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CULTURE

Classroom Study Material

(April 2023 to December 2023)

PT 365

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CULTURE

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Note to Students

Dear Students,

PT 365 document comprehensively covers the important current affairs of the **last one year (365 days) in a consolidated manner.**

In our endeavor to further enhance the document in the interest of the aspirants, the following additions have been incorporated

Summarized infographics: Topics such as

- Information on **different dynasties.**
- Cultural aspect showcased during **India's G20 Presidency.**
- **Temple and other** Architectural details.

These have been summarized and added in the form of interactive infographics to improve ease of understanding, provide for a smoother learning experience, and ensure enhanced retention of the content.

Appendix: Prelims-oriented information about Jainism and Buddhism has been added in the appendix for quick revision.

Consolidated Maps: They have been used to provide geographical and contextual information about Festivals, Tribes in news, etc.

Quiz: QR-based Smart quiz has been added to test the aspirant's learning and understanding.

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Smart and Effective
UPSC Prelims
Preparation Strategy

The UPSC Prelims is the first and highly competitive stage of the Civil Services Examination. It comprises two objective-type papers (General Studies and CSAT) designed to test a candidate's knowledge, understanding, and aptitude.

This stage challenges aspirants to not only master a broad syllabus and adapt to changing patterns but also excel in time management, information retention, and navigating the Prelims unpredictability. Achieving success in this exam transcends mere hard work; it necessitates a holistic and adaptive approach to preparation.

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Key Strategies for Prelims Preparation

Strategized Preparation Plan: Allocate your study time wisely across subjects, ensuring you have enough time for revision and practice mocks. Pay attention to your weak areas.
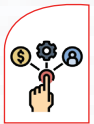
Resource Optimization: Choose study materials that are both thorough and to the point. Focus on quality over quantity to prevent getting overwhelmed.

Strategic Use of PYQs and Mock Tests: Use past year papers to understand the exam pattern, important topics, and question trends. Regularly practicing and assessing progress with mock tests improves preparation and time management.

Systematic Current Affairs Preparation: Keep abreast with Current affairs through newspapers, magazines and integrating this knowledge with static subjects to improve understanding and retention.

Smart Learning: Focus on understanding concepts rather than rote learning, use mnemonics, infographics, and other effective learning tools for better retention.

Seeking Personalized Guidance: Engage with mentors for customized strategies, areas to improve, and motivation. This mentorship also helps in stress management, guiding you through effective practices to maintain mental well-being.

Keeping the needs of the UPSC Prelims examination, the VisionIAS has brought its much-celebrated **All India GS Prelims Test Series and Mentoring Program** which encompass the entire UPSC syllabus based on the latest trends.

Scan **QR code** to watch **"UPSC Prelims 2024: Effective Strategy for 3.5 Months"**

Its key Features include:

- Comprehensive coverage of the UPSC syllabus
- Flexible test series schedule
- Live online/offline test discussion and post-test analysis
- Answer keys and comprehensive explanation for every test paper
- Individualized Personal Mentoring
- Innovative Assessment System and Performance Analysis with All India Rankings
- Quick Revision Module (QRM)

Ultimately, a strategic, well-rounded preparation combining smart study plans, practice, focused resources, and personalized guidance is key to navigating the UPSC Prelims successfully.

Scan **QR code** to **register** and **download brochure** "All India GS Prelims Test Series and Mentoring Program"

1. SCULPTURES, TEMPLES AND OTHER ARCHITECTURE

1.1. UNESCO RECOGNITION

1.1.1. SANTINIKETAN

Why in the news?

Santiniketan has been designated as the 41st UNESCO World Heritage Site (WHS) of India.

More on News

- It is the third WHS of West Bengal, after the **Sundarbans National Park** and the **Darjeeling Mountain Railways**.
- Along with Rabindranath Tagore, Surendranath Kar, Nandalal Bose, Patrick, and Arthur Geddes played a key role in shaping it.
- The recommendation was made by the **International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS).**

About ICOMOS

- **Genesis:** established in 1965 as an outcome of the Second Congress of Architects and Specialists of Historic Buildings, held in Venice in 1964.
- **HQ**: Paris, France
- **About:** Global NGO associated with UNESCO, whose mission is to promote the conservation, protection, use and enhancement of monuments, building complexes and cultural heritage sites.
- **Members:** 151 countries including India.
- **Other Key Facts:** Advisory Body of the World Heritage Committee for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention of UNESCO.
- **Report:** Heritage at Risk

About Santiniketan (Abode of peace)

- **Location**: District Birbhum, West Bengal.
- It has elements from **ancient, medieval, and folk traditions of India as well as Japanese, Chinese, Persian, Balinese, Burmese and Art Deco forms** (Western Europe and the United States).

Santiniketan Griha
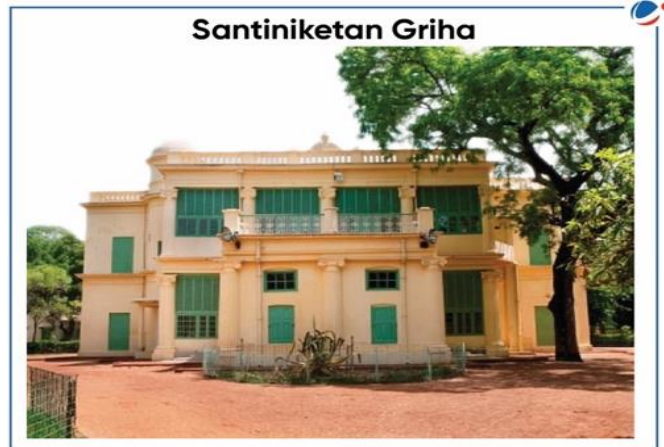
About World Heritage Sites (WHS)
- It is any of the areas or objects inscribed on the **UNESCO World Heritage List**.
- These sites are designated as having **outstanding universal value** under the **World Heritage Convention** of **1972**.
- Sites are selected under three categories i.e. **cultural**, **natural**, and **mixed**.
  - There are 42 **World Heritage Sites** in India. Out of these, 34 are cultural, 7 are natural, and one is of mixed type.
- WHS are **nominated on the basis of the tentative list submitted the members**.
- For inclusion in World Heritage List, a site must **meet one of the ten selection criteria.**

Key Architecture elements of different cultures

Culture	Examples
🏯 **Chinese**	Circular window of Guhaghar
⛩ **Japanese**	woodwork
🏰 **Neo Gothic and Neo Classical**	Bunglow style of Santiniketan Griha and Surul Kuthibari
⛰ **Buddhist**	**Ajanta** (Patha Bhavan) and **Sanchi** (railing of Chhatim Tala)
🕌 **Sultanate and Mughal Period**	Arches, facade, and jaalis
🏠 **Bengali**	Chaiti, inspired by a rural Bengali hut

- **Uniqueness**: Unique Indian example of a '**total work of art' (Gesamtkunstwerk)** where **life**, **learning**, **work** and **art** along with the **local** and the **global** intertwined.
- **Establishment (Early Days)**
  - Established: Middle of the 19th century by **Maharshi Devendranath Tagore**.
  - Has substantial soil erosion which gave certain areas a **barren look (locally known as khoai)**
  - Flanked by the **Ajay** and the **Kopai**.

Key Architecture and Cultural Features

- **Overall: The first architectural structures** are part of the complex was the glass Temple (Mandir), where worship is non-denominational.
- **Indigenous Architecture Style**
  - **Buildings Material**: Both **traditional materials** (mud and thatch) and **reinforced cement concrete**.
  - **Decoration: Murals**, **frescoes**, and **sculptural friezes** on walls.
    - ✓ Adorned with **Bharhut**, **Mahabalipuram**, **Mohenjodaro**, **Egyptian** and **Assyrian motifs**.

Rabindranath Tagore's Period in Santiniketan

- He began his journey in Santiniketan, by establishing **Brahmacharyashrama** in 1901.
  - Inspired by **ancient Vedic traditions of tapoban and gurukul** with **open air classrooms arranged** under the canopies of trees**.**
    - ✓ From 1925 this ashrama came to be known as Patha-Bhavana.
- He established **ashrama in Santiniketan.**
- **Visva Bharati University, Santiniketan**:
  - A '**world university'** named **Visva Bharati** was established in 1921.
  - In 1951, **Visva Bharati** transitioned into a **central university** with **Rathindranath as the first vice-chancellor**

Related News: Banglar Mati

- West Bengal declared **Rabindranath Tagore's** Banglar mati, Banglar jol as its **state anthem.**
- West Bengal Assembly also passed resolution making **Poila Baishakh** (first day of the Bengali calendar i.e. April 15) as the **statehood day**
- Song was written during the **Banga Bhanga movement** against the partition and **promotes communal harmony** through **Raksha Bandhan.**
- Tagore also composed **Amar sonar Bangla (**national anthem of Bangladesh).

1.1.2. SACRED ENSEMBLES OF HOYSALAS

Why in the news?

The Sacred Ensembles of Hoysalas in Karnataka, has been declared as **42nd UNESCO World Heritage Site (WHS).**

More on News

Chennakeshava Temple
Stellate plan

- It includes the temples of **Chennakeshava temple (Belur)** and **Hoysaleshwara temple (Halebidu)** and **Keshava temple (Somanathapur).**
- Hoysalas temples are 4th WHS of Karnataka after **Hampi**, **Pattadakal** and **Western Ghat**.

Temples and Features of the Hoysalas

- **Chennakeshava Temple (also referred as Vijayanarayana Temple)**
  - **Commissioned by:** King Vishnuvardhana in 1117 CE **in Belur Region, Hassan District.**
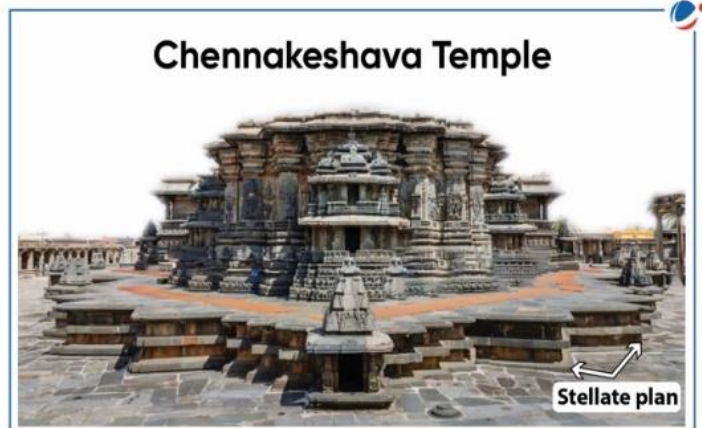
- ✓ Located on the banks of the Yagachi River.
  - o **Deity**: It is an **ekakuta** (temple with one shrine) and the **garbha griha** (sanctum sanctorum) houses portrait of Krishna.
    - ✓ Dedicated to **Lord Vishnu** known as Chennakesava (Chenna (beautiful) and Keshava (Vishnu).
    - ✓ It is a living temple (only worshiping temple among them).
- **Hoysaleshwara Temple (Halebid Temple)**
  - o **Commissioned**: in 1121 CE, King Vishnuvardhana played key role in its construction in Halebidu, Hassan.
    - ✓ Located on the banks of **Dwarasamudra lake.**
  - o **Deity**: Dedicated to **Lord Shiva** as **Nataraja**, the God of Destruction.

Hoysaleshwara Temple
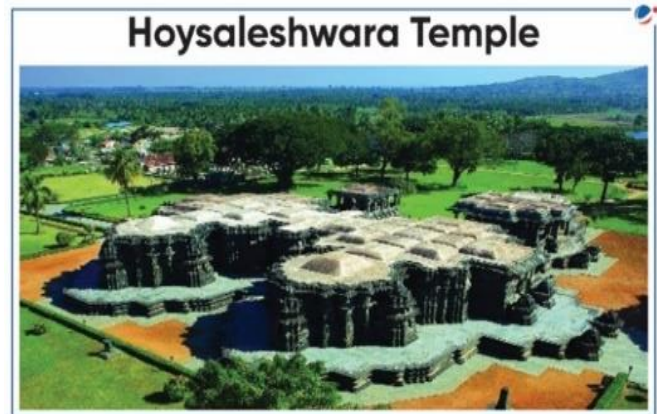
Keshava Temple

- **Commissioned by**: Somanatha Dandanayaka (during the regime of Narasimha III) in 1268 CE in Somanathapura, Mysuru.
  - o Located on the banks of River Kaveri.
- **Deity**: It is a **Trikuta Temple** dedicated to Lord Krishna in three forms.

Keshava Temple

Vimana

Hoysala Architecture Style

- Followed **hybrid** or **Vesara** temple style. Its basic features includes:
  - o Basic blend of **Dravidian and Nagara style**.
  - o Show a strong influence of '**Bhumija**'.
    - ✓ **Bhumija** is a variety of North Indian shikhara.
  - o **Karnata Dravida tradition** of the **Kalyani Chalukyan** territories.

Key Features of Temple Architecture

- **Style**: Followed a **stellate plan** (looking like a star) built on a **raised platform (adhisthana)**.
- **Material used: Soapstone**, these are soft and amiable to carving.
- **Garbha griha (sanctum sanctorum):** houses a **centrally placed murti (enshrined icon)** on a **pitha (pedestal)**.
- **Mandapas** (hall where groups of people used to gather for prayers):
  - o Have circular pillars in their mandapas. Each pillar has four sculpted figures on the top brackets.
- **Gopuram (entrance of temple):** Lofty gopurams were constructed.
- **Sculpture:** Salabhanjika (a woman), a common form of sculpture.
- **Vimana** (structure over the garbhagriha or inner sanctum): Simple inside and lavishly decorated on the outside.
- **Other Features**: Ceilings featured **corbelled domes.**

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Hoysala Dynasty

Genesis	○	They are believed to be natives of the **Malnad region in Karnataka** but inscriptions also point towards connections with the Yadavas from North India.
Founder	○	**King Nripa Kama II** ○ He built an alliance with the Western Ganga dynasty.
Time Period	○	10th to 14th century
Capital	○	**Belur and Dwarasamudra (Halebidu)**
Region Ruled	○	Large part of modern day area from Karnataka to Tamil Nadu.
Important Rulers	○	**Vishnuvardhana Raya** (during his reign Sri Ramanujacharya's influence spread in the Karnataka region and Srivaishnavism grew in popularity). ○ He removed Cholas from Gangavadi in battle of Talakadu, for this he got the title Talkadugonda. ○ **Veera Ballala II** (freed the Hoysalas from the Chalukya subordination).
Administration	○	Kingdom was divided into **Nadus, Kampanas, Vishayas and Deshas (in a descending order).**
Decline/End	○	Veera Ballala III was killed at the **battle of Madurai in 1343.** ○ Then, the sovereign territories of the Hoysala Empire were merged with the areas administered by **Harihara I** in the Tungabhadra River region.

1.2. TEMPLES

1.2.1. KONARK SUN TEMPLE

Why in the news?

The mural of the iconic Konark Sun Temple wheel was showcased to the World Leaders at the G20 Summit.

About Konark Sun Temple

- Also known **as Black Pagoda, Arka Kshetra and Padma Kshetra**.
- Built during the **13th century under the reign of Eastern Ganga King Narasimhadeva-I**.
  - Sun temples highlight **the celestial movement of the Sun.**
  - Materials used: **Chlorite, Laterite and Khondalite rocks.**
- Rabindranath Tagore describe it as the **place where the language of stone surpasses the language of man**.
- **Other prominent sun temples**: Martand (J&K), Katarmal (Uttarakand), Surya pahar (Assam), Dakshinaaka (Bihar), Arasavalli (Andra Pradesh), Suryanar Kovil (TN), Modera(Gujarat), and Brahmanya (MP).

Structure of the Temple

- Period: **Kalinga Architecture**.
- **Entrance:** The main entrance, the **Gajasimha** - gaja meaning elephant and simha referring to lions.
  - **Lions resemble pride, elephants resemble wealth** and both of them kill the human.

Konark Sun Temple
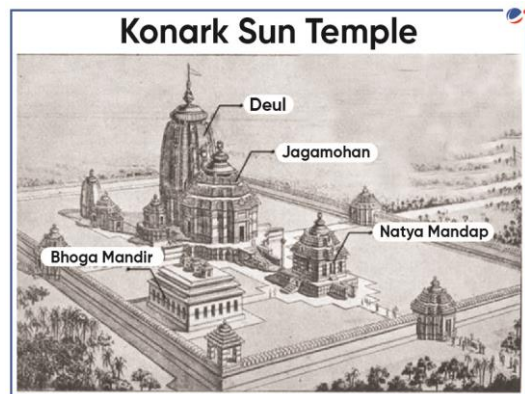
- **Natya Mandapa after** Gajasimha, the hall for dance and theatre.
- **Jagamohan or Mukhasala:** assembly hall of the temple.
- **Deul:** The Jagamohan is followed by the deul where the idol is placed.
- **Bhoga-mandira (kitchen)** to make bhoga for the deity and devotees.

Kalinga Architecture
- **Nature:** The **Nagara style of Northern India** and the Dravida style of South India were combined to create the Kalinga architecture.
- **Typical architecture:** Kalinga temple consists of two parts – a sanctum (**deul)** and a hall (**Jagamohana)**. However, early-period temples were devoid of Jagamohana.
  - Later additions to the temple style include **natya-mandapa** and then **bhoga-mandir**.
- **Categories:** The architecture is broadly classified into three main categories:**Rekha deul: Pidha Deul or Bhadra Deul**, **Khakhara Deul.**

Key Features of Kalinga Architecture
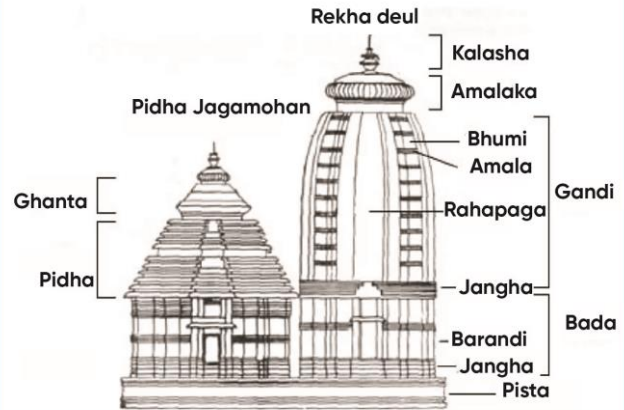
Architectural features of the Temple

- **Sun rays:** sun's first rays would illuminate the sanctum and the presiding deity.
- **Chariot Design:** It has been designed like chariot **of Surya, the Sun God**.
- **Konark Wheel:** The **rims** are carved with designs of **foliage with various birds and animals**, whereas the **medallions** in the spokes are carved with **the figures of women in various luxurious poses**.
- **Seven Horses:** These seven horses have been named in Bhagawat Gita which possibly stand for the rhythmic representation of the sacred verses of the Vedas.
  - The seven horses are also **named after the seven colours of the rainbow**.
- **Carvings of the Temple:**
  - **War Horses:** There are two carved war horses in front of the southern side **crushing down the warrior**.
    - ✓ This figure of the war horse of Konark has been accepted as the **symbol of the state Government of Odisha**.
  - **Sun God:** three carvings of the Sun God at three location to catch the sun at dawn, at noon and at sunset.

Konark War Horse

Eastern Ganga Dynasty

Founder	Kamarnava is believed to be the founder
Time period	• **Indravarman I**, whose Jirjingi copper-plate grant was issued in 537 CE • **Anantavarman Chodaganga** was most powerful ruler.
Major cities	• **Capital:** Kalinganagara
	• **Present-day territories:** Odisha, as well as large portions of West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, and Chhattisgarh.
Declined due to external invasions and internal conflicts, leading to the rise of the **Vijayanagara Empire.**	

PT 365 - Culture

- o **Others:** Some carvings depict **sensuous details** while others exhibit **mythical creatures and animals** like elephants and birds.
- o **Different Interpretations of the Konark Wheel:** Time, Life cycle, Zodiac signs, Dharmachakra, Sun dial, Symbol of democracy.

1.2.2. SHARDA TEMPLE

Why in the news?

Navratri puja was held at the newly built Sharda Devi Temple close to the Line of Control (LoC) in Teetwal village in the Kupawara district of Jammu and Kashmir.

More in news

- The temple is **one of the base camps** en route to the **traditional Sharda Peeth in the Neelam Valley of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir.**

About Sharda Devi Peeth

- **One of the three principal shrines** of the region, along with the **Martand Sun Temple and the Amarnath Temple**.
- Has a **close resemblance with the Martand temple**.
- **Al Beruni described the temple** as a **much-venerated site of pilgrimage**.

Significance of Sharda Peeth

- **Religious significance:** one of the **18 Maha Shakti Peethas**, or a **"Grand Shakti Peethas"** and is considered to be the **abode of Hindu Goddess Saraswati.**
  - o Goddess Sharada is **considered by Kashmiri Pandits as their kuldevi** (principal deity) and referred to by many as **Kashmira Puravasini** (resident of Kashmir).
- **Educational significance:** university of higher learning of Vedic works, scriptures, and commentaries.
  - o It is believed that Sharda University had a **script known as Sharada.**
  - o The university also had **over 5,000 scholars and the biggest library.**
  - o **Renowned scholar Adi Shankaracharya and Ramanujacharya** (also written his treatise Sri Bhasya) is said to have **studied at Sharada University.**

1.3. OTHER TEMPLES IN NEWS

1.3.1. TRIMBAKESHWAR TEMPLE

- **Trimbakeshwar** temple is the **abode of one of the 12 Jyotirlingas of Lord Shiva. A Jyotirlinga is a representation of Lord Shiva in Hinduism.**
  - o Location: **foothill of mountain Bramhagiri**, from which **Godavari River flows.**
  - o **Constructed by third Peshwa Balaji Bajirao (1740-1761)**
  - o Word "Trimbak" indicates **Trinities (trideva) - Lord Brahma, Lord Vishnu, and Lord Mahesh.**
  - o Temple was **built of black stone** in **Nagara Style of temple architecture,** which is mostly prevalent in northern parts of India.

