



CULTURE

Classroom Study Material

(May 2019 to February 2020)



DELHI



LUCKNOW



JAIPUR



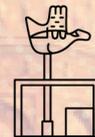
HYDERABAD



PUNE



AHMEDABAD



CHANDIGARH



8468022022



9019066066



enquiry@visionias.in



[/c/VisionIASdelhi](https://www.youtube.com/c/VisionIASdelhi)



[/Vision_IAS](https://www.facebook.com/Vision_IAS)



[vision_ias](https://www.instagram.com/vision_ias)



www.visionias.in



[/VisionIAS_UPSC](https://www.telegram.com/@VisionIAS_UPSC)

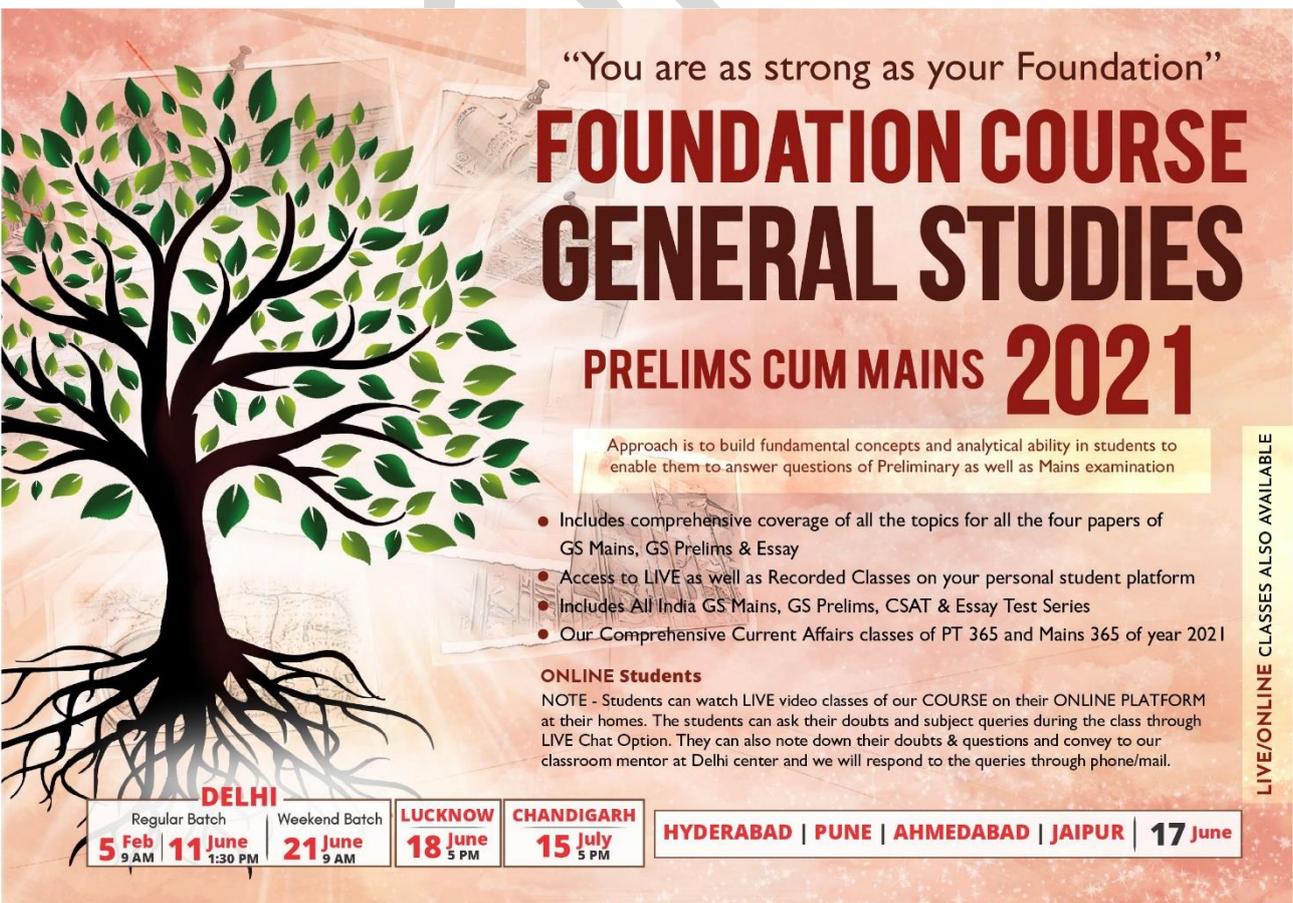


CULTURE

Table of Contents

1. SCULPTURE AND ARCHITECTURE _____	3	7.3. Mamallapuram _____	24
1.1. Megalithic Culture _____	3	7.4. Earliest Sanskrit inscription in South India _____	25
1.2. Chaukhandi Stupa _____	3	7.5. Poompuhar to be digitally Reconstructed _____	25
1.3. Amaravati School of Art _____	5	7.6. Early Humans Lived in Northern India 80,000 Years Ago _____	26
1.4. Stucco Sculpture _____	5	7.7. Neolithic Age Siva Linga Discovered _____	27
1.5. Mini Khajuraho _____	6	7.8. Nagardhan Excavations _____	27
1.6. Brihadisvara Temple _____	6	7.9. Buddhist Monasteries in News _____	28
1.7. Other architecture forms in news _____	7	8. PERSONALITIES _____	29
2. PAINTINGS & OTHER ART FORMS _____	9	8.1. Guru Nanak _____	29
2.1. Pattachitra _____	9	8.2. Tipu Sultan _____	29
2.2. Bagru Block Printing _____	9	8.3. Maharaja Ranjit Singh _____	30
2.3. Other Art Forms _____	9	8.4. Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar _____	30
3. DANCES & MUSIC _____	11	8.5. Ashfaqullah Khan _____	32
3.1. Assamese Bhaona _____	11	8.6. Vinayak Damodar Savarkar _____	32
3.2. Other performing Art Forms in News _____	11	8.7. Muhammad Iqbal _____	33
4. LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE _____	13	8.8. Dara Shikoh _____	33
4.1. Classical Language _____	13	8.9. Adi Shankar _____	34
4.2. Urdu _____	13	8.10. Thiruvalluvar _____	34
4.3. Indigenous Languages _____	13	8.11. Guru Ravidas Jayanti _____	35
5. INITIATIVES OF UNESCO _____	15	8.12. Vedanta Desikan _____	35
5.1. UNESCO World Heritage Sites _____	15	8.13. Travelogues in Decoding Indian History _____	35
5.1.1. Tentative List of UNESCO World Heritage Sites _____	16	8.14. Other Personalities in News _____	36
5.1.2. Iran's Cultural Heritage _____	16	9. HISTORICAL EVENTS _____	38
5.2. UNESCO's Creative Cities Network _____	17	9.1. Paika Rebellion _____	38
6. FESTIVALS _____	18	9.2. Payyanur _____	38
6.1. Ambubachi Mela _____	18	9.3. Jallianwala Bagh _____	39
6.2. Lai Haraoba _____	18	9.4. Azad Hind Government _____	40
6.3. Zo Kutpui _____	19	9.5. Nehru-Liaquat Agreement _____	41
6.4. Aadi Mahotsav _____	19	9.6. Privy Purse Abolition _____	41
6.5. Cultural Festival in News _____	19	9.7. Other events _____	41
7. ANCIENT HISTORY _____	22	10. PRIZES AND AWARDS _____	43
7.1. New Findings on the Decline of Harappan Civilization _____	22		
7.2. Sangam Age _____	23		

10.1. Nobel Prizes _____	43	11.2. Republic Day Parade 2020 _____	47
10.2. Awards by Sangeet Natak Akademi _____	43	11.3. Parsi Population _____	48
10.3. Portugal Sets up Gandhi Prize _____	43	11.4. Kodavas Community of Coorg _____	48
10.4. Sahitya Akademi Awards 2019 _____	44	11.5. Pashmina Products Receive BIS Certification _____	48
10.5. Padma Awards _____	44	11.6. Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI) _____	49
10.6. Jnanpith Award _____	45	11.7. Government Initiatives _____	49
11. MISCELLANEOUS _____	46	11.8. Tribes in News _____	50
11.1. GI Tags _____	46		



“You are as strong as your Foundation”

FOUNDATION COURSE GENERAL STUDIES

PRELIMS CUM MAINS 2021

Approach is to build fundamental concepts and analytical ability in students to enable them to answer questions of Preliminary as well as Mains examination

- Includes comprehensive coverage of all the topics for all the four papers of GS Mains, GS Prelims & Essay
- Access to LIVE as well as Recorded Classes on your personal student platform
- Includes All India GS Mains, GS Prelims, CSAT & Essay Test Series
- Our Comprehensive Current Affairs classes of PT 365 and Mains 365 of year 2021

ONLINE Students
NOTE - Students can watch LIVE video classes of our COURSE on their ONLINE PLATFORM at their homes. The students can ask their doubts and subject queries during the class through LIVE Chat Option. They can also note down their doubts & questions and convey to our classroom mentor at Delhi center and we will respond to the queries through phone/mail.

DELHI

Regular Batch	Weekend Batch	LUCKNOW	CHANDIGARH	HYDERABAD PUNE AHMEDABAD JAIPUR 17 June
5 Feb 9 AM	11 June 1:30 PM	21 June 9 AM	18 June 5 PM	15 July 5 PM

LIVE/ONLINE CLASSES ALSO AVAILABLE

1. SCULPTURE AND ARCHITECTURE

1.1. MEGALITHIC CULTURE

Why in News?

Recently, new menhirs were found on the Pothamala hills on the Kerala-Tamil Nadu border.

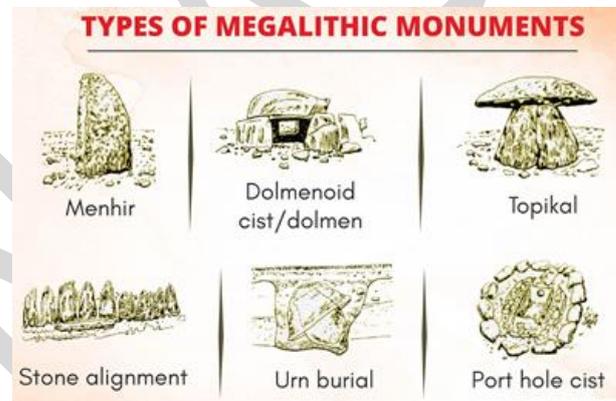
More about news

- Menhirs are **monolithic slabs that are erected above the ground** and may be small or gigantic in height.
- Pothamala hills houses **hundreds of cobbled stone structures**, pointing to the existence of a **structured graveyard** of a prehistoric civilisation dating back around 3,000 years.
- These menhirs are the **largest-ever recorded Menhirs in Kerala**.
- Menhirs are endemic to certain regions only and are a **feature of megalithic culture**.

