of **granite boulders and pillars**.
- It resembles **Thirumalai Nayakkar Mahal of Madurai**.
- The palace includes, **Lakshmi Vilasam** (A court hall), **Krishna Vilasam** (Hall for dance and music concerts), and a **Marriage hall**.
- **Stucco images** - The skeleton of every image (dancers and others) was made of wood, covered with cloth over which plastering was done and final touches were given with lime and sand paste.



Rulers of Udayarpalayam

- Udayarpalayam rulers lived as **poligars**.
- **Palaiyakkarars, or Poligar**, in Andhra and Tamil Nadu refers to the holder of a small kingdom (palayam) as a feudatory to a greater sovereign.

- **Genealogy** – The names of the rulers start with the title Kachi, indicating that they had migrated from Kancheepuram.
- **1st ruler** - Kachi Yuvarangappa Kalakka Tola Udayar.
- **Currency** – Udayarpalayam puthupanam [new money].
- **Political scenario** – They submitted to the Mughals when they took Gingee and paid **Peshkash** (tribute).
- During Anglo-French struggle, they supported British.

4.14 Peralassery Subrahmanya Temple Pond

- Located in **Kannur, Kerala**, it has found place in the list of **75 water heritage sites** of India.
- It is locally known as Aynivyal pond. It is situated on the banks of the Anjarakandy River.
- There is no provision under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958 to declare a site as a “Water Heritage Site” under Archaeological Survey of India (ASI).
- However, the **Ministry of Jal Shakti** had constituted a committee to identify 75 Water Heritage Structure (WHS) in reference to 75 years of India's Independence.



5. LITERATURE

5.1 Upanishads and Scriptures

PM Modi presented the U.S. President; a first edition prints of the book *The Ten Principal Upanishads* from 1937.

Hindu scriptures

- There are broadly 2 categories of Hindu sacred texts – Shruti and Smriti.
- **Shruti (the revealed)** – Sruti is direct experience. Great Rishis heard the eternal truths of religion and left a record of them for the benefit of posterity.
- It constitutes the **Vedas** (Rig, Yajur, Sama and Atharva) and accompanying texts.
- The Vedas are primary authority and foundational scriptures of the Hindus.
- **Smriti (the remembered)** – Smriti is a recollection of that experience so it is secondary authority.
- If there is anything in a Smriti which contradicts the Sruti, the Smriti is to be rejected.
- It includes **Brahmanas** (ritual texts), **Aranyakas** (forest or wilderness texts), and **Upanishads** (philosophical texts).
- These include the great epics of Ramayana and Mahabharata, Dharmashastras, Puranas and all other post-Vedic scriptures.

Upanishads

- The Upanishads, also known as the **Vedanta** (the end of Veda) forms the very foundation of Hinduism.
- It is a religious and Philosophical treatise that speculate about the ontological connection between humanity and the cosmos.
- Dated to roughly 800-500 BC, the Upanishads discuss concepts such as transmigration, nature and God.
- They represent the “Knowledge of Brahman” (Brahma-vidya) and are mostly related to Vedas.

10 Principal Upanishads (Dashupanishads)

Esha	Mandukya
Kena	Taittiriya
Katha	Aitareya
Prashna	Chandogya
Mundaka	Brihadaranyaka

- **The oldest Upanishads** - Brihadaranyaka and Chandogya Upanishads – 1st millennium BC.
- **The latest Upanishad** - Muktika Upanishad - by Dara Shikoh – 1656.
- The Upanishads were given particular importance by 8th century Hindu scholar **Adi Shankara**, whose interpretations synthesised the **Advaita Vedanta** tradition.

5.2 Manuscripts

India has a large collection of ancient manuscripts, a part of the country's cultural heritage, but over the years many have been lost or lie in museums abroad.

- A manuscript is a **handwritten composition** on paper, bark, cloth, metal, palm leaf or any other material dating back at least 75 years that has significant scientific, historical or aesthetic value.
- **Lithographs and printed volumes are not manuscripts.**
- Manuscripts are distinct from historical records such as epigraphs on rocks, firmans, revenue records which provide direct information on events or processes in history.
- **National Mission for Manuscripts (NMM)** – It is an autonomous body under the **Culture Ministry**, which is mandated with preserving the vast manuscript wealth of India.
- **The Bakhshali manuscript** – It is an ancient Indian mathematical text written on birch bark, is considered to be the earliest recorded example of the use of zero.

75% of the existing manuscripts are in Sanskrit, 25% are in regional languages.

6. HERITAGE

6.1 UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN)

UNESCO has published the new list of 55 creative cities on World Cities Day (Oct 31st), in which 2 Indian cities Kozhikode and Gwalior were included.

- Created in 2004 to promote cooperation among cities that have identified creativity as a strategic factor for sustainable urban development
- UN Sustainable Development Goal 11 (SDG 11) - Sustainable Cities and Communities.
- **Kozhikode** is the 1st Indian city to get City of Literature tag.

UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN)	
Launch Year	2004
Eligibility	UNESCO's members and associate members
Updating Time	Once every 2 years
Total Cities	350 in more than 100 countries (in 2023)

Creative Fields	Indian Cities in UCCN
Crafts & Folk Arts	Jaipur (2015), Srinagar (2021)
Design	-
Film	Mumbai (2019)
Gastronomy	Hyderabad (2019)
Literature	Kozhikode (2023)
Media Arts	-
Music	Chennai (2017), Varanasi (2015), Gwalior (2023)

6.2 All about Antiquities

India is close to signing an agreement with the United States under which the process for the return of stolen antiquities will be hugely simplified.

- **Antiquities and Art Treasures Act, 1972**- It defines "antiquity" as
 - Any coin, sculpture, painting, epigraph or other work of art or craftsmanship

- Any article, object or thing
 - detached from a building or cave
 - illustrative of science, art, crafts, literature, religion, customs, morals or politics in bygone ages

Legal framework in India for antiquities

- **Ancient Monuments Preservation Act, 1904**- Enacted under Lord Curzon to protect the ancient monuments and objects of archaeological, historical, or artistic interest.
- **Antiquities (Export Control) Act, 1947**- 1st law that was enacted to regulate the export of antiquities from India.
- **Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958**- Enacted to preserve ancient and historical monuments and archaeological sites and remains of national importance.
- **Antiquities and Art Treasures Act, 1972 (AATA)** - Empowers the Central Government to compulsorily acquire any antiquity or art treasure and is based on UNESCO 1970 convention.
- Every person who owns, controls or is in possession of any antiquity shall register such antiquity before the registering officer and obtain a certificate in token of such registration.

Antiquity criteria	Duration
Any article, object or thing of historical interest	Not less than 100 years
Manuscript, record or other document which is of scientific, historical, literary or aesthetic value	Not less than 75 years

International conventions on antiquities

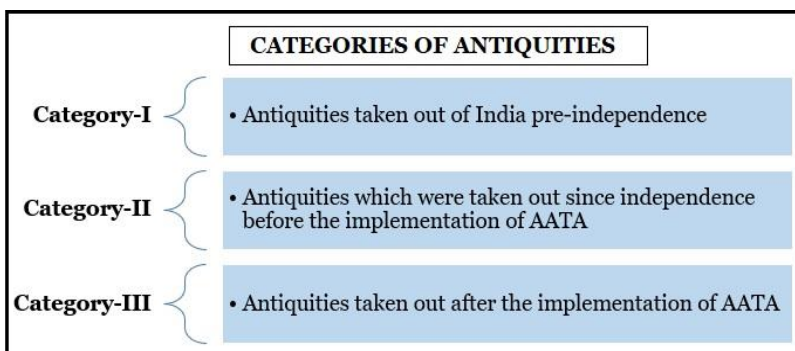
- **UNESCO 1970 convention**- It is on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property.
- It stated that, "The requesting Party shall furnish, at its expense, the documentation and other evidence necessary to establish its claim for recovery and return.
- Cultural property is defined as the property designated by countries having "importance for archaeology, prehistory, history, literature, art or science."
- **UN resolutions**- UN resolution 2367 and other several resolutions condemned and prevented the illicit trafficking of cultural property, especially in conflict zones to promote peace and justice

Constitutional Framework to Protect Cultural Heritage

- **Article 51 A (f)** - It states that it shall be the duty of every citizen of India to value and preserve the rich heritage of our composite culture.
- **Article 49**- Protection of monuments and places and objects of national importance.
- **7th Schedule**- The cultural heritage is protected under Union List, State List and Concurrent List.

Bringing back the antiquities

- **International cooperation**- First two categories' requests have to be raised bilaterally or on international fora.
- In 2022, Maharashtra government announced that it was working to bring back the sword of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj from London.
- This sword was given to Edward, the Prince of Wales (the later King Edward VII) by Shivaji IV in 1875-76.
- **Proof of ownership**- Antiquities in the second and third categories can be retrieved easily by raising an issue bilaterally with proof of ownership and with the help of the UNESCO convention.



6.3 International Yoga Day

- Yoga embodies unity of mind and body, thought and action, restraint and fulfillment, harmony between man and nature, a holistic approach to health and well-being.

- Yoga originated in India and emphasizes physical postures (**asanas**), breathing techniques (**pranayama**), and meditation (**dyana**).
- International Yoga Day is celebrated on **June 21** every year because it is the longest day of the year in the northern hemisphere.
- Theme of 2023** - Yoga for **Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam** (Yoga for the welfare of all in the form of 'One World-One Family').
- Yoga Sutras** - Patanjali, also known as Gonardiya or Gonikaputra, was the author of Yoga-sutras.
- The Yoga Sutras is Yoga school's treatise on how to accomplish this.
- Yoga School** - Yoga school is one of the orthodox schools in Indian philosophy.
- It is closely related to the **Samkhya school** of Hinduism.
- The purpose of yoga is liberation from suffering, caused by entanglement with the world.
- It believes **Ashtanga yoga** eventually leads to liberation.

Schools of Indian Philosophy	Founder	Significance
Vaishesika	Kanada	Naturalism
Nyaya	Gautama	Logic, Methodology, and Epistemology
Samkhya	Kapila	Reality
Yoga	Patanjali	Meditation for achieving Mukti
Purva Mimansa	Jaimini	Power of Yajnas and Mantras
Vedanta or Uttara Mimansa	Vyasa	World is unreal and Brahman is the only real

6.4 Kambala

More recently, the Kambala Samithi hosts weekly events from the end of November till the 1st half of April across Dakshina Kannada and Udupi districts in Karnataka.

- A folk sport practised in **coastal Karnataka districts**, especially in regions where **Tulu speakers** form a majority.
- Harvest festival** – It will be organised in the slushy **paddy fields**, in the **days after the harvest** from November to March.
- Pairs of buffaloes are groomed by **Bunt community** in the coastal regions around the year.
- 4 categories**
 - Negilu (plough)** – Lighter ploughs are used to tie buffaloes which is for entry-level buffalo pairs.
 - Hagga (rope)** – Buffaloes are raced by jockeys with just a rope tied.
 - Adda Halage** – Participants stand over a horizontal plank which is dragged by buffaloes.
 - Kane Halage** – Participants stand over a wooden plank which has 2 holes through which water gushes out.
- Ban** – Supreme Court ruled to ban Jallikattu, Kambala and bullock cart racing in 2014.
- Later, the Environment Ministry and State governments made provisions to exempt these events in recognition of the **customs and cultural heritage of various communities**, which was upheld by the Supreme Court in 2023.