Jyotirlingas in India

Mahakaleshwar
Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh

Omkareshwar
Khandwa, Madhya Pradesh

Nageshvara
Darukavanam, Gujarat

Somnath
Saurashtra, Gujarat

Trimbakeshwar
Nashik, Maharashtra

Bhimashankar
Pune, Maharashtra

Kedarnath
Kedarnath, Uttarakhand

Vaidyanath
Deoghar, Jharkhand

Kashi Vishwanath
Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh

Grishneshwar
Aurangabad, Maharashtra

Mallikārjuna
Srisailam, Andhra Pradesh

Rameshwar
Rameshwaram, Tamil Nadu

PT 365 - Culture

1.3.2. TUNGNATH TEMPLE

- Temple, **situated in Rudraprayag district**, is believed to be more than **1,000 years old** and founded by **Arjuna** (third of the Pandava brothers).
  - At a **latitude of over 12,000 feet,** it is the **highest Shiva temple in the world.**
  - It is also referred to as **'Tritiya Kedar',** since it is part of **the 'Panch Kedar'** cluster of Shiva te mples (including Kedarnath, Madhmaheshwar, Tungnath, Rudranath, Kalpnath) spread across **the Garhwal Himalayas.**

Tungnath Temple

1.3.3. JAGESHWAR TEMPLE AND PARVATI KUND

- **Jageshwar temple** is located near **river Jata Ganga.** **Main temple of Shiva** is covered by more than 100 small **ancient temples of different gods.**
  - Temples belong to **post-Gupta and pre-medieval eras** (mostly built and renovated by **Katyuri dynasty kings).**

- o According to **Skandha Purana and Linga Purana worship of lord Shiva** was **started from Jageshwar.**
- o This area was **also centre of Lakulisha Shaivism**, a **revivalist sect worshipping Lord Shiva.**
- **Parvati Kund** at an elevation of about 5,338 feet is believed to be the site where **Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati meditated.**

1.3.4. SREE SEETHARAMA SWAMY TEMPLE, THRISSUR, KERALA

Sree Seetharama Swamy Temple

- Thrissur Pooram is considered as the **mother of all Poorams (Temple Festivals of Kerala).**
  - o It is celebrated annually at **Vadakkunnathan Temple** in Thrissur.
- The temple is dedicated to **Lord Sree Seetharama, Lord Ayyappa and Lord Shiva**.
  - o It has a **Hanuman statue of 55 feet tall**, which is the Kerala's Largest hanuman statue.
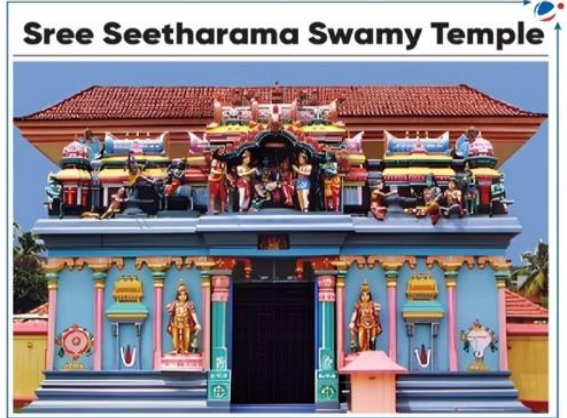
1.3.5. THIRUNELLY TEMPLE, KERALA

Thirunelly Temple

- Built in **traditional Kerala architecture**, it is situated on **banks of stream Papanashini**, on the side of **Brahmagiri hills** in Wayanad, Kerala.
- This temple is blessed with the **trinity of Shiva, Vishnu (main diety), and Brahma**.

NEWS TODAY

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News Today is **Daily Current Affairs bulletin** that simplifies newspaper reading and keeps you updated with daily events. It helps aspirants in:

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Developing an eye for identifying the kind of news that should be read in the newspapers.

Understanding the different technical terms, complex phenomenon appearing in news.

Key Features of News Today Document

- **Sources:** It covers multiple sources like the Hindu, Indian Express, PIB, News on Air, Economic Times, Hindustan Times, the Mint etc.

- **Segments:** It covers primary News of the day, Also in News and special focus on Personalities and Places in News in 4 pages.

- **Primary News of the Day:** It covers main news of the day in less than 180 words. The main focus of this news is to cover the recent development in detail.

- **Also in News and Places in News/Personality in News:** It covers in 80 words sections like important terms appearing in the news, Protected areas & Species in News etc.

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Watch News Today Video Bulletin every day at 9 PM

Scan the QR code to download the News Today document

Scan the QR code for News Today Quiz

2. ARCHITECTURE AND SCULPTURE

2.1. MOHENJO-DARO'S DANCING GIRL

Why in news?

The Mascot of the International Museum Expo in Delhi is inspired from Mohenjodaro's Dancing Girl.

More on news

Dancing Girl

- The **International Museum Expo** was organized as part of Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav to celebrate the **47th International Museum Day (IMD).**
    - The IMD **theme** for this year is **'Museums, Sustainability and Well Being'.**
- Mascot which is a contemporized version of the Dancing Girl **made of wood in the Chennapatnam art style.**

About Mohenjodaro's Dancing Girl

- The Dancing Girl sculpture belongs to the **Harappan Civilisation** and dates back to **circa 2500 BCE.**
- **Found in the Mohenjo-Daro site in 1926** by British archaeologist **Ernest McKay.**
- Presently, it is on display **National Museum, New Delhi.**
- The sculpture was made using the **'Lost Wax'** method.
- The statue is **named the 'Dancing Girl'** owing to her posture.

> **Chennapatnam art style**
> - **Made in Channapatna town** also known as "town of toys", Ramanagara District in Karnataka.
> - In 2005, **it got protection through Geographical Indication (GI) tag.**
> - **Mostly ivory wood** is but rarely rosewood and sandalwood are also **used**.
> - **Woodwork is coloured using vegetable dyes** and high abrasive property grass is used for glazing.
> - **Tipu Sultan invited Persian artisans to train the local artists.**

2.2. NATARAJA STATUE

Why in the news?

The world's tallest Nataraja statue was installed at Bharat Mandapam, the venue of the G20 summit in Delhi.

About the statue

- Built in **Ashtadhatu.**
    - **octo-alloy** of **gold, silver, copper, lead, zinc, tin, iron, and mercury**
- Lost wax casting method used.

About Nataraja ('Lord of Dance') Statue

- Dance represents the **cyclical creation and destruction of the universe.**
    - Manifestation of **panchkrityas or the five activities** of Shiva.
    - The Cholas considered Lord Shiva as Nataraj as their family deity.
- **Evolution of Nataraja Sculpture**
    - first appeared in the Pallava period between the **7th century CE and mid-9th century CE.**
    - Its present, form evolved **under the patronage of the Chola dynasty**.
    - Distinguished patron during the 10th century: widowed Chola queen, **Sembiyan Maha Devi.**
- **Temples associated:**
    - **Thillai Nataraja Temple** in Chidambaram (Tamil Nadu).

- ✓ **Parantaka I (ruler of the Chola dynasty)** is associated with the temple.
- ✓ Located at the **Center Point of world 's Magnetic Equator.**
- Also found at the **Uma Maheswarar Temple** in Konerirajapuram, and the **Brihadeeswara Temple**, in Thanjavur.

Features of the Nataraja Statue

- » **Damaru in the upper right hand** (signifies creation)
- » **Upper left-hand holds Agni** (signifies destruction and its counterpart)
- » Lower right hand in **abhayamudra** (a gesture that allays fear and reassures safe existence)
- » Lower left hand held in **dola hasta**
- » Right leg used for balancing and suppressing the **apasmara** (the demon of ignorance or forgetfulness)
- » Left leg in **bhujangatrasita stance** (represents tirobhava, that is kicking away the veil of maya or illusion from the devotee's mind)
- » **Circular jvala mala** (the garland of flames) surrounding the entire dancing figuration

Art and architecture under Chola dynasty

Sculptures
- Chola bronze sculptures were made using the **cire perdue or lost-wax casting** technique.
- The sculptures featured holes at the bottom.

Paintings
- Paintings on the themes of **Puranas** painted on the inner walls of the **Raja Rajeswara** and Gangaikonda Cholapuram Temple.
- A painting believed to be that of Marco Polo is in the **Brihadeeswarar Temple.**

Music and dance
- Instruments such as kudamula, **veena**, and **flute** were used, and the **devadasis** were expert musicians and singers.
- The **classical dance** form of **Bharatnatyam** is believed to have flourished under Chola .

Chola kingdom and its neighbours

Temples
- Chola temples can be **categorized in two groups**
  - ○ Early temples had **Pallava influence.**
  - ○ Later temples had **Chalukya influence.**
- **Architectural style:** Dravidian
- **Key Features of the Chola temples**
  - ○ Surrounded by a **high boundary wall.**
  - ○ Consists of **grabhgriha** (inner sanctum) and **antarala** (vestibule)**.**
  - ○ Temples were huge and large with **Vimanas** (structure over inner sanctum) or **Gopuras** (entrance tower).
  - ○ Raw materials: blocks of **gneiss and granite**.
  - ○ **Important examples**:
    - ✓ Early group- **Vijayalaya temple**.
    - ✓ Later group- **Brihadishwar temple of Thanjavur and the Brihadishwar temple of Gangaikond cholpuram.**

Chola Dynasty

Founder	Vijayalaya
Prominent ruler	• **Parantaka I (destroyer of Madurai) (capital city of Pandyas):** Defeated Sinhalese invaders and united Cholas and Pandyas lands. • **Rajaraja Chola (985-1014 AD):** Acquired northern Sri Lanka, Lakshadweep and Maldive islands. • **Rajendra Chola-I (1014-1044 AD) (known as Gangaikonda chola):** Conquered portions of the Malay Peninsula and MalayArchipelago. • **Kulottunga I:** United eastern coast with chola empire.
Major cities	• **Capital:** Thanjavur (Tanjore) and later Gangaikonda Cholapuram. • **Regional capital:** Kanchipuram and Madurai in which occasional courts were held. • **Present-day territories:** Perambalur, Ariyalur, Nagapattinam, Pudukkottai, Vridhachalam, Pichvaram districts of Tamil Nadu.
Cultures	• **They sculpted and cast exquisite bronze figures,** primarily depicting Hindu gods (Bronze statue of Nataraja). • **Land tax was** the single largest source of income. • **Puravu-varitinaik - katam system of** land revenue was in existence. • Officials were paid by **assignments of land called jivitas.**
Language	• **Official language was Tamil.** It was the medium of education for the masses. • **The Sanskrit language** was for liturgical purpose.
Administration	• **Cholas ruled in a sustained Monarchy.** Kingdom was divided into provinces which were known as mandalams. • Each village acted as a **self-governing unit.** • King remained the **central authority** who make major decisions.
Social religious condition	• **Buddhism, Jainism, Saivism, and Vaishnavism** were all supported by Chola kings. • Presence of high level of **literacy and education in society. Sanskrit education was restricted to Brahmins.** • **Religious monasteries (matha or gatika)** were centers of learning. • Practices like the **Division of caste into "Idangai" and "Vadangai",** Sati among royal families, devadasi system was prevalent.
**The Chola Dynasty was defeated by Pandya Dynasty**

PT 365 - Culture

2.2.1. SENGOL

Why in the News?

Recently, Prime Minister (PM) placed the **Sengol or sceptre**, presented by head of **Thiruvaduthurai Adheenam (monastery)**, in the new Parliament building.

More on News

- On August 14, 1947, **Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru received the 'Sengol' as a symbol of the transfer of power**.
- The word **'sengol'** is derived from the **Tamil word 'semmai'**, which means **'righteousness'**. As the observer of 'justice', the **hand-engraved Nandi sits atop it**.
  - **The recipient** has the "aanai" (order or decree) **to rule justly and fairly.**
- **In the Chola Empire**, Sengol was **considered a symbol of the path of duty**, the path of **service**, and the **path of the nation.**
  - handing over of a sceptre is **since the Sangam Age and finds mention in** texts such as **Purananooru, Kurunthogai, Perumpaanatrupadai, and Kalithogai.**

> **About Thiruvavaduthurai Adheenam**
> - **Established by Namasivaya Murthy**, a Saivite saint and scholar**, in 16th century**, **Thirumoolar,** Siddhar and one of the Saivaite saints and **author of Thirumanthiram**, attained enlightenment under a Peepal tree **in Thiruvavaduthurai**.
> - Math is on the **southern banks of river Cauvery.**

About Chola Administration

- **King was the most powerful** individual **and guided by a council of ministers.**
  - **Top authorities were known as Peruntaram,** while the inferior officials were known as Siruntaram.
- **Chola empire was divided into mandalams or provinces** and these, in turn, **were divided into valanadu and nadu.**
- **Encouraged local self-government in the villages**.
  - **Mention of two assemblies, Ur and the Sabha or Mahasabha**, in many inscriptions (including the Uthiramerur Inscriptions).
    - ✓ **Ur** was a general **assembly of village.**
    - ✓ **Mahasabha was a gathering of adult men** in brahmana villages which were called agraharas.
- **In addition to land tax**, they drew income from **tolls on trade, taxes on professions etc.**
  - Chola kings gave some **rich landowners titles like muvendavelan** (a velan or peasant serving three kings), **araiyar (**chief), etc.

> **Categories of Land gifted**
> - **Vellanvagai**: Land of non-Brahmana peasant proprietors
> - **Brahmadeya**: Land gifted to Brahmanas
> - **Shalabhoga**: Land for the maintenance of a school
> - **Devadana, tirunamattukkani**: Land gifted to temples.
> - **Pallichchhandam:** Land donated to Jaina institutions.

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2.3. OTHER CULTURAL ASPECTS SHOWCASED IN G20

VISIONIAS
INSPIRING INNOVATION

Cultural Aspects Showcased in G20

- The theme of the summit **"Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" has its origins in the Maha Upanishad.**
  - ▷ **Satyameva Jayate' inscribed below the Emblem of India is taken from** Mundaka Upanishad.

Tribal Art and Artifacts in G20 Summit

- **Pithora paintings** are done by Rathwa, Bhil, Nayak and Tadi tribes of Gujarat, parts of **Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh.**
- **Angora and Pashmina** shawls of **Leh-Ladakh and Himachal Pradesh,** woven by Bodh and Bhutia tribes.
- **Metal Ambabari craft** of the Meena tribe of Rajasthan.
- **Gond painting** (received the **Geographical Indication (GI)** tag recently) from Madhya Pradesh and **Saura painting** by artisans from Odisha.
- **Longpi pottery: The Tangkhul Naga tribes practice this.** Longpi does not resort to the potter's wheel.

Every country displayed two exhibits at G20

India showcased

- Rigveda manuscript **handwritten in Sharada script.**
  - ▷ Max Muller translated **Rigveda from Sanskrit to English.**
  - ▷ **Other major translation**
    - William Jones translated **Gita Govinda into English.**
    - Georg **Buhler translated** Paiyalachchhi, the oldest Prakrit dictionary
- Another Indian exhibit was a **handwritten version of Panini's Ashtadhyayi.**
  - ▷ It deals with Sanskrit grammar.

Democratic Tradition in Indian History

Democracy in Ancient India

- Two sets of assembly, **namely, 'sabha' and 'samiti' figuring in the 'Atharva Veda'**
- Buddhist and Jain texts list several republican states of the time. For example, **Lichchavi state** of Vaishali.
- **Buddist canon describes** norms for the election of king and also leaders of Bauddha sangha.

Uthiramerur Inscriptions (Uttaramerur)	‣ **Dated around 920 A.D** in reign of **Parantaka Chola-I** (907-955 AD).
	‣ It is an **ancient Chola village** once known as Chaturvedimangalam and is **located near Chennai in Tamil Nadu.**
	‣ As per Uthiramerur inscriptions on Chola Kudavolai Election System, **every village was categorized as kudumbu** (ward in modern day parlance) where **representatives of general assembly were elected.**
	  ▷ **Provide details** of the way in which the **sabha was organized.**
	  ▷ **Qualification for contesting:** Must own land, own a house, have knowledge of vedas, and above 35 years of age and below 70 years.
	  ▷ **Disqualification:** member of committee from last 3 years, acts of misconduct included accepting bribes, and misappropriating else's property.

Khalimpur Copper Plate Inscription	‣ This copper inscription belongs to the **Pala ruler Dharmapala.** ‣ It talks of how King Gopala **was elected by the people to replace an unfit ruler.**
Mahasthan inscription	‣ Mauryan time inscription. ‣ There is a description of the famine during the time of Emperor Ashoka.

Anubhava Mantapa of Lord Basaveshwara	‣ It was established to **facilitate gathering for philosophy and experience.**
	‣ It was one of the **earliest Parliament in the history** of mankind.
	  ▷ **Prabhudeva, a great Yogi,** was the President and Lord Basava acted as the Prime Minister.
	  ▷ In Anubhava Mantapa members **were picked up or nominated by higher authorities** of Mantapa.
	
	Lord Basaveshwara (1105–1167)
	‣ He was a **12th-century poet and born in Karnataka.**
	Known for Socio-Religious Reforms,Vachana Literature, and the Lingayat Movement in south India.
	Basava Purana, written by Palkuriki Somanatha in 13th-century, holds full account to Basaveshwara life and ideas

2.4. NEW PARLIAMENT HOUSE

Why in the News?

Recently, new Parliament House was inaugurated.

More about News

- Current project is **part of Central Vista development/redevelopment plan**, .
  - **Inaugurated in 1931**, Central Vista **included Rashtrapati Bhavan, North and South Blocks, Parliament House, Record Office** (later named as The National Archives) **along with India Gate monument** and civic gardens on either side of the Rajpath.
- **Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat spirit:** Its triangular design, by Padma Shri architect Bimal Patel, is inspired by India's cultural diversity and built to meet the needs of the next 150 years.

Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat Spirit

- **Lok Sabha Hall** is based on the **theme of National Bird, Peacock.**
- **Rajya Sabha Hall** is based on the **theme of the National Flower, the Lotus.**
- **National tree**, the banyan, has been **planted on the premises** of the Parliament.
- **Inclusion of the symbolic Sengol** (sceptre), symbolising the transfer of power, is **placed next to the Speaker's chair**.
- **Ashoka Pillar on the roof** of Parliament House.
- **Hand-woven carpets from Bhadohi,** known as 'Carpet City' due to its beautiful hand-woven carpets, in Uttar Pradesh have been fitted in the new Parliament House.
- **Six gates dedicated to water, land, and sky** that express its gratitude to the friendly nature of Indian civilization.
- **Ashok Chakra is made on the gate** of the new Parliament House, and **Satyamev Jayate is written**.
- **Wood from Nagpur, marble of Gujarat, stone work is of Rajasthan** and **bamboo wood flooring from Tripura** is used.

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New Parliament has **6 entrances, each signifying a different role.**

Ceremonial entrances and their Guardians

Gaja Dwar (North Gate)		• **Represents wisdom and wealth, intellect, and memory,** and also embodies the aspirations of the elected representatives of the democracy. • Inspired by a similar statue at **Madhukeshvara Temple at Banabasi, Karnataka.**
Garuda Dwar (Eastern Gate)		• Eagle-like Garuda stands, which signifies the **aspirations of the people and the administrators of the country.** • Inspired by a similar statue of **Nayaka period sculpture from Kumbhakonam, Tamil Nadu.**
Ashwa Dwar (Southern Gate)		• Horse standing alert and ready which is symbol of **endurance and strength, power, and speed,** also describing the quality of governance. • Inspired by a similar statue at the **Sun temple, Konark, Odisha.**

Public Entrances and their Guardians

Shardul Dwar (Western Gate)		• Mythological creature, Shardul symbolising the **power of the people of the country.** • Inspired by a similar statute at **Shiva Temple at Sihonia in Morena, Madhya Pradesh.**
Hansa Dwar (North East)		• Reminding the people the power of **discernment and self-realisation** as essential feature of Democracy. • Inspired by a similar statute at **Vijay Vitthala Temple, Hampi, Karnataka.**
Makara Dwar		• Mythological aquatic creature, Makara representing, **unity in diversity among the people of the country.** • Inspired by a similar Statue at the **Hoysaleshwara Temple at Halebidu.**

Related News: Chausath Yogoni temple

- It is believed that the design of the old Parliament building was inspired from **Chausath Yogini temple located in mitaoli village in Madhya Pradesh.**

More about the news

Old Parliament building was designed by architects **Edwin Lutyens** and **Herbert Baker.**

- The grand Chausath Yogini **temple is circular**, with 64 chambers dedicated to the 64 yoginis, and a **central shrine dedicated to Shiva.**
  - The 64 yoginis are **believed to be powerful warriors and sorceresses**.
- It was built around 1323 by King Devapala of the **Kachchhapaghata dynasty.**

Chausath Yogini temple

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2.5. JANTAR MANTAR

Why in news?

The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has constituted a fresh expert committee for the conservation, preservation, restoration, and proper functionality of the Delhi Jantar Mantar observatory.

About Jantar Mantar

- **Genesis:** Maharaja Jai Singh II built 5 astronomical observatories across northern India.
- **Observations:** It was used to-
  o Study time and differences between planets
  o Observe the Movement of Planets and Time at Different Places.
- **Reason to build observatories at different locations:** to improve accuracy by comparing readings from different coordinates.
- **Timeline of construction:** The first to be built was the observatory at Delhi in 1724 and the last to be completed was the observatory at Jaipur, in 1738.
- **Present conditions:** Five observatories in Delhi, Jaipur, Mathura (ceased to exist), Varanasi and Ujjain.
  o **Jaipur Observatory houses the greatest number and variety of instruments**.
  o They include a number of instruments that are not duplicated at the other sites, such as the Kappala Yantra, Rasivalaya Yantras, and Unnatamsha Yantra etc.

Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh II (1686-1743)
- He was the ruler of the Rajput State of **Amber in India.**
- A feudatory of the Mughals, he received the title of 'Sawai' (one and a quarter) **from Emperor Aurangzeb.**
- **He built the city of Jaipur.** The European travellers of the time, like the Frenchman Louis Rousselet, and the English bishop, Heber, were greatly impressed by Jai Singh's unparalleled excellence in city planning.

Key instruments in Delhi's Jantar Mantar
1. Misra Yantra
2. Samrat Yantra
3. Jai Prakash Yantra
4. Ram Yantra
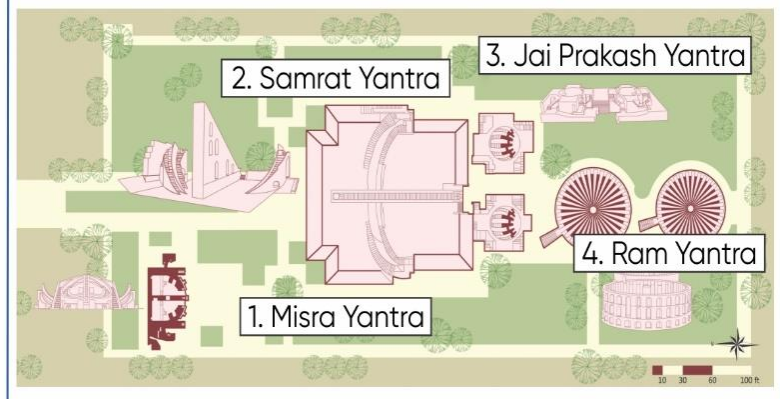
2.6. OTHER ARCHITECTURAL-RELATED NEWS

2.6.1. GOLCONDA FORT

- Its history goes back to **early 13th century** when it was **ruled by the Kakatiya's** followed by **Qutub Shahi kings** (ruled the region in 16th and 17th century).
  o Qutb Shahi Sultans developed the present architecture, a **gigantic granite stronghold.**
  o Golconda was the **principal capital of the Qutub Shahi kings**.
  o **Engineering marvel: Acoustical effects** at Fateh Darwaza (Victory gate).

2.6.2. SIRI FORT

- Siri Fort **was built** in the **13th Century by Alauddin Khilji.**
  o Siri is **considered** among **one of the eight cities of Delhi.**
  o **Alauddin Khilji laid the foundation** of his capital Siri in 1303 A.D.
  o He also **excavated a reservoir known as Hauz Khaz** to meet the requirement of Siri township.
  o He also **constructed semi-circular gateway**, popularly **known as Alai Darwaja**, with horseshoe shaped arch with lotus motifs.

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2.6.3. STATUE OF ONENESS

- **Adi Shankaracharya,** also known as **Jagadguru,** was the **founder of Advaita Vedanta** (non-dualism) in **8th century.**
  - He was **born** in Kaladi in **Kerala.**
  - The statue of Adi Shankaracharya **is in Omkareshwar and it is named as statue of Oneness.**

Other Statues

Name	Dedicated to	Location
Statue of **Unity**	Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel	Kevadia in Gujarat
Statue of **Equality**	Saint Ramanuja	Hyderabad
Statue of **Peace**	Jain monk Acharya Shree **Vijay Vallabh Surishwer**	Rajasthan
Statue of **Prosperity**	Nadaprabhu Kempegowda	Bengaluru

Master

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3. PAINTING AND OTHER FORMS OF ART

3.1. INSCRIPTIONS AS SOURCES OF HISTORY

Why in news?