Megalithic culture in India

- Megalithic culture refers to the **cultural remains found in the megaliths and from the habitation sites associated with them**.
 - Megaliths include different kind of monuments that have one thing in common—they are **made of large, roughly, dressed slabs of stone**.
 - Such monuments have been found in **many parts of the world in- Europe, Asia, Africa, and in Central and South America**.
- **In the Indian subcontinent, Megaliths occur in the far south, the Deccan plateau, the Vindhyan Arravalli ranges and the north west**.
 - Megalithic sites in India are dated to a period ranging from **1300 BCE to 12 century CE**.
 - Megaliths in **Vindhyas** referred to a **pre-iron chalcolithic context, peninsular India** are associated with **iron period**.
 - The practice of **making megaliths continues among certain tribal communities** of India such as **the Khasis of Assam and the Mundas of Chotanagpur**.
- Megaliths **reflect certain burial styles** that emerged at different times in different places and continued for quite some time.
 - The origin of some of these burial practices can be traced to a **Neolithic-chalcolithic context**. For instance, pit and urn burials are found in the South Indian neolithic-chalcolithic sites and two burials marked by stones have been found at Watgal, Karnataka.

- However, unlike burials of the Neolithic chalcolithic phase, which tend to be within the habitation, megalithic burials **are located in a separate area**. The **separation of abodes of the living and the dead** is significant, and is indicative of a **shift in social organization**.
- The three basic types of Megaliths are the **chamber tombs, unchambered tombs, and megaliths not connected with burials**.
- Various types of megalithic monuments found are menhirs, dolmenoid cist/dolmen, topikal etc. (See infographic).
- Megaliths in India **cannot be treated as representing a single, homogenous or contemporaneous culture**.



1.2. CHAUKHANDI STUPA

Why in news?

Recently, Chaukhandi Stupa has been declared site of national importance by the Archeological Survey of India (ASI).

About Chaukhandi Stupa

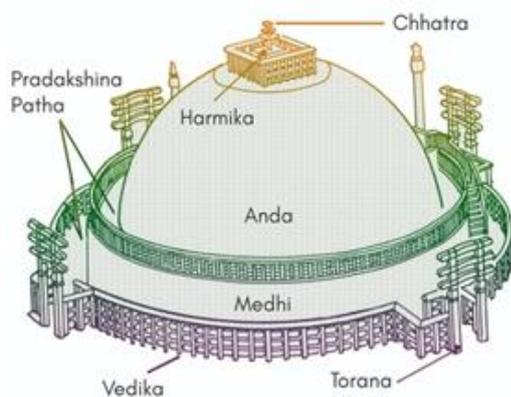
- It is an ancient Buddhist site in **Sarnath (Uttar Pradesh)**, with a lofty brick structure crowned with an octagonal tower.
- Originally stupa is said to be built by Emperor Ashoka.
- The **octagonal tower** on top is a **Mughal monument** built in 1588 to **commemorate Humanyu's visit to this place**.

About Sarnath

- Sarnath had been referred as 'Mrigadava' meaning 'deer park' and 'Isipatana' denoting the place where holy men fell to earth.
- **Site for Buddhism:** Lord Buddha delivered his first sermon after attaining enlightenment in Sarnath called **dharmachakra – pravartana**.

- **Dhamekh Stupa (Dharma Chakra Stupa):** It is the place where Lord Buddha had given his first sermon of Dharma. It is said to have been built in the year 500 CE while the construction was ordered by Emperor Ashoka in the 3rd Century BC.
- **Mulagandhakuti Vihara:** This is the place where Lord Buddha lived when he visited Sarnath.
- **Bodhi Tree:** It is located near to the Mulagandhakuti Vihara, planted by taking a branch from the Sri Maha Bodhi tree of Anuradhapura, Sri Lanka.
- **Ashoka Pillar:** Emblem of the country.
 - Ashoka Pillar marks the visit of King Ashoka to Sarnath. This 50m long pillar has **four lions on top** of it and **four animals at below** viz. bull, lion, elephant and horse. These four represent the phases of Lord Buddha's life.
- **Site for Jainism:** It is the birthplace of 11th teerthankar, **Shreyansanath**.

PLAN OF STUPA



About Archeological Survey of India (ASI)

- Under the **Ministry of Culture**, it is the premier organization for the archaeological researches and protection of the cultural heritage of the nation.
- It regulates all archaeological activities in the country as per the provisions of the **Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (AMASR) Act, 1958**.
- It also regulates Antiquities and Art Treasure Act, 1972.
- It was **founded in 1861** by **Alexander Cunningham** who also became its **first Director-General**.

About National Importance Site

- Under Section 4 of the **Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (AMASR) Act, 1958**, ancient monuments or archaeological sites which are of historical, archaeological or artistic interest and which have been in existence for not less than 100 years may be declared as site of national importance.

- The **protection and maintenance** of monuments declared as site of national importance is taken up by ASI by way of structural repairs, chemical preservation and environmental development around the monument which is a regular and on-going process.

Other important Stupas

- **Sanchi Stupa**
 - It is one of the oldest structures in India and was commissioned in 3rd century BCE by **Emperor Ashoka**.
 - It is believed that during the reign of Shunga Emperor Pushyamitra Shunga it was vandalised. While under Agnimitra Shunga, son of Pushyamitra, it was refurbished.
 - During the **Satavahanas Period** the gateways and the balustrade (design between the railings) were built and highly decorated. The gateways commissioned were covered with **narrative structures**. The figure of Lord Buddha was carved in these structures as canopy under the Bodhi Tree at the point of Enlightenment. Various **events of life of Lord Buddha** were carved.
 - The Sanchi Stupa has four beautifully carved Toranas or the gateways which depict various **events of Buddhas' life** and Jatakas.
 - It was enlisted as **UNESCO world heritage site** in 1989.
- **Bharhut stupa**
 - The stupa of Bharhut is between Allahabad and Jabalpur situated in the erstwhile Nagod state of **Madhya Pradesh**. It was probably **built around 150 B.C during Shunga period**.
 - It is carved out of **red stone**.
 - The site was discovered by sir Alexander Cunningham in 1873.
 - Narrative reliefs at Bharhut show how artisans used the **pictorial language very effectively to communicate stories**.
 - ✓ Folded hands in the narratives as well as single figures of the Yakshas and Yakshinis are shown flat clinging to the chest.
 - ✓ carved panels depict **Buddhist narratives** such as the dream of Maya; celestials celebrating Buddha's enlightenment, the worship of Buddha's throne and the Bodhi tree; elephants paying homage to the Buddha throne and also **Jataka story**.
- **Amravati Stupa**
 - It is a famous specimen of the Buddhist art and architecture of ancient India. It is located at Amravati in **Andhra Pradesh**,
 - The stupa was built in **3rd century BC**, and was in vogue as an **important monastic centre** till the 14th century AD and was discovered by Colin Mackenzie in 1797.

- The stupa was earlier a simple structure with limestone crossbars and simple carvings, but when renovated by the **Satavahana rulers**, became a highly marked architectural monument.
- The stupa is made of **brick with a circular vedika** and depicts Lord Buddha in a human form, subduing an elephant. It is adorned with 95 ft high platforms, protruding in four cardinal directions.
- **Bairat Stupa in Rajasthan:** It is a Mauryan circular stupa-shrine (by Ashoka) made of lime-plastered panels of brickwork alternating with twenty-six octagonal pillars of wood, preceded by monastic remains with a double row of cells arranged around an open square courtyard.
 - Bairat or ancient Viratnagar, **the capital of Matsyadesa**, is said to have been founded by king Virat, in whose kingdom the five Pandavas spent the thirteenth year of exile in disguise.
 - The place is well-known for **two Asokan inscriptions** and important ancient Buddhist relics are found here.
- **Devnimori stupa in Gujarat:** Located on the frills of River Meshwo near Shamlaji, this mammoth site boasts of several viharas, stupas, small caves and chaityas.
- **Jagayyapetta, Bhattiprolu, Nagarjunkonda, Goli:** Andhra Pradesh.

medallion depicts a whole story of **'taming of an elephant by the Buddha'**.

- There is prominence of **human figures** rather than figures drawn from nature.

Differences between Gandhara, Mathura and Amravati Schools of Art

School of Art	Gandhara	Mathura	Amravati
Influence	Had influence of helenistic and greek art features	It is indigenous in character	It is indigenous in character
Material Used	Grey Sandstone	Red Sandstone	White Marble
Religious tones	Mainly Buddhist	Buddhist, Hindu and Jain	Mainly Buddhist
Patrons	Kushana	Kushana	Satavahanas
Description of images	Spiritual image of Buddha with wavy hair, beard and moustache	Delighted image of Buddha without beard and moustache	Depiction of Jataka stories

1.3. AMARAVATI SCHOOL OF ART

Why in News?

Recently, a Buddhist relic, having features belonging to Amravati school of Art, has been unearthed by a group of indologists on the banks of **River Gundlakamma** in Andhra Pradesh.

More on news

- The unearthed Buddhist relic is a **local limestone pillar**, which is carved with half lotus medallions at the centre and top portions on all the four sides. Such features have striking similarities with Amravati School of Art of the Ikshvaku times.
- The **Amravati School of Art** flourished in the region of Andhra Pradesh between the lower valleys of **ivers Krishna and Godavari**.
- The main patrons of this art form were the **Satavahanas** but it carried on even later, patronized by their successor **Ikshavaku rulers**. This art is said to have flourished between **150 BC and 350 AD**.
- An important characteristic of the Amravati school is the **'narrative art'**. The medallions were carved in such a manner that they depict an incident in a natural way. For example one

1.4. STUCCO SCULPTURE

Why in news?

Recently, archaeologists have unearthed a life-size stucco sculpture (one of the Bodhisattvas) from a Buddhist site in **Phanigiri, Telangana** making it the largest found in the country so far.

Phanigiri Hillock

- It is a prominent Buddhist site in Telangana and has relics dating back to 1st Century AD which were unearthed during excavations in 2001.
- The sculptural wealth from the site shows a gradual transition between the **Satavahana period and Ikshvaku period**.
- Efforts are ongoing to place Phanigiri on the tourist map of **Buddhist circuit** by the State government.
- A **Mahastupa**, apsidal **chaitya grihas**, votive stupas and pillared congregation halls belonging to the **Satavahana period** from the first century BC have been found here.
- The site was one of the **biggest training and Dhyana Kendra for Buddhist monks** as 200 Viharas in which Buddhist monks are believed to have resided, were located on the hillock.