Article 29 (1) of Indian constitution is a fundamental right guaranteed under Part III to protect the educational and cultural rights of citizens.

Sports involving Animals

- Jallikattu** - Tamil Nadu
- Rekla** – Tamil Nadu
- Bail Gadi Shariat** – Maharashtra
- Kambala** – Karnataka
- Maramudi Bull Surfing** – Kerala
- Dhirio bull fight** – Goa
- Camel racing** – Rajasthan
- Bulbul fight** - Assam
- Cock fighting** - Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand

6.5 Sengol

The new building of Parliament will witness the same historic event of vesting the Hon'ble PM with the Sengol.

- To signify the transfer of power from British to Indian hands, C.Rajagopalachari suggested using a Sengol followed by **Cholas**.
- The Adheenams (Priests) gave the Sengol to **Lord Mountbatten** first and on the night of August 14, 1947, Jawaharlal Nehru received the 'Sengol' from the priest of the Thiruvaduthurai Adheenam (Mutt) in Tamil Nadu.
- A song composed by the 7th-century Tamil saint **Tirugnana Sambandar**, was played during the ceremony.
- This exact moment signifies the independence of India and transfer of its power.
- **Sengol** - The 'Sengol' was later kept in a museum in Allahabad.
- The Sengol is a historic sceptre which **symbolises power**.
- The recipient of the Sengol has the 'order' ('Aanai' in Tamil) to rule justly and fairly.
- The sceptre measures 5 feet in length and has a '**Nandi**' bull on top.
- The Nandi, with its unyielding gaze is the beholder of "Nyaya" and symbolising justice.
- The word 'Sengol' is derived from the Tamil word 'Semmai', meaning 'Righteousness'.
- The golden sceptre was crafted by Vummidi Bangaru Chetty, a famous jeweller in the Madras Presidency.



6.6 Channapattana Toys & Dancing girl

The Prime Minister unveils Mascot of the International Museum Expo 2023 - the Chennapatnam style dancing girl.

Channapattana Toys

- Channapatna is a town in **Karnataka**, popularly called the **Gombegala Ooru (Toy Town)**.
- Traditionally, the Channapatna work involved ivory-wood, locally called **Aale mara** and is finished with eco-friendly, non-toxic dyes.
- It is said that the then ruler of Mysore, **Tipu Sultan**, invited artists from Persia to train the local craftsmen in the art of wooden toy making.
- Karnataka holds the **Geographical Indication (GI) tag**.



Dancing Girl of Mohenjo-Daro

- The 'Dancing Girl' belongs to the **Indus Valley Civilization** and dates back to 2500 BCE.
- It is a sculpture made of **bronze** using the '**Lost Wax**' method.



7. FAIRS & FESTIVALS

7.1 Bonalu Festival

The annually celebrated bonalu festival held recently in the Golconda fort in Hyderabad.

- It is celebrated in the twin Cities Hyderabad and Secunderabad and other parts of **Telangana**.
- It is dedicated to the worship of the **Goddess Mahakali**.
- The word "Bonalu" is derived from the Telugu word "Bhojanalu," which means "feast" or "meal."
- Bonalu involves worship of Kali in her various forms such Mysamma, Pochamma, Yellamma, Dokkamma, Pedamma, Poleramma, Ankamma, Maremma, Nookamma etc.
- Other temples such as Akkanna Madanna temple in Haribowli, Muthyalamma temple in Shah Ali Banda are the popular venues where Bonalu is celebrated.

7.2 Nuakhai Juhar Festival

Prime Minister greeted the people on the auspicious occasion of Nuakhai.

- Nuakhai is an agrarian festival originated during the Vedic period where the sages or Rishis used to talk about Panchyajna.
- One among them was Pralambana yajna, the cutting of new crops and offering them to mother goddess.
- Regions** – The festival is mostly celebrated by the people of **Western Odisha and Southern Chhattisgarh**.
- It is known as Navakhai Parv in Chhattisgarh.
- Observed on** – It is observed in the month of Bhadrpada or Bhadraba (August–September), the day after the Ganesh Chaturthi festival.
- In Odisha, on the occasion, the new rice is offered as Bhog to Goddess Laxmi.

Some other festivals in India that celebrate the harvest include **Onam, Makar Sankranti, Baisakhi, Lohri, Ladakh Harvest festival, Pongal, Ugadi, Bihu** among several others.

7.3 Banni Festival of Andhra Pradesh

3 dead during 'Banni' festival at Mala Malleswara Swamy temple located at Devaragattu in Andhra Pradesh's Kurnool district.

- Banni actually refers to mock fight for capturing the idols during the Banni festival. It is a traditional stick fight celebration.
- Banni Festival** – It is celebrated every year, on the night of **Dussehra festival** (Vijayadashami).
- It is celebrated to mark the victory of Lord Shiva (Mala Malleswara Swamy) and Goddess Parvati (Mallamma) over demons Mani and Mallasura who used to trouble people at Devaragattu region.
- Origin** - Since the times of Vijayanagara Empire.
- Participants** – Devotees from Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka participate.

The Banni grassland in Gujarat's Kachchh district is one of the largest grasslands in the Indian subcontinent which was notified as a reserve forest in 1955.

7.4 Hornbill Festival

The 24th Hornbill Festival, a vibrant celebration of culture, music and dance will be held in Nagaland's misty mountains in 2023.

- It is an **annual** event which is called as the **festival of festivals**.
- Origin** – It began in **2000** and is named after hornbill, a bird that symbolises beauty and grace in Naga folklore and ritual.
- Held at** – The heritage village of Kisama, **Nagaland**.
- December 1 is Nagaland Statehood Day; thus, the hornbill festival begins on that day and goes on for 10 days.
- Aim** – To revive and protect the rich culture of Nagaland and display its extravaganza and traditions.
- It **unites 16 Naga tribes** of Nagaland to celebrate in colourful costumes, pulsating rhythm, and musical stories.
- 24th Edition, 2023** – Partner Countries include USA, Germany and Columbia
- The Great Indian Hornbill is the State bird of both Kerala and Arunachal Pradesh.

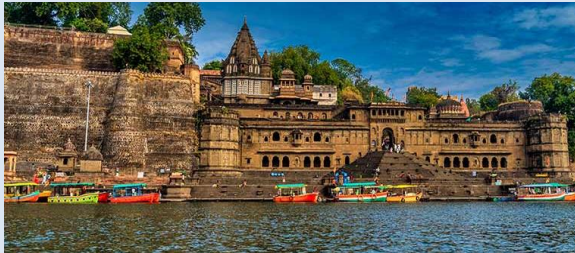
Nagaland – The Land of Festivals	
Festival	Tribes
Tsukhenyie	Chakhesangs
Mimkut	Kukis
Bushu	Kacharis
Sekrenyi	Angami
Aoling	Konyak
Moatsu	Aos
Tuluni	Sumis
Nyaknylum	Changs

7.5 Sacred River Festival

Ahilya Fort is to present the 20th Sacred River Festival in February 2024, after a 3-year gap due to the pandemic.

- It is a 4-day festival celebrated annually since 2010.
- It was conceived by **Richard Holkar** of Holkar dynasty to represent the family's refined cultural sensibilities
- Venue** – Ahilyabai Fort in Maheshwar, **Madhya Pradesh**.
- Activities** - Music, dance, theatre performances, and craft walks, discussions, food displays and also highlights the Ganga Jamuni tehzeeb (syncretic culture) intrinsic to Awadh.

Safed Baradari (White Palace) in Uttar Pradesh, is a place of Mourning by Wajid Ali Shah, the last nawab of Awadh.

The Holkar dynasty	The Ahilya Fort
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was a Maratha clan of nomadic tribes founded by Malhar Rao who joined the service of the Peshwa Baji Rao of the Maratha Empire in 1721. They later became Maharajas of Indore in Central India as an independent member of the Maratha Empire until 1818. The name of the dynasty was associated with the title of the ruler, known informally as Holkar Maharaja. It became a princely state under the protectorate of British India. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Located above River Narmada in Madhya Pradesh. Maharani Ahilyabai Holkar ruled here from 1765 to 1796 and built Ahilya Wada, her personal residences, offices, and darbaar audience hall, within the fort. 

7.6 Tansen Festival

- Tansen Samaroh is a musical extravaganza celebrated near his tomb at Gwalior district, **Madhya Pradesh**.
- The festival is organized to pay tribute to the Great Indian Musical Maestro Tansen.
- Tansen popularised and improved the plucked rabab (of Central Asian origin).
- He was among the **Navaratnas (9 jewels) at the court of the Mughal Emperor Akbar** who gave him the title **Mian**, an honorific, meaning learned man.

7.7 Nadi Utsav

The fourth 'Nadi Utsav' on Riverine Culture will commence at IGNCA New Delhi.

- 'Nadi Utsav' is an attempt to document riverine culture, its tradition, rituals and water wisdom.
- Aim** - To create awareness and sensitize people about their ecology and environment.
- Founder** - This noble initiative was conceived by Dr. Sachchidanand Joshi.
- The 'Nadi Utsav' was first celebrated in the year 2018.
- Fourth Nadi Utsav is organized by the National Mission on Cultural Mapping (NMCN) of Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) and the Janapada Sampada Division.

Utsav	Held in
1 st Utsav	Nashik (Maharashtra) on the banks of River Godavari.
2 nd Utsav	Vijayawada (Andhra Pradesh) on the banks of River Krishna.
3 rd Utsav	Munger (Bihar) on the banks of River Ganga.
4 th Utsav	Delhi, on the banks of River Yamuna

IGNCA is an institution dedicated to art and culture, under the **Ministry of Culture**.

7.8 Kanwar Yatra

The kanwar Yatra that attracts millions of devotees of shiva in state of Uttarakhand had concluded recently.

- It is a pilgrimage organised in the Hindu calendar month of Shravana (Saavan), usually from July to August.
- During this yatra, millions of devotees of **Lord Shiva** known as '**Kanwariya**' make a journey to Haridwar, Gangotri, and Gaumukh in the state of **Uttarakhand**.
- The pitchers of holy water balanced on decorated slings are known as **Kanwars**.
- The water is used by the pilgrims to worship Shiva lingas at shrines of importance, including the **12 Jyotirlingas**, or at certain specific temples or even in the devotee's own village or town.
- Similarities** - Kanwar yatra in North India is celebrated as **Kavadi festival in Tamil Nadu** in which Lord Muruga is worshipped.

7.9 Char Dham Yatra

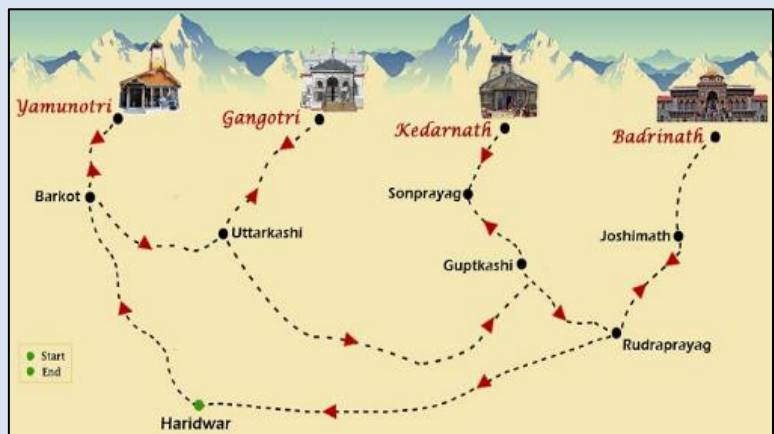
Over 31,78,000 people have visited and 149 pilgrimages died in the Char dham Yatra in the initial 65 days in Uttarakhand.