Recently, ancient Copper plates were decoded by Pune-based Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute (BORI), shedding light on the ancient Sanskrit poetess Shilabhattarika.

More about news

- **About the Copper plates:** it had five copper plates said to be dating from the reign of the Badami Chalukyan ruler Vijayaditya (696-733 CE).
  - The plates were held together by a copper ring bearing a **Varaha (boar) seal.**
  - The Varaha seal is the trademark of **the Badami Chalukyas**.
- **About Shilabhattarika:** She was a Chalukyan princess, possibly the daughter of Pulakeshin II.
- **Works of Shilabhattarika:**
  - Adhere to the **Panchali style** that calls for a balance of words with their meaning.
  - **The Sanskrit poet-critic Rajashekhara** (who lived in the 9th-10th century CE) and (Gurjara-Pratiharas) has praised Shilabhattarika.
- **Significance of Inscriptions:**
  - **Proper dating of the events,(** After James Prinsep deciphered the edicts of Mauryan emperor Ashoka, proper dating of events became easy**)**
  - **Information about social life(**For example, the Brahmadesham inscription refers to the Sati committed by a Queen) and
  - **knowing about art forms**(The earliest reference to a Dancer is found in Jogimara cave belonging to 3rd century B. C. And kudimmiyanmalai inscription of Tamil Nadu is one of the earliest inscriptions on music.

Other prominent ancient Indian Poetesses
- **Gargi :** She challenged the sage Yajnavalkya (writer of brihadaranyaka Upanishad).
- **Maitreyi:** She was **the expounder** (a person who explains) **of the Vedas.**
- **Key women among Nayanars (circa 7th and 8th century CE):** Karaikkal Ammaiyar, Mangaiyarkkarasi, and Isaignaniyar (also known as the mother of Sundarar.)
- **Andal (circa 10th century CE):** She was the only female in 12 Alvars. Andal composed two works (both in Tamil) - Tiruppavai and Nacciyar Tirumoli.
- **Akka Mahadevi (circa 12th CE):** She wrote in the Kannada language and her poems are in the *vacana* form.
- **Atukuri Molla (circa 1440 CE):** She was the daughter of a potter and writer of the Telugu Ramayana.

Related News: Someshwara Inscription
- Archaeologist discovers an inscription announcing the death of King Kulashekara Alupendra I at Someshwara (Karnataka).
- It was the **first record of the Alupa Dynasty** that announced the death of a king.
  - The inscription is significant in the **study of Tuluva history** (different from Tuluva dynasty of Vijayanagara**)** and culture.
- **Alupa Dynasty** was one of the **longest-reigning dynasties of Tulu Nadu** (in Karnataka).
  - **Capital:** Barkur.
  - Shifted their capital to **Barkur from Udyavara**.
  - Tulu has a **rich oral literature tradition** with **folk-song forms** like paddana, and traditional folk theatre yakshagana.
  - The **Halmidi Inscription (Hassan, Karnataka) mentions about a grant recommended by King Pashupati** of Alupa and the **Chief Commander of Kadamba** forces.

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3.2. UNESCO CREATIVE CITIES NETWORK (UCCN)

Why in the news?

Gwalior, Kozhikode joined the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN).

More about the news

- New cities were acknowledged for their strong commitment **to harnessing culture and creativity as part of their development strategies.**
- **Kozhikode ('City of Literature')**
- **Gwalior ('City of Music')**
  - It has a rich musical history **encompassing legends like Mian Tansen (**Tansen title was given by Raja Vikramjeet of Gwalior) **and Baiju Bawra.**
  - It is also considered the **birthplace of Gwalior Gharana** (the oldest Hindustani musical Gharana).
- **Other Indian cities on UCCN:** Mumbai (Film), Chennai (Music), Hyderabad (Gastronomy), Varanasi (Music), Jaipur (Crafts and Folk art) and Srinagar (Crafts and Folk art).
- **About UCCN**
  - It was **created in 2004.**
  - The **UCCN tag** gives **global recognition and boosts tourism.**
  - It has **350 creative cities in more than 100 countries, spanning seven creative fields:**
    - ✓ Crafts and Folk Art, Design, Film, Gastronomy, Literature, Media Arts, and Music.
- **About UNESCO**
  - **Genesis:** Established in 1945 with headquarters in Paris
  - **Objective:** To contribute to the building of a culture of peace, the eradication of poverty, and intercultural dialogue through education, the sciences, culture, communication, and information.
  - **Members:** 194 Members (including India) and 12 Associate Members.
  - **Initiatives:** The Universal Copyright Convention (1952); Man and the Biosphere program (1971); World Heritage Convention (1972); Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003).

3.3. ANCIENT STITCHED SHIPBUILDING METHOD (TANKAI METHOD)

Why in the news?

Recently, the **Ministry of Culture** collaborated with the Indian Navy to **reconstruct an ancient stitched ship**.

More about the news

- The **Ministry of Culture has fully funded** this project.
- Indian Navy is overseeing the **ship's design and construction.**
- Ship will be constructed by stitching the planks of wood using ropes, cords, coconut fibres, natural resins, and oils.
  - The idea of ship design was taken from an **Ajanta painting** of a stitched ship.
  - This initiative is **in synergy with the Ministry of Culture's Project Mausam.**
    - ✓ **Project Mausam** aims to reconnect and re-establish communications between countries of the Indian Ocean world, to create an understanding of cultural values and concerns.
    - ✓ It aims to **rebuild maritime cultural connections with the 39 countries bordering the Indian Ocean**.
- **Ancient trade Routes:** The Indian Ocean trade routes connected Southeast Asia, India, Arabia, and East Africa, beginning at least as early as the 3rd century BCE.
  - **Important ancient ports:**
    - ✓ **West coast ports:** Barygaya, Suppara, Calliena,Semylla, Mandagore, Palaepatme,Malizigara, Aurranobbas,Byzantine, Naura, Tyndis, Muziris and Nelcynda.
    - ✓ **East coast ports**: Tamralipti, Charitrapur, Paluru, Dantapur, Kalingapatnam, Pithunda, Sopatma, Ghantasala, Poduca, Puhar, Korkai and Camara

PT 365 - Culture

- Some of the important trade routes
  - **Ancient Maritime and cultural links to South and Southeast Asian regions:** Local traders known as **Sadhavs** used to sail through place of South and South East Asian regions like Bali, Sumatra, Silon (Sri Lanka), etc.
  - **Red Sea trade route:** linked the Roman Empire and India, through the Red Sea.
  - **Silk Road:** An overland trade route supposedly stretching all the way across Asia from Xian in China to Antioch in Turkey.

3.4. MEWAR SCHOOL OF PAINTING

Why in the news?

About 4,000 Mewari miniature paintings **of Allah Baksh, Maharana Jai Singh's Court painter** were showcased.

- **About Mewar Miniature painting (17th-18th centuries)**
  - School in the **Rājasthanī style developed in Mewar (Rajasthan).**
  - The emergence of the Mewar School is **associated with a set of Ragamala paintings painted at Chawand in 1605** by an artist named **Nisardin**.
  - In the 18th century, Mewar painting shifted **towards courtly and secular subjects, including portraiture, court scenes**, hunting expeditions, festivals, zenana activities, and sports.
  - **The Nathdwara School** is a subset of the Mewar School of painting.
- **Features:**
  - It is characterized by **simple bright colour and direct emotional appeal**.
  - Miniature painting is a **small, finely wrought portrait executed on vellum, prepared card, copper, or ivory**.
- **Mewar school artists**: Sāhibdīn (drew Raagmala), Manohar (Bal Kanda of Ramayana), and Jagannath (Bihari Satsai).
- **About Rajasthani painting:**
  - It **differs from the Mughal painting** in its bolder use of colour, an abstract and conventionalized conception of the human figure, and an ornamental treatment of landscape.
  - **Two main factors contributed to the development of Rajasthani paintings**:
    - ✓ the patronage of rich Rajputana communities
    - ✓ the revival of Vaishnavism and the growth of bhakti cults.

Other Rajasthani Miniature Paintings: Malwa school of painting, Jaipur school of painting, Bundi school of painting, Kota school of painting, Bikaner school of painting, Kishangarh school of painting, Jodhpur school of painting

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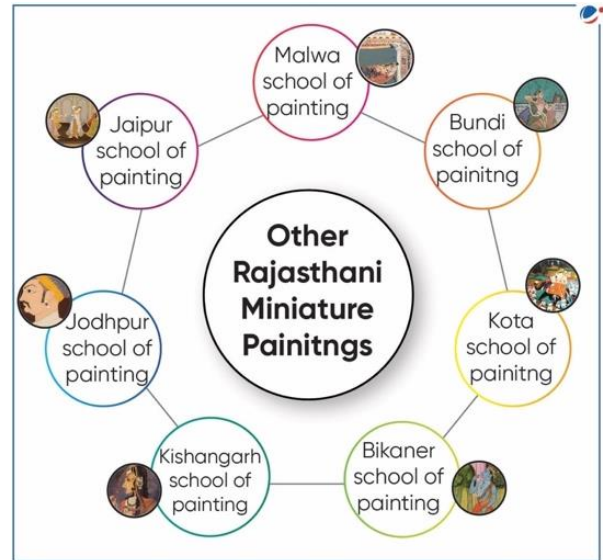
Related news: Basholi Painting
- **They are known for their miniature art style from the Kathua district(Jammu)** and have received the Geographical Indication (GI) Tag.
  - It is the first independent GI-tagged product from the Jammu region.
- It is considered the first school of Pahari paintings
- These are painted on **paper, cloth, or wood using natural pigments and dyes.**

Basholi Painting

PT 365 - Culture
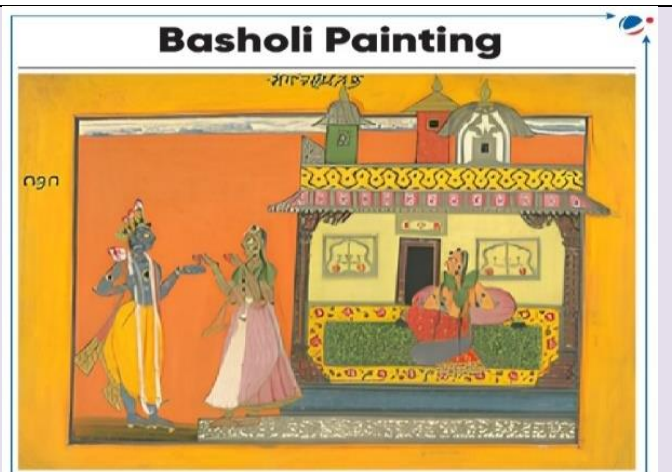
3.5. OTHER PAINTINGS IN NEWS

3.5.1. BAGH PRINT

- **MP Tourism Board** in association **with district administration Dhar** launched a **training camp on** manufacturing **sustainable bags based on Bagh Print.**
- Its name is derived from the **village Bagh on the banks of the Baghini River.**
- **Vegetable colours of red and black over a white background** is used
- It has been awarded **Geographical Indications (GI) tag.**
- **Mesolithic Era Rock Painting**

3.5.2. PANAMALAI PAINTINGS (TAMIL NADU)

- 1,300-year-old paintings at **Talagirishwara temple** are fading, as per reports.
- The painting shows Lord Shiva with eight hands dancing, known as **Latathilagabhani**, being watched by Goddess Parvathi.
- These **mural paintings** were created after covering stonewalls with a **paste made of limestone and sand**.
- The paintings bear a close **resemblance to paintings in Ajantha and Chithannavasal.**
- The temple was constructed by **Pallava king Narasimhavarman II,** popularly known as Rajasimha

3.5.3. CHERIYAL SCROLL PAINTING

- **Cheriyal Scroll paintings** are unique to **Telangana**, having Geographical Indication (GI) status.
  - It is a **popular and modified version of Nakashi art**, highly rich in local motifs.
  - **Features:**
    - ✓ **painted in narrative format** and depict stories from **Indian mythology** as well as shorter stories related to the **Puranas and Epics**.
    - ✓ Use in **story-telling** by the balladeer community called **Kaki Padagollu.**
    - ✓ painted in **mostly primary colors**, showing a predominance of red color in the background.

Cheriyal Scroll painting

3.5.4. PICHWAI (PICHVAI) PAINTING

- Chennai hosts an art exhibit showcasing Pichwai, some dating back 350 years.
- **About Pichwai Painting:**
  - The style originated over **400 years ago**, in the town o**f Nathdwara near Udaipur in Rajasthan.**
  - The word **Pichwai comes from 'pichh'** meaning **back**, and **'wai', meaning textile hanging.**
  - Made on **cloth** and **depict**s tales fro**m Lord Krishna's life.**
    - ✓ Other common subjects found are **Radha, gopis; Festivals such as Sharad Purnima, Raas Leela, Diwali and Holi.**

Pichwai Painting

✓ They are made by members of the **Pushti Marg sect**, founded by Shri Vallabhacharya in the 16th Century.

3.6. GARBA

Why in the News?

'Garba of Gujarat' has been inscribed in the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) of Humanity by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

More on the news

- 'Garba Of Gujarat' was added in the ICH list under the provisions of the **2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage** .
- It is the **15th ICH element** from India to join this list.

About Garba

- Folk dance performed on the occasion of the Hindu festival of **Navaratri**, which is dedicated to the worship of the **feminine energy or 'Shakti'**.
- Word **"garba"** comes from the Sanskrit word **garbha,** meaning **"womb."**
- **Key Features of the Dance**
  o Takes place around a **perforated earthenware pot** called a **garbha deep ("womb lamp")**, or an image of the **mother goddess Amba.**
  o Dancers move around the pot in an **anti-clockwise circle**.
  o Accompanied by **traditional dhol/drum,** and other musical instruments.

About UNESCO's Convention for the Safeguarding of the ICH, 2003

- The UNESCO meeting in **Paris** adopted this convention in **2003** for the Safeguarding of the ICH.
- **Intergovernmental Committee(IGC)** was established within UNESCO, to **examine requests submitted by States Parties** for the inscription of intangible heritage on the Lists.
  o **IGC** consists of **24 members** and is elected in the General Assembly of the Convention.
  o **India** was elected to the **IGC** in 2022 for a **tenure of 4 years(third term).**
- **About intangible cultural heritage**
  o **Article 2** of this Convention defines "intangible cultural heritage".
  o They are manifested in the following domains:
    ✓ oral traditions and expressions;
    ✓ performing arts;
    ✓ social practices, rituals and festive events;
    ✓ knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe;
    ✓ traditional craftsmanship.

List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of India	
Kutiyattam, Sanskrit theatre	Buddhist chanting of Ladakh
Tradition of Vedic chanting	Sankirtana, ritual singing, drumming and dancing (narrate the life of Lord Krishna).
Ramlila: The traditional performance of the Ramayana	Traditional brass and copper craft of utensil making among the Thatheras of Jandiala Guru, Punjab
Ramman: Religious festival and ritual theatre of the Garhwal Himalayas	Nawrouz
Chhau dance	Yoga
Kalbelia folk songs and dances of Rajasthan	Kumbh Mela
Mudiyettu, ritual theatre and dance drama of Kerala	Durga Puja in Kolkata

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3.7. OTHER DANCE FORMS IN NEWS

3.7.1. CHAM LAMA DANCE

- Tibetan Buddhists perform Lama dance to celebrate Guru Padma sambhava's birthday
- It is a **masked dance unique to Tibetian Buddhism**
- The **dance in itself is seen as a form of meditation** and mostly practised during festivals like Losar in Buddhist monastries.
- **Padma Sambhava (Guru Rinpoche)** the founder of Nyingmapa is believed to **have started the Cham Dance tradition.**
- The dance **often depicts scenes of Padmasambhava's life and his 8 manifestations.**

Cham Lama dance

3.7.2. KOLKALI DANCE

- Recently, Kolkali dance was performed in Thrissur, Kerala in remembrance of **St. Thomas' arrival** in India.
- **About Kolkali Dance**
  - Folk art form, performed in **North Malabar region** of **State**.
    - ✓ It is referred to as **Kolattam** and **Kolamu in** Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh, respectively.
  - It draws elements from **Kalaripayattu**, a martial art of Kerala and Tamil Nadu**.**
  - It is performed during the paddy harvest season.

3.7.3. PULIKKALI (TIGER DANCE)

- More then 250 Pulikkali dancer participated in thrissur to lend a carnivalesque finish to Onam celebrations
- **Pulikali (Tiger Dance) is a folk dance of Kerala.**
- During the Onam festival, artists **paint their bodies like tigers with stripes of yellow, red and black.**
- They dance to the rhythm of traditional percussion instruments such as thakil, udukku and chenda.
- Main theme: tiger hunting with participants playing the role of tiger and hunter**.**

Pulikkali Dance

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3.8. OTHER NEWS RELATED TO ART FORMS

3.8.1. GILGIT MANUSCRIPTS

- **The birch bark and clay-coated Gilgit manuscripts** were written between the **5" - 6" centuries CE.**
- These manuscripts include both **canonical and non-canonical Buddhist works** that throw light on the evolution of other languages like Sanskrit, Chinese, etc.
- The manuscripts contain sutras from the Buddhist canon, **Samadhirajasutra** and the **Saddharmapundarikasutra** (the Lotus Sutra).
- **First discovered at the ruins of an ancient stupa-like structure at Naupur village in Gilgit, Kashmir** in 1931.

Gilgit Manuscripts
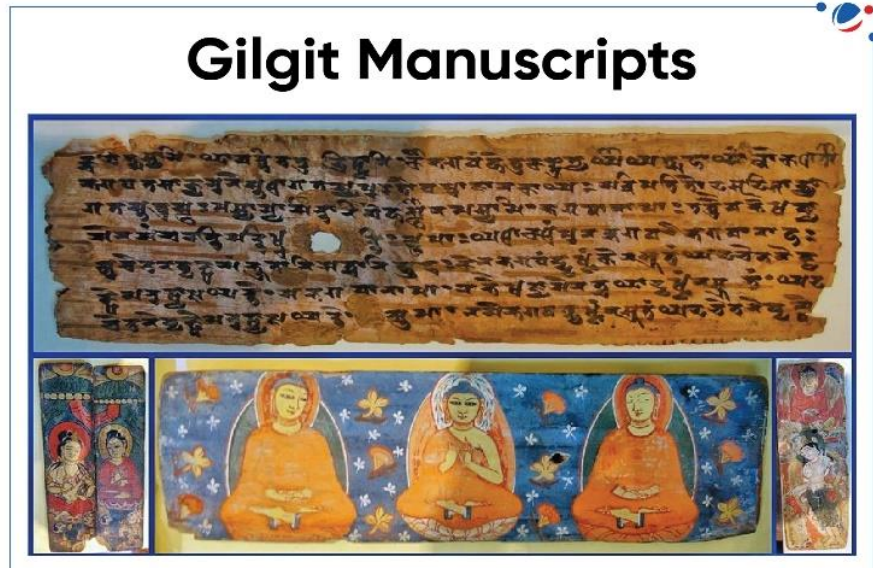
3.8.2. OL CHIKI SCRIPT

- Prime Minister wished the people of the Santhal tribe on the occasion of Hul diwas using the Ol Chiki Script of the Santhali language.
- Ol Chiki script **was created in 1925 by Raghunath Murmu.**
  - **Santhali is a Munda language spoken mainly in Jharkhand, West Bengal**, Odisha, and also in Bangladesh, eastern Nepal and Bhutan.
  - There are about 7.3 million speakers of Santhali in India, according to the 2011 census.
- Santhal rebellion is **attributed to** the **Permanent Settlement Act of 1793** which led to their displacement from Birbhum and Manbhum regions (present-day Bengal).
  - The rebellion **occurred in** the **Damin-i-Koh region (**Persian word meaning the skirts of the hills) in the **Rajmahal Hills of Jharkhand.**
  - Sidhu and Kanhu Murmu headed it.
  - After the Santhal Uprising subsided the colonial government took the following steps
    - ✓ The territories called **'Santhal Paraganas' were created.**
    - ✓ It **became illegal for a Santhal to transfer land to a non-Santhal.**

3.8.3. PHANIGIRI ARTEFACTS

- **Belonging to 200 BCE-400 CE.**
- Artefacts discovered in **1942 and rediscovered in 2003.**
- **Phanigiri (meaning hillock of snake hood)** is a small village in the state of Telangana.
- **Key findings**
  - **narrate an epoch-making change** in the history of Buddhism.
  - **provides evidence of the deification of Buddha** and a transition towards canonization and ritual in Buddhist practices.
  - image of the **Buddha wearing Roman toga** (a distinctive white garment) with folds carved in limestone.
  - Thoranas discovered **shows both Mahayana and Hinayana schools of thought.**

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3.8.4. VAJRA MUSHTI KALAGA

- **"Vajra Mushti Kalaga"** is a form of wrestling different from conventional grappling and entails two jetties (fighters).
- **Wrestlers use 'Vajramushti', knuckle-dusters adorned with** diamonds as a mark of weaponry to engage in immaculate battle.
- Whosoever **draws the blood from the opponent's head** first is declared the winner.
- It is held on the **ninth day of Navaratri at the Mysuru Palace** (Mysore, Karnataka).
- It was first mentioned in **Manasollasa, a manual of warfare of King Someshwara III** of the Chalukya dynasty (1124–1138).
- **Fernano Nuniz, a Portuguese traveller** noticed this form of wrestling in Vijayanagar empire.

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Answer Writing for
CIVIL SERVICES MAINS EXAMINATION

Answer writing holds paramount importance in the UPSC Mains exam as it serves as the primary means for candidates to demonstrate their knowledge, understanding, analytical ability, and time management skills. Effective answer writing is pivotal in showcasing one's ability to synthesize information, critically evaluate diverse perspectives, and present balanced arguments concisely. Proficient answer writing is instrumental in securing high scores and distinguishing candidates in a competitive environment, ultimately determining their success in the rigorous selection process for the UPSC Mains examination.

COMPONENTS OF AN IMPACTFUL ANSWER
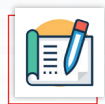
Identification of Context: Understanding the specific theme or topic of the question, and situating the response within its relevant context.

Content Competence: Demonstrating a comprehensive grasp of the subject matter, supported by accurate facts, relevant examples, and insightful analysis.

An impactful Introduction: Engagingly setting the stage for the answer, capturing the examiner's attention while providing a brief overview of the discussion to follow.
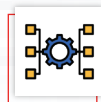
Structure and Presentation: Organizing the answer coherently with clear headings, subheadings, or bullet points, and presenting information logically and aesthetically for easy comprehension.
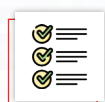
Balanced Conclusion: Summarizing key points concisely, offering insights or recommendations if applicable, and providing a satisfying closure to the argument or discussion.
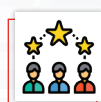
Language: Employing precise, formal language appropriate to the context, avoiding jargon, colloquialisms, or ambiguity, and demonstrating fluency and clarity in expression.

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4. IMPORTANT SITES IN THE NEWS

4.1. KEELADI EXCAVATION

Why in the News?

Recently, archaeologists at Keeladi in Tamil Nadu, have unearthed a crystal quartz weighing unit from the Sangam era.

About Keeladi Excavation site

- Keeladi is a small village situated on the **banks of the Vaigai River** in Tamil Nadu.
- excavation by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and the Tamil Nadu Archaeology Department.