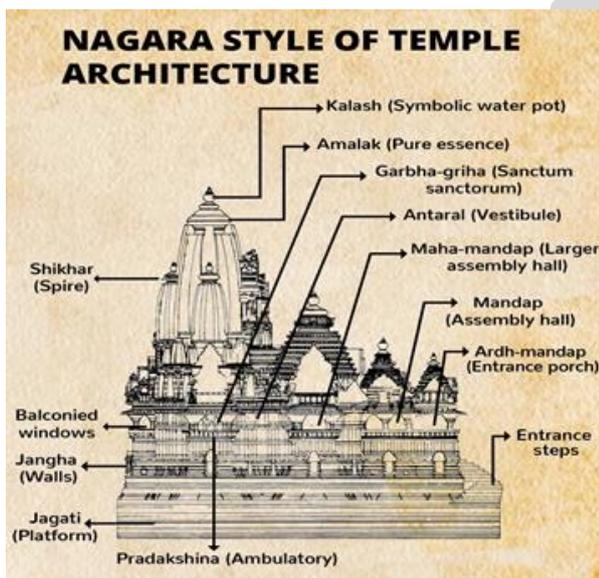
About Stucco Art

- Stucco is used as a decorative coating for walls and ceilings, and as a sculptural and artistic material in architecture.
- **Traditional stucco** is made of lime, sand, and water, whereas **modern stucco** is made of portland cement, sand, and water.
- As a plastering material it is applied wet which hardens to a very dense solid.
- Indian architecture used stucco as a **material for sculpture in an architectural context**.
- Stucco art was earliest seen in the **Gandhara region** (around Peshawar and northern Pakistan)
- It was used mainly in the monastery complex. For example: In the sculptural art of Nalanda and **Vikramshila** monasteries stucco was used extensively.
- In the **Dravida architecture** hundreds of stucco figures used to decorate the vimana.

1.5. MINI KHAJURAHO

Why in news?

The Archaeological Survey of India is restoring the **Markandeshwar group of temples** in the Gadchiroli district of Maharashtra.



Details

- This group of temples were built between the 9th and 12th centuries and may have had up to 24 different temples.
- It gets its name from the main temple dedicated to Lord Shiva called **Markandeshwar or Markandadeo temple**, which lies in Markanda village on the **banks of the Wainganga river**.
- They are famously known as the '**mini Khajuraho**' or '**Khajuraho of Vidarbha**'. They belong to saiva, vaishnava and sakti faith.

- The temples belong to the **Nagara group of temples** of North India.
- It is believed that a lightning strike about 200 years ago led to the partial collapse of the shikhara. Then a **Gond ruler** about 120 years ago tried to restore the temple.

1.6. BRIHADISVARA TEMPLE

Why in news?

Recently, 'Kumbhabhishekham' ceremony was held at '**Brihadeshwara temple**' after **23 years**.

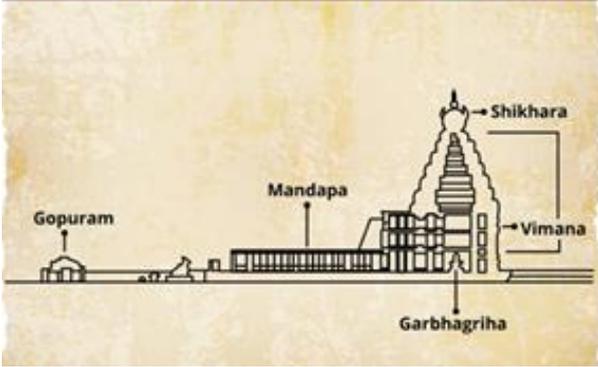
About Brihadeshwara Temple

- Kumbhabhishekham is part of the consecration ceremony of Hindu temples.
 - **Kumbha** means the Head and denotes the Shikhara or Crown of the Temple (usually in the gopuram) and **abhishekam** is ritual bathing.
- Brihadeshwara Temple, **dedicated to Lord Shiva**, is located in Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu at the South bank of **Kaveri river**.
- It is also known as **Periya Kovil, RajaRajeswara Temple and Rajarajeswaram**.
- It is a Dravida style temple built between 1003 AD and 1010 AD by the great Chola emperor **Raja Raja I**. It is one of the largest temples in India and is an **example of Dravidian architecture**.
- The temple is **part of the UNESCO World Heritage Site** known as the '**Great Living Chola Temples**' with other two being the '**Temple at Gangaikondacholapuram**' and '**Airavatesvara temple at Darasuram**'.

Location Of **Chola Temples** In The **UNESCO** World Heritage Site.



DRAVIDIAN ARCHITECTURE



Chola Architecture

- **Dravidian style of art and architecture** reached its perfection under the Cholas. The Cholas followed the **Pallava style of architecture**. Sanctum of the Chola temples are both circular and square in size
 - **Famous temples include:** Siva temple at Gangaikondacholapuram built by Rajendra I; Narthamalai and Kodumbalur in Pudukottai district and at Srinivasanallur in Tiruchirappalli district etc.
- **Dome shaped sikhara and kalasa** were also there on the top of Gopurams. Chola temples are noted for sculptures and ornamental works.
- Many temples are having pillared mandapams namely **arthamandapa, mahamandapa and nandi mandpa**. Sculptures and inscriptions are also fixed on the walls of these temples.
- **Stone and metal sculptures** are found in plenty in Chola temples.
 - Scenes from **Ramayanam Mahabharatam, Puranas and lives of the 63 Nayanmars** are sculptured in narrative panels on the walls of temples.
- **Nataraja sculpture** is famous from Chola period around 12th Century.
 - **Shiva is associated with the end of the cosmic world** with which this dancing position in Nataraja is associated.
 - Shiva shows balancing himself on his right leg and suppressing the **apasmara, the demon of ignorance or forgetfulness**, with foot of same leg.
 - At the same time he raises his left leg in **bhujangatrasita stance, which represents tirobhava**, that is kicking away the veil of maya or illusion from the devotee's mind.
 - His four arms are outstretched and the main right hand is posed in abhaya hasta or the gesture suggesting.
 - ✓ The **upper right holds the damaru** his favourite musical instrument to keep on the beat tala.
 - ✓ The **upper left hand carries a flame** while **main left hand is held in dola hasta** and connects with the abhaya hasta of right hand.

- His hair locks fly on both the sides touching the circular jwala mala or garland of flames which surrounds entire dancing figuration.

Chola Art

- **Dance: Bharathanatyam and kathakali** were two types of dances performed during the Chola period. Lord Siva was represented as the exponent of Karana dance.
 - Natarajar temple at Chidamparam and Sarangapani temple at Kumbakonam have dancing poses of Lord Nataraja.
- **Drama: Rajarajeswara natakam and Rajarajavijayam** were the dramas enacted during festival times.
- **Paintings:** scenes of Periyapuram are beautifully depicted Kailasanathar temple at Kanchipuram, Vishnu temple at Malaiyadiatti contain fine specimen of the Chola paintings.

1.7. OTHER ARCHITECTURE FORMS IN NEWS

Suranga Bawadi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The monument has been selected under the "Ancient Water System of the Deccan Plateau" by the World Monuments Fund (an NGO), which monitors restoration of ancient monuments across the globe. • Suranga Bawadi was an integral part of the ancient Karez system of supplying water through subterranean tunnels built during Adil Shahi era in Karnataka. • Karez is found mostly in the Middle East region. In India, Karez system was found in Bidar, Gulbarg and Bijapur in Karnataka and also in Burhanpur in Madhya Pradesh. • The Adil Shahi dynasty, founded by Yusuf Adil Shah, ruled the Sultanate of Bijapur in the Western Deccan region of Southern India from 1489 to 1686.
Belum Caves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belum Caves, also known as Belum Guhalu in Andhra Pradesh is the second longest cave in the Indian subcontinent, only after Krem Liat Prah caves in Meghalaya.
Jahaz Mahal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is a two-storey 'ship- palace' between two reservoirs built by Sultan Ghiyasuddin Khilji (1469-1500). • It was possibly used as his harem and as pleasure and recreational resort. • It is located in Mandu in Madhya Pradesh.

'Bibi Ka Maqbara'	<ul style="list-style-type: none">It is a mausoleum, believed to be constructed by Prince Azam Shah, son of Aurangzeb in memory of his mother Dilras Banu Begum (also known as Rabia-ul-Daurani) during 1651-1661 A.D.It is in Aurangabad in Maharashtra.It is also known as 'Taj of the Deccan' because of its striking resemblance to the Taj Mahal.
--------------------------	--

Sirsa's Ther Mound	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Sirsa, a district in Haryana, houses a mound which is believed to unravel some clues about the ancient city 'Sarishika'.Sirsa is believed to be one of the oldest towns located in Haryana on the ancient route leading to Taxila.
---------------------------	--



फाउंडेशन कोर्स सामान्य अध्ययन

प्रारंभिक एवं मुख्य परीक्षा 2021

इनोवेटिव क्लासरूम प्रोग्राम

- प्रारंभिक परीक्षा, मुख्य परीक्षा और निबंध के लिए महत्वपूर्ण सभी टॉपिक का विस्तृत कवरेज
- मौलिक अवधारणाओं की समझ के विकास एवं विश्लेषणात्मक क्षमता निर्माण पर विशेष ध्यान
- एनीमेशन, पावर प्वाइंट, वीडियो जैसी तकनीकी सुविधाओं का प्रयोग
- अंतर - विषयक समझ विकसित करने का प्रयास
- योजनाबद्ध तैयारी हेतु करेंट ओरिएंटेड अप्रोच
- नियमित क्लास टेस्ट एवं व्यक्तिगत मूल्यांकन
- सीसेट कक्षाएं
- PT 365 कक्षाएं
- MAINS 365 कक्षाएं
- PT टेस्ट सीरीज
- मुख्य परीक्षा टेस्ट सीरीज
- निबंध टेस्ट सीरीज
- सीसेट टेस्ट सीरीज
- निबंध लेखन - शैली की कक्षाएं
- करेंट अफेयर्स मैगजीन

लाइव/ऑनलाइन कक्षाएं भी उपलब्ध

Scan the QR CODE to download VISION IAS app

DELHI 18 Feb | 9 AM
16 June | 1:30 PM

LUCKNOW 9 July
9 AM

JAIPUR 17 June

2. PAINTINGS & OTHER ART FORMS

2.1. PATTACHITRA

Why in news?

Many pieces of **Pattachitra art** have been damaged due to **cyclone Fani** in the coastal villages of Odisha.

About Pattachitra

- It is a traditional cloth-based **scroll painting** from **Odisha**, which derives its unique place because of its pictorial conception, technique of painting, line formation and colour scheme.
- These paintings were traditionally drawn by the **mahapatras**, an original artiste caste in Odisha.
- It became an important art form with the ornamentation of **Lord Jagannath** in the innermost sanctum.