- Char Dham** – **Adi Shankaracharya** (686–717 AD) propounded the concept of the Char Dham temples.
- He also established the famous Shankaracharya Peethams or Mathas in the four directions for the study and propagation of the 4 Vedas.
- Badrinath (Uttarakhand)** - The temple is also one of the 108 Divya Desams dedicated to Vishnu holy shrines for Vaishnavas who is worshipped as Badrinath.
- It is situated along the banks of **Alaknanda River**.
- Dwarka (Gujarat)** – It is dedicated to Lord Krishna.
- It is located on the right bank of the **Gomti River** at the mouth of the Gulf of Kutch facing the Arabian Sea.
- Puri (Orissa)** - Jagannath Temple located on the coast of Bay of Bengal. It is associated with the **Mahanadi River**.

Dhams	Temples	Yugas
Badrinath	Badrinarayan Temple of Vishnu	Satya Yuga
Dwarka	Dwarkadhish Temple of Krishna	Dwapar Yuga
Puri	Jagannath Temple Puri	Kali Yuga
Rameswaram	Shree Rameshwaram Jyotirlinga Temple	Treta Yuga

Chota Char Dham (Uttarakhand Char Dham)

- It includes **Kedarnath**, **Yamunotri**, **Badrinath**, and **Gangotri**.
- It is situated in Garhwal region of Uttarakhand, Indian Himalayas.
- Yamunotri Dham** – It is situated at Yamunotri where the sacred river the Yamuna originates.
- It named after Goddess Yamuna, the twin sister of Yama (the God of death).
- Gangotri Dham** Gaumukh, the sacred snout of the Gangotri Glacier is where the River Ganga begins its journey.
- Kedarnath Dham** - It is the highest located jyotirling.
- The temple is an old stone edifice located on the shores of **Mandakini River**.
- It is believed to have been built by the Pandavas and revived by Adi Sankara in 8th century CE.



- **Badrinath Dham** – It is sacred to Lord Vishnu, particularly in Vishnu's dual form of Nara-Narayana.
- Badrinath temple was re-established by Adi Shankracharya in the 8th century.
- The Badrinath Dham is situated on the banks of the Alaknanda River.

7.10 India Art, Architecture, and Design Biennale 2023

- It is a celebration of our country's diverse heritage and vibrant culture and it will serve as an introduction to the Cultural Space at Delhi.
- **Aim** – To institutionalise a flagship Global Cultural Initiative in India like the International Biennales at Venice, Sao Paulo, Singapore, Sydney and Sharjah, among others.
- **7 Exhibition themes** – Doors of India, Gardens of India, Baolis (step-wells) of India, Temples of India, Architectural Wonders of Independent India, Indigenous Design and Women in Architecture and Design.
- They are designed in both physical and digital forms.
- **Exhibition curated by** - The National Gallery of Modern Art, The National Council of Science Museums, Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), Lalit Kala Akademi, Council of Architecture, The outreach department of the Ministry of Education
- **Atmanirbhar Bharat Centre for Design** - A special gallery to provide a platform to promote rare crafts of India which was curated by the Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts.
- **Samunnati** – It is a student biennale at Lalit Kala Akademi, to showcase their work and interact with peers & professionals within the architecture community.

Recently, the 1st edition of IAADB was held at the Red Fort.

Cultural spaces are being built in Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai, Ahmedabad, and Varanasi to enrich these cities culturally.

7.11 Chhath Puja

Recently, the 4-day celebration of Chhath Puja started off in many parts of Northern India.

- **Chhath** – It means Shashthi in Sanskrit meaning the 6th.
- **Celebration** - It honours 'the Sun' which is celebrated 6 days after Diwali while some celebrate in Chaitra month (Chaiti Chhath).
- **Location** – In Bihar, parts of eastern Uttar Pradesh and Nepal
- **Activities** – Fasting, cleaning river banks and the roads leading up to those banks and preparing thekuas (the prasad).
- **Uniqueness** – It is a **coming together of the Bihari migrants** who immerse in their culture and homeland once more.
- No priests are involved and people of any caste can participate.
- Both women and men observe the fast for God, and not for husband/children (like in Karwa Chauth or Jitiya).

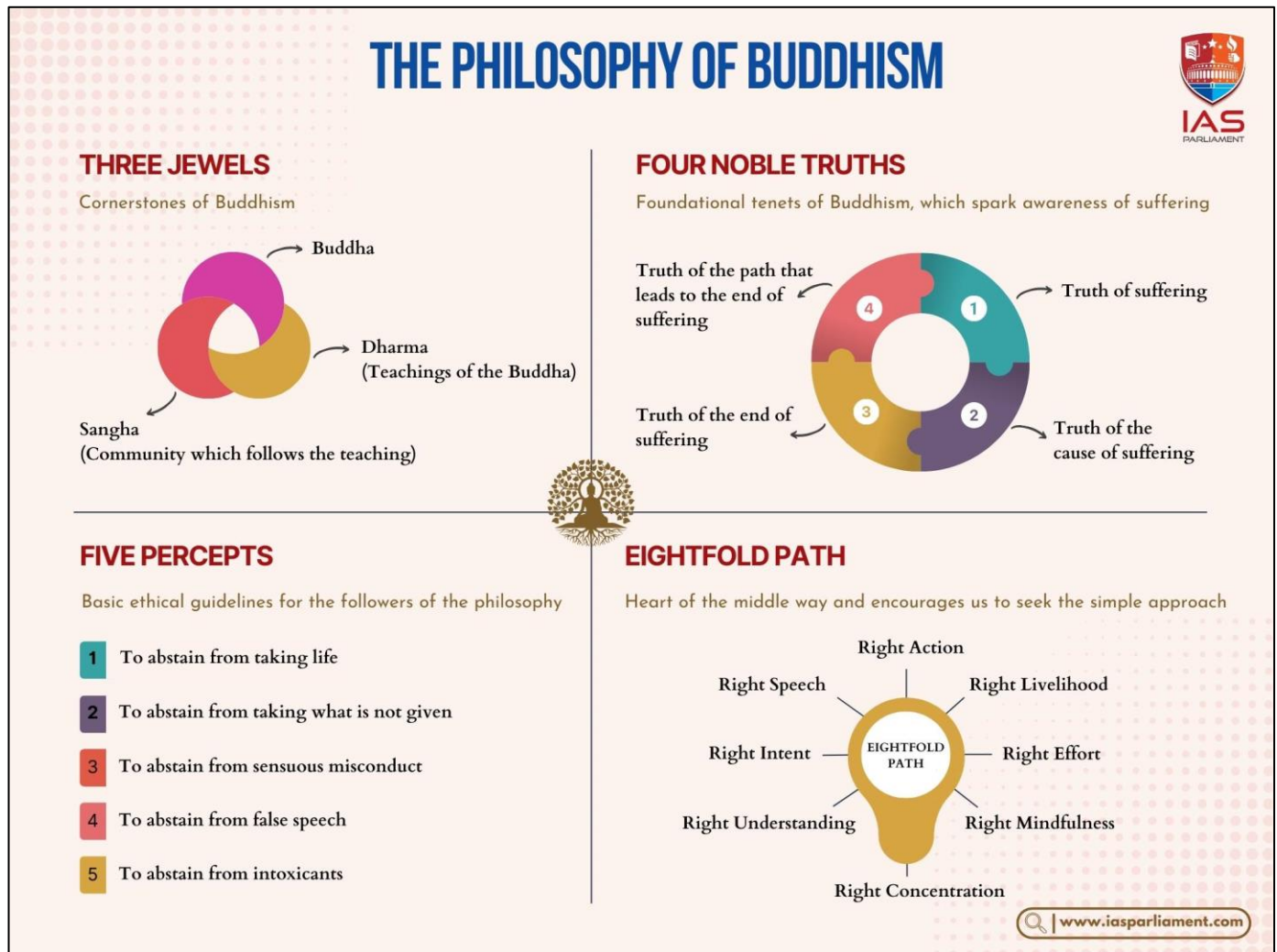
Origin theories of Chhath Puja

- A carryover from the time that man worshipped nature.
- **In Ramayana**, Lord Ram and Goddess Sita were said to have fasted for the Sun god after returning victorious to Ayodhya.
- **In Mahabharata**, when the Pandavas were in exile, Draupadi observed a fast and prayed to the Sun and Karna also organised an elaborate ceremony in honour of Surya (the Sun), his father.

7.12 Jal Itihas Utsav

- Ministry of Jal Shakti to Organize 'Jal Itihas Utsav' at Shamsi Talab, Jahaz Mahal in Mehrauli, Delhi recently.
- **Aim** - To raise public consciousness about safeguarding water heritage sites, creating a sense of ownership among the masses as well as promote tourism and restoration of such heritage structures.

8. RELIGIOUS SECT



8.1 Global Buddhist Summit 2023

The recently concluded global Buddhist summit could leverage India's soft power to connect the Buddhist population around the world.

- **Theme of the summit** - Responses to Contemporary challenges: Philosophy to Praxis.

Significance of the summit

- **Shakyamuni Buddha** - The prime vision of the Summit is to look into the teachings of the Shakyamuni Buddha.
- **Buddhist diplomacy efforts** - The summit could be a good push to the foreign soft power diplomacy.
- **Buddhist culture and heritage** - The Indian government hopes to demonstrate its commitment to preserving and promoting Buddhist culture and heritage by conducting such event.
- **Four themes** - The discussion during the summit revolves around
 1. Buddha Dhamma and Peace,
 2. Buddha Dhamma: Environmental Crisis, Health and Sustainability,

KAPILAVASTU LIVED UNTIL THE AGE OF 29 WITH HIS PARENTS IN THE SHAKYA CAPITAL	LUMBINI BUDDHA WAS BORN AS THE PRINCE SIDDHARTHA GAUTAMA IN C. 563 BC
SARNATH FIRST SERMON AT A DEER PARK NEAR VARANASI	BODH GAYA ATTAINED ENLIGHTENMENT UNDER THE BODHI TREE IN 500 BCE
SHRAVASTI IT IS THE CAPITAL OF ANCIENT KOSALA KINGDOM, WHERE HE LIVED THE LARGEST PART OF HIS LIFE	RAJGIR HE TAUGHT IN THE AREA, WHERE HE WAS BUILT A FOREST MONASTERY BY KING BIMBASARA OF MAGADHA
KUSHINAGAR LAST SERMON IN VAISHALI & ATTAINED MAHAPARINIRVANA HERE (483 BC)	

3. Preservation of Nalanda Buddhist Tradition,
 4. Buddha Dhamma Pilgrimage, Living heritage and Buddha Relics.
- **173 international participants** - Comprising 84 Sangha member and 151 Indian delegates comprising 46 Sangha members, 40 nuns and 65 laity from outside Delhi.
 - **Resolve Buddhist issues** - India is well-positioned to play a leading role in shaping the discourse around Buddhist issues on the global stage.
 - **Foreign policy** - The Panchamrit principles includes Sanskriti Evam Sabhyata which means cultural and civilizational links, which were heightened in the summit.

Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR)

- ICCR was founded in **1950** by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, independent India's first Education Minister.
- ICCR objectives are to actively participate in the formulation and implementation of policies and programmes pertaining to India's external cultural relations.
- ICCR foster and **strengthen cultural relations** and mutual understanding between India and other countries.
- ICCR promotes cultural exchanges with other countries and people, and to develop relations with nations.

8.2 Bodhicitta

Dalai Lama arrives at Siliguri's Sed-Gyued Monastery to deliver teachings on bodhicitta to his devotees.

Mahayana

- One of the two major traditions of Buddhism, now practiced in a variety of forms especially in **China, Tibet, Japan, and Korea.**
- It emerged around the 1st century CE.
- It is typically concerned with other-oriented spiritual practice as embodied in the ideal of the bodhisattva.
- In Mahayana practice, compassion is both a practice and a result.
- Compassion is used to transform emotional reactivity into attention, and that attention in turn is used to awaken to the nature of mind, emptiness.

Bodhicitta

- This **interweaving of emptiness and compassion** is expressed in the Sanskrit word Bodhicitta, for which an accepted and widely used English translation is awakening mind.
- Compassion is the stepping-stone into bodhicitta (awakening mind), the central theme of Mahayana.
- Bodhicitta permeates every aspect of Mahayana teaching and practice.

Bodhisattva

- Bodhisattva, in Buddhism, one who seeks awakening (Bodhi), hence, an individual on the path to becoming a Buddha.
- In **Theravada**, the major form of Buddhism in **Sri Lanka**, the term bodhisattva was used primarily to refer to the Buddha Shakyamuni (as Gautama Siddhartha is known) in his former lives.
- The stories of his lives, the **Jatakas**, portray the efforts of the bodhisattva to cultivate the qualities, including morality, self-sacrifice, and wisdom, which will define him as a Buddha.

Sed-Gyued Monastery

- It is located in Siliguri, **West Bengal.**
- It is the main seat of the Sed-Gyued lineage or **whispered lineage**, a secret teaching transmitted only to the closest disciple through direct communication with their root teacher or meditational deity.

8.3 Vipassana

The Delhi chief minister will skip an ED summons in the Delhi excise policy case, as he is currently attending a 10-day Vipassana retreat.

- Vipassana, in Pali literally means super-seeing or seeing things as they really are.
- It is an **ancient meditation technique** derived from the **teachings of the Buddha**.
- It comes directly from the **Satipatthana Sutta**, a discourse attributed to the Buddha himself.
- SN Goenka** brought Vipassana back to India in 1969.

8.4 Nigrantha

The naked ascetics of the Nigrantha sect and other nude ascetics.

- The word 'Nirgrantha' means 'without knots' or 'without bonds' (Nir - without; Granth - knot or bond).
- In **Jainism**, the Nirgranthas are those who have achieved a state of spiritual purity and liberation.
- They are free from all attachments, desires, and passions.
- As per the Buddhist texts, Mahavira was the founder of the **Nigrantha movement**.
- The name of the order refers to those who have destroyed the worldly ties as well as have given up their clothes.
- They were pravrajita (houseless ascetics) as well as the naked ascetics (nigrantha).
- These ascetics abstain from animal food and all food cooked by fire. They live on fruits picked up when they had dropped to the ground.
- They believed in soul's existence and abstained from killing animals and destroying plants.
- Epic Manimegalai** - The Tamil epic Manimegalai, which is about 1,500 years old, refers to two types of naked ascetics: the Ajivika and the Nigrantha.

Nude Ascetics

- The Greeks who accompanied Alexander, 2,300 years ago, encountered nude ascetics and referred to them as gymnosophists or naked philosophers.
- Buddhism** - Buddha forbade monks from wandering in the nude as he was against nudity.
- Jainism** - Male nudity is integral to the more conservative Digambara (sky-clad) Jain monasticism.
- Mahavir practised nudity that made him belong to sky-clad (Digambara sect).
- Ajivika** - Gosala, the eventual founder of Ajivika sect, accepted nudity.

Terms in news

Basadi and Nishidis are Jain shrine in Karnataka.
Bhattarakas are the chiefs of Jain monasteries.

Ajivika	Nigrantha
Ajivika means those who endure life.	Nigrantha refers to those who consciously untie all knots of life.
The Ajivika believed that humans have no free will	Nigrantha believed humans have free will.
Both were yogis, seeking to do yoga to uncrumple the crumpled mind and break free from the limitations of the body.	

8.5 Jehovah's Witnesses

The recent low intensity blast at a convention centre in Kalamassery area of Kochi in Kerala that targeted a congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses was an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) explosion.

- Jehovah's Witnesses** - They are a Christian sect who does not believe in the Holy Trinity.
- Origins** - Bible Student movement of 1870s in USA.

Holy Trinity is the doctrine that God exists in three equal persons of the Father, the Son (Jesus Christ) and the Holy Spirit.

- **Governance body** – Watch Tower Bible in New York and Tract Society of Pennsylvania.
- **Belief** – They worship Jehovah and considered Jehovah as the God of Abraham, Moses, and Jesus and their belief is based only on the text of the Bible.
- They don't celebrate Christmas or Easter, because they believe such festivals to be inspired by **Pagan traditions**, practicing nature-based polytheistic religions, loosely based on the religions of the ancient world.
- **Controversy** – They refuse to vote, run for public office, serve in any armed forces, salute the flag, stand for the National Anthem, or recite the pledge of allegiance.
- **In India** - They have been present in India since 1905 and have a legally permitted office in Bombay.

*In **Bijoe Emmanuel vs State of Kerala, 1986**, the Supreme Court granted protection to 3 children belonging to the Jehovah sect, who did not join in the singing of the National Anthem at their school and cited that forcing them to sing violates their fundamental right to religion under Article 25 of the Constitution.*

Article 25 of the Indian Constitution guarantees the freedom of conscience, the freedom to profess, practice, and propagate religion to all citizens which are subject to public order, health, and morality.

9. GI TAGS

Geographical Indication Tag

- Geographic Indication (GI) is defined under Article-23 and 24 of the **Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) Agreement** of the World Trade Organization (WTO).
- India is a member of the WTO and thus enacted the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration & Protection) Act, 1999 which came into force from 2003.
- A geographical indication (**GI Tag**) is a sign used on products that have a specific geographical origin and possess qualities or a reputation that are due to that origin.
- The qualities, characteristics or reputation of the product should be essentially due to the place of origin.
- The registration of a geographical indication is valid for a period of **10 years**.
- **Darjeeling tea** became the first GI tagged product in India.
- As of January 2024, **Tamil Nadu** has the highest number of GI tagged products (61).



9.1 GI tags in U.P.




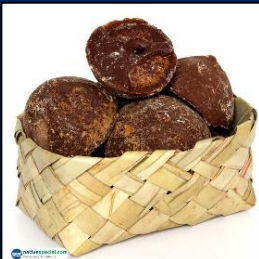
Seven products from Uttar Pradesh recently got Geographical Indication tag.

Recently GI Tags from UP	Significance
Amroha Dholak	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is a musical instrument made of natural wood.
Mahoba Gaura Patthar Hastashlip	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is a stone craft, a very unique and soft stone with scientific name, the '<u>Pyro Flight Stone</u>'.
Baghpat Home Furnishings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only cotton yarn is used in the handloom weaving process. • It is famous for weaving on the <u>frame loom</u> instead of the pit loom since generations.
Barabanki Handloom Product	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This handloom product mainly consists of cotton. • It is manufactured using traditional techniques.

Kalpi Handmade Paper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kalpi has historically been a centre of handmade paper manufacturing.
Sambhal Horn Craft	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sambhal city is associated with a unique kind of horn and bone craft items.
Mainpuri Tarkash	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tarkashi is a technique of inlaying brass, copper, and silver wires in wood. It is a unique and artistic product of the Mainpuri district. It is used for decorating jewelry boxes, name plaques, and other similar items.

9.2 GI Tags from Tamil Nadu

Some famous products from Tamil Nadu were given the GI tag.






GI Product	Description
Jaderi namakatti 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jaderi namakatti are white clay sticks. They are used to adorn the foreheads of idols, men and temple elephants. Composition - Rich deposit of hydrous silicate minerals that form fine grain particles of clay. The clay is processed and shaped in a finger like structure. Jaderi is a small village in Tiruvannamalai district of Tamil Nadu.
Kanniyakumari Matti banana 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Matti banana is a traditional table banana cultivar of medicinal value. It is mostly grown in the Agatheeswaram, Thovalai & Thiruvattar of Kanniyakumari, Tamil Nadu. The fruit is highly fragrant, sweet with sub-acid flavour, firm texture and powdery nature. It is also called as 'Crocodile Finger Banana'.
Chedibutta Saree 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is a handloom saree in art silk and cotton mix fabric. Chedibutta is a combination of two Tamil words- 'Chedi' (plant) and 'Butta' (repeated motif or design). The iconic 'plant and flower' motif woven on the border and pallu. Intrinsic character - The saree is woven using art silk thread while the Chedibutta designs are made using brightly coloured cotton threads.
Udangudi Panangkarupatti 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Karuppukatti is a hard and golden brown coarse sugar which is added to food items as sweetener. It is prepared from the sap (Pathaneer) which is extracted from the Palmyra tree. It is <u>prepared in traditional way</u> without any additional modern strategies and <u>chemical additives</u> like Triple super phosphate and phosphoric acid. Uniqueness - Presence of <u>red sand dune soil</u> in this region. <u>Low groundwater and atmospheric moisture</u> enriches high sucrose content and is suitable for long term storage. <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p><i>Palmyrah (Borassus flabellifer) is the State tree of Tamil Nadu</i></p> </div>


Other GI Tags across India

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Agra leather footwear | 5. Jammu Kashmir's Rajouri Chikri Wood Craft |
| 2. Rajasthan's Nathdwara Pichhwai Painting | 6. Agsechi Vayingim (Agassaim Brinjal) of Goa |
| 3. Kashmir's Mushqbudji rice | 7. Sat Shiro Bheno (Sat Shirancho Bhendo) also known as Okra, vegetable crop of Goa |
| 4. Bihar's Marcha Rice | |

9.3 GI tags from Rajasthan, Goa and U.P.

Seven products from across India, including four from Rajasthan, were given the Geographical Indication (GI) tag by the Geographical Indications Registry in Chennai.

Products	Types	States	Description
Jalesar Dhatu Shilp	Metal craft	U.P.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is a metal craft famous in the Jalesar in Etah district, Uttar Pradesh. It includes ghungrus (anklets), ghantis (bells) and other decorative metal craft and brassware. Community - The Thatheras community, which resides in Hathuras, involved in making of these products. 
Goa Mankurad Mango	Food Item	Goa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Goa Mankurad / Malcorada mango holds position as the king of mangoes for its yellowish-golden or orange colour. Taste - It holds a complex taste of honey caramel tempered with a taste of all spice and cinnamon.
Goan Bebinca	Food Item	Goa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Also known as bibik or Bebinca, it is a type of pudding and a traditional Indo-Portuguese dessert. Traditional Bebinca has 16 layers but mainly preferred 7 layers prepared by coconut milk & local eggs of Goa. 
Udaipur Koftgari Metal Craft	Metal Craft	Rajasthan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The specialty of Koftgari is that the whole design is produced mainly by wire. Koftgari is an ornamental art where pure gold and pure silver inlay work is done on iron base. 
Bikaner Kashidakari Craft	Embroidery	Rajasthan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bikaner Kashidakari is an exclusive women oriented embroidering by putting traditional skills. Community - The gift items are made by the women of the Meghwal community of Bikaner and are often a testament to the skills learnt by the new bride. 
Jodhpur Bandhej Craft	Dress material	Rajasthan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bandhej is a tie-die technique evolved in Jodhpur, Rajasthan. Main Centers - Jodhpur, Nagaur, Churu and Barmer in Rajasthan. 