Significance of Keeladi Excavation

- **Corroborate the historical accuracy:** Important for understanding the **missing links of the Iron Age** (12th century BCE to sixth century BCE) **to the Early Historic Period** (sixth century BCE to fourth century BCE)
- **Urban settlement**: Keeladi has all the characteristics of an urban civilization,
- **Existence of Industries:** Excavation suggested various stages of a weaving industry. There existed a dyeing industry and a glass bead industry.
- **Tamil Brahmi script**: Some of the pottery fragments found are written in Tamil Brahmi script.
- **Linked to Sangam age**

About Sangam age (**period of ancient Tamil Nadu, Kerala, from c. 6th century BCE to c. 3rd century CE.**)

- Sangam refers to assemblies or gatherings of poets and scholars.
- The social classification of Varna was known to Sangam poets
- It is believed that **three Sangams existed:** First and third at Madurai, the Second Sangam at Kapadapuram.
- **Vattakirutal** was a Tamil ritual of fasting till death, widespread during the Sangam age.
- **Literature** chiefly consists of Tolkappiyam (earliest), Ettuthokai and Pathuppattu and
  - **The twin epics** - Silappathigaram and Manimegalai.

4.2. OTHER SANGAM AGE SITES RELATED NEWS

4.2.1. PORPANAIKOTTAI SITE

- **A gold stud, a bone point and a carnelian bead belonging to Sangam Age** have been excavated at the Porpanaikottai site in the Pudukottai district of Tamil Nadu.
- **The Excavation site indicated a burial site, and the fort area** showed signs of water bodies inside the site.
- The discovery of bone point tools indicated weaving **industry**.

4.2.2. ADICHANALLUR

- Foundation stone laid for the **establishment of a museum in Adichanallur**, **one of five sites** declared **to be developed as Iconic Sites** in Union Budget 2020-21.
  - **Other sites are:** Rakhigarhi (Haryana), Hastinapur (UP), Dholavira (Gujarat), Shivsagar (Assam).
- Adichanallur is **an iron-age burial site located in Thoothukudi District on banks of Thamirabarani River in Tamil Nadu**
  - Adichanallur **also showcases megalithic culture**.
  - **Various objects dating back to 467 BCE** and **food grains** such as **millets and paddy** dated 665 BCE **have been unearthed** here.
  - **Korkai, ancient seaport** mentioned in Sangam literature, is **nearby Adichanallur.**

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4.3. OTHER IMPORTANT SITES IN NEWS

4.3.1. JUNA KHATIYA SITE

- Since 2018, archaeologists have **discovered 500 graves at the site**.
- Juna Khatiya is an **Early Harappan burial site** located in Lakhpat Taluka of **Kachchh district in Gujarat.**
  o Site contains **biggest Early Harappan cemetery documented in India** so far.
  o **Other Harappan sites in Gujarat**: Lothal, Surkotada, Dholavira etc.
- **Major Findings**
  o **Burial structures** are made of **dressed sandstone** and the majority of them are **rectangular in plan followed by oval or circular ones.**
  o **Painting on the Reserved Slip Ware jar** is a peculiar feature noticed.

4.3.2. CHEBROLU

- **Chebrolu, a town in Guntur** district (Andhra Pradesh), harbours clusters of temples.
  o **Eastern Chalukya, Velanati Choda, Kakatiya, Pota Rajulu, and Paristchedi dynasties** have ruled this place.
- **Major temples**
  o **Chaturmukha Brahmeswar:** Located in the middle of a pond and is dedicated to Lord Brahma.
  o **Bhimeswara:** Built by Eastern Chalukyan King Chalukya Bhima (9th century A.D.). It is a Two-storeyed temple and has a huge Shivalinga.
  o **Nageswara Swamy:** Siva temple, belonging to the 11th century A.D.
  o **Adikesava temple:** Built in Cholan style of architecture. Dedicated to Lord Vishnu, has pillars outside that have standing lions.

4.3.3. MENHIRS

- Heritage enthusiasts of Telangana seek UNESCO tag for **Menhirs at Mudumal village in Telangana.**
  o Menhirs are **upright stones** from the Megalithic period. Generally, they are erected above a burial site or near a burial site as a memorial.
  o According to archaeologists, the menhirs have been designed in a manner such that **they align with the sun on particular days,** like Equinoxes and solstices.
- They were also **used as clocks and calendars**.
- **About Menhirs, in Mudumal**
  o Mudumal village is home to **one of South-East Asia's largest cluster of Menhirs**. They are as old as **3,500 years.**
  o Locally they are called '**Niluvu rallu'- meaning standing rocks**.

Menhirs
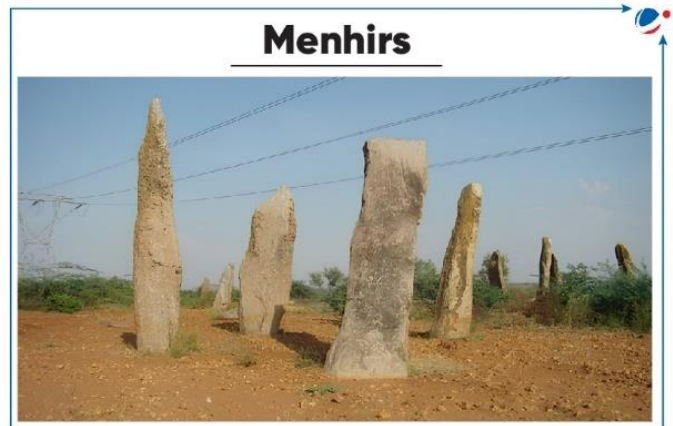
4.3.4. THOPPIKKALLU OR HAT STONES

- A large number of **megalithic hat stones** were found at **Nagaparamba, near Thirunavaya in Malappuram district in Kerala.**
  o Thirunavaya is **situated on the banks of Bharathapuzha river** and is considered the **land of ancient Mamankam** (grand assembly of rulers held once in 12 years).
  o **Hat stones,** popularly called Thoppikkallu in Malayalam, are **hemispherical laterite stones** used as **lid on burial urns** during the **megalithic period**.

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4.3.5. SUNDARGARH NATURAL ARCH

- **Geological Survey of India (GSI)** has proposed to declare the **'Natural Arch' in Kanika range of Sundargarh forest division in Odisha** as **a Geo Heritage site.**
- Arch is **oval and approximately 12 metres in height** which dates back to **lower-middle Jurassic age.**
- It is **considered to be the largest natural arch in India**, while the **other two natural arches are found in Tirumala hills in Tirupati and Andaman and Nicobar Island.**

Sundargarh Natural Arch
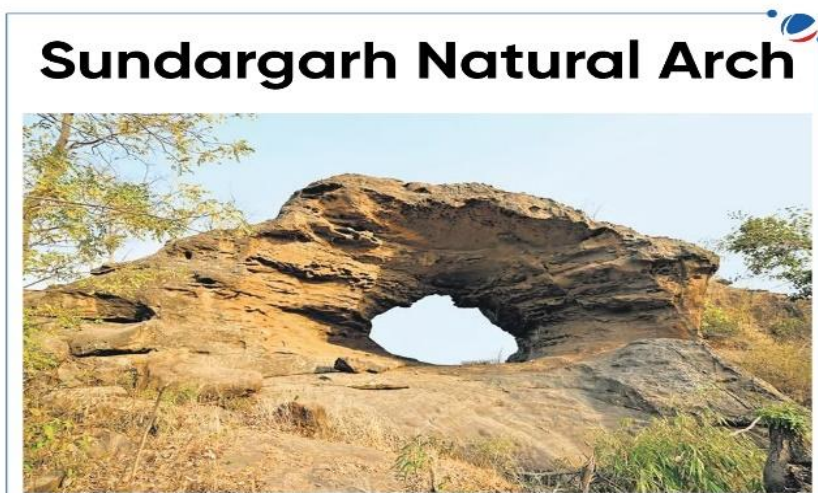
4.3.6. SISUPALGARH

Recently, land mafias have damaged a portion of the wall of the fortified ancient city of Sisupalgarh.

About Sisupalgarh:

- Located near Bhubaneswar, it was built around the 7th to 6th century BCE and served as the **capital of the Kalinga kingdom.**
- The fortification was carried out in the 4th to 3rd century BCE when King Kharavela took up the repair of the city 2,100 years ago.
- It was **designed and constructed in a complete square shape** that was surrounded by defensive walls.
- It was an important center of trade and commerce during ancient times.
- It was declared a **Centrally Protected Monument under the provisions** of the Ancient Monuments Preservation Act 1904

4.3.7. BYCULLA RAILWAY STATION OF MUMBAI

- It received **UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation**
  - 169 year old railway station is **Asia's oldest railway station.**
  - Apart from Byculla station, **Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya Museum (Mumbai), Stepwells of Golconda (Hyderabad) and Domakonda Fort** (Kamareddy) **were also winners** of this award (under different categories) in 2022.
  - Since 2000, awards have been **recognizing the achievement of private sector and public-private initiatives** in conserving or **restoring heritage in the region**.

4.3.8. WHISTLING VILLAGE (KONGTHONG VILLAGE)

- An MP presented a development report on **Kongthong village in Meghalaya**, India's **only whistling village**, to the PM.
- **About Kongthong village:**
  - Kongthong is located in the **East Khasi Hills in Meghalaya.**
  - It is popular as the **'whistling village'** due to its **unique tradition of 'Jingrwai Lawbei' (meaning the Song of the Clan's First Woman).**
  - It is a **tradition under which mothers create a tune for their newborns. These tunes are often used as names.**
  - **Kongthong people belong to the Seng Khasi Tribe and speak Khasi language.**

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THE PLANET VISION

In a world facing unprecedented environmental challenges, staying informed and empowered is more crucial than ever. VisionIAS brings you **'The Planet Vision'**, a simplified, informative, and interactive magazine to delve into the complexities of the environment.

With the belief, that individual efforts and awareness are the key to a sustainable future, the magazine seeks to inspire and educate people to **develop a deeper understanding and appreciation for the environment, nature & planet.**
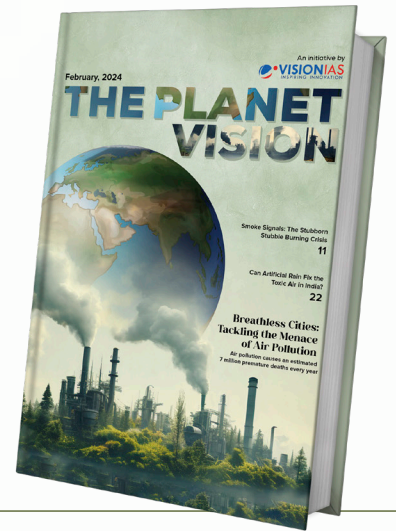
Objectives of 'The Planet Vision'

Sensitise the young generation: Highlighting pressing environmental issues and their multifaceted impacts.

Inspire Action and Promote Sustainable Lifestyle: Inspiring stories and case studies to motivate readers to make environmentally conscious choices.

Bridge Environmental Science and Public Understanding: Presenting complex scientific concepts in a simple and interactive manner.

Showcase Solutions: Spotlight innovative technologies, projects, and initiatives that offer solutions to environmental challenges.

Highlight Local Efforts: Showcase local conservation efforts, community initiatives, and grassroots projects that make a positive impact on the environment.

Who is the magazine for?

The Magazine is designed for students, eco-conscious individuals, educators, environmentalists, and anyone who cares about the health of our planet.

Key elements of the 'The Planet Vision'

Cover Stories: Thought-provoking articles about a critical ongoing environmental issue, along with the mitigation strategies adopted at the national and international levels.

Briefing and Developments: Stay informed about the latest environmental news, trends, and solutions.

Protect and Preserve: Inspirational stories of local conversation efforts.

Environment and You: Illustrating ways to make environmentally conscious choices in everyday life.

Green Tech: New and emerging technologies in the field of environment.

Interactive elements:

- **Snapshot:** Telling a story through capturing images.
- **Quizzes and crosswords:** To test your understanding and knowledge as a reader.

> Look deep into nature, and then you will understand everything better.
>
> -Albert Einstein

Scan the QR code, to download and read the Magazine:

5. PERSONALITIES

5.1. MIHIR BHOJA

Why in the news?

Recently a statute of Raja Mihir Bhoja was unveiled in Kaithal, Haryana.

About Mihir Bhoja

- A prominent **9th-century ruler from Gurjar – Pratihara dynasty.**
- He succeeded his **father Rambhadra in 836 CE**.
- He adopted the **title of Adivaraha (devotee of Lord Vishnu).** Also**,** some of the **coins from his era feature the term Adivaraha.**
- **Arab merchant Sulaiman** described him as **greatest Gurjara – Pratihara emperors**.
- He was also a **great patron of art and literature**. **Poet Rajsekhara** adorned his court.

Political consolidation by Mihir Bhoja

- He **reorganized and consolidated** the Pratihara empire through conquests and diplomacy.
  - Various **inscriptions at Varaha, Daulatpur, Kahala, Pahewa**, etc.**,** indicate his control over **Malwa, Rajputana**, **Madhyadesh**.
  - **Kalhana's Rajatrangini** mentions the **expanse of his empire to Kashmir** in the north.
- **Tripartite struggle:**
  - He was also involved in tripartite struggle **for Kannauj** with **Palas in the East** and **Rashtrakutas in the Deccan**.
  - He fought wars with Pala king **Devapala**. Later, according to **Gwalior prashasti**, Bhoja **defeated the son of Devapala**.
  - During his reign, **Amoghavarsa and Krishna II** were Rashtrakuta kings ruling over Kannauj. Bhoja captured Kannauj from Rashtrakutas and **extended his empire up to the river Narmada.**

Kannauj Triangle (Tripartite struggle)
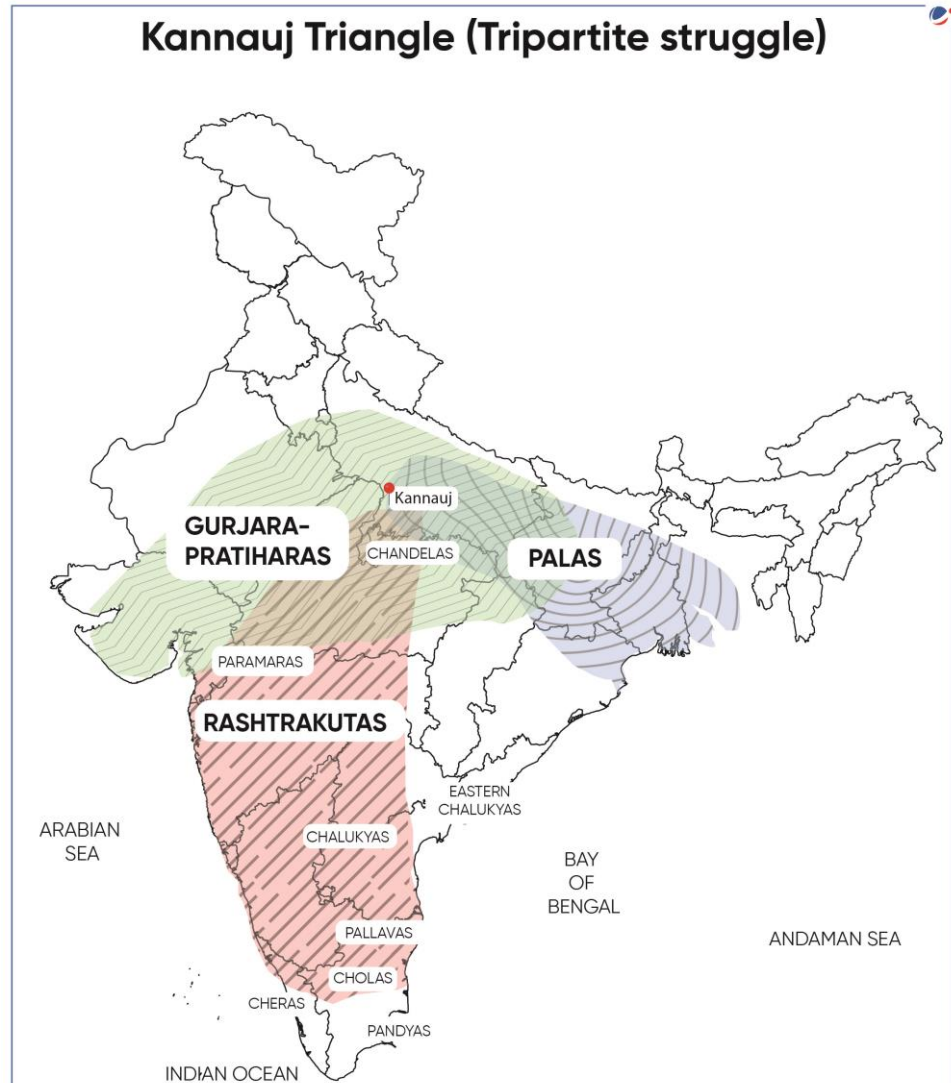
Gurjara Pratihara (730 CE – 1036 CE)

Prominent Rulers	→ Nagabhatta (Founder) → Vatsraja → Nagabhatta II → Mihir Bhoja → Mahendrapal → Jasapala (last ruler)
Major Cities	→ **Ujjain:** Capital of Vatsraja → **Kannauj:** Capital city of Mihir Bhoja and later rulers
Literary records	→ **Aihole inscriptions** of Pulakesin II → Travelogues of **Hiuen Tsang** → **Harshacharita** of **Banabhatta**
Administration	→ Kings adopted big titles like **'Parameshwara', 'Maharajadhiraj',** etc. → **No references of council of ministers.** → State was divided into **Bhuktis,** Bhuktis into **Mandalas,** and Mandalas into **cities and villages.** → **Villages were locally administered**
Socio-Religious conditions	→ Prevalence of **caste system, inter-caste marriages, polygamy for royal and rich classes,** etc. → This was the **age of progress for the Brahminical religious** order with **Vaishnava, Shaiva, Shakti** and **Surya** being the most prominent sects. → **Idol worship, Yajanas** and giving **charity to religious places** were also prominent.
Art and Architecture	→ Rulers of the dynasty were **great patrons of arts, architecture and literature.** → Notable sculptures of this period include **Viswaroopa form of Vishnu, marriage of Shiva and Parvati, female figure Sursundari,** etc. → The most important architectural work of this dynasty are at **Osian** (in modern day **Jodhpur district of Rajasthan**), which includes **Hari-Hara temple** built in **Maha-Maru style** of architecture. → Early works at Osian also portray **Panchayatana style** (central shrine surrounded by four subsidiary shrines) of temple building. → **Teli ka Mandir** at Gwalior fort, **dedicated to a Shakti-cult,** is one of the oldest surviving large-scale works of this dynasty. It was **built during the reign of Mihir Bhoja.**

- Dynasty ended in 1036 CE due to a quick succession of rulers, family feuds, Turkic attacks from the west and Pala advances from the east.

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5.2. SANT MEERA BAI

Why in the News?

The 525th birth anniversary of **Sant Meerabai was recently celebrated in Mathura, Uttar Pradesh.**

About Sant Meera Bai (1498-1546)

- Meerabai was a **great Bhakti saint,** Hindu mystic poet and a devotee of the Lord Krishna.
- **Early life**
  - She was born as **Princess of Mewar** and her childhood name was **Yashodha**.
  - In **1516**, Meera Bai married to **Rana Bhoj Raj** the crown **prince of Mewar** who was the **son the Rana Sanga**.
    - ✓ **Rana Sanga** is famous for his leadership in the **Battle of Khanwa (1527),** where he led the Rajput alliance against Mughal Emperor Babur.

- **Life as a saint**
  - She followed **Saguna bhakti** and considered Lord Krishna as her **husband** since her childhood.
  - She addresses Lord Krishna as **Giridhar Gopal.**
- **Major works**
  - One of her celebrated songs is **"Paayoji maine Ram Ratan dhan paayo (today I got the most precious wealth of Lord Rama's name)".**
  - **Meerabai's poems in Braj language**, sung during prayer, make up her poetry collection.
    - ✓ These include **Raag Govind, Narsi Ji Ka Mayara, Geet Govind ki Tika, Meera Bai ki Malhar, Raag Vihaag and Garba Geet**.
    - ✓ Some of her bhajans **translated into English** by **Robert Bly and Jane Hirshfield** as **'Meerabai: Ecstatic Poems'.**
  - **Bhaktmal**, describes the biography of Meera Bai, is **written by Guru Nabha Dass ji** in 1585 in **Braj language.**
- **Social Reforms**
  - She became a disciple of **Sant Ravidas** (also known as **Raidas**) who belonged to a caste considered "**untouchable**".
  - Her songs also openly **challenged the norms of the upper castes**.

About Bhakti Movement

The Bhakti movement originated in South India between the **7th and the 12th centuries A.D.** Saint believed in the **equality of all humans,** disregarding caste distinctions.

Bhakti movement in different regions

- **South India**
  - Initially led by the **Alvars** (Devotees of Lord Vishnu) and **Nayanars** (devotees of Lord Siva).
    - ✓ They connected with masses through use of **local language.**
  - **Nayanars**: Devotees of **Lord Siva,** were sixty-three in number. Famous saints were **Appar, Sundarar, Thirugnana Sambandar and Manickavachakar.**
  - **Alwars**: Devotees of **Lord Vishnu** who were twelve in number. Famous saints were **Nammalwar, Tirumangai Alwar, Andal and Perialwar.**
    - ✓ The **devotional songs of Andal** are called **Thiruppavai.**
    - ✓ **Alvars** songs were compiled in the **Divya Prabandham.**

Bhakti Saints and the regions associated with them

- **Central and North India**
  - From South Bhakti movement spread to **central and North India around 13th century** and saw a new wave of the bhakti movement in north.
  - Bhakti traditions into two broad categories:
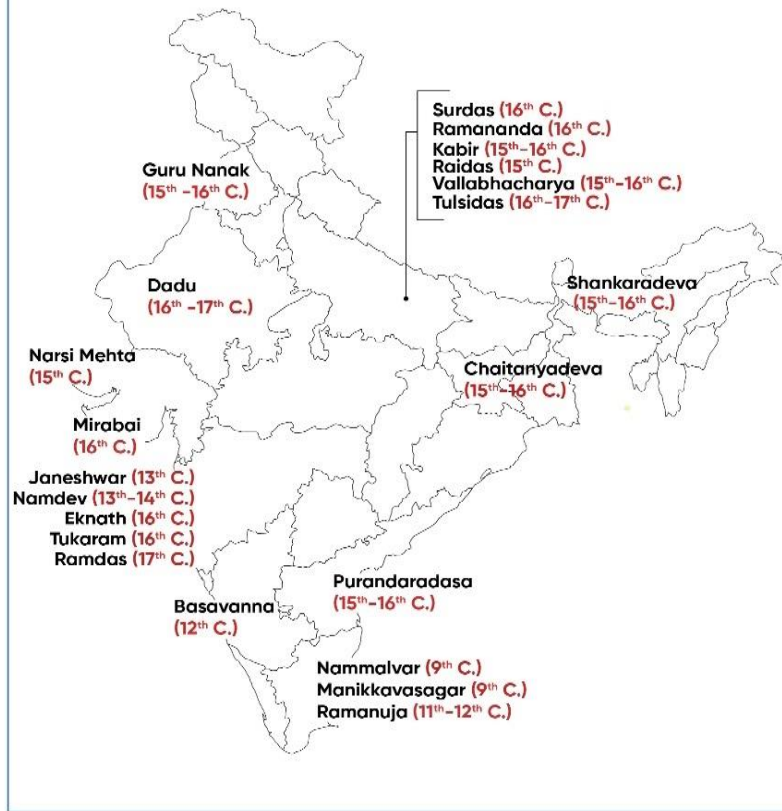
- ✓ **Saguna:** Worship of **God with attributes** or form. Example: Tuslidas, Meera Bai, etc**.**
- ✓ **Nirguna:** Worship of the **Formless form of God**. Examples: Kabir Das, Guru Nanak Dev, etc.
- **Maharashtra**
  - o From the **thirteenth to the seventeenth centuries** Maharashtra saw a great number of saint-poets who composed poems in **Marathi language.**
  - o Region focused on the **Vitthala** (a form of Vishnu) **temple in Pandharpur and followed Warkari tradition.**
  - o Famous saints- **Janeshwar, Namdev, Eknath** and **Tukaram** as well as women like **Sakkubai** and the family of **Chokhamela,** who belonged to the **"untouchable"** Mahar caste.
  - o These saint-poets **rejected all forms of ritualism**, outward display of piety and **social differences based on birth**.
- **East and North East**
  - o **Neo-Vaishnavite Movement** was propagated **by Śaṅkaradeva in Assam region**.
  - o **Chaitanya mahaprabhu**, a great **devotee of Lord Krishna**, was a saint from **Benga**l. He popularised '**Sankirtan** or public singing of God's name.