Features

- The artist **does not use a pencil or charcoal for the preliminary drawings**.
- In Pattachitra, it is a tradition to **complete the borders** of the painting first.
- When the painting is completed it is held over a charcoal fire and lacquer is applied to the surface. This makes the painting **water resistant and durable**, besides giving it a shining finish.
- It is a disciplined art form where painters maintain **rigidity in their use of colours and patterns, restricting the colours to a single tone**.
- Themes:** Depiction of temple of **Lord Jagannath**, his brother Balram and sister Subhadra, Krishna Lila, incarnations of Lord Vishnu, mythological and folk stories from the Panchatantra, Puranas, Ramayana-Mahabharata and the Geet Govind.
- Craft material and colours:** The materials used in the paint are from vegetable, earth, and mineral sources.
 - The gum of **the kaitha tree is the chief ingredient**, and is used as a base for making different pigments.
 - White** is prepared from conch-shells, **Red** from Hingula (a mineral), **Yellow** from Haritala stone, **Blue** from Ramaraja (a variety of indigo) and **Black** is obtained from lamp-black or coconut shells.
- With the passage of time, the Pattachitra art has gone through a **commendable transition**, and have been painted on **tussar silk and palm**

leaves, and being created as wall hangings and showpieces.

Related Information

Raghurajpur (Puri, Odisha) has been identified as a **heritage village** due to the traditional works ranging from Pattachitra to paper mask and wooden carvings to dolls that are made here.

Other important Scroll Paintings:

- Kalamkari: Andhra Pradesh**
- Kalighat Pats: Bengal**
- Phad Paintings: Rajasthan**
- Cheriyal Paintings: Telangana**
- Pichwai: Rajasthan**

2.2. BAGRU BLOCK PRINTING

Why in news?

Union Textiles Minister inaugurated the 'Titanwala Museum' in Bagru that showcases the Chhipa community's hand-block printing.

About Bagru Block printing

- It is a traditional technique of printing with natural colour done by the **Chippa community in Bagru village of Rajasthan**.
- Traditionally, **motifs** printed at Bagru are **large with bold lines**. The motifs include **wild flowers, buds, leaves and printed geometrical patterns**.
- The main colors used in Bagru are **Red and Black**.

Some other important traditional block printing techniques in India

- Gujarat:** Ajrakh Print
 - Rajasthan:** Sanganeri, Ajrakh, Dabu
 - Madhya Pradesh:** Bagh Print, Bherogarh Print (Batik)
 - Andhra Pradesh:** Kalamkari
- Calcutta, Serampur (West Bengal), Varanasi and Farrukabad (Uttar Pradesh) are also important centres of block printing in India.

2.3. OTHER ART FORMS

Pithora paintings

- Recently, Pithora paintings artist conducted his first-ever workshop on the art form for students from over 45 schools in Delhi.
- Pithora is a **ritualistic painting done on walls** by tribes of Rathwas, Bhils, and Naykas of Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh.
- They are characterised by seven horses representing the seven hills

	<p>that surround the area bordering Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They also have imagery from their everyday life such as weddings, festivals and celebrations.
Sulawesi Art	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recently, a cave painting on Sulawesi island in Indonesia was discovered which may cast new light on the beginnings of modern religious culture.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is cave painting found on Indonesia's island of Sulawesi, depicting human-like figures hunting animals. • The painting, found in a limestone cave in 2017, was dated to nearly 44,000 years ago using uranium-series analysis.
--	---

VISIONIAS

PT 365 - Culture

#PrelimsIsComing

ABHYAAS 2020

ALL INDIA GS PRELIMS MOCK TEST SERIES

(ONLINE / OFFLINE)

4 TESTS | TEST 1 - 19 APRIL (ONLINE)

LAST DATE OF REGISTRATION
18TH APRIL | 7 PM

- 🎯 All India ranking & detailed comparison with other students
- 🎯 Vision IAS Post Test Analysis™ for corrective measures and continuous performance improvement

Register @ www.visionias.in/abhyaas

**OFFLINE IN
65 CITIES**

AGRA | AHMEDABAD | ALIGARH | AMRITSAR | AURANGABAD | BAREILLY | BENGALURU | BHAGALPUR | BHOPAL | BHUBANESWAR | BILASPUR | CHANDIGARH
CHENNAI | COIMBATORE | CUTTACK | DEHRADUN | DELHI | DHANBAD | DHARWAD | DIBRUGARH | GHAZIABAD | GORAKHPUR | GREATER NOIDA | GUWAHATI
GWALIOR | HYDERABAD | IMPHAL | INDORE | ITANAGAR | JABALPUR | JAIPUR | JAMMU | JHANSI | JODHPUR | KANPUR | KOCHI | KOLKATA | KOZHIKODE
KURUKSHETRA | LUCKNOW | LUDHIANA | MADURAI | MANGALURU | MEERUT | MUMBAI | NAGPUR | NASHIK | ORAI | PATIALA | PATNA | PRAYAGRAJ | PUNE | RAIPUR
RAJKOT | RANCHI | ROHTAK | SHILLONG | SHIMLA | THIRUVANANTHAPURAM | UDAIPUR | VADODARA | VARANASI | VIJAYAWADA | VISAKHAPATNAM | WARANGAL

3. DANCES & MUSIC

3.1. ASSAMESE BHAONA

Why in news?

Recently, a group Bhaona artist performed in Abu Dhabi in English language contrary to the traditional language of Brajawali.

About Bhaona

- Bhaona is a **mythology-based theatrical performance created by Sankardeva**.
 - The **plays of bhaona are popularly known as Ankiya Nats and their staging is known as bhaona**.
- A Bhaona usually involves 40-50 people and has **dialogues, songs and dances by performers in costumes and ornaments**.
- In a Bhaona, the orchestral attire is stark white and the **actors wear glittering costumes representing various kings, queens, demon and animals**.
- The performers pass through an archway of lights, which is called 'Agni Garh'. They **speak dialogues in Brajawali often in lyrical form**.
- The main drama is generally proceeded by a **performance of the Gayan-Bayan**.
 - It's a musical, performed with traditional instruments (**Khol, Taal, Doba and Nagara; all the instruments were also created by Sankardeva**); with different hard and fast sequences, and formulas, which are also named differently.
- About Brajawali**
 - Brajawali is special language used in Bhaona which was created by Sankardeva.
 - It was created** because the Sanskrit, which was the original language used in the Hindu religious texts, **was difficult for common people**.
 - Also, Sankardeva wanted language spoken in the drama to be somewhat different, to connect with his Assamese masses, **who did not expect divine characters of his plays to speak in the common man's language**.

Sankardeva

- Srimanta Sankardev (1449 – 1568) **was a great Assamese saint, scholar, poet, playwright, social reformer and founder of Vaishnavism in Assam**.
 - He **inspired the Bhakti movement in Assam** and united people through his neo-vaishnavite movement – **Ekasaran Naam Dharma**.

- Sankardev enriched Assamese language and literature through his poetry, dramas (ankia naat) and songs (borgeet & bhatima).
- He was also the father of Assamese classical dance – **Sattriya Dance**.

3.2. OTHER PERFORMING ART FORMS IN NEWS

Gatka	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is an ancient martial art from Punjab. The word Gatka actually refers to the wooden stick called 'Khutka' used in training. It is believed to have originated when sixth Sikh guru Hargobind adopted 'Kirpan' for self-defence during Mughal era.
Kalaripayattu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kalaripayattu is one of the oldest martial art forms that originated in Kerala and dates back to the 3rd century B.C. Kalaripayattu techniques include a combination of steps and postures.
Yakshagana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is a traditional theatre form of Karnataka, based on mythological stories and Puranas. The most popular episodes are from Mahabharata and Ramayana. It combines dance, music, dialogue, costume, make-up, and stage techniques with a unique style and form. 'Yaksha' means Demi-God, and 'gana' means song. It is believed to be originated during Bhakti movement in between 11th and 15th century.
Khon Ramlila	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recently, the Culture Department of Uttar Pradesh government organised the country's first training and performance programme of KHON Ramlila in collaboration with Thailand government. Khon Masked Dance Drama in Thailand is a performing art which involve graceful dance movements, instrumental and vocal renditions and glittering costumes that depict the glory of Rama. It has no dialogues and background voices narrate the whole story of Ramayana.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Khon Ramlila of Thailand is included in the list of UNESCO's Intangible cultural heritage.
Mallakhamba	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is a traditional Indian sport in which a gymnast performs feats and poses in concert with a vertical wooden pole or rope. The word also refers to the pole used in the sport. • The origin of Mallakhamb can be traced to the 12th century,

	<p>where it is mentioned in Manas-Olhas - a classic by Chalukya in 1135 A.D.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was revived after seven centuries (during the first half of the 19th century for about) by Balambhattadada Deodhar, the renowned teacher of Peshwa Bajirao-II. • It is state sport of Madhya Pradesh.
--	---



ENGLISH MEDIUM
2 April | 5 PM

हिन्दी माध्यम
7 April | 5 PM

- Specific targeted content: oriented towards Prelims exam
- Extra classes to cover rest of the current affairs of March and April 2020
- Doubt Clearing sessions and mentoring
- Complete coverage of The Hindu, Indian Express, PIB, Economic Times, Yojana, Economic Survey, Budget, India Year Book, RSTV, etc from May 2019 to April 2020
- Live** and **online** recorded classes that will help distance learning students and who prefers flexibility in class timing

One Year
CURRENT AFFAIRS
FOR PRELIMS 2020 IN 60 HOURS

4. LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE

4.1. CLASSICAL LANGUAGE

Why in News?

Recently, **Akhil Bharatiya Marathi Sahitya Sammelan**, passed a resolution demanding the declaration of Marathi as a 'Classical' language.

Details

- **The Sammelan, is an annual conference of Marathi writers** and was started in 1878.
 - It has been **headed by leading Marathi intellectuals**, including Justice Mahadev Govind Ranade, Maharaja Sayajirao Gaekwad III of Baroda, and Prahlad Keshav "Acharya" Atre.
- Currently, **six languages enjoy the 'Classical' status: Tamil (declared in 2004), Sanskrit (2005), Kannada (2008), Telugu (2008), Malayalam (2013), and Odia (2014).**
- As per Ministry of Culture, the **guidelines** for declaring a language as 'Classical' are:
 - **High antiquity of its early texts/recorded history** over a period of 1500-2000 years;
 - **A body of ancient literature/texts**, which is considered a valuable heritage by generations of speakers;
 - The **literary tradition be original and not borrowed** from another speech community;
 - The classical language and literature being **distinct from modern**, there may also be a **discontinuity between the classical language and its later forms** or its offshoots."
- Benefits accrued to a classical language are:
 - **Two major annual international awards** for scholars of eminence in classical Indian languages are given.
 - A **Centre of Excellence** for studies in Classical Languages is set up.
 - The University Grant Commission (UGC) awards **research projects for promoting these languages** and create a certain number of **Professional Chairs for the Classical Languages in the Central Universities.**

4.2. URDU

Why in news?