Bikaner Usta Kala Craft	Craft	Rajasthan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is a craft of Bikaner, Rajasthan that involve paintings with gold and spaces filled with bright meenacolours and vice versa on smooth surfaces. <u>Nakashi and Manouati</u>, both are types of Usta work using real gold, handmade paints and executed with fine line “Siyahi” technique. The ink (Sihayi) is used with a brush made of Squirrel hair to fill the design with different colours. 	
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9.4 Goan Cashews

Goan cashew (Fruit and Nut) was recently granted the geographical indication (GI) tag.

- Goan cashew derived from the Portuguese name ‘caju’ or ‘kaju’ in Konkani.
- Uniqueness** - It has unique identity, flavour and taste.
- Overall climatology of Goa and traditional farming practices

Originally, native to northeast Brazil in Latin America, Cashew was introduced by Portuguese in 1570.

Joynagar Moa	Cashew feni
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is a seasonal Bengali sweetmeat delicacy made from date palm jaggery and Kanakchur khoi. It is only available during winter season in Bengal. It received the Geographical Indication (GI) tag in 2015. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cashew feni (brew) was awarded GI in 2009 as a speciality alcoholic beverage from Goa.

9.5 Sea Buckthorn

In Ladakh, after GI Tag for **Apricot** (Raktsey Karpo), **Pashmina**, and **Ladakhi Wood Carving**, the Geographical Indication Registry has officially granted the GI tag to Ladakh Sea Buckthorn.

- The **Leh Berry**, or sea buckthorn (Hippophae), is a plant found in **Ladakh** that yields tiny, sour- tasting orange or yellow berries that are high in **vitamin C**.
- They are known as Wonder Plant, Ladakh Gold, Golden Bush or Gold Mine of cold deserts.
- Every part of the plant, including fruit, leaf, twig, root and thorn, has been traditionally used as medicine, nutritional supplement, fuel and fence.
- The root of sea buckthorn is resistant to cold, drought, and barrenness due to nitrogen fixation by rhizobia.



10. AWARDS & RECOGNITION

10.1 Guinness World Record

PM Narendra Modi-led yoga session at United Nations headquarters, on the occasion of 9th International Yoga Day, created a Guinness World Record for participation of people of most nationalities in a yoga event.

- Guinness World Records originally known as the Guinness Book of Records documents record-breaking achievements of all kinds, listing world records both of human achievements and the extremes of the natural world.
- It is a reference book published every year in different languages around the world.
- It was formed on 1955 by Sir Hugh Beaver, Managing Director of the Guinness Brewery.
- World Record** - Defined as the best performance recorded in the world in any sphere of art or profession.

Criteria (A record must satisfy all of the following criteria to count)

- It should be objectively measurable.
- It should be breakable it cannot be something so unique that only one person can do it.
- It should also be standardisable with a possibility to create a set of parameters and conditions that all challengers can follow.
- It should be verifiable.
- It should be based on only one variable.
- It should be the best in the world.
- For any new record, GWR sets a minimum standard that has to be met for the record to be broken.
- **Exceptions** - It states several types of records it will not accept for ethical reasons, such as those related to the killing or harming of animals.
- Environmentally unfriendly records (such as the releasing of sky lanterns and party balloons) are no longer accepted or monitored.
- In addition to records relating to tobacco or cannabis consumption or preparation are not accepted.

10.2 Gandhi Peace Prize

Gandhi Peace Prize 2021 has been conferred upon Gorakhpur-based Gita Press

- **Instituted Year** – 1995, on the 125th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.
- **Eligibility** - It is awarded for social, economic and political transformation through non-violence, to any deserving persons or institutions, annually by the Government of India.
- It is open to all persons regardless of nationality, race, language, caste, creed or gender and any association, institution or organisation.
- Work achieved within the 10 years preceding the nomination is considered for the award.
- **Rewards** - The award carries a cash prize of ₹1 crore, a citation, a plaque and an exquisite traditional handicraft/handloom item.
- **Awarding Committee** - The awardee is selected by a 5-member jury comprising of the Prime Minister, Chief Justice of India, Leader of Opposition and 2 eminent personalities.
- The decision of the jury is final and cannot be challenged or appealed.
- **Gandhi Peace Joint Award** – If 2 persons or an organization deserved equally for this prize.
- **Past Awardees** - Ramakrishna Mission (1998), Grameen Bank (2000), Nelson Mandela (2000), ISRO (2014), Sheikh Mujibur Rahman (2020).

Gita Press

- Founded in 1923 by Hanuman Prasad Poddar and Jay Dalal Goyandka.
- It is a unit of Gobind Bhawan Karyalaya, Kolkata, registered under the West Bengal Societies Act, 1960.
- It is one of the world's largest publishers and is most famous for publishing the Hindu text Srimad Bhagwat Gita.
- As of date, the institution has published 41.7 crore books in 14 languages, including 16.21 crore copies of the Gita.

10.3 British Academy Book Prize

- India-born author **Nandini Das** won the 2023 British Academy Book Prize for Global Cultural Understanding, a leading international non-fiction prize.
- The prize was awarded her book 'Courting India: England, Mughal India and the Origins of Empire'.
- The prize was established in 2013, formerly known as the Nayef Al-Rodhan Prize.

- The prize is open to authors of **any nationality** based anywhere in the world and working in any language provided the nominated work is available in English and published in the UK.

10.4 Rohini Nayyar Prize

- The 2nd edition of Rohini Nayyar Prize was presented to Deenanath Rajput, for his work on *empowering tribal women in Bastar, Chhattisgarh*.
- It is a prize to recognize the exemplary contributions of young Indians, under the age of 40 years, towards improving the lives of people in *rural India*.

10.5 Indira Gandhi Peace Prize 2022

- Jointly awarded to the *Indian Medical Association (IMA)* and *Trained Nurses Association of India*.
- Also known as Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development, it is an annual award established in 1986.
- Aim** - To honour individuals and institutions for exemplary work in the service of humanity and the planet.

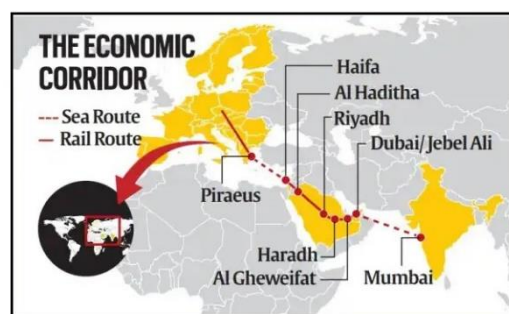
11. HISTORY

11.1 Ancient Red Sea trade route

In the G20 Summit 2023, PM announced the launch of the historic India-Middle East-Europe mega economic corridor.

India Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor

- Infrastructure corridor**- The rail and shipping corridor is part of the *Partnership for Global Infrastructure Investment* (PGII) — a collaborative effort by G7 nations to fund infrastructure projects in developing nations.
- Aim**- To enable greater trade among the involved countries, including energy products
- Member countries**- India, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, the European Union, France, Italy, Germany and the US.
- Proposed corridors**
 - East Corridor**- India to West Asia/Middle East
 - Northern Corridor**- West Asia/Middle East to Europe.
- Railway link**- It involves the laying of a railway link through *Arabian Peninsula* that could link up with Europe.
- Proposed projects**- The corridor will include
 - Electricity cable and high-speed data cable,
 - Hydrogen pipeline
 - A green and digital bridge across continents and civilizations.
- Significance**- The use of the land route in the Arabian Peninsula could bypass the congested Suez Canal
- The project eventually aims at laying out a seamless corridor running all the way from South East Asia to Europe
- It is seen as a weighty ideological alternative to China's Belt and Road Initiative.



Ancient Red Sea trade route

Before Common Era

- Meluha**- There are evidences of Indian diaspora in the Middle East at the time of Meluha (Indus Valley Civilisation).

Roman Empire covered from lowland Scotland to the borders of Persia, and from the Sahara to the banks of Rhine & Danube

- **Roman times-** The trade expanded with huge cargo ships moving directly between the subcontinent and the Roman Empire.

After Common Era

- **Conquest of Egypt-** The trade picked up in the 1st and 2nd centuries after the Romans conquered Egypt, opening up for Roman merchants, who were adventurous enough to try to sail to India.
 - Sir Mortimer Wheeler's excavations at Arikamedu, Pondicherry in the 1930s and 40s, had established the existence of Indo-Roman trade in the 1st century CE.
- **Muziris Papyrus-** This document gives details of one particular cargo sent to the Egyptian port of Berenike from Muziris port, India.
- According to latest estimates, custom taxes on the Red Sea trade with India, Persia, and Ethiopia may have generated as much as one-third of the income of the Roman exchequer.
- **Maritime link-** In the 1st and 2nd century CE, maritime highway linked the Roman Empire and India through the Red Sea, with many hundreds of ships going in both directions each year.
- **Exports-** There was a great demand across the Roman Empire for luxuries from India.
 - Cinnamon-like plant called malabathrum whose leaves were pressed to create perfume
 - Luxury items such as ivory, pearls, and precious gemstones
 - Ivory figures such as Yakshi fertility spirit
 - Exotic goods especially wild animals like elephants and tigers
 - Spices such as pepper have been found during excavations at Berenike
- **Import-** The flow of goods in the other direction was more limited.
 - The Roman historian **Pliny the Elder** (23-79 CE) says it was mainly gold that went to India and the balance of trade was firmly in India's favour.
 - There was some trade in olive oil and Garum, an ancient Roman fermented fish paste, evidence of which has been found in Arikamedu and in Kerala.
- **Trade organisation-** The evidence points that the trade being highly organised.

Role of Indians in this trade

- **Monsoon winds-** The Indians were quick to grasp that the heating of the Tibetan Plateau meant that the monsoon winds blow in one direction in winter and the other in summer.
- **Paintings-** The pictures in Ajanta had large double-masted ships.
- **Coins-** Ships were a common insignia in many early Indian coins. For example- Satvahana coins
- **Graffiti evidence-** It is found in the Hoq caves on the Socotra island, at the mouth of Gulf of Aden.
- **Images-** There are images of Buddhist stupas, Shaivite tridents, swastikas, Syrian Christian crosses, and pictures of large three-masted Indian ships, as well as prayers to Krishna and Radha.
- **Recent evidences-** There is a lot of evidences in places like Muziris in Kerala and Berenike in Egypt.
- Recently, the head and torso of a magnificent Buddha, the first ever found to the west of Afghanistan, was discovered at the site in Berenike along with a triad of early Vaishnav deities.



Red Sea Route vs Silk Route

- **Absence of record** - The Silk Road was completely unknown in ancient or mediaeval times. It certainly existed during the Mongol period (13th and 14th centuries CE).
- However, during the Roman period, there's no evidence that China and Europe knew of each other's existence.
- **Indian ports-** Chinese silk seems to have reached Rome during this period via the ports of India.
- **China factor-** China has politicised the Belt and Road initiative and actively mobilised the idea as part of Chinese foreign policy, to make China the end of a worldwide trade network.