5.3. RANI DURGAVATI

Why in news?

Recently, **500th birth anniversary** of Veerangana Rani Durgavati was celebrated.

About Rani Durgavati

- She was born in **Chandela Dynasty of Mahoba in Banda, UP**
  - o While the Chandela Dynasty had declined by the late 12th century AD, it was later revived by Chandela ruler Keerat Pal Singh (father of Rani Durgavati)
- She was married to Dalpatshah of **Gond Dynasty of Garha-Katanga** in 1542.
  - o **Gonds** are one of the largest tribal groups and located in central India.
- **Assuming leadership:** She took reins of the Gond Dynasty in 1550 after Dalpatshah's death.
- **Conflict with Akbar:** The Mughal general Asaf Khan I launched the attack with the permission of Akbar.

Rani Durgavati

Contributions

- **Infrastructure Development: constructed reservoirs** such as Ranital, Cheral and Adhartal and **moved the Capital to Chauragarh** (from Singaurgarh) on the strategic Satpura Hill Range.
- **Patronage of Religious Figures:** She allowed Acharya Bitthalnath to establish a **seat of the Pushtimarg Cult at Garha**. She welcomed the Vitthalnath of Vallabh community and took Diksha from him.
- **Victory over Baz Bahadur of Malwa: Tarikh-i-Firishta** mentions Durgavati defeated Baz Bahadur, the ruler of Malwa.
- **Historical documentation: Story of Durgavati was chronicled by Abul Fazl** (Akbar's chronicler) and British Colonel, Sleeman.
- **Contributed to the rich heritage of Bundelkhand** and constructed multiple temples inside of Kalinjar Fort.

Chandelas Dynasty

Chandelas were an Indian Rajput clan of Central India (aka **Jejakabhukti dynasty**).

Founder	Nanuka in **835 CE.**
Prominent Rulers	Yashovarman, Dhanga, Vidhyadhara, Paramardideva, Trilokyavarman
Major Cities	Capital city: **Khajuraho** (later changed to **Mahoba**)
Language	**Sanskrit and Prakrit**
Social System	**Varna system** was the basis of social organization.
Decline	Invasion of Mahmud Ghaznavid, Qutb ud-Din Aibak.

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5.4. CHHATRAPATI SHIVAJI MAHARAJ

Why in News?

Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj

Celebrations marking the 350th anniversary of the coronation of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj began at the Raigad fort in Maharashtra.

About Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj (1627-1680)

- **Born:** At the Shivneri fort near Junnar in Pune district on 19th February 1630.
- **Mother:** Jijabai
- **Father:** Shahajiraje Bhosale
- Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj **carved out a stable kingdom** with the support of **powerful warrior families (deshmukhs).**

Foundation of Swaraj

- Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj started the work of **founding the Swaraj in the Pune region**
- The **inhabitants of this region** are called the **Mavalas.**
- **The objective in founding the Swaraj** (expressed in his official seal) to seek the **welfare of the people.**
- He **captured the forts** of Murumbdev (Rajgad), Torna, Kondhana, Purandar and **laid the foundation of the Swaraj.**

Administrative structure of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj

- The **king was at the helm** of affairs. To assist the king, there was a **council of state ministers known as ashtapradhan** including:
  - **Peshwa** (Prime Minister), **Mazumdar** (finance), **Wakenavis** (intelligence, posts and household affairs), **Dabir** (Foreign secretary and ceremonies), **Senapati (commander of Army), Nyayadhish, Surnavis (royal correspondent) and Panditrao** (in charge of charitable grants).
- Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj **preferred to give cash salaries** to the regular soldiers, though **sometimes chiefs received revenue grants** (saranjam).
  - **Mirasdars** (those with hereditary rights in land) **were strictly supervised.**
- Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj **supplemented his income by levying a contribution** on neighbouring Mughal territories **known as Chauth** (one-forth of land revenue) and Sardeshmukhi'(additional 10% tax on Chauth).

Military Organisation of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj

- Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj maintained light cavalry and light infantry trained in guerilla and hilly warfare.
  - The **Mevalis and the Hetkaris** were his most excellent troopers.
- **Establishment of Maratha Navy**
- Navy included battleships like Gurab, Galbat and Pal.
- **Forts found the prime place in Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj scheme** of military organisation.
  - **No single officer was entrusted sole charge of a fort**. Instead, in every fort there were a havildar (incharge of the keys), a sabnis (for muster-roll and government correspondences) and a sarnobat (incharge of the garrison).
  - **He also built Sea forts** that would provide **protection to the navy and keep in check the Sidi of Janjira** and the **Portuguese**.
    - ✓ **He built Suvarnadurg**. In 1664 he commenced the construction of **Sindhudurg at Malvan**. About the same time he strengthened a fort named **Vijaydurg.**
    - ✓ He **also built a fort named Padmadurg** on a small island in front of Rajpuri to counter the Sidi power.

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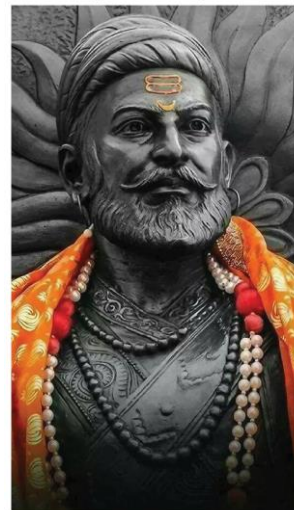
5.5. SIR SYED AHMED KHAN

Why in the news?

Year 2023 marked **Sir Syed Ahmed Khan's 125th death anniversary**.

About Sir Syed Ahmed Khan (1817-1898)

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan

- He worked as a **civil servant, journalist, educationist, social reformer and historian**.
- **Religious view**
  o His **interpretation of Islam emphasised the validity of free enquiry (ijtihad)**.
  o He also **highlighted similarities between Koranic revelations** and the laws of nature discovered by modern science
- **Writings**:
  o Written a paper titled **Asbab-e-Baghawat-e-Hind (The Causes of the Indian Revolt)** to explain the reasons for the revolt from native perspective.
  o **The Aligarh Institute Gazette**, a magazine was an organ of the **Scientific Society,**
  o **Tahzebul Akhlaq** (Mohammedan Social Reformer in English) written in urdu, a magazine to awaken people's consciousness on social and religious issues.
  o He was also a scholar on Christianity and wrote a book, **'Commentary on the Holy Bible'.**
  o **Historical Documentation** like **Asar-us-Sanadid**(The Remnant Signs of Ancient Heroes).
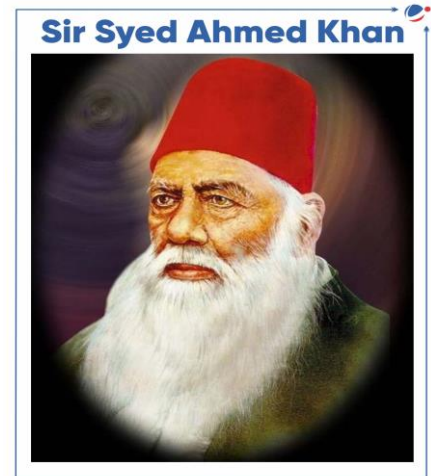
Role as a Social Reformer

- **Transformation in the Education sector**
  o Instituted **Scientific Society in 1863** to instil a scientific temperament into the Muslims.
  o Realised that the **advancement of Muslims depended on their adoption of modern education**
  o Founded **Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College in Aligarh in 1875** and started the **Aligarh movement.**
  o He was against **ignorance, religious intolerance, and irrationalism**.
- **As part of National Movement**
  o In his later years, encouraged the **Indian Muslims not to join the National Movement.**
  o He is regarded as one of the founders of the **Two-Nation Theory**
- **Record on women's rights: Conservative**
  o Sir Syed Ahmed Khan faced criticism for advocating "**disorganized tutor-based home education**" for women, focusing on family roles.
  o Despite this, he **denounced polygamy**, **Infanticide, and child marriage.**

5.6. MAHARISHI DAYANAND SARASWATI

Why in the news?

The government has formed **a high-level committee to oversee 200th year-long celebrations** commemorating the 200th birth anniversary of Dayanand Saraswati.

About Dayanand Saraswati (1824-1883)

Maharishi Dayanand Saraswati

- He was a **social reformer** born in 1824 at **Morvi in Kathiawar (Gujarat)**.
- **Original name:** Mula Shankara
- Under **Swami Virajananda Saraswati at Mathura**, he began **to study Panini and Patanjali and started preaching**.
- **Literary work:**
  o Wrote **Satyartha Prakash** in Hindi.

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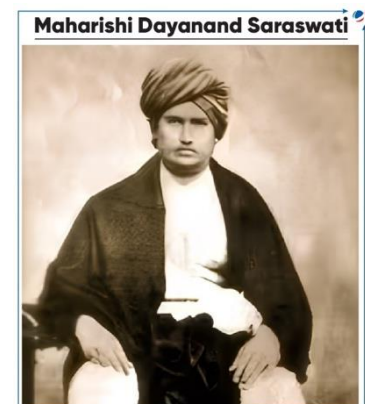
- o **Veda Bhasya Bhumika**, an introduction to his Vedic commentary and
- o **Veda Bhasya**, a Vedic commentary in Sanskrit on the Yajurveda.

Dayanand's philosophy

- **Vedic ideology:**
  - o **Denouncing idolatry and ritualistic worship,** he worked towards reviving Vedic ideologies.
  - o Believed in **the infallible authority of the Vedas**
  - o His book "**Satyarth Prakash**" emphasised the "**return to Vedic principles**"
  - o He gave the slogan **"Go back to Vedas."**
- **Caste system**:
  - o He claimed that **caste is not supposed to be hereditary but rather** on the basis of an individual's talents and disposition.
  - o While he did not fully oppose the institution of caste itself, he **advocated for significant reform within it.**
  - o He was against the **practice of untouchability and advocated Vedic education for all castes**.
- **Women & Education:**
  - o He opposed **the evil practices of child marriage and forced widowhood**.
  - o He **campaigned for the education of women,** and according to him, the burden of education **was to be shouldered by the king/state and stood for compulsory education.**
  - o **Advocated for introducing Anglo-Vedic schools** to offer teaching both the knowledge of the Vedas along with contemporary English education.
- **Political philosophy**: The political **philosophy of Dayanand Saraswati has two central ideas**-
  - o The first is the idea of an **'Enlightened Monarchy'** -- a concept that he borrowed from Manusmriti-that is, a monarchy thoroughly rooted in obedience to Dharma.
  - o The second, somewhat contradictory notion is that of **elective representation, i.e. democracy.**
- **Social movements:** He started the **cow protection movement and the Shuddhi program**.
- **National movement**:
  - o **First to give the call for Swaraj** as "India for Indians" in 1876, a call later taken up by Lokmanya Tilak.
  - o **Inspired by Swadeshi**, strongly in favour of wearing indigenous clothes and setting up factories in his country

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Arya Samaj and Vedic Schools
- In 1875, the **Arya Samaj was established in Bombay by Dayanand Saraswati**, and its constitution was finalized at Lahore.
- It was a **monotheistic Hindu order that rejected ritualistic excesses and social dogmas**.
- The main aim of Arya Samaj is to make the universe the best place by all means for human beings to live in i.e. **Krinvanto Vishwamaryam.**
- It was the first Hindu organization to introduce **proselytization in Hinduism.**
- **Some principles of Arya Samaj which is based on the idea of universalism**
  - o The source of pure knowledge is God.
  - o Ethical justifications of actions are a must.
  - o Rays of knowledge must dispel the darkness of ignorance.
- The Arya Samaj opened a vast number of **educational institutions and orphanages** (First Dayanand Anglo Vedic (DAV) school in Lahore in 1886).
- In 1892, there was a **split in Arya Samaj into Gurukul (conservative) and college group(radical).**
  - o The leader of the conservative wing **was Swami Shraddhanand and the radical group was Lala Hansraj.**
  - o The split was due to the kind **of language that was to be promoted and the kind of food to be followed.**

5.7. SRI AUROBINDO GHOSH

Why in the news?

Recently, the year-long celebration of the 150th Birth Anniversary of Sri Aurobindo concluded at Auroville, Puducherry.

About Sri Aurobindo

Sri Aurobindo Ghosh

- **20th-century Bengali poet, philosopher, spiritual leader** and revolutionary freedom fighter.
- **Participation in the National Movement**
  - **Pioneer of the Indian extremist movement** and helped in establishing **Anushilan Samiti in 1902.**
  - Plunged into active politics after **the partition of Bengal in 1905.**
  - During the Surat session of INC in 1907, known for the Surat Split, **he joined the extremist group led by Bal Gangadhar Tilak against the moderates.**
  - Advocated **passive resistance and not violence**. He, however, did not opine that to attain freedom, it is wrong to resort to violence.
  - In May 1908, Aurobindo was arrested in connection with **the Alipore Conspiracy Case later released.**
- **Literary Contribution:**
  - **'New Lamps for Old',** articles written by him in InduPrakash criticizing moderate politics of Congress.
  - In 1906, in Yugantar newspaper, he preached **open revolt and complete independence.**
  - Edited **Bande Mataram** newspapers founded by Bipin Chandra Pal.
  - Started two weeklies, namely **Karmayogin in English and Dharma in Bengali.**
  - In 1914, he started publishing a **philosophical magazine, Arya.**
  - **Other Books include a** compilation of poems, letters and essays such as **Essays on the Gita (1922), Collected Poems and Plays (1942), The Synthesis of Yoga (1948), The Human Cycle (1949), The Ideal of Human Unity (1949), Savitri: A Legend and a Symbol (1950)**, etc.
- **Spiritual Journey:**
  - **Played an active role in the Indian Freedom Movement till 1910**, after which he became a spiritual reformer.
  - His important works like **the Life Divine, Essays on Geeta, The Synthesis of Yoga, and the epic poem 'Savitri'** were written during this period.
  - He developed a kind of **Yoga called Integral Yoga.**
  - He founded **a community of spiritual seekers,** which took shape as **the Sri Aurobindo Ashram** in 1926 with Mirra Alfassa.
    - ✓ **Mirra Alfassa founded the Auroville**, i.e., the city of dawn, a universal town for a peaceful, progressive, and harmonious existence.
- **Aurobindo's life philosophy**
  - It is a synthesis of **idealism, realism, naturalism, and pragmatism**.
  - According to him, **Jnana (knowledge), Bhakti (devotion), and Karma (work ethics)** can lead man to the divine path.
    - ✓ **But the synthesis** of spirituality, creativity, and intellectuality is essential for a sound personality.
  - **Sri Aurobindo did not believe in any man-made divisions** and used to consider social inequalities as a major obstacle to raise national consciousness.
  - **Influenced by the teaching of Sri Ramanujacharya,** who argued for the inclusion of outcastes into the fold of Hinduism.

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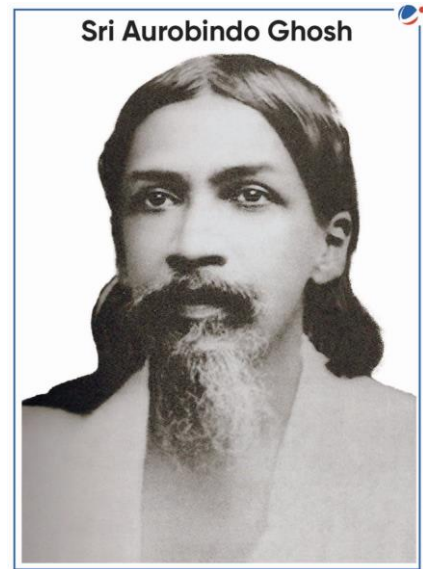
5.8. BHAGWAN BIRSA MUNDA

Why in news?

Janjatiya Gaurav Divas is celebrated **on 15th November (since 2021)** to recognize the efforts of the tribal freedom fighters.

More on News

- The date is the **birth anniversary of Sri Birsa Munda** who is revered as Bhagwan by tribal communities across the country.
- On this occasion government launched **Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra and PM Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan (PM JANMAN) for PVTGs.**

About Birsa Munda (1875-1900)

- **Early life: Birsa Munda also known as Dharti Aaba,** was born in **Munda tribe** at **Ulihatu,** Khunti district of **Chotanagpur Plateau region (Jharkhand).**
- **Social reforms:** He stressed on the importance of **prayer, staying away from alcohol,** having faith in God and observing a code of conduct.
    - **Based on these, he started the faith of Birsait.**
- **Ulgulan movement :** Birsa started a movement called **'Ulgulan', or 'The Great Tumult'** against the exploitation and discrimination against tribals.
    - **Led to Chotanagpur Tenancy Act being passed in 1908** which restricted the passing on of land from the tribal people to non-tribals.

Birsa Munda
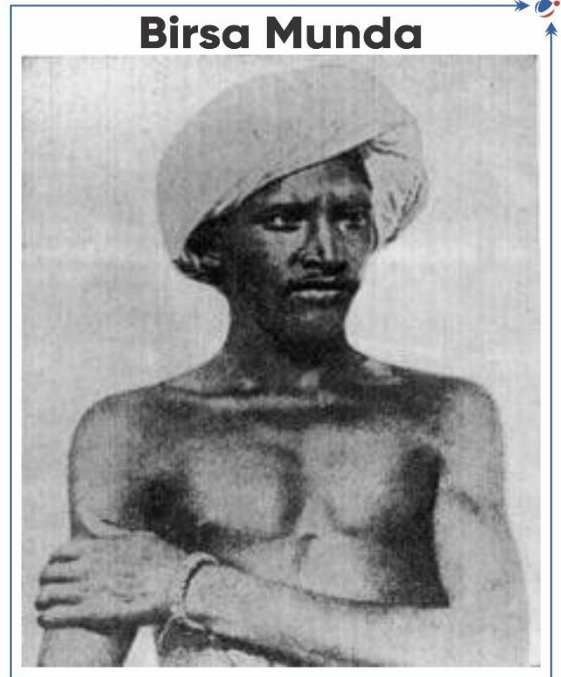
5.9. SRI ALLURI SITARAMA RAJU

Why in the news?

Recently, the year long celebration of the **125th Birth** Anniversary of Shri Alluri Sitarama Raju and **100 years of the Rampa Rebellion** concluded in Hyderabad.

Early Childhood

- **Birth Place:** Born on 04 July 1897, at Mogallu near **Bhimavaram, Andhra Pradesh.**

Contribution in India's Independence

- **Influenced by Mahatma Gandhi during Non-Cooperation Movement (NCM):**
    - He inspired the tribals to seek justice in the **local panchayat courts** and boycott the colonial courts.
    - He persuaded people to wear **khadi** and give up **drinking.**
- **Rampa Rebellion (1922-1924)**
    - It is also known as the **Manyam (which means forest area) Rebellion.**
        - ✓ He is also referred as **"Manyam Veerudu"** (Hero of the Jungles) by the local people.
    - In August **1922**, Shri Alluri Sitarama Raju launched movement against British tyranny rule.

Alluri Sitarama Raju

- ✓ Organised **militant guerrilla movement** spread in the early 1920s
  - ✓ To get modern weapons, he found the best way to snatch them from the enemy, and for that he launched attacks on **police stations.**
  - ✓ The first of such attacks was made on **Chintapalli police station** in Visakhapatnam.
  - o Shri Alluri Sitarama Raju was martyred on May 7, 1924.
  - o Rampa Rebellion later inspired the tribals of Orissa and they started no rent Struggle along with violating forest laws.
- He was also a member of a **Calcutta Secret Society** where he learnt to make bombs.

Factors behind Rampa Rebellion
- **Alienation of tribal population from Rampa and Gudem Hills:** By passing the **Madras Forest Act, of 1882,** Agency restricted the free movement and collection Minor Forest Produce by the tribal communities.
- **Banning traditional Podu agricultural system (slash-and-burn shifting cultivation)**.
- **Exploitation of Tribals:**
  - o **Vetti worker (free customary or unpaid Labours)**
  - o **Gothi Labour (**A form of **debt bondage)**
  - o **System of Coolie Labour**
- **Muttadars** (Village Headman) **power curtailed:** Muttadars in the traditional socio-economic framework of the Rampa region had been actual rulers in their capacity.
  - o British rule altered this power structure of tribal community which antagonised the muttadars.

5.10. KAZI NAZRUL ISLAM

Why in the News?

The re-tuning of Kazi Nazrul Islam's 1922 anti-British anthem **Karar Oi Louho Kopat** (Iron bars of a jail) for a film has led to widespread criticism in Bangladesh.

About Kazi Nazrul Islam (1899-1976)

- **Childhood and Early Life**
  - o Born in **Churulia village**, **Burdwan** (now Bardhaman) district of **West Bengal.**
  - o In 1917, he joined the **Indian Army**
- Popularly known as the **Bidrohi Kobi** (Rebel Poet), as many of his works rebelled **against oppression of humans** through slavery, hatred and tradition.
- Wrote and composed more than **2000 songs** which are popularly known as **'Nazrul Geeti'.**
- **Major Works:**
  - o In 1919, he published his first piece, **'The Autobiography of a Delinquent' or 'Saogat'.**
    - ✓ Nazrul left the military in 1920 and then joined the **'Bengali Muslim Literary Society'**.
  - o He is famous for his works like **Bandhan-hara** (Freedom from bondage), **'Bodhan', 'Shat-il-Arab', 'Badal Prater Sharab', etc.**
  - o He created his famous poem **'Anondomoyir Agomone'** in **1922,** for which he was sent to prison.
  - o In 1930 **his book Pralayshikha was banned** and he faced charges of **sedition.** He was sent to jail and released after the **1931, Gandhi–Irwin Pact was signed.**
- **Role in National movement**
  - o He motivated people to **fight against the British** through his poems, plays, etc.
  - o He took an active part through his writings on **Swadishi and Khilafat movement**.
  - o He organized the **Sramik Praja Swaraj Dal (Workers and Peasant Party).**

✓ **Sramik Praja Swaraj Dal,** a socialist political party which worked within the **Indian National Congress** (INC).

- o He became critic of the **"Khilafat" struggle** and the **INC** for not bargaining political independence from the British Empire.
- **Hindu Muslim Unity:** During Hindu-Muslim riots in Calcutta in 1926, he called for Hindu-Muslim unity.
- **Awards & Achievements**
  - o In 1960, he was awarded the **Padma Bhushan**,.
  - o He was conferred the title of **'national poet'** and awarded the **'Ekushey Padak'** by the **Bangladesh.**

5.11. RAJA RAVI VARMA

Why in news?

175th birth anniversary of Raja Ravi Varma was celebrated recently.