Recently Punjab University had proposed to merge Department of Urdu language with school of

foreign languages, which led to the criticism that Urdu is an Indian language.

About Urdu

- Urdu is one of the **official languages (under 8th schedule) under the Constitution of India.**
- It is among the **15 Indian Languages written on the Indian Currency notes.**
- It is one of the official languages in states like Kashmir, Telangana, UP, Bihar, New Delhi and West Bengal.
- Urdu is closely related to Hindi. They are very similar in phonology and grammar.
- According to experts, the **Urdu language originated and evolved in India from 6th to 13th century A.D.**
- All the historical references indicate that origin of Urdu had taken place in Punjab state of India.
- Main dialects of Urdu are: Dehlavi, Rekhta etc.
- **Despite its Persian script, Urdu is an Indian language** because there are several examples of Indian languages which are written in scripts derived from outside the country (e.g. Punjabi shahmukhi language is also written from right to left).
- After its origin in Punjab, Urdu got developed and flourished in Delhi along with part of Haryana state and some states in South where it was developed in the form of '**Dakhni (Deccani) language.**

4.3. INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES

Why in news?

2019 is the United Nations' **International Year of Indigenous Languages.**

More on news

- **Papua New Guinea** has the **highest number of 'living' indigenous languages** in the world (840), while India stands fourth with 453.
- Among regions, Asia and Africa account for the highest number of indigenous languages (over 70% of the total).
- According to UNESCO's 'Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger', **228 languages have become extinct since 1950.**
- About 10% of the languages are classified 'vulnerable', while another 10% are 'critically endangered'.
- **In India, five languages have become extinct** since 1950, while 42 are critically endangered.

- The Central Government is implementing '**Protection and Preservation of Endangered Languages of India**' (SPEEL) for protection, preservation and documentation of all mother tongues and languages of India, which are spoken by less than 10,000 people.
 - Dialects are also covered under this programme.
 - It is being implemented by Mysore-based **Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL)**.

Related Information

- The University Grants Commission (UGC) has a scheme for '**Establishment of Centres for Endangered Languages**' under which centres were approved in respect of nine Central universities.

- UGC has also invited proposals from universities for establishment of **Department of Devanagari Lipi** (script) in universities with a view to preserve dialects, which do not have a written script in Devanagari.

Related Information**Most widely spoken Language**

- According to the online database Ethnologue, Globally, **English remains the most widely spoken language**, followed by Mandari while **Hindi is third** and Bengali is seventh.
- In India, as per the Census 2011, Hindi is the most spoken language with over 528 million, Bengali had 97.2 million speakers, Marathi (83 million), Telugu (81 million), Tamil (69 million), Gujarati (55.5 million) and Urdu (50.8 million).

“ The Secret To Getting Ahead Is Getting Started ”



ALTERNATIVE CLASSROOM PROGRAM *for*

GENERAL STUDIES

PRELIMS & MAINS 2022 & 2023

DELHI

Regular Batch

Weekend Batch

5 Feb
9 AM**11 June**
1:30 PM**21 June**
9 AM

- Approach is to build fundamental concepts and analytical ability in students to enable them to answer questions of Preliminary as well as Mains examination
- Includes comprehensive coverage of all the topics for all the four papers of GS Mains, GS Prelims and Essay
- Includes All India GS Mains, Prelim, CSAT and Essay Test Series of 2021, 2022, 2023
- Our Comprehensive Current Affairs classes of PT 365 and Mains 365 of year 2021, 2022, 2023 (Online Classes only)
- Includes comprehensive, relevant and updated study material
- Access to recorded classroom videos at personal student platform

Scan the QR CODE to
download **VISION IAS** app

5. INITIATIVES OF UNESCO

5.1. UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITES

Why in news?

Recently, the Pink City, Jaipur got the UNESCO World Heritage status.

Background

- In 2017, **old Ahmedabad** was **India's first city** to win the 'heritage city' tag.
- With Jaipur's inclusion, the **number of heritage sites** across India that are on the UNESCO World Heritage list, has grown to 38, including **30 cultural properties, 7 natural properties** and **1 mixed site**.
- India had proposed the nomination of Jaipur as an **"exceptional urban example in indigenous city planning and construction in South Asia"**.

About Jaipur- City Planning

- The fortified city of Jaipur, in India's north western state of Rajasthan was founded in 1727 by Sawai Jai Singh II.
 - Jaipur is distinguished for its **exemplary development in town planning and architecture of the late medieval period**.
 - Unlike other cities in the region located in hilly terrain, **Jaipur was established on the plain** and built according to a **grid plan** interpreted in the light of **Vedic architecture**.
 - The city's urban planning shows an exchange of ideas from **ancient Hindu and modern Mughal** as well as **Western cultures**.
- Designed to be a **commercial capital**, the city has maintained its local **commercial, artisanal and cooperative traditions** to this day.
- Jaipur boasts of vibrant intangible culture and heritage reflected in it being preferred tourism destination owing to its iconic monuments such as the **Govind Dev temple, Amer Fort, City Palace, Jantar Mantar** and **Hawa Mahal** among many.

Related information

World Heritage Committee

- It is the executive body responsible for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention.
- The **Convention** is an international agreement adopted in **1972** by the Member States of the UNESCO.
- The primary mission of the Convention is to **identify and protect the world's natural and**

cultural heritage considered to be of Outstanding Universal Value

- Strategic Objectives Of the convention is based on the **"Five Cs"**: **Credibility, Conservation, Capacity-building, Communication, Communities**
- The Convention **serves as a catalyst to raising awareness for heritage preservation**.
- **The World Heritage Fund**, setup under convention, provides financial assistance to States Parties in **identifying, preserving and promoting World Heritage sites**.
- For a city to be designated as world heritage under UNESCO, it has to
 - Be of **'outstanding universal value'**,
 - Needs to commit to protect and conserve its heritage.

UNESCO

- It is a specialized agency of the United Nations based in Paris.
- Its declared purpose is to **contribute to peace and security by promoting international collaboration** through educational, scientific, and cultural reforms in order to increase universal respect for justice, the rule of law, and human rights along with fundamental freedom proclaimed in the United Nations Charter.
- **United States and Israel left UNESCO** on 31 December 2018.

Other India's World Heritage Sites in News

Shore Temple, Mamallapuram	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is a structural temple built between 700–728 AD with granite Blocks. It was built by Narasimhavarman II in Dravidian Style of Architecture.
Ajanta And Ellora Caves in Aurangabad, Maharashtra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ajanta Caves are rock-cut Buddhist cave monuments dating from the 2nd century BCE to about 480 CE. • Ellora caves is one of the largest rock-cut monastery-temple cave complexes in the world, featuring Buddhist, Hindu and Jain monuments dating from the 600–1000 CE period.
Maha Bodhi Temple at Bodh Gaya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Mahabodhi Temple Complex is one of the four holy sites related to the life of the Lord Buddha, and particularly to the attainment of Enlightenment. • The first temple was built by Emperor Asoka in the 3rd century B.C., and the present temple dates from the 5th or 6th centuries.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is one of the earliest Buddhist temples built entirely in brick.
Stone Chariot at Hampi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The chariot is a shrine dedicated to Garuda, built inside the Vittala Temple Complex (UNESCO World Heritage Site). The temple is located in Hampi, near the banks of the Tungabhadra River in Karnataka. Hampi Chariot has earned its name among the other three famous stone chariots in India- One in Konark, Odissa, and the other in Mahabalipuram (Tamil Nadu). The chariot was built by King Krishnadevaraya of the Vijayanagara Empire during the 16th century, who got fascinated with the Konark Sun temple chariot while fighting a battle in Odissa.

5.1.1. TENTATIVE LIST OF UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITES

Why in News?

Recently, UNESCO has included the **Orchha city** (MP) and Indian part of **Kailash Mansarovar** in its tentative list of world heritage sites on the proposal sent by **Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)**.

More on News

- About Orchha**
 - It's considered in the list of **cultural heritage**.
 - The historical settlement derived its name from the **phrase 'Ondo chhe'** meaning 'low' or 'hidden'.
 - Situated on the **banks of the Betwa river**, Orchha was built by **king Rudra Pratap Singh** of Bundela dynasty in the **16th century**.
 - Bundela architecture has Mughal influence.
 - It is famous for its **Chaturbuj Temple**, Orchha fort complex, Raja Mahal.
 - Orchha is also famous for its **two elevated minarets called Saavan and Bhadon** and its four palaces — Jahangir Palace, Raj Mahal, Sheesh Mahal and Rai Praveen Mahal — and for its concept of open bungalows, stone work windows, animal statues depicting the culture of Bundelkhand.

- It is the **only place in India** where Lord Ram is worshipped as a king (not in God form) with a dedicated temple in his name called **Sri Ram Raja Mandir**.

- About Kailash Mansarovar**

- It is considered in the **mixed category** — both as a natural as well as a cultural heritage.
- Site share landscape in the **east with Nepal and bordered by China on the north**.
- Indian site is part of the larger landscape of 31,000 sq km referred to as the **'Kailash Sacred Landscape'** constituting the **Mount Kailash and Lake Mansarovar** in the remote south-western portion of the Tibet Autonomous Region of China and adjacent districts in the far-western region of Nepal.
- Four rivers originate** from Mount Kailash: **the Indus, the Brahmaputra, the Karnali and the Sutlej**.
- Ministry of External Affairs organizes this Kailash Yatra each year through two different routes - **Lipulekh Pass (Uttarakhand) and Nathu La Pass (Sikkim)**.

5.1.2. IRAN'S CULTURAL HERITAGE

Why in News?

Recently US President warned Iran that if it strikes any American assets in retaliation, the **US would target its 52 sites which are important to Iran & the Iranian culture**.

Details

- Iran is home to one of the world's **oldest civilisations dating back to 10,000 BC**.
- Important world heritage sites** in Iran: **Meidan Emam and Masjed-e-Jame** in Isfahan, **Golestan Palace** in Tehran, **Pasargadae and Persepolis** (capitals of the Achaemenid Empire, founded in the 6th BC) and **Takht-e Soleyman** (ancient Zoroastrian sanctuary).
- Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (1954)** is an international treaty focused exclusively on the protection of cultural heritage during war and armed conflict.
 - Convention defines cultural property** as "movable or immovable property of great importance to the cultural heritage of every people, such as monuments of architecture, art or history, whether religious or secular; archaeological sites.
 - There are currently **133 signatories to Convention**. Both the United States and Iran (as well as **India**) are signatories.