11.2 Ashoka, the Great

Three Ashokan era edicts were recently found in Delhi.

- Ashoka - 3rd ruler of Mauryan Empire.
- **Parents-** Mauryan King Bindusara and Devi Dhamma.
- **Year-** 273 BC - 232 BC
- In 265 BC, he won the battle of Kalinga and after seeing the bloodsheds he had a change of heart. He started to follow the path of non-violence and Buddhism.
- He also made Buddhism as State religion around 260 BC.
- **3rd Buddhist Council-** Held at Pataliputra (250 BC) under the patronage of King Ashoka and Chairman is Moggaliputta Tissa.
- Compilation of Abhidhamma Pitaka took place here.
- **Edicts** - Ashoka started to preach dhamma and wrote his philosophy through 14 edicts. These were known as Ashokan edicts.
- Great Sanchi Stupa was inscribed as a World Heritage Site by UNECSO in 1989.
- **Sarnath Pillar-** The Ashokan Pillar at Sarnath has a 4-lion capital, which was adopted as the national emblem of the India post-independence.

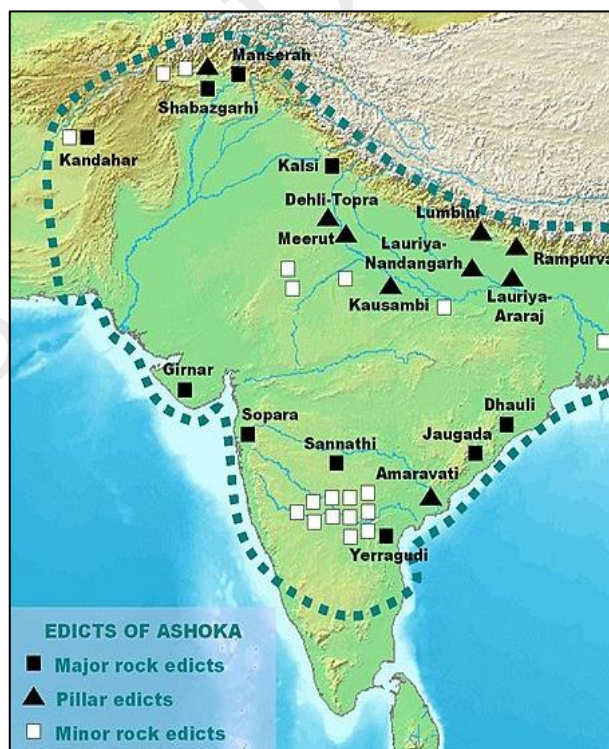
Edicts and inscriptions of Ashoka

- **Edicts-** It is a decree or announcement of law, which can be under any official authority. It can be issued in any number of physical forms
 - Major and Minor Pillar Edicts, Major Rock Edicts- 14 edicts (termed 1st to 14th) and two separate ones found in Odisha, Minor Rock Edicts.
- **Inscriptions-** It is a text produced by carving the letters into solid surface like stones, coins, buildings and rocks
 - Major Rock Inscriptions, Barabar cave inscriptions and Kandahar bilingual inscription.
- **Themes** - Ashoka's conversion, his efforts to spread Buddhism, Moral and religious precepts and Social and animal welfare programmes
- In these inscriptions, Ashoka refers himself as "Beloved Servant of the God" (Devanampiyadasi). The identification of Devanampiyadasi with Ashoka was confirmed by an inscription at Maski, were written in Magadhi Prakrit using the Brahmi script.
- **Edicts-** Collection of 33 inscriptions on the Pillars of Ashoka as well as boulders and cave walls made by the emperor Ashoka.
- These inscriptions represent the first tangible evidence of Buddhism. The edicts describe in detail the Ashoka's view about dhamma, to solve the severe problems faced by the complex society.

Maurya Empire

- 322 – 185 B.C.E.
- Chandragupta Maurya founded 322 BCE after overthrowing the Nanda Dynasty.
- Chanakya (also known as Kautilya and Vishnugupta) who wrote Arthashastra was the political mentor of Chandragupta Maurya

All rock edicts are inscriptions but all inscriptions are not rock edicts



Major Rock Edicts	About
I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prohibits animal slaughter • Bans festive gatherings

II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentions the South Indian kingdoms such as Cholas, Pandya, Satyaputas and Keralaputras. • Deals with social welfare measures
III	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liberty to Brahmanas Every five years Yukatas, Pradesikas along with Rajukas. • To visit all the areas of the kingdom to spread Dhamma.
IV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preference of Dhammaghosa (Sound of peace) over Berighosa (Sound of wandrums). • Impact of Dhamma on society
V	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Humane treatment of slaves by their masters. • Mentions about the appointment of Dhamma Mahamatras.
VI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deals with the welfare measures King's wish to know about the condition of the people
VII	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tolerance towards all religions and sects
VIII	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentions about Ashoka's visit to Bodh Gaya and Bodhi tree • Maintaining contact with rural people via Dhammayatras
IX	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stresses on the moral conduct of people. • Avoiding expensive ceremonies
X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Condemns the desire for fame and glory
XI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elaborate explanation of Dhamma
XII	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appeal for developing tolerance towards all religious sects
XIII	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explains about Kalinga war and conquest through dhamma
XIV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deals with the purpose of engraving inscriptions in various parts of the country
Pillar Edict	About
I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ashoka's principle of protecting his people
II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defines Dhamma as minimum of sins, many virtues, compassion, liberty, truthfulness, purity
III	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoiding practices of cruelty, sin, harshness, pride and anger among his subjects.
IV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsibilities of the Rajukas.
V	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List of animals and birds that should not be killed on certain days. • Another list mentions animals that should never be killed. • Describes release of 25 prisoners. • This pillar edict is also known as Delhi-Topra Pillar Edict.
VI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dhamma policy of the State (welfare of the people).
VII	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ashoka's work for fulfilling Dhamma. Tolerance for all sects. Dhamma Mahamatta

Ashoka's policy of Dhamma

- The word dhamma is the Pali form of the Sanskrit word dharma.
- Aim** - To create a harmonious atmosphere in the state where all people irrespective of their religious and cultural diversities, lived in peace and harmony.
- Ahimsa**- Ban on animal sacrifices, it reduced killing of animals for food in the royal kitchen
 - Good conduct**- It emphasised on good conduct and social responsibilities that were part of dhamma.
 - Proper courtesy to slaves and servants
 - Respectful behaviour towards elders
 - Restrain in one's dealing with all living beings.
- Gift of dhamma**- Obedience to mother & father, Liberty towards friends, relatives, acquaintances and relatives
- Mutual respect**- Religious toleration
- Dhamma as a king**- To promote welfare of the people, Discharge the debt he owes to all beings, Ensure people's happiness in this world, Renunciation of warfare.

Inscription / Edict	About
Allahabad – Kosam/Queens Edict/Kausambi or Schism Edict	Ashoka asks the members of the Sangha to refrain from causing division in the ranks.
Kandahar Inscription	It is a famous bilingual edict in Greek and Aramaic.
Kalinga Edict	Mentions “all men are my children”

11.3 Kakori Train Robbery

4 young revolutionary leaders were hanged 96 years ago for the Kakori train robbery incident.

- Execution in** – 1925 at Kokori (about 15km from Lucknow).
- Executed by** – **Hindustan Republican Association (HRA)**
- They had looted a train transporting money (containing approx Rs 4,600) to the British treasury.
- Objective** – To fund the HRA and garner public attention for their work and mission.
- Punishment** – Out of the 40 men arrested by the British, 4 were handed death sentences, while others received lengthy prison terms. In 1927, Rajendranath Lahiri, Ashfaqullah Khan, Ram Prasad Bismil, and Thakur Roshan Singh were hanged.

The only major leader of HRA who evaded arrest after Kakori train robbery was Chandrashekhar Azad.

Hindustan Republican Association

- Founded by** – Ram Prasad Bismil, Ashfaqulla Khan, Sachindra Nath Bakshi and Jogesh Chandra Chatterjee.
- Chandra Shekhar Azad and Bhagat Singh joined later.
- Cause of formation** - Disillusioned with Gandhi's non-violence and calling off Non-cooperation movement (NCM) in 1922.
- Manifesto** – Krantikari (Revolutionary) was released in 1925.
- Objective** – To establish a federal Republic of United States of India with universal suffrage and socialist principles by an organized and armed revolution.

In 1928, HRA merged with revolutionary groups of Punjab, Bihar and Bengal and became the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA). It had Marxist leanings and stressed upon a struggle by the masses to establish 'the dictatorship of the proletariat'.

11.4 Liaquat-Nehru Pact

It has been 73 years since the treaty of Liaquat-Nehru pact signed between India and Pakistan.

- Also known as the Delhi Pact, 1950, the pact was signed in 1950 by the Prime Ministers, Jawaharlal Nehru and Liaquat Ali Khan.

- It was a bilateral treaty between **India and Pakistan** regarding the rights of minorities and refugees.
- **Aim** - To provide a framework for the treatment of minorities in both countries following Partition, which was accompanied by massive communal rioting.
- An estimated 1 million people Hindus from East Pakistan and Muslims from West Bengal crossed the borders during 1950 after the partition.
- **Features** - It is to ensure that
 - Refugees were allowed to return unmolested to dispose of their property,
 - Abducted women and looted property were to be returned,
 - Forced conversions were unrecognized, and
 - Minority rights were confirmed.
- Minority commissions were established to implement these terms, and confidence was in fact restored for a time.
- The Governments of India and Pakistan solemnly agree that each shall ensure, to the minorities throughout its territory, complete equality of citizenship.
- Members of the minority shall have the equal opportunity with the members of the majority community.
- They have the rights to participate in the public life, to hold political and other office and to serve in civil and armed forces of their country.
- Both governments agreed to declare these rights to be fundamental and undertake to enforce them respectively.

11.5 Abhyudaya

- Abhyudaya is a Hindi weekly magazine which was authored by **Madan Mohan Malaviya**, in 1907.
- MM Malaviya is the founder of the **Banaras Hindu University** and he himself edited the paper.

12. PERSONALITIES IN NEWS

12.1 Ram Prasad Bismil

126th birth anniversary of Ram Prasad Bismil, a revered symbol of patriotism and Hindu-Muslim unity, was commemorated recently

- Ram Prasad Bismil was born on June 11, 1897 in the United Provinces (now Uttar Pradesh) Shahjahanpur district.
- He joined the **Arya Samaj** and became a prolific writer and poet.
- He wrote patriotic verses in Hindi and Urdu under pen names like '**Agyat**', '**Ram**', and the one that is most known '**Bismil**'.
- He wrote the poem **Mera Janm** (My Birth), venting out his anger over death sentence handed out to Arya Samaj missionary **Bhai Parmanand**.
- **Ghulami Mita Do** was his famous poem that denotes he was not willing to negotiate or beg for his country's freedom, if the British did not accede, he was willing to take it by force.

The Mainpuri Conspiracy, 1918

- Bismil started a revolutionary organisation called **Matrivedi** (The Altar of the Motherland) and joined forces with fellow revolutionary Genda Lal Dixit.
- Dixit was well-connected with dacoits of the state and wanted to utilise them in the armed struggle against the British.
- In 1918, Bismil wrote the famous poem, **Mainpuri ki Pratigya**.
- In order to collect funds for their parties, he carried out at least 3 instances of looting at government offices in Mainpuri district.