Contributions to Indian art

- **Proponent of Lithography:** He was one of the **earliest proponents of lithography**.
  - o Lithography refers to **art of producing a work on a flat stone or metal plate.**
- managed to accomplish a beautiful u**nion of Indian tradition with the techniques of European academic art**.
- **Insights to mythological stories:** Through his paintings, he gave an insight of the famous mythological stories.
  - o Popular story are s**tory of Dushyanta and Shakuntala**, story of Nala and Damayanti, Lord Rama's triumph over Varuna etc.
- **Artist of the people**: He was notable for making **affordable copies** of his paintings available to the public.
- **Fact sheet**
  - o Also known as **'The Father of Modern Indian Art.**
  - o Birth in **Travancore Kilimanoor(1848).**
  - o The title Raja was conferred as a **personal title by Lord Curzon.**
  - o **Classification of paintings**: Portraits, Portrait-based compositions, Theatrical compositions based on myths and legends.
  - o **Teachers:** Rama Swami Naidu (water painting); Theodor Jenson, a Dutch Painter (oil painting)
- **Awards:** Kaisar-i-Hind Gold Medal (1904); Government of Kerala has instituted an award in his name.
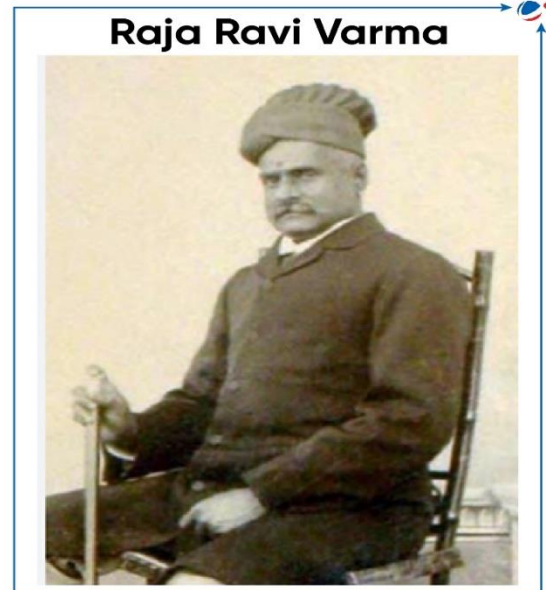
5.12. OTHER PERSONALITIES IN NEWS

5.12.1. SRIMANTA SANKARADEVA

- He was a **Vaisnav-saint**, scholar, playwright, and social-religious reformer, **born in 1449**.
- Propagated a form of **Vaisnavism,** called **Ek-Sarana-Hari-Naam-Dharma** (considered Lord Krishna to be one, eternal and absolute)
- His religious system was **strictly monotheistic**.
- **Poetic works:** Kirtana-ghosha, Harischandra-upakhyana, Kurukshetra-yatra, etc.

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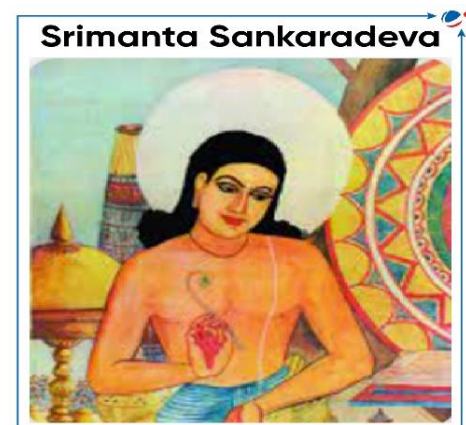
- **Contribution**
  - **Fountainhead of Ankiya-Naat** (traditional Assamese one-act plays), Borgeets, Bhaonas, and **Sattriya dance (classical Indian Dance form)**
  - Began the practice of setting up **Namghars** or houses of recitation and prayers.
  - **Visual arts:** Sapta vaikuntha, Vrindavani vastra, etc.

5.12.2. AHILYABAI HOLKAR (1725 – 1795)

- **Maharashtra government** has decided **to rename Ahmednagar district as Ahilyanagar.**
- She was a **18th century Malwa queen.**
- She **took control of Malwa in 1754 after her husband's** (Khande Rao) **death in Battle of Kumbher** against king of Bharatpur.
- **Highlights/achievements of her rule:**
  - **City of Maheshwar became a literary, musical, artistic and industrial centre,** and she helped establish a textile industry there, which is now home to famous Maheshwari saris.
  - **Restoration/revamp of various temples** including Kashi Vishwanath, Badrinath, Dwarka, Omkareshwari etc.

Ahilyabai Holkar
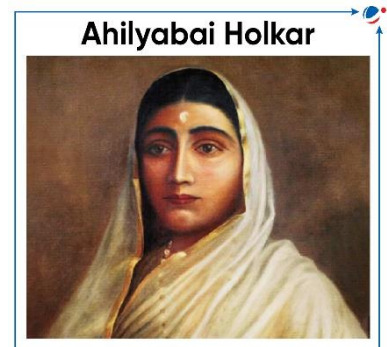
5.12.3. SREE NARAYANA GURU (1856-1928)

- **PM paid tribute to Sree Narayana Guru on his Jayanti.**
- **He was a** Hindu saint & social reformer from Kerala.
- He propagated the idea of **'One Caste, One Religion, One God'.**
- **Contribution**
  - He, along with Padmanabhan Palpu, **founded the 'Sree Narayana Dharma ParipalanaYogam' (SNDP) for upliftment and education of Ezhava community.**
  - He launched the **"Aruvipuram movement, one of the first moments for equal rights to temple entry.**
  - He lent support to **Vaikkom Satyagraha for temple enrty (1924-25) in Travancore.**
  - His works include **DaivaDasakam, Anukampadasakam etc.**

Narayana Guru
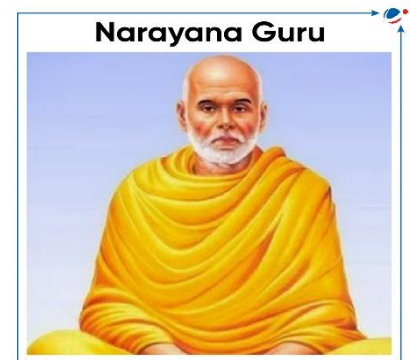
5.12.4. SACHCHIDANANDA SINHA (1871-1950)

- Bihar Chief Minister inaugurates Sachchidananda Sinha statue on his birth anniversary on 10th November in Patna.
- **About Sachchidananda Sinha**
  - Born in Arrah, in the erstwhile Bengal Presidency.
  - Played crucial role **in formation of Province of Bihar and Orissa.**
  - Active member of British Committee on INC in London.
  - Member of **Imperial Legislative Council from 1910-1930.**
  - As a constitutional nationalist, he believed that Indians should adopt constitutional means to attain freedom.
  - Served as interim President of the Constituent Assembly **before Rajendra Prasad was formally appointed as President.**
  - **Key Writings:** Iqbal: The Poet and His Message, Kashmir the Playground of Asia etc.

Sachchidananda Sinha

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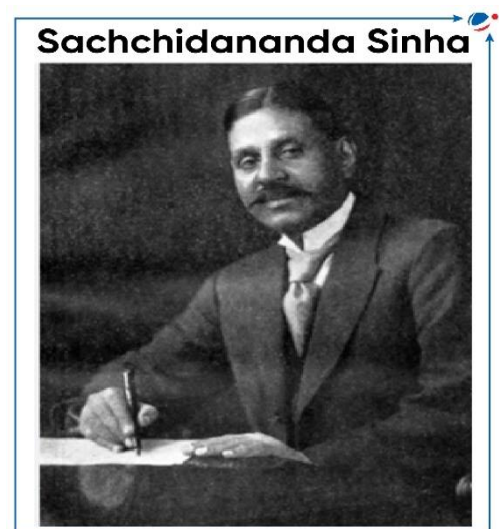
5.12.5. SWAMI SAHAJANAND SARASWATI

- **Born in Ghazipur, Uttar Pradesh.**
- At Congress session in Lucknow in April 1936, **All India Kisan Sabha** was formed and he was elected as its **1st President.**
- **He organized Bakasht movement in Bihar** against zamindars evicting tenants from Bakasht lands.
  - This led to the enactment of **Bihar Tenancy Act** and **Bakasht Land Tax** to protect farmers' rights.
- He also led the successful struggle in the Dalmia sugar mill at bihta, where peasant-worker unity was the most important characteristic.

Swami Sahajanand Saraswati

5.12.6. MALATI MEM (AKA MANGRI ORANG)

- She was remembered as one of the **first woman martyrs of Assam** in India's freedom struggle.
- She was one of the leading members of the **anti-opium campaign in tea gardens of Assam.**
- In 1921, she was killed for leading a fight against **foreign liquor and opium pushed** during the colonial period.

5.12.7. RUKMINI LAKSHMIPATHI (1892- 1951)

- **She was a freedom fighter, social reformer** from Andhra Pradesh's West Godavari district.
- She was influenced by **Mahatma Gandhi, C Rajagopalachari, and Sarojini Naidu.**
- **Contributions**
  - **Participated in Civil disobedience, Salt Satyagraha of 1930 in Vedaranyam of Madras Presidency.**
    - ✓ **She became first female** prisoner in Salt Satyagraha movement.
  - **Was elected to the Madras Legislative Council.** Later, became first woman to become a member of Legislative Assembly.

Rukmini Lakshmipathi

5.12.8. ASHFAQULLA KHAN (1900-1927)

- **He was a freedom fighter who actively fought against the British forces.**
- **Contributions**
  - Helped in formation of **Hindustan Republican Association (later, Hindustan Socialist Republican Association)** in 1924 to organize an armed revolution to achieve freedom.
    - ✓ **Ram Prasad Bismil, Sachindra Nath Bakshi, Sachindranath Sanyal** were also prominent members.
  - He was a **poet** who wrote under the pen names of **hasrat and warsi.**
  - Arrested for his involvement **in Kakori Train Robbery** and sentenced to **death.**

Ashfaqulla Khan

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5.12.9. SHRI RAMALINGA SWAMIGAL

PM addresses on the occasion of the 200th birth anniversary of Shri Ramalinga Swamy.

About the Swamigal:

- Also known as Vallalar or Ramalinga Adigal, he belonged to a **line of Tamil saints known as 'gnana siddhars'** (gnana meaning higher wisdom).
- Vallalar endeavoured to eliminate the caste system **through the notion of Suddha Sanmarga Sangam** (pure path of absolute truth).
- According to Suddha Sanmarga, the prime aspects of human life should **be love, connected with charity and divine practice, leading to pure knowledge.**
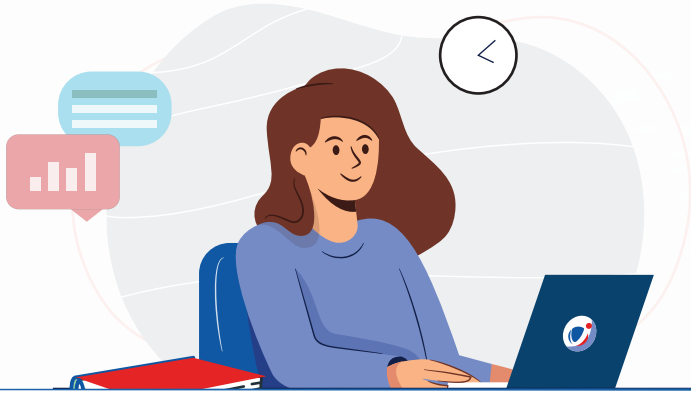

Shri Ramalinga Swamigal

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Mastering CSAT:
A Strategic Roadmap for
UPSC Prelims Examination

The UPSC Prelims is the initial, highly competitive stage of the Civil Services Examination, consisting of two objective-type papers: General Studies and the Civil Services Aptitude Test (CSAT). These papers assess a candidate's knowledge, understanding, and aptitude.

With the CSAT's growing complexity, achieving the 33% qualifying score is challenging. Aspirants must navigate time management, adapting to changing difficulty levels, maintaining balance with General Studies, and finding quality practice materials. This underscores the importance of a well-planned strategy.

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Strategic Framework for CSAT Preparation

Initial Self-Assessment: Begin with a self-evaluation using the previous year's CSAT papers to identify strengths and areas for improvement.

Study Plan: Develop a structured study plan, focusing on high yielding areas and selecting reliable study sources.

Regular Practice and Post-Test Analysis: Solving and analyzing previous year papers and mock tests to familiarize with the exam format and question types, ensuring a strategic approach to covering the comprehensive syllabus effectively.

Seeking Personalized Mentorship: Engage with mentors to receive customized strategies for improvement. Alongside essential stress management guidance, ensuring a focused and balanced preparation journey.

Reasoning: Sharpen your logical and analytical reasoning by practicing diverse question types from Clocks, Calendars, Series & Progression, Direction, Blood Relation, Coding-Decoding, Syllogism, and so on.

Focus on understanding patterns and building a step-by-step approach to solving problems.

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6. AWARDS

6.1. NOBEL PRIZE IN LITERATURE FOR 2023

Why in news?

It was awarded to the Norwegian author and dramatist **Jon Fosse**, "**for his innovative plays and prose which give voice to the unsayable.**"

About Nobel Prize in Literature

- The Academy honoured Fosse's body of work written in **Norwegian Nynorsk** which includes several plays, novels, poetry collections, essays, children's books and translations.
  o Nynorsk is one of two official languages of Norway.
- **Nobel prize for Literature** is worth **11 million Swedish kronor ($1 million)** and is regarded widely as the world's most prestigious literary award.
- The Nobel Prize in Literature has been awarded **116 times to 120** Nobel laureates between 1901 and 2023.

Indian Noble Prize Winners*

RABINDRANATH TAGORE
Nobel Prize for **Literature (1913)**
For-Profoundly sensitive, fresh and beautiful Writing, by which with consummate skill, he has made his poetic journey

CV RAMAN
Nobel Prize for **Physics (1930)**
For-Work on scattering of light and discovery of Raman Effect

HAR GOBIND KHORANA
Nobel Prize in Physiology or **Medicine (1968)**
For-Interpretation of genetic code and function in protein synthesis

MOTHER TERESA
Nobel **Peace Prize (1979)**
For-Work in bringing help to suffering humanity

SUBRAMANYAN CHANDRASEKHAR
Nobel Prize for **Physics (1983)**
For-Studies of Physical processes of importance to structure and evolution of stars

AMARTYA SEN
Nobel Memorial Prize in **Economic Sciences (1998)**
For-Work Contributions to welfare economics

VENKATRAMAN RAMANKRISHNAN
Nobel Prize in **Chemistry (2009)**
For-Studies of structure and function of ribosome

KAILASH SATYARTHI
Nobel Peace **Prize (2014)**
For-Struggle against the suppresssion of children and young people and for the right of all children to education

ABHIJIT BANERJEE
Nobel Prize in **Economic Sciences (2019)**
For-Experimental approach to alleviating global poverty

*Five of them are Indian citizens and four are of Indian origin.

- In the recent years, the prizes have gone to French author Annie Ernaux (2022), Tanzanian novelist Abdulrazak Gurnah (2021).

6.2. SAHITYA AKADEMI AWARD

Why in news?

Ministry of Culture intends to change nomination process for Sahitya Akademi Award.

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About Sahitya Akademi Award

- It is a **literary honour, conferred annually on writers of most outstanding books** of literary merit published in any of the major Indian languages.
  - Besides 22 languages enumerated in Constitution, **English and Rajasthani language are also recognised.**
  - Award includes **a casket containing an engraved copper-plaque, a shawl and an amount of Rs. 1,00,000/-.**
- Sahitya Akademi **functions as an autonomous organisation.** It is registered as a society under Societies Registration Act, 1860.

6.3. SANGEET NATAK AKADEMI AMRIT AWARDS

Why in news?

Recently, **84 artists** were conferred with the **Sangeet Natak Akademi Amrit Awards.**

- **About the Award**
  - **Besides 22 languages enumerated in the 8th Schedule of the Constitution,** Akademi has recognized **English and Rajasthani** as well.
  - **Purpose**:
    - ✓ **National honour** on **performing artists, teachers, and scholars** in the field of performing arts.
    - ✓ To honour **the Indian artists aged above 75 years** who have not been accorded any national honour in their career so far.
    - ✓ This is **one-time awards** by the Sangeet Natak Akademi.
  - **Prize:** ₹1 lakh, besides a '**Tamrapatra**' and '**Angavastram**'.
  - **Award presented by:** Vice president of India.
- **About Sangeet Natak Akadeni**
  - **Genesis:** Set up in 1953, as an apex body in the field of performing arts in the country.
  - **Ministry:** Autonomous body under the ministry of culture
  - **Objectives:** For the preservation and promotion of the vast intangible heritage of India's diverse culture expressed in forms of music, dance and drama.
  - **Major Awards:** Sangeet Natak Akademi Fellowship (Ratna Sadshya), Sangeet Natak Akademi Award (Akademi Purashkar), Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar

6.4. OTHER IMPORTANT AWARDS

6.4.1. GOVIND SWARUP LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

- **Professor Jayant Vishnu Narlikar** gets first Astronomical Society of India (ASI) Govind Swarup Lifetime Achievement Award in Pune.
- Award was established in 2022, golden jubilee year of ASI, to **recognise eminent Indian astronomers.**
- **Professor Govind Swarup (1929-2020)** was **founder of Indian radio astronomy.**
  - He constructed the **Ooty Radio Telescope (ORT) and Giant Metrewave Radio Telescope (GMRT).**
  - He was the founding director of **National Centre for Radio Astrophysics (NCRA),** Pune.
  - He was one of the **strongest early proponents of Square Kilometre Array (SKA).**

6.4.2. RAMON MAGASAYSAY AWARD

- Assam-based **oncologist Ravi Kannan** is among winners of 2023 Ramon Magsaysay Award.
- Established in 1957, the Ramon Magsaysay Award is regarded as the **Asian version of the Nobel Prize.**
- It is named after **Ramon Magsaysay,** the 7th president (1953-57) of Philippines. Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation (RMAF) honors individuals or organizations in Asia every year **for social contribution activities.**

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6.4.3. INDIRA GANDHI PEACE PRIZE, 2023

- Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development for 2023 has been jointly awarded to Daniel Barenboim and Ali Abu Award.
  - They have brought together **the youth and peoples of Israel and the Arab World** for **a non-violent resolution of the Israel-Palestine conflict.**
- **About Indira Gandhi Peace Prize**
  - It has been **conferred every year since 1986** by the **Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust.**
  - It consists of **a monetary award of `25 lakh along with a citation.**

6.4.4. ANNAPURNA CERTIFICATE PROGRAMME

- Six Indian restaurants from around the **word awarded Annapurna Certificate.**
- The Annapurna Certificate Programme is to recognize restaurants abroad that promote Indian culinary and cuisine traditions.
  - Initiative by **the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR)**
  - Awarded every year.
- **ICCR-**
  - It was founded in 1950 by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad.
  - It participates in policies for external cultural relations.

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Current Affairs
Quarterly
REVISION

The aspirants preparing for the Civil Services Examination often have **diverse backgrounds, age groups, work and familial engagements**. In the hustle and bustle of life, staying updated on current affairs is crucial for preparation of Civil Services.

Considering this fact, the **Current Affairs - Quarterly Revision** document seeks to aid the preparation of such aspirants, who have a **busy working schedule**, seldom face difficulty to read and revise the Monthly Current Affairs Magazine.

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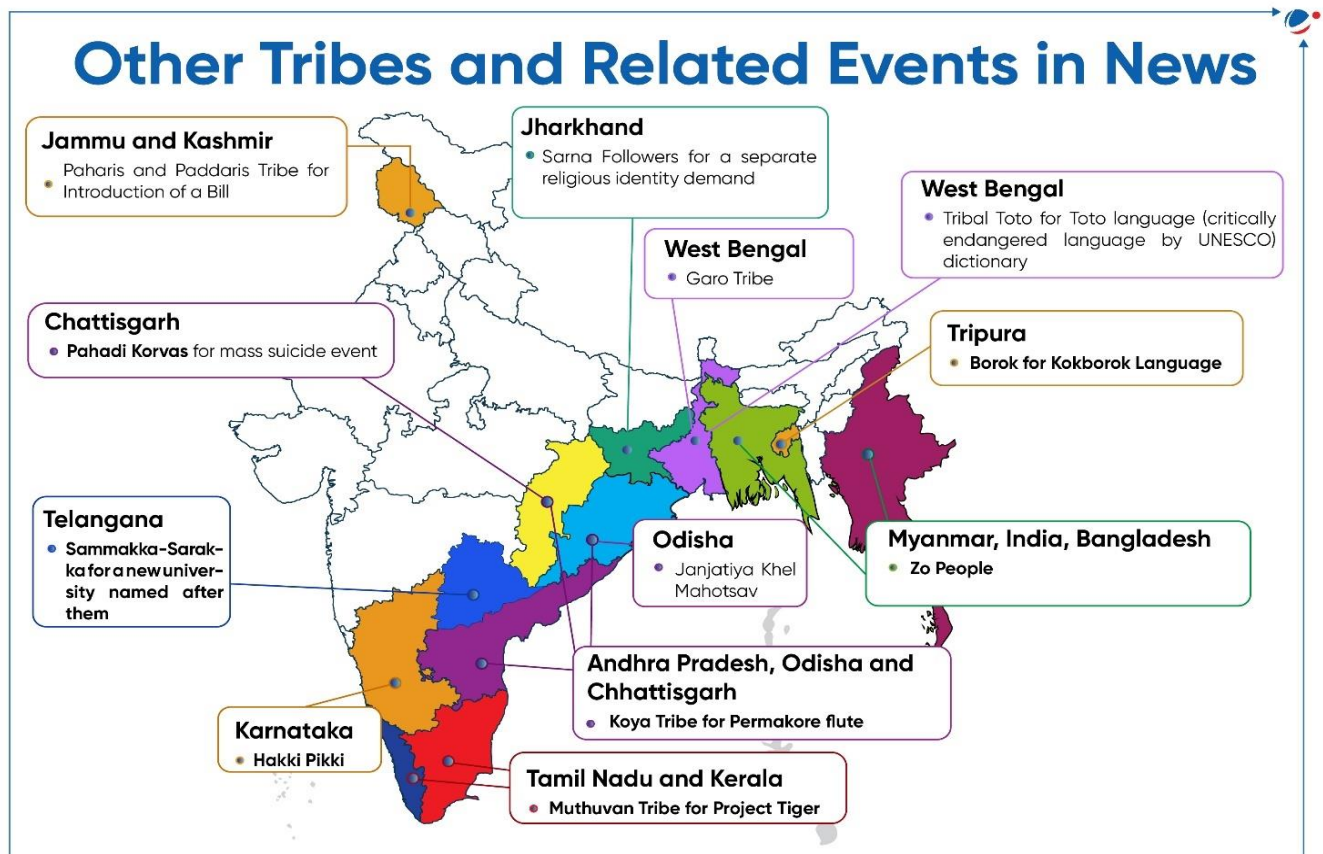
7. TRIBES IN NEWS

7.1. KUI LANGUAGE

Why in news?

Odisha Cabinet has proposed including the Kui language in the 8th Schedule of the Constitution.

About Kui Language

- **Kui Language** belongs to **the Dravidian Family of languages** and is spoken mainly by people of the **Kondh/ Kandha Tribe,** the largest tribe of Odisha.
  - It **uses Odia Scrip**t, and Khondi, Gumsai are its dialects.
- **Schedule 8 of the Indian Constitution:**
  - It currently enlists the Official language of the Country and consists of 22 languages.
  - **Fourteen languages were initially** listed in the Constitution, and the rest were added over time.
  - Sindhi was introduced in 1967, Konkani, Manipuri, and Nepali in 1992, and Santali, Dogri, Maithili, and Bodo by the 92nd Amendment Act 2003.
- **Inclusion of New Language:**
  - **Currently, no fixed criteria exist for a language to be considered for inclusion in the Eighth Schedule.**
  - Though two committees under **Pahwa (1996) and Sitakant Mohapatra (2003**) were set up to evolve fixed criteria, the objective was not achieved.
  - **Schedule 8 benefits:** Support from government, recognition from sahitya Academy, can be used in assembly and parliament, Rbi to includes it in currency note denominations.