- **Rome Statute of 1998**, the founding treaty of the International Criminal Court, describes as a “war crime” any intentional attack against a historical monument, or a building dedicated to religion, education, art, or science.
 - 122 countries are States Parties to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. US is a signatory that has not ratified the Statute. **India has neither signed nor ratified the Statute.**

5.2. UNESCO'S CREATIVE CITIES NETWORK

Why in news?

UNESCO has announced that **Mumbai and Hyderabad have been included** amongst the 66 cities (making the total cities under the network 264) selected **in its network of 'Creative Cities'** on the occasion of World Cities Day 2019.

More on news

- Mumbai has been designated as **Creative City of Films** and Hyderabad a **Creative City of Gastronomy**.
- **Earlier, Chennai and Varanasi** were selected UNESCO cities of music while **Jaipur** is the City of Crafts and Folk Arts.

About UNESCO's Creative Cities Network

- The initiative was created in 2004 to **promote cooperation** with and among cities that have **identified creativity as a strategic factor for sustainable urban development**.
- The **cities** which currently make up this network **work together towards a common objective**:
 - placing creativity and cultural industries at the heart of their development plans at the local level and cooperating actively at the international level.
- By joining the Network, cities commit to **sharing their best practices** and developing partnerships involving the public and private sectors as well as civil society to strengthen creation, production, distribution and dissemination of cultural activities, goods and services.
- The Network covers **seven creative fields**: Crafts and Folk Arts; Design; Film; Gastronomy; Music; Media Arts; Literature.
- Previously, **3 Indian cities were recognized as members of UCCN**- Jaipur-Crafts and Folk Arts (2015); Varanasi-Creative city of Music (2015); Chennai-Creative city of Music (2017).
- **Ministry of Culture** is the nodal Ministry for all matters in UNESCO relating to culture.

ALL INDIA TEST SERIES

Get the Benefit of Innovative Assessment System from the leader in the Test Series Program

PRELIMS

- **General Studies** (हिन्दी माध्यम में भी उपलब्ध)
 - **CSAT** (हिन्दी माध्यम में भी उपलब्ध)
- | | |
|--|---|
| ➤ VISION IAS Post Test Analysis™ | ➤ All India Ranking |
| ➤ Flexible Timings | ➤ Expert support - Email/Telephonic Interaction |
| ➤ ONLINE Student Account to write tests and Performance Analysis | ➤ Monthly Current Affairs Analysis |

Starting from 15th April

MAINS

- **General Studies** (हिन्दी माध्यम में भी उपलब्ध)
- **Essay** (हिन्दी माध्यम में भी उपलब्ध)
- **Philosophy**

Starting from 10th May



6. FESTIVALS

6.1. AMBUBACHI MELA

Why in News?

Ambubachi Mela, which is one of the biggest religious festivals of eastern India in the border state of Assam was celebrated recently.

About Ambubachi Mela

- It is an **annual festival held for 4 days at Kamakhya temple**, atop **Nilachal hills of Guwahati**, Assam on the **bank of Brahmaputra river**.
- **Kamakhya Temple** is one of the 51 **shakti shrines** representing the different body parts of Shiva's consort Sati. It is considered as **one of the prime seats of Tantric cult**.
- Temple is believed to be the site where Hindu deity Sati's womb and genitals fell after she burned to death. Temple's sanctum sanctorum houses the yoni — female genital — symbolised by a rock.
- During the four-day event, it is believed that **the presiding goddess** of the temple, Devi Kamakhya (Goddess of fertility), **goes through her annual cycle of menstruation**.

Related information

Kharchi festival

- It is a **week-long festival** celebrated at **Chaturdash Devata Mandir (14 Gods temple), Old Agartala, Tripura** to worship fourteen gods and mother earth.
- The Puja is performed to **wash out the sins and to clean the post menstrual phase of mother earth's menstruation**.
- It is **performed 15 days after Ambubachi mela**.
- On the day of the Puja, the fourteen gods are carried to **river Saidra**.
- Earlier, **the kings of Tripura offered pujas** to the 14 Gods and Goddesses, but later it became the festival of common people.
- **Animal sacrifice** is also an important part of this festival and includes sacrificing of goats and pigeons.

Tantrism in India

- The origin of Tantrism can be dated to the **Harappan Civilization**, which existed between approximately 2,700 and 1,750 B.C.E.
- However, it was the most **-remarkable development in the religious field in India** from about the sixth century A.D. was the spread of tantricism.
- **Tantrism admitted both women and sudras into its ranks**, and laid great stress on the use of magic rituals.

- They were intended to **satisfy the material desires of the, devotees for physical possessions** and to cure the day-to-day diseases and injuries.
- The **brahmanas adopted many of the tribal rituals and charms**, which were now officially compiled, sponsored and fostered by them.
- Tantricism permeated **Jainism, Buddhism, Christianity, Saivism and Vaishnavism**.
 - **Mandalas** are works of sacred art in Tantric (Tibetan) Buddhism.
- The understanding of modern Tantra Yoga was first detailed in a Vedic scripture known as **Agama**.

6.2. LAI HARAOPA

Why in News?

Recently, Lai Haraoba was celebrated.

About Lai Haraoba

- It is a five-day long **ritualistic festival observed by Manipuri Meitei communities**, was celebrated.
- Lai Haraoba means **'Festivity of the Gods' or merry making of Gods**.
- This festival is marked to celebrate the **creation of the universe** and the recollection of the evolution of plants, animals and human beings.
- The festival is observed to honour **Umang Lai** deity of the state.
- During the festival, men and women dance in front of the idols of gods and goddesses and also perform dance drama, enactment of **Khamba and Thoibi**, the hero and the heroine of a popular folklore.
- It is celebrated through oral literature, music, dance and rituals.
- **About Meiteis:**
 - Meiteis are the majority **ethnic groups of the state of Manipur**.
 - A significant population of the Meitei also are settled in domestic neighbouring states such as **Assam, Meghalaya and Tripura** and contiguous areas of Bangladesh and Myanmar.
 - They speak Meiteilon (Manipuri), a Tibeto-Burman language. It is one of the **officially recognized languages of India** which was included in the **Eighth Schedule of the Constitution in 1992**.

6.3. ZO KUTPUI

Why in News?

Mizoram government organised **Zo Kutpui (festival)** in at least 10 states across India and countries such as US, Myanmar and Bangladesh.

Details

- The event **witnessed various cultural programmes** by different Mizo tribes.
- The exercise is an **attempt to unify and strengthen** the brotherhood among various Mizo tribes living in different parts of the world.
- **Other important festivals of Mizoram:** **Mim Kut** (celebrated in the months of August and September, when the maize crop is ready for harvesting), **Chapchar Kut** (celebrated in the month of March), **Thalfavang Kut** etc.
- **About Mizos**
 - Mizo people are an ethnic group native to north-eastern India, western Burma and eastern Bangladesh.
 - This term covers several ethnic peoples who speak various Kuki-Chin languages.
 - The Mizo traditionally practiced slash-and-burn agriculture, moving their villages frequently.
 - Among the most prominent of the Mizo groups are the Lushai, Pawi (Lai), Lakher (Mara), and Hmar.

6.4. AADI MAHOTSAV

Why in News?

National Tribal festival 'Aadi Mahotsav' was organised recently.

Details

- It is a joint initiative of **Union Ministry of Tribal Affairs and Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED)**.
- The festival features exhibition-cum-sale of tribal handicrafts, art, paintings, fabric, jewellery etc.
- **Theme of the Mahotsav:** "A Celebration of the Spirit of Tribal Culture, Craft, Cuisine and Commerce".
- It was an effort to take tribal commerce to the **next level of digital and electronic transactions** and it also showcased the electronic and digital skills of the tribals as a special attraction.

About TRIFED

- It works under **Ministry of Tribal Affairs** established in 1987.
- It is engaged in **marketing development of tribal products** including tribal art and craft under the brand name "TRIBES INDIA".
- It acts as an **agency for canalisation of export and import** and facilitate, inter-State trade of tribal products.
- It promotes creation of supply/market infrastructure like Warehouses, Marketing Yards related to tribal products etc.
- It also implements- **Van Dhan Vikas Kendra scheme**.

6.5. CULTURAL FESTIVAL IN NEWS

Festival	State	Details
Ashadhi Bij	Gujarat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ashadh Bij or Kutchi New Year is a distinguished culture where arrival of rain is celebrated. • Kutchi community in Kutch region (desert area) of Gujarat observes Kutchi New Year as per an indigenous calendar. • Ganesha, Lakshmi and other regional deities are worshipped on this occasion. • During Ashadhi-beej, they check the moisture in the atmosphere to help predict which crop would do best in coming monsoon.
Bhogali Bihu	Assam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bhogali Bihu or Magh bihu is a harvest festival that marks the end of harvesting season (January- February) in Assam. • Other Harvest festival in different parts of the country- Baisakhi in Punjab, Poila Baisakh in Bengal, Puthandu in Tamil Nadu, Vishu in Kerala etc. • Gogona is a type of jaw harp, a vibrating reed instrument that is used primarily in the traditional Bihu music in Assam.