12.2 Maharana Pratap

PM pays tributes to Maharana Pratap on his Jayanti.

- **Birth** – Maharana Pratap, a Hindu Rajput King who belonged to the Sisodiya clan of Rajpuwas born in **Rajasthan** in 1540.
- Maharana Udai Singh II, the king of the Kingdom of Mewar was his father.
- The legendary king is revered as a true patriot who initiated the country's first war of independence.
- **Against Mughals** – In the **Battle of Haldighati**, he fought alongside Akbar, one of the most famous Mughal Emperors. Maharana Pratap was eventually forced to flee.

12.3 Rani Durgavati

Prime Minister concluded the 6-day Rani Durgavati Gaurav Yatra launched by Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Chief Minister in Madhya Pradesh.

- She was born in 1524, in Mahoba's **Chandela dynasty**, the present-day Uttar Pradesh, near the southern border with MP.
 - The Chandelas were known for building the famous **Khajuraho temples** in the 11th century.
- She was married to Dalpat Shah who belongs to **Garha-Katanga** kingdom, consists Narmada Valley and parts of northern MP.
- In 1550, Dalpat Shah was died and then she then ruled the country in name of her son Bir Narayan.
- Ministers **Adhar Kayastha** and **Man Thakur** helped the Rani in looking after the administration successfully and effectively.
- Rani moved her capital to **Chauragarh** (a fort of strategic importance situated on the Satpura hill range) in place of **Singaurgarh**.
- In 1556 A.D. Rani Durgavati defeated Bajbahadur, Sultan of Malwa.
- She **fought Mughal emperor Akbar** and his commander Asaf Khan and gave the ultimate sacrifice.
- She was a good marksman, skilled at using guns, bows, and arrows and so intent on hunting tigers. She built so many **lakes** in her state.
- She extended her patronage to the scholars and welcomed the **Vitthalnath of Vallabh community** and took diksha from him.
- She was secular and appointed many eminent Muslims on important posts.
- **Gonds** – Group of aboriginal peoples (now officially designated as Scheduled Tribes) of central and south-central India, about two million in number.
- They live in the states of Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, and Odisha.

In 1983, the Government of Madhya Pradesh renamed the University of Jabalpur as Rani Durgavati Vishwavidyalaya in her memory.

12.4 Karnail Singh Isru

On India's Independence Day this year, Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann paid his tributes to the late activist Karnail Singh Isru.

- Isru was born in 1930 at Punjab that is now in Pakistan.
- **Inspired by** - Bhagat Singh, Chandra Shekhar Azad, Udham Singh and others.
- In the early 1950s, he joined the local unit of the **Communist Party of India (CPI)**.
- Though the country had achieved independence by then, the territories of Goa, Daman and Diu, and Dadra and Nagar Haveli were still under Portuguese rule.
- In mid-1955, CPI decided to send Satyagrahis to Goa for continuing the fight against colonial rule with an aim to hoist the **Indian tricolour in Goa** on Independence Day.
- Isru reached Pune on August 14, 1955, and a batch of Satyagrahis began their march towards Goa.
- They were led by a young widow named **Sahodrabai Rai**, who hailed from the Bundelkhand region.

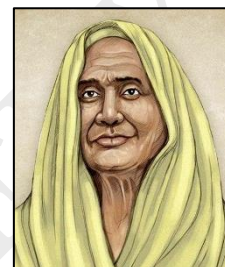
- Isru was hit by a bullet in his chest, resulting in his death at the age of 25 during this march.
- After that **Operation Vijay** was carried out and an instrument of surrender was signed, leading to Goa's annexation by India. Goa liberated on **December 19, 1961**.

12.5 Matangini Hazra & Kanaklata Barua

On the eve of 77th Independence Day, President Murmu pays tribute to Matangini Hazra, Kanaklata Barua.

Matangini Hazra

- Hazra, born in **West Bengal** in 1869, was influenced by Gandhiji's beliefs and earned the name "**Gandhi Buri**" (the old Gandhian woman).
- In 1905, she became actively involved in the Indian independence struggle and was arrested for taking part in the **Civil Disobedience Movement in 1930**.
- She was arrested for her role in the **Salt Satyagraha**.
- She led a march during the **Quit India movement** of 1942, to take over the Tamluk police station from British authorities and fell to the British bullets at the age of 73.
- She was the first woman revolutionary to have her statue erected in the Kolkata Maidan in 1977.



Kanaklata Barua

- She was one of the youngest martyrs who died at the age of 17 in the **Quit India Movement** and has an iconic status in Assam.
- She was born in 1924, at Barangabari of Sonitpur district of **Assam**.
- At the age of 17 she tried to join the **Azad Hind Fauz**. But because of her being minor she could not succeed.
- She joined the **Mrityu Bahini** and was made the leader of the women cadres of the Bahini.
- Barua unfurled the Tricolour at Gohpur police station in 1942. When police did not let them move forward, an altercation led to firing, killing Barua.
- In 2020, the Coast Guard named a Fast Patrol Vessel (FPV) after her, the ICGS Kanaklata Barua.



Mrityu Bahini - A death/suicide squad prepared to sacrifice their lives while attempting to hoist the national flag atop police stations.

12.6 Constantine Joseph Beschi

An Italian Jesuit, Tamil scholar, and Chanda Sahib's Dewan.

- Visit to India** – He arrived in Goa in 1700 and reached Tamil Nadu in 1715 to do missionary work.
- Language skills** – He studied Sanskrit, Telugu, Urdu and Tamil and became a master of these languages, especially Tamil.
- Friendship with Chanda Sahib** – Veeramamunivar considered Chanda Sahib as the **ruler of the banks of the Cauvery**.
- Chanda Sahib gifted him **4 villages to the north of the River Kollidam** (tributary of **River Cauvery**) in Tamil Nadu.
- He conferred the surname, **Ismattee Sannyasi**, indicating Veeramamunivar's excellence as a religious devotee.
- He presented a palanquin and appointed him to the **office of Dewan in Tiruchi, Tamil Nadu**.
- Contribution to Tamil language** – **Thembavani, Sathurakarathi** and many other works.

Beschi was known as **Thairiyanathaswamy** or **Veeramamunivar**



F.W. Ellis, the British civil servant and a scholar in Tamil and Sanskrit had classified Dravidian Languages as a separate family of languages even before Robert Caldwell.

12.7 Guru Nanak

- Guru Nanak Dev (1469–1539) was the ***founder of Sikhism***.
- He was born in Talwandi (now Nankana Sahib, near Lahore).
- Nanak was a Bhakti saint who preached that the most important form of worship is ***Bhakti, or devotion*** to Waheguru.
- Guru Nanak Jayanti (Gurpurab), is the birth anniversary of Guru Nanak.

TERMINOLOGIES RELATED TO SIKHISM

Udaasis	It is a religious, ascetic sect, tradition which considers itself as denomination of Sikhism, and focuses on the teachings of its founder, <i>Sri Chand (1494-1643)</i> , son of Guru Nanak Dev.
Nagar Kirtan	Sikhs celebrate Guru nanak jayanti with a procession called Nagar Kirtan.
Janamsakhis	Biographies of Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism.
Kaba	It is a cube-shaped structure in Mecca that is considered holy.
Langar	It is a place where people contribute their labour and help the needy through acts such as cooking food for them at the gurudwaras.
Angad	Meaning - My own limb, Guru Nanak Dev said that Lehna (one of his disciple) as Angad instead of his own son who is not inclined towards spirituality.
Ntim	Word
Dan	Charity
Isniin	Ablution
Sevii	Service
Simran	Prayer

12.8 Guru Teg Bahadur

- Guru Tegh Bahadur Martyrdom Day is observed every year on 24 November. He is the ***9th of ten gurus***.
- He was born in Amristar, Punjab in 1621. He is also called ***Hind ki Chadar***, or Shield of India.
- He composed 115 songs that are included in the Sri ***Guru Granth Sahib***, the central book of Sikhism.

12.9 Rani Lakshmibai

- Rani Lakshmi Bai, also known as the Rani of Jhansi, had the original name of ***Manikarnika Tambe***.
- She was born in 1828 in Varanasi and was the Maharani of the princely state of Jhansi from 1843 to 1853.
- The British East India Company refused to accept their adopted son as legal heir through ***Doctrine of Lapse*** and decided to annex Jhansi.
- Therefore, Lakshmi Bai took part in the ***Indian Rebellion of 1857*** and died on the battlefield in June 1858.

12.10 Mayuram Samuel Vedanayagam Pillai

- Also known as Mayavaram Vedanayagam Pillai ((1826–1889)), he was an Indian civil servant, Tamil poet, novelist and social worker.
- He is remembered for the work **Prathapa Mudaliar Charithram**, the 1st modern Tamil novel.
- His religious works are Kochakappa, Mata Patikankal, Tayabarakanni, Deva Thothiramalai, Tiruvarul Malai, Deva Mata Antati, and Tiruvarul Antati.
- His musical works include Sarva Samaya Samarasa Kirtanai, Satya Veta Kirtanai, Periyanaayaki Amma Patikam, and Pen Mati Malai.

12.11 Saint Meera Bai

- Saint Meera Bai is one of the famous Hindu mystic poetesses of 16th century and a great devotee of **Lord Krishna**.
- She was born into a royal family in Kudki, now Pali district of Rajasthan in 1498 CE. Her childhood name as Yashodha.
- **Bhaktmal**, the biography of Meera Bai, is written by **Guru Nabha Dass ji** in 1585 CE in Braja language.

12.12 Lachit Borphukan

- Lachit Borphukan was the commander of the Ahom forces and an icon of **Assamese nationalism**.
- In the **Battle of Saraighat** (Naval battle) on the River Brahmaputra, he thwarted an invasion by the Mughal Forces under the command of Ramsingh I.
- On 24th November each year, Lachit Diwas is celebrated in Assam to commemorate the heroism of Lachit Borphukan and the victory of the Assamese army at the Battle of Saraighat.

12.13 Kanakadasa

2023 marks the 529th birth anniversary of the famous philosopher Kanakadasa.

- He was born as **Thimmappa Nayaka** on December 3, 1509.
- He brought the **Bhakti movement** to Karnataka being the devotee of Lord Krishna and went on to become a **Haridasa** (servant of god).
- He actively discarded rigid caste-based systems in places of worship and spread the messages of equity and uplifting the social community.
- He was renowned for his Kirtans and **Ugabhogga** (Carnatic music compositions in Kannada language) which reflect a deep sense of devotion and social consciousness.
- He, along with fellow **Haridasa, Purandaradasa**, rejected norms by composing in the local language, Kannada.
- **Famous works-** Nalacharithre, Haribhakthisara, Nrisimhastava, Ramadhanyacharithre and Mohanatarangini. He used the pen name **'Kaaginele Adikeshava'** for all his songs.

According to Karnataka tourism official website, the Kanakadasa Jayanthi is mainly celebrated by the people of the **Kuruba** community.

Bhakti Movement in Karnataka

- The Shaiva bhakti cult of the Kannada-speaking **Virashaivas** developed during the 12th and 13th centuries.
- Virshaiva Movement was initiated by **Basavanna** and his companions like Allama Prabhu and Akkamahadevi.
- It argued for the equality and were also against all forms of ritual and idol worship.
- Veerashaivism also came to be known as **Lingayatism**.