7.1.1. OTHER TRIBES AND RELATED EVENTS IN NEWS

Other Tribes and Related Events in News

Jammu and Kashmir
- Paharis and Paddaris Tribe for Introduction of a Bill

Jharkhand
- Sarna Followers for a separate religious identity demand

West Bengal
- Tribal Toto for Toto language (critically endangered language by UNESCO) dictionary

West Bengal
- Garo Tribe

Chattisgarh
- **Pahadi Korvas** for mass suicide event

Tripura
- **Borok for Kokborok Language**

Telangana
- Sammakka-Sarak-ka for a new university named after them

Odisha
- Janjatiya Khel Mahotsav

Myanmar, India, Bangladesh
- Zo People

Andhra Pradesh, Odisha and Chhattisgarh
- Koya Tribe for Permakore flute

Karnataka
- Hakki Pikki

Tamil Nadu and Kerala
- Muthuvan Tribe for Project Tiger

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Smart and Effective
Notes Making for UPSC CSE
Principles and Strategies

Why Notes Making? 📝

Note-making for the UPSC exam is a strategic tool that significantly enhances an aspirant's ability to understand, retain, and revise the vast curriculum effectively. This personalized study aid helps in breaking down complex topics into digestible pieces, facilitating easier recollection and efficient last-minute revisions.

Principles of Notes Making 📝

- **Personalize Notes:** Understand your learning style for effective customization which should be prepared in an integrated manner for both Prelims and Mains examination.
- **Format Choice:** Opt for digital, handwritten, or a hybrid approach based on learning ease.
- **Summarization and Organization:** Condense passages, use bullet points for clear organization.
- **Current Affairs Integration:** Enhance note relevance by integrating current affairs with static topics.
- **Language Precision:** Emphasize keywords, concepts, and examples; avoid complete sentences.

Scan to access Essential Learning **Resources.**

Smart Strategies for Effective Notes Making 📝

Reliable Sources
Choose reputable sources that meet the demands of the examination.

Summarize and Organize
Highlight or underline important points while reading, then summarize these in your own words.

Link to the UPSC Syllabus
To ensure easy referencing of subject, topic, and subtopic for efficient exam preparation.

Integrate Visual Aids
Use diagrams, flowcharts, and mind maps to visualize complex relationships between topics.

Current Affairs
Create a dedicated section and link it to corresponding static topics for a comprehensive understanding.

Regular Revision
Frequently revisit your notes to reinforce your memory and improve your retention.

💡 *Use bullet points, headings, and subheadings to structure your notes clearly.*

VisionIAS Smart Quality Content 🎖

Designed and developed for smooth understanding, learning, retention, and reproduction of content in the UPSC Examination. Further, it also facilitates smart and efficient note-making.

- **Simplified Complex Topics:** Makes tough subjects easier and more digestible for better understanding.
- **Up-to-date Information:** Offers latest, relevant study materials aligned with current exam requirements.
- **Analytical Skills Development:** Boosts essential critical and analytical thinking through quizzes.
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- **Enriched Presentation:** Utilizes thematic colors and tables for fast information identification and recall.

Scan to know more, **explore,** and **integrate the Smart Quality Content** in your learning.

8. MISCELLANEOUS

8.1. MILITARY SYSTEMS IN ANCIENT INDIA

Why in news?

Recently, **Defense minister launched Project Udbhav** at inauguration of **Indian Military Heritage Festival (IMHF)**

Project Udbhav

Significance of the project

- **Acknowledges vintage scriptures and writing on military wisdom:** E.g. Mahabharata, Nitisara, Arthashastra, Thirukkural etc.
- **Enriches Military Pedagogy:** Facilitates better understanding of ancient military wisdom and helps to **facilitate its usage in contemporary military strategies.**
- **Knowledge enrichment:** Facilitate **research of previously under-explored thoughts and theories** related to strategicthinking, statecraft and warfare.

- It is a **collaborative project** between **the Indian Army** and the **United Service Institution of India (USI)**, a defense think tank.
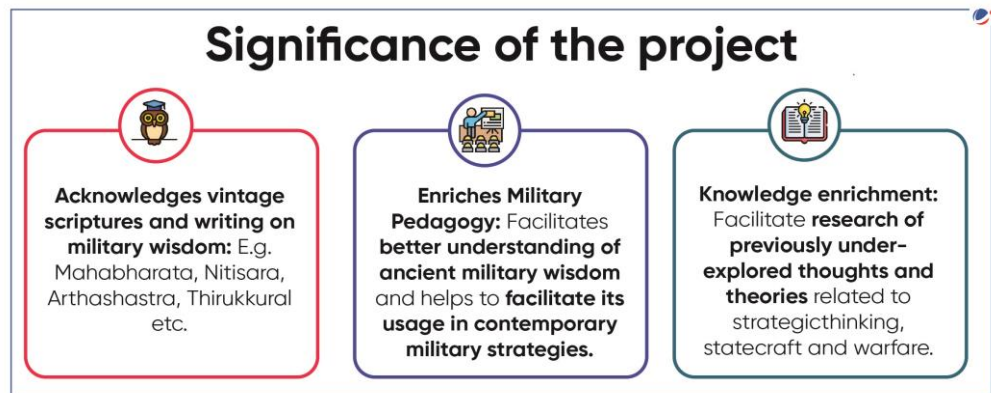- **Objective**:
  - To rediscover **the profound Indic heritage of statecraft and strategic thoughts**. ('Udbhav' translates to 'origin' or 'genesis')
  - To **integrate ancient Indian wisdom** with **modern military pedagogy**.
  - **Formulate a holistic approach to modern military challenges** using ancient military wisdom.

Military systems in Ancient India

India's ancient military wisdom is based upon **large body of intellectual texts, scriptures, manuscripts, thinkers and study of prominent military campaigns and leaders**.

- **Kautilya's realism**: Kautilya wrote Arthasastra around 300 BC, belongs to Mauryan period. His strategies emphasize understanding **ground realities and adapting tactics accordingly.**
  - **Mandala theory**: It deals with **knowledge of foes, friends and allied countries**.
  - **Intelligence Gathering:** advocated the **use of spies (Amatyas)**
  - **Logistics and Supply Chains**.
- **Kamandaka by Nitisara**: It belongs to the Gupta age and follows the Arthasastra tradition.
  - **STRATEGY OF UPEKSHA** (diplomatic neglect, diplomatic indifference), maya (deception) reused and revived during the Indian freedom struggle.
  - Proposed that **army with women can also fight**.
- **Thiruvalluvar by Thiruvalluvar (31 BC)**: It deals with **Ethical conduct during warfare**.
- **Agni Purana:** It was first to explain the **philosophy of reserve (pratigraha) on the battlefield**.

8.2. UNITED NATIONS WORLD TOURISM ORGANISATION

Dhordo village of Kutch (Gujarat) is awarded as one of the Best Tourism Village by UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

More about the news

- Nestled in the Great Rann of Kutch**, Dhordo is famous for hosting the annual Rann Utsav** (White Desert Festival).
- **Madla Village (Madhya Pradesh)** was Selected in the Upgrade Programme by UNWTO.
  - River **Karnawati (Ken) flows** through the village

About UNWTO

- **Genesis:** Established in 1975 and became specialized body of UN in 2003.

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- **HQ:** Madrid, Spain.
- **About:** Acts as a global forum for tourism policy issues and a source of tourism know-how.
- **Objectives:** It seeks to promote tourism as a driver of economic growth, inclusive development and environmental sustainability.
- **Members:** 160 Member States (including India).
- **Best Tourism Village initiative:** Launched in 2021 to honour villages that best exemplify rural tourism destinations.

8.3. INDENTURED LABOURERS

Why in news?

The tradition of performing **Ram Leela** is still carried in **Trinidad and Tobago islands** by Indian diaspora, who **migrated to the island** as **indentured laborers**, from India.

- **Who were indentured labourers?**
  - These were **laborers that the British recruited to work in their plantations across different colonies** on account of **abolition of Slave trade in 1834** in the British Empire.
  - Often referred to **as Girimityas.**
- **Abolition of Indentured labour**
  - In 1916, **Madan Mohan Malviya moved a resolution in the Indian Legislative Council** for the abolition of the indenture system.
  - Later, it was officially **abolished by British government in 1917**.
  - **In South Africa,** in 1914, under the **Smuts-Gandhi settlement**, Mahatma Gandhiji played a role against **indentured labor**, by obtaining a **waiver from the Poll tax** levied on the movement of indentured laborers.

8.4. FESTIVALS IN NEWS

Festivals in News

Ambubachi Mela, Assam
- Four day annual fair, at Kamakhya temple (one of 52 Shaktipeeths) located atop the **Nilachal hills,** Assam to mark the annual **menstruation of Goddess Kamakhya (reigning deity).**
- It is also considered as one of the prime seats **of Tantric rituals.**

Kati Bihu, Assam
- Assam is celebrating the auspicious **harvest festival of Kati Bihu (aka Kongali Bihu).**
- Kati means to cut and this marks the **relocation time of rice saplings.**

Pushkaralu Festival, Uttar Pradesh
- **12-day Pushkaralu festival of Telugu-speaking people** commenced in Varanasi.
- Pushkaralu refers to the **worship of the 12 sacred rivers in which the god Pushkar appears every 12 years.**

Hornbill Festival, Nagaland
- 24th edition started in Nagaland.
- **US, Germany and Columbia** are country partners and Assam is state partner.
- Also known as **Festivals of Festivals.**

Ker Puja, Tripura
- **Celebrated in Tripura** two weeks after Kharchi Puja.
- **People are not allowed to light fires,** dance, sing or even wear shoes.

Banni Festival, Andhra Pradesh
- Annual Banni' festival witnessed at **Devaragattu in Andhra Pradesh's** Kurnool district.
- **Banni Festival is a traditional stick-fighting festival** on the night of Vijayadasami.

Raja Parba, Orissa
- It is a **3-day festival** in Odisha to celebrate womanhood.
- It remarks the worship Bhudevi (**wife of Lord Jagannath**).

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8.5. SPORTS RELATED NEWS

8.5.1. NATIONAL GAMES OF INDIA

Why in the news?

Recently, 37th edition of National Games concluded in Goa.

About National Games

- It is an **Olympic-style multi-sport event** where athletes from the various states and Union Territories of India compete for medals.
  - **Services Sports Control Board (SSCB),** the sports team of the **Indian Armed Forces**, also competes at the National Games.
- Jurisdiction: **Indian Olympic Association.**
- **About National Games:**
  - 1st edition at Lahore in an undivided Punjab in **1924**.
  - **Lucknow hosted the first National Games** after independence.
  - The first **National Games on the lines of the Olympics** were held in **1985** in **New Delhi.**
- **About 37th edition of National Games**
  - The **Raja Bhalendra Singh trophy** was given to Maharashtra for overall championship in national games.
    - ✓ Raja Bhalendra Singh was considered responsible for bringing the **9th Asian Games to Delhi** in **1982** and organizing them.
  - Best woman athlete trophy was given to **Pranati Naik and Sanyukta Kate** while best man athlete trophy was given to **Shrihari Natraj.**
  - The **torch** for national games was handed over to **Uttarakhand as 38th National Games** will be organized there.
    - ✓ The **39ᵗʰ edition will be held in Meghalaya**.
- **About Indian Olympic Association**
  - **Establishment:** In 1927 with Sir Dorabji Tata as the Founding President.
  - **About:** IOA is the governing body for the Olympic Movement and the Commonwealth Games in India.
  - **Registration:** Registered as a Non-Profit organisation under the societies Registration Act of 1860**.**
  - **Affiliation:** International Olympic Committee (IOC), Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF), Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) and Association of National Olympic Committees (ANOC).

8.5.2. KHELO INDIA PARA GAMES 2023

Why in the new?

1st edition of Khelo India Para Games (KIPG) 2023 was organized in December 2023 in Delhi.

More about the news

- It was held across **7 sports Disciplines:** Para Archery, Par Athletics, Para Badminton, Para Table Tennis, Para Powerlifting, CP Football, Para Shooting.
- **Haryana topped** the KIPG 2023 medal table, followed by Uttar Pradesh.
- KIPG is the latest addition to the government of **India's Khelo India initiative**, which also includes the Khelo India Youth Games, Khelo India University Games and Khelo India Winter Games.
- **About Khelo India Games**
  - Organized under a **Central Sector Scheme** named as **Khelo India Scheme.**

12 Verticals of Khelo India Programme

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- o Since **2018**, a total of 11 Khelo India Games have been successfully held.
- o First edition was held in New Delhi.

8.5.3. DIAMOND LEAGUE

- **Indian long jumper Murali Sreeshankar** secured a **third place in Paris Diamond League.**
- **Diamond League** is an annual **series of top-tier track and field competitions** organised **by World Athletics**, international governing body for athletics.
  - o It was **started in 2010 as a replacement for previous IAAF Golden League** and IAAF World Athletics Final events.
  - o **Number of meets in a particular season** of Diamond **League is generally 14.** The meets are **held in different cities** across the globe.

8.5.4. ICC WORLD TEST CHAMPIONSHIP (WTC)

- **Australia has beaten India to win** the WTC title.
- **WTC comprises the top nine Test teams**, all of whom played six series each – three at home and three away.
  - o **Top two teams competed** in WTC Final,
- **Rather than each series** being worth the **same number of points like in the first edition**, each **match was worth the same number of points** this time.
- **Teams qualified on a percentage of points won basis** to standardise the imbalance in the number of matches played by terms.

8.6. GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES IN NEWS

8.6.1. REVAMPED 'ADOPT A HERITAGE 2.0' PROGRAMME

Why in the news?

Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) launched revamped 'Adopt a Heritage 2.0' programme.

More about the news

- The scheme was **originally launched in 2017** under **Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Culture, ASI, and State/ UTs Government.**
- Objective was ensuring **quality and inclusive provision of amenities** through active participation of **private and public sector organizations and individual.**
  - o **Director-General of ASI may receive voluntary contributions** towards the cost of maintaining a protected monument under the **Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (AMASR) 1958, Act.**
- **Key highlights of Adopt a Heritage 2.0**
  - o **Smāraka Sārathī**: Any private/ public sector company/ trust/ NGO/ society that has been selected by ASI for the programme (earlier called as monument mitra).
  - o **Funding of projects: Private and public sector companies shal**l utilize their **CSR fund** while others may provide **voluntary contribution.**
  - o **Flexibility:** Either **adopt a monument in whole or provide a particular amenity**
  - o **Four-pronged framework of amenities:** Hygiene, Accessibility, Safety, and Knowledge.
  - o **Project Duration: 5 years.**

8.6.2. NATIONAL MISSION FOR CULTURAL MAPPING

Why in news?

Government has identified and documented distinctive features of more than one lakh villages under the '**Mera Gaon Meri Dharohar**' (My Village My Heritage) programme of the National Mission for Cultural Mapping (NMCM).
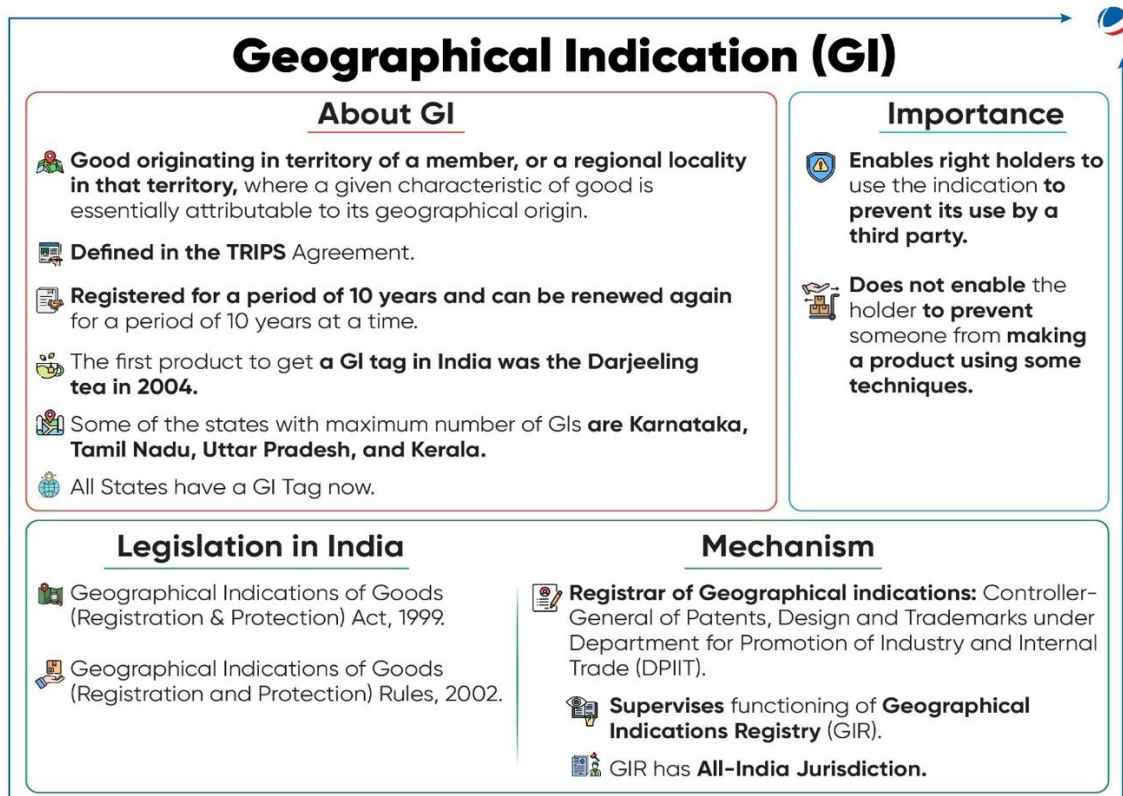
About Mera Gaon Meri Dharohar survey

- **Aim**: Seeks to **document the cultural identity at the village level** .
  - It aims to harness the **unique cultural heritage of rural India**.
- **Mechanism**: Involves **Common Services Centres** (CSC**) Village Level Entrepreneur** conducting meetings with locals and then uploading interesting facts about their village on to an application.
  - It can be **places of interest, customs and traditions, famous personalities, festivals and beliefs, art and culture**, etc., of the village.
- **Coordination**: **Ministry of Culture has partnered with the** CSC, under Ministry of Electronics & IT.
- **Villages have been broadly divided into various categories** like ecologically, developmentally, and scholastically, if they produce a famous textile or product etc.

About National Mission for Cultural Mapping

- Initiated by the **Ministry of Culture** in 2017.
- **Institutions involved**
  - CSC e-Governance Services India Limited (CSC) is **given the task by Ministry of Culture to carryout NMCM.**
  - Mission is being executed under the guidance of **Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA).**
    - IGNCA is an autonomous institution **under the Ministry of Culture.**
    - Acts as a centre **for research, academic pursuit, and dissemination** in the field of the arts
- **At broad-level, there are three important objectives of the mission, as follows.**
  - **National Cultural Awareness Abhiyan**
  - **Nationwide Artist Talent Hunt/Scouting Programme**
  - **National Cultural Work Place (NCWP)-**
- **Key mission components: Identify places where cultural hubs/kala grams may be developed**
  - **Create vitual platform for learning**
  - **Mapping of local artists and Guru-Shishya Parampara appreciation program**

8.7. GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS(GI) TAGS

Geographical Indication (GI)

About GI

- Good originating in territory of a member, or a regional locality in that territory, where a given characteristic of good is essentially attributable to its geographical origin.
- Defined in the TRIPS Agreement.
- Registered for a period of 10 years and can be renewed again for a period of 10 years at a time.
- The first product to get **a GI tag in India was the Darjeeling tea in 2004.**
- Some of the states with maximum number of GIs **are Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, and Kerala.**
- All States have a GI Tag now.

Importance

- Enables right holders to use the indication **to prevent its use by a third party.**
- Does not enable the holder **to prevent someone from making a product using some techniques.**

Legislation in India

- Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration & Protection) Act, 1999.
- Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Rules, 2002.

Mechanism

- **Registrar of Geographical indications:** Controller-General of Patents, Design and Trademarks under Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT).
- **Supervises** functioning of **Geographical Indications Registry** (GIR).
- GIR has **All-India Jurisdiction.**

GI Tags in News

Product	Details
Uttar Pradesh	
Jalesar Metal Craft (Uttar Pradesh)	• The **Thatheras community** makes these products.
Traditional attar production	• Kannauj is known as Perfume city. o India is the world's largest exporter of attar. • Kannauj Perfume has also received GI Tag.
Other recent GI Tags	• **Amroha Dholak** (musical instrument made of mango, jackfruit and teakwood). • **Baghpat Home Furnishings** • **Mainpuri Tarkashi** (inlay work with brass wire on dark sheesham) • **Kalpi Handmade Paper** • **Sambhal Horn craft** • **Barabanki Handloom** • **Mahoba Gaura Patthar Hastshilp** (stone craft)
Karnataka	
Kari Ishad Mango	• **Features:** unique aroma, luscious taste, high amount of pulp.
Lambani Embroidery Patches	• Named after the **Lambani tribe**. • **Amalgam of pattern darning**, **mirror work**, **cross stitch**, and **overlaid** and **quilting stitches** with borders of "Kangura" patchwork.
Rajasthan	
Udaipur Koftgari Metal Craft	• Art of decorating arms and weaponry using gold or silver wires.
Bikaner Kashidakari Craft	• **Fine stitching and mirrorwork on cotton, silk, or velvet**. • Traditionally done by the **Meghwal community** in Bikaner.
Jodhpur Bandhej Craft	• Art of tying and dyeing.
Bikaner Usta Kala Craft (gold nakashi or gold manauti work)	• Done on walls, ceilings, glass, wood, marble and artefacts made of camel leather.
Goa	
Mankurad Mango	• Named by Portuguese as malcorada (means **'poor coloured'**). • Mankurad has a **uniform yellow colour, less fibre and balanced sugar**.

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Goan Bebinca	• It is a **traditional Indo-Portuguese pudding**.
Goan cashew (kernel)	• Origin: Native to northeast Brazil; introduced to Goa by Portuguese in 1570. • Occupies largest area among horticultural crops in Goa.

Tamil Nadu

Matti Banana (Baby Banana)	• Known for its **distinct fragrance** and **honey-like taste** • Its **low total soluble solids content (TSSC)** recommends it as a **baby food.** • Fingers exhibit a distinct wind-blown appearance.
Sago	• SAGOSERVE (a cooperative society) **received GI tag for its Sago produced in Salem (TN).** • Sago is derived from **raw tapiocas and is in the form of small hard globules or pearls** and is pearl white in colour. • It is easy to **digest and provides rapid energy.**
Udangudi 'Panangkarupatti' (palm jaggery/ gur)	• Panangkarupatti is made from the **palm sap collected from the inflorescence of palmyra trees** that grow on the red sand dunes in the region.
Manamadurai pottery	• **Vaigai River** which runs through the Manamadurai village **enriches the clay used for the pottery.**

Chhattisgarh

Nagri Dubraj rice	• After **Jeeraphool rice in 2019, Dubraj is the second brand to get the GI tag in Chhattisgarh.** • The grain finds reference in Valmiki Ramayana
Assam	

Joha Rice	• Scientists **explored nutraceutical properties** of Joha rice (a **GI Tag rice from Assam**) and **detected two unsaturated fatty acids:** linoleic acid (omega-6) and linolenic (omega-3) acid.
	  ○ **Joha rice has a more balanced ratio of omega-6 to omega-3** in comparison to widely consumed non-scented variety.
	• It is effective in **lowering blood glucose** and **preventing diabetes onset.**
	  ○ It is also **rich in several antioxidants, flavonoids**, and phenolics.