Mela Kheerbhawani	Jammu and Kashmir	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Kheer Bhawani mela starting on Zeasht Astami is one of the biggest religious functions of the displaced community Kashmiri Pundit who fled their homes for their life in the 1990s. It was held at the famous Ragnya Devi temple in Jammu and Kashmir's Ganderbal district. During this Kashmiri Pandits visit five other temples of Tulmulla in Ganderbal district, Tikker in Kupwara, Laktipora Aishmuqam in Anantnag and Mata Tripursundri Devsar and Mata Kheerbhawani Manzgam in Kulgam district.
Chamliyal Mela	Jammu and Kashmir	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is celebrated at Chamliyal border shrine along the International Border. The fair takes place at the shrine of Baba Dalip Singh Manhas, a saint popularly known as Baba Chamliyal, in Samba district.
Lui-Ngai-Ni	Manipur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is seed sowing festival celebrated by Naga tribes of Manipur. It reflects the rich cultural heritage of the Nagas and expresses the hope that the festival usher joy, prosperity and strengthen the bond of oneness and brotherhood among all communities.
Chhath Pooja	Bihar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is a festival of Bihar and neighbouring states UP, Jharkhand and Madhesh region Nepal Chhath Pooja in which devotees worship sun, rivers, water bodies and extol the virtues of the nature.
Hornbill Festival	Nagaland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is one of the largest celebrations of the indigenous warrior tribes of Nagaland. The aim of the festival is to revive and protect the rich culture of Nagaland and display its extravaganza and traditions. It is organized every year in the first week of December. The festival is named after Hornbill, one of the most venerated bird species in the state whose importance is reflected in a number of tribal cultural expressions, songs and dances.
Nagoba Jatara	Telangana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is a tribal festival held in Adilabad district, Telangana. It is the second biggest tribal carnival and celebrated by Mesaram clan of Gond tribe. Gusadi Dance performance by dancers from the Gond tribe is a major special attraction of the event.
Surajkund International Crafts Mela	Haryana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The largest crafts fair in the world, it is being organized since 1987 to showcase the richness and diversity of handicrafts, handlooms and cultural heritage of India. It is organized at Surajkund, District Faridabad, Haryana. For the 34th Surajkund International Crafts Mela-2020, the state of Himachal Pradesh has been chosen to be the Theme State. Since 2013, the fair was upgraded to an international level and around 20 countries participate in the fair. It is organized by the Surajkund Mela Authority & Haryana Tourism in collaboration with Union Ministries of Tourism, Textiles, Culture and External Affairs.
Murajapam rituals at Padmanabhaswamy Temple Kerala	Kerala	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The rituals were initiated in the 18th century by Travancare king Marthanda Varma and is conducted, once in six years. It involves chanting of Rigveda, Vajurveda and Samveda by scholars.
Animal Sports in India		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jallikattu <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is a traditional bull-chasing sport of Tamil Nadu which is organised during the harvest festival Pongal. There are references to Jallikattu in Sangam literature too. Kambala <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Its local name for bull race in Tamil Nadu. During the race bulls are made to run and the fastest wins the prize. Eruthu Vidum Vizha <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is an annual buffalo race held in Karnataka.
Porag Festival	Assam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This festival is also known as Nara Singha Bihu festival and is harvest festival celebrated by the Misings. In this farmers seek the blessings of the Mother Earth for them and their corps.

Vasanthotsavam	Andhra Pradesh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is celebrated in Tirumala and mark the arrival of Spring Season and was started during the period of King Achyutaraya in 1460's. It is celebrated for 3days on Trayodasi, Chaturdasi and Pournami in the month of Chaitra (March/April) every year.
Makaravillakku Festival	Kerala	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is two months long annual festival of Sabarimala temple celebrated on the occasion of Makara Sankranti.
Bathukamma Festival	Telangana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is a nine day floral festival celebrated during Durga Navratri Bathukamma means 'Mother Goddess come alive' and the festival represents the cultural spirit of Telangana, symbolizing the patron Goddess of womanhood. The festival is also regarded as the Spring Festival of Goddess Gauri.
Pandharpur Wari	Maharashtra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is a special Yatra during the Ashada month which starts from Alandi village and continues for 250 kms until the pilgrims reach Vithoba temple, Pandharpur in Maharashtra. Several palanquins are carried during this which contain the padukas of famous sages and total duration is 21 days, ending on Ashada Ekadashi. The Wari tradition was started by Saint Dnyaneshwar's great grandfather Tryambakpant Kulkarni. Dnyaneshwar himself along with other saints like Namdev, Sawta Mali and Tukaram had also participated in the Wari Yatra during their lifetimes. Its participants are known as warkaris.

FAST TRACK COURSE 2020

GENERAL STUDIES PRELIMS

PURPOSE OF THIS COURSE

The GS Prelims Course is designed to help aspirants prepare for & increase their score in General Studies Paper I. It will not only include discussion of the entire GS Paper I Prelims syllabus but also that of previous years' UPSC papers along with practice & discussion of Vision IAS classroom tests and the All India Prelims Test Series. Our goal is that the aspirants become better test takers and can see a visible improvement in their Prelims score on completion of the course.

INCLUDES

- Access to recorded classroom videos at your personal student platform.
- Comprehensive, relevant & updated **HARD COPY** of the study material for prelims syllabus. (For online students, it will be dispatched through Post)
- Classroom MCQ based tests and access to **ONLINE PT 365 Course**.
- All India Prelims Test Series 2020 and Comprehensive Current Affairs.

ADMISSION

OPEN

TOTAL NO OF CLASSES

60

7. ANCIENT HISTORY

7.1. NEW FINDINGS ON THE DECLINE OF HARAPPAN CIVILIZATION

Why in news?

Recently, a DNA analysis of some **skeletal remains at the Rakhigarhi site**, have **questioned the Aryan invasion theory**.

Rakhigarhi Site in Haryana

- It is one of the five known biggest townships of **Harappan civilization on Indian sub-continent**.
- **Important findings from this site:**
 - Five interconnected mounds
 - **planned township** having mud-brick as well as burnt-brick houses with proper drainage system
 - **ceramic industry** represented by red ware
 - **ritual system of Harappans** (Animal sacrificial pit)
- Recently, Centre is moving ahead with its plan to develop Rakhigarhi as a tourist hub and set up a museum.

Lothal

- Lothal is located between Sabarmati river and its tributary Bhogavo, in Saurashtra region of Gujarat.
- It was a major maritime activities center of Harappan civilization dating from 3700 BC. and has **world's oldest man-made dockyard**.
- **India and Portugal** will cooperate in the setting up of a **national maritime heritage museum at Lothal** in Gujarat.
- The **National Maritime Heritage Complex (NMHC)** is likely to be built in public-private partnership and will have a huge museum displaying India's heritage of inland waterways and trade through water route.
- The project is being **implemented** by the **Ministry of Shipping** through its **Sagarmala programme**, with the involvement of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), the State government and other stakeholders.

More on news

- A paper titled “**An Ancient Harappan Genome Lacks Ancestry from Steppe Pastoralists and Iranian Farmers**” was published recently, which has challenged many noted points of Aryan Invasion Theory.
- The paper indicates that there was no Aryan invasion and no Aryan migration and that all the developments right from the hunting-gathering stage to modern times in South Asia were done by indigenous people.

About Aryan Invasion Theory

- According to theory by **British archaeologist Mortimer Wheeler**, a nomadic, Indo-European tribe (Steppe pastoralists or from Anatolian and Iranian farmers), called the Aryans, suddenly overwhelmed and conquered the Indus River Valley, **causing the decline of Indus Valley civilization**.
- He posited that **many unburied corpses found in the top levels of the Mohenjo-Daro** archaeological site were victims of war.
- The theory suggested that by using horses and more advanced weapons against the peaceful Harappan people, the Aryans may have easily defeated them.
- Evidence from Rig Veda:
 - The Rig Veda time and again refers to the fortresses of the Dasas and Dasyus. The Vedic god Indra is called '**Purandara**' meaning '**the destroyer of forts**'.
 - The geographical area of the habitation of the Rig Vedic Aryans included the Punjab and the Ghaggar-Hakra region.
 - Since there are no remains of other cultural groups having forts in this area in this historical phase, Wheeler believed that it was the Harappan cities that were being described in the Rig Veda.
 - In fact, the Rig Veda mentions a place called Hariyupiya. This place was located on the bank of the river Ravi. The Aryans fought a battle here. The name of the place sounds very similar to that of Harappa.
 - These evidences led Wheeler to conclude that it was the Aryan invaders who destroyed the cities of Harappa.

Facts given by the new study

- Inhabitants of the Indus Valley Civilisation (IVC) were a **distinct indigenous people** and the **DNA of the skeletal remains matches with the local population**.
 - The skeleton remains found in the upper part of the Citadel area of Mohenjo Daro belonged to those who **died due to floods** and were not massacred by Aryans as hypothesised by Sir Mortimer Wheeler.
 - There was some small movement of people from Central Asia and mixing of their gene with the population here. But it doesn't change the ancestry of the IVC people.



- There was no attack that replaced the entire population.
- A genome from the Indus Valley Civilisation is from a population that is the largest source for South Asians.
- The population has no detectable ancestry from Steppe pastoralists or from Anatolian and Iranian farmers.
- **Farming-** It was brought to the region through migrations from Iran, and, most significantly, that Harappan genes are present in varying quantities in all south Asians.

Other Theories of Decline of Harappan Civilization

- There have been various other theories surrounding the decline of Harappan civilization. Some of them are-
 - **Floods and Earthquakes-** There were evidence such as houses and streets were covered by large silt deposits and Indus area is a disturbed earthquake zone.
 - ✓ **Criticism-** Decline of settlements outside Indus Valley will not be explained by this theory and a river cannot be dammed by tectonic effects.
 - **Shifting Away of the Indus-** There was evidence that silt is there in Harappa because of wind action, which brought sand and silt, rather than floods.
 - ✓ **Criticism-** This can explain only desertion of Mohenjodaro but not its decline.
 - **Increased Aridity and Drying Up of the Ghaggar-** There were various evidence such as increased arid conditions led to decline of agriculture and tectonic movements would have led to drying up of Ghaggar river.
 - ✓ **Criticism-** Drying up of river Ghaggar has not been dated yet.

Related news

Sadikpur Sinauli: likely to get National Importance tag

- Sinauli, supposed to be a **largest necropolis** of the late Harappan period, is located on the **left bank of the River Yamuna**.
- **ASI Excavation:** They found **chariots**, swords and other objects pointing to the presence of a **warrior class of people** in the region during the **Copper-Bronze Age (3300 BC –1200 BC)**.
- They also unearthed **underground sacred chambers, decorated legged coffins** as well as rice and dal in pots and animal bones **buried with the bodies**.

7.2. SANGAM AGE

Why in News?

Recently, excavations at Keeladi in Tamil Nadu have pointed that the time period of Sangam Age could be between **6th century BCE and 1st century AD** (earlier believed to be 3rd BCE and 3rd AD).

Details

- **Sangam era** refers to period when earliest works in Tamil, known as Sangam literature, were composed.
- These texts were called Sangam because they were supposed to have been composed and compiled in **assemblies (known as sangams)** of poets that were held in the city of Madurai.
- The results from the excavations suggest that the **second urbanisation** (the first during Indus civilisation) of Vaigai plains (Keezhadi site belongs from this plain) happened in Tamil Nadu around 6th Century BCE as it happened in 'Gangetic plain'.
 - 'Vaigai plains' attained **literacy or learned the art of writing as early as 6th Century BCE**.
 - There are also evidence of presence of **agrarian society, cattle rearing and weaving industry**.
- **Various Sources of Evidences which determine the Sangam Age:**
 - **Stone Inscription:** Ashokan Edicts (Chera, Chola and Pandya kingdoms), Hadikumba Inscriptions (Kalinga king), inscriptions at Velvikudi & Thirukoviloor etc.
 - **Coins found near Madurai** indicates the Trade and Merchandise dealings with Tamils and Romans.
 - **Archaeological Evidences** confirm the trade relations between Rome and Tamil Nadu during Sangam Age are found in Arikamedu near Pondicherry.
 - **Foreign Accounts:** In addition to the Sangam literature, foreign literary accounts like Greek and Roman writers remain useful sources for the study of the Sangam Age.
 - ✓ **Megasthenes** in his book Indica also referred to the three Tamil Kingdoms.
 - **Sangam literature** chiefly consists of **Tolkappiyam** (earliest), **Ettuthokai** and **Pathuppattu**. These works provide valuable information to know the history of the Sangam Age.
 - ✓ **Tolkapiyam** written by Tolkaapiyar is considered as grammar, it

encompasses the **political and socio-economic scenario** of that age.