12.14 Tamilisai Moovars

- **Tamilisai Moovars (Tamil Trinity)** - Muthuthandavar, Marimutha Pillai, and Arunachala Kavirayar, all 3 lived in TamilNadu and contributed to Carnatic music.
- **Kavirayar** was the 1st to compose musical drama in Tamil, his contributions were Rama Natakam, Asomuki Natakam, Sirkazhi Sthala Puranam, and Sirkazhi Kovai.
- **Marimutha Pillai** was a pioneer in composing Ninda Stuti Kritis, his contributions were Puliur Venba and numerous Padhigams and Kuravanji.
- **Muthuthandavar** composed the cosmic dance of Lord Nataraja called Tandava Kritis.

12.15 Paranjothi

- Popularly known as **Sirruthondar**, he was an army general of the Pallava king **Narasimavarman I**.
- He also led the Pallava army during the invasion of Vatapi in 642 CE.
- **Periyapuranam**, a biography of 63 Saivite saints, gives a detailed account of Siruthondar, a Saivite.

12.16 Dr. B.R Ambedkar

- Dr. Ambedkar was born on 14th April, 1891 and died on 6th Dec, 1956 his death anniversary is observed as **Mahaparinirvan Diwas** across the country.
- **Works** - In 1924 he started **All India depressed classes association** with Sir Chimanlal Setalvad.
- **The Bahiskrit Bharat**, newspaper was started in 1927 to address the cause of the depressed classes in view of the new reform.
- He was conferred with the Title of **Bodhisattva** while he was alive.

12.17 Madan Mohan Malaviya

- He was an Indian educationist, freedom fighter and the thrice president of Indian National Congress.
- He was born on 25 December 1861, Prayagraj and died on 12 November 1946.
- He was addressed as '**Mahamana**', he was the founder of Banaras Hindu University (BHU) at Varanasi in 1916, also founded an English-newspaper, "**The Leader**".
- Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya was posthumously conferred with Bharat Ratna.

12.18 Thakkar Bapa (Amritlal Vithaldas Thakkar)

- An Indian social worker and freedom fighter who worked to improve the lives of tribal people in **Gujarat**.
- Thakkar Bapa was a strong believer in universal education and the abolition of untouchability.
- He was the Chairman of the Excluded and Partially Excluded Areas Sub-Committee of the Constituent Assembly.
- In 1922, he established **Bhil Seva Mandal** and in 1949, he established the "**Adim Jati Sevak Sangh**".

12.19 Louis Pasteur

- Louis Pasteur (1822 - 1895) was a French chemist and microbiologist who is known for his discoveries in vaccination, microbial fermentation, and pasteurization.
- He is considered one of the first scientists to discover the role of microorganisms in disease and how vaccines can prevent sickness. He developed the **vaccine against Rabies**.

12.20 Iyothee Thass Pandithar

The Tamil Nadu government has installed a statue of Dalit rights and anti-caste activist Iyothee Thass Pandithar in Chennai.

- He was a prominent Tamil **anti-caste activist** and practitioner of Siddha medicine.
- On May 20, 1845 in the former Madras Presidency.
- He started **Advaidananda Sabha in 1876**.
- He founded **Panchamar Mahajana Sabha in 1891** along with Rettaimalai Srinivasan.
- He stressed that untouchables are not Hindus and shall be considered as **Adi-Tamilar**.
- He established the '**Sakya Buddhist Society**' in Madras in 1898 with branches all over South India, which is also known as Indian Buddhist Association.
- He launched '**Dravida Pandian**' magazine in 1885 along with John Rathinam and in 1907, he launched '**Oru Paisa Tamizhan**', a Tamil newspaper.
- He succeeded in getting 1000's of acres of lands and distributed among the landless poor under the scheme of '**Panchami Lands**'.
- The Siddha Institute of Studies (**National Siddha Institute**) at Tambaram, Chennai was established in 2005 and named after the anti-caste Buddhist leader.
- His **work was nationalized** and in 2008 he was given alimony to his legal heirs.
- Iyothee Thass Pandithar is also known as the '**Father of Social Reforms in South India**' and also described as '**Dravida Peroli**'.

Panchama are people who do not belong to the Varna system. They are called avarna communities.



13. OTHERS

13.1 Statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji

- Unveiled at **Rajkot Fort**, Sindhudurg, **Maharashtra**.
- Chhatrapati Shivaji (1630-1680) was the founder of the Maratha kingdom of India in opposition to the Mughal dynasty.
- He was a contemporary of Mughal emperor **Aurangzeb**.
- He was crowned the King of Marathas in 1674, at **Raigadh** in an elaborate coronation ceremony.
- **Victories** - Shivaji's conflict with the Adil Shahi Sultanate of Bijapur began when he was only 16.
- **Ashta Pradhan (8 ministers)** - Council of ministers

ASHTA PRADHAN

Peshwa - Head of council
Senapathi - Commander of Army
Nyayadhisht - Justice
Majumdar - Finance
Pant Sachiv - G. Secretary
Manthri - Head of intelligence
Dandadhyaksha - Religious Matters



13.2 Statue of Oneness

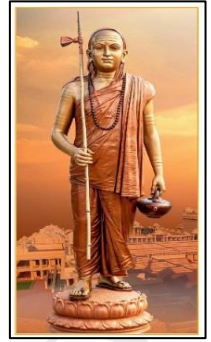
Madhya Pradesh CM unveiled Statue of Oneness of Adi Shankaracharya at Omkareshwar.

- It depicts **Adi Shankaracharya** as a 12-year-old child, the age he was when he is said to have visited Omkareshwar.
- This **108-ft tall** statue is situated atop Mandhata Parvat hill at **Omkareshwar, Madhya Pradesh**.
- At the base of the statue is the **Shankar Stambh**, depicting 32 stories related to Shankaracharya.

Adi Shankaracharya

- **Period** - Born in **Kerala's Kaladi** and is believed to have lived between 788 and 820 AD.

- He studied under guru **Govinda Bhagavatpada** and became a proponent of **Advaita Vedanta**.
 - The philosophy of advaita is based on the concept that the higher or true Self is identical to **Brahman**, the Absolute Reality.
 - It is **non-dualism** based on the **Vedas**, the ancient Hindu texts, specifically the **Upanishads**.
- He challenged the prevailing philosophical traditions including Buddhism and Jainism.
- **Works** - The most notable work are the commentaries on the 10 Upanishads, the Brahmasutra and the Gita.



Other such statues

- **Statue of Unity** – Statue of **Sardar Vallabhai Patel**, the Iron Man of India. The statue is the world's tallest statue, located near the Sardar Sarovar Dam, in the banks of the Narmada River, **Gujarat**.
- **Statue of Equality** - Statue of **Sri Ramanujacharya** located in **Telangana**. Born in 1017 in Sriperumbudur in Tamil Nadu, Ramanujacharya is revered as a Vedic philosopher and social reformer. It is the second-tallest statue in the world.
- **Statue of Social Justice** - 206 feet of **Dr BR Ambedkar**, the architect of the Indian Constitution unveiled in **Andhra Pradesh**. It is the world's tallest statue of BR Ambedkar.
- **Statue of Equality (US)** - It is the tallest statue of **Dr BR Ambedkar** outside India inaugurated in Maryland, USA.

13.3 Foucault's Pendulum

One of the biggest attractions in the new building is Foucault's Pendulum, which hangs from a large skylight in the triangular roof of the Constitution Hall and signifies the relation of India with that of the universe.

- The original Foucault's pendulum, named after 19th century French scientist Leon Foucault, is an **experiment to demonstrate the earth's rotation**.
- The experimental set-up involves a heavy object hung from a height with a string, free to swing in any direction.
- Once set in to-and-fro motion, the pendulum is seen to change its orientation slowly over time.
- Actually, it is not the pendulum that changes its plane of motion, but the ground beneath it.
- Observers standing on the ground do not notice the earth's rotation, because they too are rotating with the earth, but can notice the change in orientation of the pendulum.
- **India** - Created by the National Council of Science Museum (NCSM) in Kolkata, the pendulum is being dubbed as the largest such piece in India, 22 metre in height, and weighing a staggering 36 kg.
- At the latitude of the Parliament, it takes 49 hours, 59 minutes, and 18 seconds for the pendulum to complete one rotation.



13.4 National Culture Fund

National Culture Fund (NCF) Received Rs. 3.70 Crore from Non-Government Sources during Last Five Years (2018-19 to 2022-23).

- **Set up in** – 1996, a trust under the Charitable Endowment Act, 1890.
- **Aim** – To mobilize extra resources through Public-Private Partnership (PPP) towards promoting, protecting & preserving India's Cultural Heritage (Tangible & Intangible).
- It is managed by a Council and an Executive Committee.
- **Council** – It is **chaired by the Hon'ble Minister of Culture** and has 19 members from various fields.
- **Executive Committee** – It will actualize the policies and is chaired by the **Secretary, Ministry of Culture**

- The accounts are audited by the **CAG of India** annually.
- **Fund usage**
 - To train a cadre of specialists and cultural administrators
 - To document cultural expressions and forms
 - To undertake research, innovations and experiments in arts
 - To create of institutions such as galleries and museums
 - To promote international cultural cooperation
- The donations to NCF will be **eligible for tax benefit** under the Income Tax Act.
- **Beneficiaries** – Any **State Government or voluntary organisation** registered under the Societies Registration Act 1860 (21 of 1860) or registered as a Public Trust at least for the last 2 years.
- **Individuals are not entitled** to financial assistance under this.

13.5 Bedouin Arabs & Hezbollah

A video on social media shows local Israelis expressing their gratitude to a Bedouin commander for putting up an effective defence against Hamas fighters recently.

Bedouin Arabs

- The Bedouins are a nomadic **Muslim Arab people** who live mainly in the **Negev desert of southern Israel**.
- **Occupation** - They have traditionally been pastoralists with no powerful or exclusive national affiliation.
- Before the formation of Israel, groups of Bedouin were employed by early Jewish settlers to guard clusters of their communities in Palestine.
- During the **Arab-Israeli war of 1948-49**, many Bedouin provided valuable intelligence to the Jewish militias and the newly formed Israel Defence Forces (IDF).
- In the 1950s, Israel recognised a large number of Bedouin as its citizens, and subsequently helped build settlements for them in the Negev.
- Many Bedouin continued to serve in the IDF, primarily in scouting or tracking units.

Hezbollah

- **Hezbollah (Party of God)** - It is a **Shiite** Islamic militant organisation from **Lebanon**.
- **Origin** - During the Lebanese Civil War (1975-1990)
- **Cause of origin** - Discontent with presence of armed Palestinian in Lebanon and inspiration from theocratic Islamic government of Iran in 1979.
- **Funding and Training** - Iran and its Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC).
- **Aim** - It opposes Israel and Western influence in West Asia.
- **Conflict with Israel** - Israeli forces invaded southern Lebanon in 1978 and again in 1982 to expel Palestinian guerrilla fighters. It fought a war with Israel in 2006.

According to Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), Hezbollah's are the world's most heavily armed non-state actor.

13.6 Goa Liberation Day

- Goa Liberation Day is celebrated on December 19th every year.
- It marks the day in 1961 when India reclaimed the coastal state from centuries of **Portuguese rule**.
- On December 19, 1961, Goa officially became part of India and was declared as a Union Territory along with Daman and Diu after a military operation called "**Operation Vijay**".