Meghalaya

Lakadong turmeric	• **Lakadong turmeric:** known for its **high Curcumin content.** ○ Cultivated in the black alluvial soil during the monsoon months in Lakadong, Jaintia Hills.
Garo dakmanda	Traditional dress worn **by Garo tribe.**
Larnai pottery	Black pottery from Jaintia Hills District.
Garo chubitchi	Traditional **rice based alcoholic beverage** of Garo tribe.

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Ladakh	
Sea Buckthorn	• **It is the fourth GI tag In Ladakh,** after Apricot (Raktsey Karpo), Pashmina, and Ladakhi Wood Carving.

Arunachal Pradesh	

Arunachal Yak Churpi	• First ever **Yak milk product** to get a **Geographical Indication (GI) tag.**
	• Yak Churpi is a **naturally fermented cheese** prepared from **milk of Arunachali yak** reared in the high Altitude areas in Arunachal Pradesh.
	  o It is rich in protein.
	  o Arunachali Yaks is **reared by tribal** yak pastoralists known as **Brokpas.**

Uttarakhand	
Chamoli Wooden Ramman mask	• Ramman is a religious festival and ritual theatre of the **Garhwal region in India**. • It is a festival based on the **epics of Ramayana** of the Hindu community Chamoli district of Uttarakhand. • The process of making masks is considered **sacred by the artists**, as they bring to life the mythological gods and goddesses.
Bichhu Buti fabrics	• It made from **Himalayan nettle fibres**. • As the plant's fibres are **hollow**, they have the unique ability to accumulate air inside, thus creating a natural insulation and making an ideal clothing material for both winters and summers.
Kala Bhat	• It is traditionally cultivated under **"Barah-anaja" system of cultivation (upto 12 crops grown together)** where in varieties of millets, beans, pulses and cereals are cultivated in the same field under rain-fed conditions. • It is one of the richest sources of flavones in the human diet.
Burans (Rhododendron arboreum)	• State flower of Uttarakhand. • Buransh flowers contain **anthocyanins** (a class of water-soluble flavonoids) and **flavonols** (possess numerous health benefits) as the major pigments.
Other recent GI Tags	• **Mandua finger millet (Garhwal and Kumaon)** • **Jhangora millet** • **Lal chawal (Red Rice)** • **Chaulai (ramdana) ,** a pseudo-cereal. • **Pahari toor Dal** • **Gahat pulses** • **Ramnagar Litchi** • **Malta citrus fruit** • **Ramgarh Nainital Aadu** (stone fruit) • **Almora Lakhori mirchi** (yellow in color and is low in saturated fat, cholesterol and sodium). • **Berinag Tea** • **Likhai wood craft** • **Mombati** (hand carved and natural flower candles) • **Rangwali Picchoda apparel of Kumaon.**

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8.8. OTHER IMPORTANT NEWS

8.8.1. HOMO NALEDI

- New evidence suggests that Homo naledi, an extinct human species, **may have buried their dead and carved meaningful symbols in a cave.**
  - The burials are older than any known Homo sapiens burials by at least 100,000 years.
- **Features of Homo naledi**
  - They walked fully upright and had hands that were similar to ours.
  - Shoulders were built for climbing and teeth were shaped like that of older primates.
  - Brain size was just one-third of that of modern humans.
- **Humankind's earliest ancestors:** Ardipithicines, Australopithecines, Homo habilis, Homo ergaster/ erectus, Homo neanderthalensis, Denisovans.

8.8.2. WOMAN ODHUVAR

- Tamil Nadu has **appointed women Odhuvars in temples**.
  - Odhuvars are in the service of Lord Shiva by singing his praise from Thirumurai in Saivite temples.
- **Thirumurai is a twelve-volume compendium** of songs in praise of Lord Shiva from the 6th to the 10th century CE by Nayanars in Tamil Nadu.
  - This first 7 are called Tevaram, written by 3 important nayanar saints Sundarar, Sambandar and Appar.
  - Manikavasagar completed the 8th Book.
  - The first 9 books are called Thothithiram (in praise of Shiva).
  - 10th contains compositions of Tirumular.
  - 11th has minor works by a female Karaikkal and Nambi Andar.
  - 12th is called the Periyarpuranam.

8.8.3. BALI YATRA

- On the occasion of **Kartika Purnima**, **Asia's largest open-air annual trade fair** Bali yatra inaugurated on the banks of **Mahanadi River in Cuttack, Odisha.**
  - People of **Odisha float small boats made of banana peels and Sola** in nearby ponds and rivers to recall the **glories of daring Sea Voyages of ancient Kalinga.**
- **About Bali yatra fair**
  - It commemorates **Odisha's historical ties with Bali** (Indonesia), and its **rich maritime legacy** of transoceanic voyages to Southeast Asian nations.
  - It is also **associated with legend 'Taapoi'** which reminds the traditional memories of a **young maiden waiting for the return of her sailor brothers.**
  - However, there is also a belief that **Vaishnavite Saint Sri Chaitanya landed** in Cuttack after crossing Bali on his way to **Puri on this auspicious day.**
  - **'Bhalukuni Osha'** or **'Khudurukuni Osha'** and **'Bada Osha' are the key** rituals associated with this fair.

8.8.4. UNESCO'S 2023 PRIX VERSAILLES

- **Kempegowda International Airport** Bengaluru (Karnataka) was honored at **UNESCO's 2023 Prix Versailles**, and named among the 'World's most beautiful airports'**.**
- Granted annually at UNESCO since 2015, the Prix Versailles **consists of architecture awards that showcase the finest contemporary achievements worldwide**.
  - The **Official list** aligns with the with the principles of **intelligent sustainability** and takes into consideration **projects' ecological, social and cultural impacts into consideration.**
  - It highlights the primary **role of the Laureates in beautifying and improving the living environment.**

8.8.5. ABHILEKH PATAL

- It is a **full-featured web-portal to access National Archives of India's (NAI)** reference media and its **digitized collections through internet**.
  - It is an **initiative of NAI** to make its **Indian Archival Records available to all.**
- NAI is an **Attached Office of the Ministry of Culture** and act as **repository of non-current records** of the Government of India.

8.8.6. JATAN: VIRTUAL MUSEUM BUILDER

- JATAN: Virtual Museum Builder, is a **digital collection management system for Indian museums**.
- It is a **client-server application** with features such as image cropping, watermarking, unique numbering, and management of digital objects with multimedia representations.
- It has been designed and developed by Human Centres Design and Computing Group, **Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC), Pune.**
- It is part of the Central government's plan to **complete 3D digitization of all museums under its administrative control** by the year's end for better conservation of artefacts.
  - **Ministry of Culture** has 10 museums under its ambit.
  - Also, the **Archaeological Survey of India** also has site museums at 44 locations spread throughout the country in proximity to important archaeological sites.

8.8.7. US TO RETURN OVER 100 INDIAN ANTIQUITIES

- **Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT) in Criminal Matters** between India and US allows for mutual assistance on antiquities repatriation.
- **Ministry of Home Affairs is nodal ministry** for executing court orders under MLATs.
- **Antiquities and Art Treasures Act (AATA), 1972** makes the export of such items without licence, from Archaeological Survey of India, a criminal offence.
- Also, **Customs Act 1962 prevents the export of antiquities**.
- **India Pride Project** is a **global organisation dedicated to restoring India's lost heritage.**

8.8.8. GLOBAL BUDDHIST SUMMIT 2023

- **Global Buddhist Summit 2023 concluded** with **New Delhi Declaration.**
- **Summit was organised by Ministry of culture,** in collaboration with Delhi-based **International Buddhist Confederation,**
- Aim: to **engage global Buddhist dhamma leadership** and scholars **on matters of Buddhist and universal concerns.**
- Summit highlighted the **rising role of Buddhism in India's soft power strategy**.

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APPENDIX I: BUDDHISM

ABOUT BUDDHISM

Founded By: Gautam Buddha (born as Siddhartha Gautama)

Born in 563 BC in Sakya Kshatriya family

Left family at age of 29 and later **achieved enlightenment** (nirvana) **under a pipal tree**

- **Famous sites linked to Buddha**
- **Lumbini** (Birthplace)
- **Bodh Gaya** (Enlightenment)
- **Sarnath** (First Sermon)
- **Kushinagar** (Death place)

DOCTRINE OF BUDDHISM

Core of Buddha doctrine is expressed through **Four Noble Truths**

Eight Fold path, also called middle path, recommended by Buddha **for elimination of human misery**

- Rather than believing in God, Buddhism focuses on **moral progress independent of God**
- Accepts **theory of** transmigration of soul **transmigration but not exactly**

IMPORTANT SECTS IN BUDDHISM

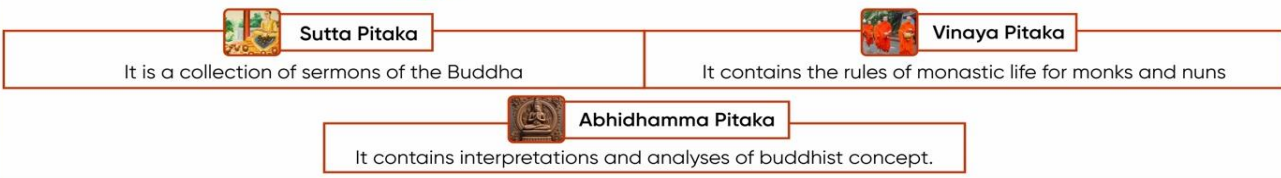| Hinayana Buddhism	Mahayana Buddhism	Theravada Buddhism	Vajrayana (Tantric Buddhism)	Other Sub-Sects:
• Means **lesser vehicle** • More of an **orthodox school** • **Did not believe in idol or image** worship • **Predominantly Pali language** was used	• Means **greater vehicle** • It is **more liberal** • Believes in **heavenliness of** • **Buddha and Bodhisattvas** • **Believes** in idol or image worship • **Predominantly Sanskrit** was used	• Sub-sect of Hinayana Goal is **cessation of kleshas** and **attainment of Nirvana** • Believes in **vibhajjavada** i.e. teaching of analysis • **Pali** language is used	• **Sub-sect of Mahayana** • **Combined Brahmanical** (Veda based) rituals with Buddhist philosophies. • **Main deity:** ara. • **Classical Tibetan language** used	• Sautrantika, Sammitya, Mahasangika, Gokulika, etc

BUDDHIST COUNCILS

S. No.	Location	Time	Royal Potronage	President	Important Remarks
1	Rajgriha	483 BCE	Ajatshatru	Mahakasyapa	Vinaya pitaka and sutta pitaka were recited.
2	Vaishali	383 BCE	Kalasoka	Sabakami	First split in buddhism with the split in Mahasanghikas and sthaviravadinis over rules of monastic discipline.
3	Pataliputra	250BCE	Ashoka	Moggaliputra Tissa	Abhidhamma pitaka was codified
4	Kashmir	72 AD	Kanishka	Vasumitra	Division between Hinayana & Mahayana sects.

BUDDHIST LITERARY TEXTS

Sutta Pitaka

It is a collection of sermons of the Buddha

Vinaya Pitaka

It contains the rules of monastic life for monks and nuns

Abhidhamma Pitaka

It contains interpretations and analyses of buddhist concept.
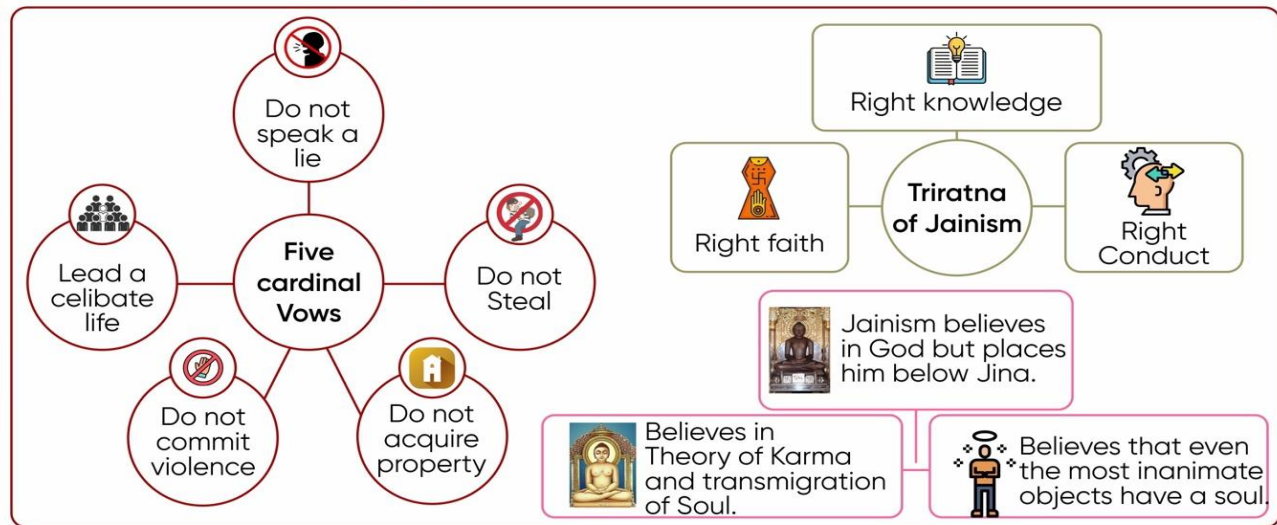
APPENDIX II: JAINISM

ABOUT JAINISM

Originated around **Rig Vedic Age**

Founded by a lineage of 24 Great Teachers known as **Tirthankaras**

First tirthankara was Rishabdeva, 23rd was Parsvanath and 24th was Vardhmana Mahavira.

Sects in Jainism Svetambara and Digambara. Other sub-sects: Bisapantha, Terapantha, Sthanakvasi, Murtipujaka, etc

VARDHMANA MAHAVIRA

Born in 540 BC at Vaishali (in present day North Bihar)

His father Siddhartha was chief of the Jnatri clan, his mother Trishala was a Lichchhavi princess

Abandoned house hold at the age of 30 and **attained Kavalya** or perfect knowledge **at age of 42**

Propagated religion through **Kosala, Magadha, Mithila, Champa** etc.

Passed away at age of 72 **at Pavapuri** (near present day Rajgir)

DOCTRINE OF JAINISM

Five cardinal Vows
- Do not speak a lie
- Do not Steal
- Do not acquire property
- Do not commit violence
- Lead a celibate life

Triratna of Jainism
- Right knowledge
- Right faith
- Right Conduct

Jainism believes in God but places him below Jina.

Believes in Theory of Karma and transmigration of Soul.

Believes that even the most inanimate objects have a soul.

FAMOUS COUNCILS

S. No.	Date	Location	President	Important Remarks
1	300 BC	Pataliputra	Sthulabhadra	Compilation of Mahavira's teachings into 12 Angas
2	512 AD	Vallabhi	Devridhigani	Systematic coding of Mahavira's teachings into 11 angas as the 12th was lost by that time.

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UPSC CSE TOPPERS 2022

Waseem Ahmad Bhat — RANK 7 2022

Waseem Ahmad Bhat, an exceptional achiever who secured an All India Rank 7 in his third attempt in the UPSC Civil Services Examination 2022. He also achieved All India Rank 225 in his first attempt in 2020 and currently, he is training as an Assistant Commissioner Income Tax.

Waseem was a student of the **VisionIAS Foundation Course**, Batch in 2019.

Hailing from Doru Shahabad, Anantnag, Jammu & Kashmir, he completed his schooling in Anantnag and holds a degree in Civil Engineering from NIT Srinagar.

Waseem opted for **Anthropology** as his optional subject. His topper's talk covers vital topics such as preparing for the **changing pattern of Prelims**, essay writing and strategy, writing **quote-based essays,** utilizing topper's answer scripts for preparation, and **effective revision strategies.**

TOPPERS' TALK

TOPPER'S COPIES

Aniruddh Yadav — RANK 8 2022

Aniruddh Yadav, a remarkable achiever who secured an All India Rank 8 in his fourth attempt in the UPSC Civil Services Examination of 2022.

Aniruddh opted for **Anthropology** as his optional subject. He completed his dual degree course in Biochemical Engineering & Biotechnology from IIT Delhi.

His topper's talk covers crucial aspects such as **creating a schedule** and **subject-wise timetable,** honing answer writing skills through topic-based **practice, mastering the structure** and format of answers (Introduction, Body, Conclusion), **managing time effectively** during answer writing practice, and preparing **topic-wise notes** with the help of syllabus analysis and previous year questions.

TOPPERS' TALK

TOPPER'S COPIES

Siddharth Shukla — RANK 18 2022

Siddharth Shukla, belongs to Uttar Pradesh. He completed his BA in History (H) from Delhi University, which was also his optional subject.

He displayed exemplary resilience by appearing in the exam for the fourth attempt and secured AIR 18 in 2022.

The preparation strategy reflected in his talk and answer scripts include the strategy for Essay, **efficient use of PYQs, notes making,** among others.

Additionally, he has also focused upon **non-academic aspects** such as **stress management, habit formation, and role of meditation** which are critical for this examination.

TOPPERS' TALK

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Anoushka Sharma — RANK 20 2022

Anouska Sharma hailing from Madhya Pradesh completed her graduation from City University, New York with a bachelor's degree in Economics. She gained job experience through a three-month internship with the United Nations prior to taking the civil service examination.

She passed her CSE with AIR 20 in 2022 on her third attempt. **Economics** is her optional subject.

She has a very good command over ethics paper and she has shared her **insights on time management and strategy for attempting questions** in CSE Mains.

TOPPERS' TALK

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UPSC CSE TOPPERS 2021

Gamini Singla
3 RANK 2021

Gamini Singla, hailing from Punjab, completed her graduation in Computer Science Engineering from Punjab Engineering College Chandigarh. Thereafter, she honed her skills through a five-month internship as a finance analyst at JP Morgan.

She secured a remarkable All India Rank of 3 in the UPSC CSE 2021 in her second attempt with **Sociology** as her optional subject.

With her strategic **approach to GS Paper IV (Ethics) and Essay,** Gamini demonstrated her ability to **critically analyze ethical issues** and effectively express her thoughts in a coherent manner.

Her expertise in answer writing provided her with a competitive edge, allowing her to convey her knowledge and insights concisely.

TOPPERS' TALK

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Aishwarya Verma
4 RANK 2021

Aishwarya Verma hails from Madhya Pradesh. After graduating in Electrical Engineering, he opted for Civil Services as a career of choice.

He chose **Geography** as his optional subject and achieved an All-India Rank 4 in UPSC CSE 2021 in his fourth attempt.

Apart from the hard work, determination and resilience shown by Aishwarya, his success can also be attributed to his **short and enriched self-made notes, advanced answer writing skills**, and smart preparation strategy, including S&T.

TOPPERS' TALK

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Utkarsh Dwivedi
5 RANK 2021

Utkarsh Dwivedi, hailing from historic town of Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh, a graduate in Mechanical Engineering from VIT Vellore, displayed resilience by attempting the exam for the third time and succeeding with remarkable achievement with the optional subject, **Political Science and International Relations.**

He displayed **exemplary command over Ethics Paper**, specially Case Studies and **quotation-based questions.** With his deep understanding of the demand of the UPSC Examination and excellent time management skills, he not only optimized his efforts, but also maximized his performance at all stages of the UPSC CSE.

TOPPERS' TALK

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Yaksh Chaudhary
6 RANK 2021

Yaksh Chaudhary, a resident of Amroha, Uttar Pradesh, through unwavering determination secured an All India Rank 6 in the prestigious exam on his third attempt in 2021. With his passion for Sociology, Yaksh opted for it as his optional subject and devised a winning strategy for his preparation.

Yaksh's **exceptional expertise in answer writing** and adeptness in attempting question papers during the mains exam provided him an edge. Moreover, his skill in crafting **well-structured diagrams** for General Studies, Ethics, and Sociology further enriched the quality and visual appeal of his responses. Yaksh's achievements serve as an inspiration to aspiring candidates nationwide, exemplifying the significance of perseverance, dedication, and strategic planning.

TOPPERS' TALK

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UPSC CSE TOPPERS 2020

Shubham Kumar — RANK 1 2020

Shubham Kumar, hailing from Katihar District in Bihar, completed his graduation in Civil Engineering from IIT Bombay. He achieved the remarkable feat of securing All India Rank 1 in the UPSC examination of 2020 in his third attempt.

His success can be attributed to his **unique approach and meticulous preparation.** Shubham emphasized the importance of **regular mock tests** for prelims and carefully analyzing previous years' UPSC prelims questions.

Shubham was a student of the **VisionIAS Foundation Course.**

He also **utilized topper's copies to enhance his skills in ethics answer writing** and emphasized the **use of diagrams and graphs** in GS papers.

TOPPERS' TALK

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Jagrati Awasthi — RANK 2 2020

Jagrati Awasthi, from Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, completed her graduation in Electrical Engineering from NIT Bhopal. She gained two years of valuable work experience at BHEL.

With **Sociology** as her optional subject, she achieved an outstanding All India Rank of 2 in the UPSC examination of 2020.

She has emphasized the **importance of a well-structured daily routine** and shared a **detailed booklist** and recommended sources. Jagrati stressed the significance of thorough reading and utilizing previous years' questions to grasp the exam's demands.

Along with refined **note-making techniques,** she has provided insights on determining the optimal number of questions to attempt in the prelims and leveraging previous year's question papers for **Ethics case studies'** preparation.

TOPPERS' TALK

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Praveen Kumar — RANK 7 2020

Praveen Kumar, achieved an impressive All India Rank 07 in the UPSC Civil Services Examination 2020. Hailing from Jammui, Bihar, Praveen holds a degree in Civil Engineering from IIT Kanpur.

His remarkable journey includes clearing the GATE examination with an AIR 5 and securing AIR 3 in the Indian Engineering Services (IES) exam, all while working for the Indian Railway Service.

Praveen's toppers talk provides invaluable insights, covering motivations for pursuing the IAS, **effective booklists and sources for exam preparation, strategies for newspaper reading and content extraction, note-making techniques** for mains, and **utilizing flow charts and diagrams** in answers.

TOPPERS' TALK

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Satyam Gandhi — RANK 10 2020

Satyam Gandhi, an exceptional achiever, secured an All India Rank 10 in the UPSC Civil Services Examination 2020. Hailing from Bihar, Satyam graduated in Political Sciences (H) from Dayal Singh College, University of Delhi.

With **Political Science and International** Relations as his optional subject, he cleared the exam on his first attempt, displaying remarkable determination.

In addition, Satyam achieved an impressive AIR 242 in the NDA Exam. His toppers talk offers invaluable insights into **time management strategies** for a first attempt success, the **significance of flowcharts and diagrams** in mains answers, **effective essay structuring**, and his experience in obtaining a remarkable 201 marks in the interview.

TOPPERS' TALK

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39 in Top 50 Selections in CSE 2022

1 AIR Ishita Kishore

2 AIR Garima Lohia

3 AIR Uma Harathi N

8 in Top 10 Selections in CSE 2021

2 AIR ANKITA AGARWAL

3 AIR GAMINI SINGLA

4 AIR AISHWARYA VERMA

5 AIR UTKARSH DWIVEDI

6 AIR YAKSH CHAUDHARY

7 AIR SAMYAK S JAIN

8 AIR ISHITA RATHI

9 AIR PREETAM KUMAR

1 AIR SHUBHAM KUMAR
CIVIL SERVICES EXAMINATION 2020

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