- ✓ **Ettuthokai** (Eight Anthologies) comprises of eight works.
- ✓ **Pathupattu** (Ten Idylls) contains ten different literary works.
- ✓ The twin epics – **Silappathigaram (by Ilango Adigal)** and **Manimegalai (by Chithalai Chathanar)**- also belonged to the post- Sangam period.
- ✓ It is believed that three Sangams existed: First Sangam had flourished at then Madurai, the Second Sangam at Kapadapuram and the Pandyan kings had established the Third Sangam at Madurai.

About Sangam Age

Sangam age Polity

- The Tamil country was ruled by **three dynasties namely the Chera, Chola and Pandyas**, with royal emblem bow, tiger and carp (fish) respectively.
- **Hereditary monarchy** was the form of government during the Sangam period.
- The **military administration was also efficiently organized** during the Sangam Age and each ruler had a regular army.

Sangam age Society

- Tolkappiyam refers to the **fivefold division of lands** Kurinji (hilly tracks), Mullai (pastoral), Marudam (agricultural), Neydal (coastal) and Palai (desert). The people living in these five divisions had their respective chief occupations as well as gods for worship.
- Tolkappiyam also refers to **four castes** namely arasar (ruling class), anthanar (priests), vanigar (traders), and vellalar (agriculturalists).
- The courage of women was also appreciated in many poems, but **life of widows was miserable and practice of Sati was also prevalent**.
- Ancient primitive tribes like Thodas, Irulas, Nagas and Vedars lived in this period.

Sangam age Economy

- **Agriculture was the chief occupation** and Rice was the common with crops like Ragi, sugarcane, cotton, pepper, ginger, turmeric, cinnamon and a variety of fruits.
- **Land revenue was the chief source of state's income** while custom duty was also imposed on foreign trade.
- The **handicrafts** of the Sangam period were popular and include weaving, metal works and carpentry. Also **ship building and ornaments making was prominent**.
- The **main exports** were cotton fabrics, spices, ivory products, pearls and precious stones. While **gold, horses and sweet wine were the chief imports**.

Related information

Avvaiyar

- Avvaiyar literally 'Respectable Woman' is a household name in Tamil Nadu.
- It was the title of more than one **female poets who were active during different periods of Tamil literature**. There were at least four Avvais.
- They were some of the most famous and important female poets of the Tamil canon. The most famous Avvai existed during **Sangam age**.

7.3. MAMALLAPURAM

Why in news?

The second India- China informal summit took place at Mamallapuram (Mahabalipuram) owing to its historical link to the China.

Historical significance of Mamallapuram

- It was one of the **major port cities** by the 7th century within the Pallava kingdom. The town was named after Pallava king Narasimhavarman I (AD 630-668), who was also known as Mamalla.
- **Architectural heritage of Mamallapuram:**
 - **Shore Temple:** It is a structural temple built between 700–728 AD with granite blocks. **It was built by Narasimhavarman II in Dravidian Style of Architecture.**
 - ✓ It has been classified as a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**.
 - **Pancharathas** (Five Rathas or Chariots): **These are monolithic rock cut structures** named after the five Pandava brothers and Draupadi but they neither have anything to do with chariots nor probably with the Pandavas and these associations are purely of a local character.
 - **Arjuna's Penance:** **It is a 27m x 9m world largest bas-relief.** It has over 100 sculptures of Gods, Birds and Beasts and Saints. It is popularly called as **Arjuna Penance (Tapas)**.
 - ✓ It is believed to illustrate an instance from Mahabharata when **Arjuna, one of the Pandavas**, performed rigorous penance with a prayer to Lord Shiva's to obtain the **Powerful and Divine Bow** to destroy the Gauravas.
 - ✓ It is also known as the "**Descent of the Ganges**". It is said in legends that King "**Bhagiratha**" standing on one leg posture Praying to the Lord to bring the **River Ganges Down to earth** to please the souls of his ancestors.

- **Varaha Cave:** It is also called as **Adhivaraha Cava Temple**. It is a **rock-cut cave** temple of the late 7th Century.
 - ✓ The prominent sculpture in the cave is that of Lord Vishnu in the incarnated form of a **Varaha Swamy (Boar)** rescuing **Bhudevi (Mother Earth)** from Seas.

The Chinese connection

- The Pallava Kings had a **trade and defence relationship** with China, in which the kings agreed to help China in keeping a check on the growth of Tibet as a powerful nation.
- Various studies by archaeologists and historians show Mamallapuram had commercial links with countries like China, Sri Lanka, and other South-East Asian countries. Coins from China, Persia and Rome have also been found in Mamallapuram, which acted as trade centre for the Pallavas.
- The Chinese traveller **Huien Tsang** visited the **region** during the rule of the Narasimhavarman I.
- It is also said that **Bodhidharma**, who is credited with taking Zen Buddhism to China, travelled from the Tamil Nadu coast to Guangzhou in 527 AD.

7.4. EARLIEST SANSKRIT INSCRIPTION IN SOUTH INDIA

Why in News?

Archaeological Survey of India has discovered the earliest Sanskrit inscription in South India.

More on News

- This inscription was discovered in **Chebrolu** village in Guntur district of **Andhra Pradesh**.
 - It was issued by **Satavahana king Vijaya** in 207 A.D.
 - It is also the **earliest epigraphic evidence** so far for the **Saptamatrika** cult.
 - It also predates **Nagarjunakonda inscription** of Ikshavaku king Ehavala Chantamula issued in **4th century A.D.** which was considered the earliest Sanskrit inscription in South India previously.

Saptamatrika cult

- Saptamatrikas are a **group of seven female deities** worshipped in Hinduism.
- Matrikas are the personified powers (shakti) of different Devas.
- In Andhra Pradesh, the Saptamatrika cult was widely prevalent **during the rule of the early**

Chalukyas of Badami (6th to 8th century A.D.), though the worship of the goddesses is traceable at Nagarjunakonda from 4th century A.D.

- The new discovery predates the earlier references of Saptamatrika worship found in the early Kadamba copper plates and the early Chalukya and Eastern Chalukya copper plates by **200 years**.
- The concept of seven Mothers or Saptamatrika also finds reference in texts like the Rig Veda, Puranas and Shilpasastras.

Other Sanskrit inscriptions

- Sanskrit began to come into **epigraphic use only in the first century B.C** with oldest Sanskrit inscriptions, namely, **Ayodhya, Ghosundi and Hathibada stone inscriptions**.
- The earliest of the Sanskrit inscriptions from Mathura are probably those of the time of the **Ksatrapa Sodasa**, who is dated with reasonable certainty to the early years of the first century A.D.
- **The Junagadh rock inscription of Rudradaman**, the greatest king of the second Western Ksatrapa line of Castana, was written shortly after A.D. 150 and represents a turning point in the history of epigraphic Sanskrit.
 - This is the first long inscription recorded entirely in more or less standard Sanskrit, as well as the first extensive record in the poetic style.
 - It was during the reign of the early Gupta emperors in the fourth century A.D. that Sanskrit was finally established as the epigraphic language par excellence of the Indian world.
- The turning point appears in the inscriptions of Samudragupta (middle to late fourth century), especially the **Allahabad pillar inscription**, which, despite a few trivial orthographic irregularities, is often held up as a model of high classical literary style of the mixed prose and verse (campu) class.

7.5. POOMPUHAR TO BE DIGITALLY RECONSTRUCTED

Why in news?

Poompuhar, a **port city in Tamilnadu**, submerged under Sea 1000 years ago is being digitally reconstructed under **Indian Digital Heritage project**.

About Poompuhar

- **Poompuhar (Puhar or Kaveripattinam)** served Early Chola Dynasty around 600 BC to 300 BC.
- It is located at the mouth of Cauvery river.
- Sangam literature, especially the **Tamil classic Silappathikaram** scripted by Jain poet Ilango

Adigal, makes several mentions about this town.

- It also finds mention even in the accounts of Pliny and Ptolemy and the Periplus of the Erythraean Sea.
- It was submerged due to “kadalkol” or rising sea levels around 1000 years ago.



About Indian Digital Heritage project

- It is initiative of the **Department of Science & Technology (DST)**, for the **digital documentation and interpretation of our tangible and intangible heritage**.
- The basic goal of the IDH project was to **bring fine synergy of Geospatial technologies with matured ICT technologies** to help preserve, use, and experience India's vast heritage in digital form.
- It also **aimed to provide analytic tools for the art-historian, the architect or any scientist** in conducting scholarly studies of Indian heritage.
- First project under it was ‘**Digital Hampi**’.

Some important Ancient port cities

- **Surat:** Situated in Bihar, it was the emporium of western trade during the **Mughal period**.
- **Kanchi:** Today known as **Kanchipuram (Tamil Nadu)**, it was here around 600 BC to 300 BC that the Chinese used to come in foreign ships to purchase pearls, glass and rare stones and in return they sold gold and silk.
- **Madura (Madurai, Tamil Nadu):** It was the capital of the **Pandayas** who controlled the pearl fisheries of the Gulf of Mannar.
- **Broach:** Today known as Bharuch/ Barygaza (**Gujarat**) it was situated on the banks of river Narmada and was linked with all important marts by roadways.
- **Syrastrane/ Saurashtra:** Today known as Soratha District in **Gujarat**, it was important trading centre for Indo Greek.
- **Suppara/Soppara:** Present day Nala Sopara, it is situated in Palghar district of **Maharashtra**. The ancient port of Sopara was an important port in western India trading with Mesopotamia, Egypt, Cochin, Arabia and Eastern Africa.

- **Muziris:** It was ancient Indo-Roman port of Muziris or Musiri on the Malabar Coast, Kerala dating back to 1st century BC.
- **Korkai:** It was situated in Thoothukudi district of **Tamil Nadu**. It dates back more than 2000 years and was also the early capital of the Pandyas. It was one of the greatest centres of **pearl fishing in the ancient world**.
- **Poduca:** Poduca or Arikamedu or Poduke (**Puducherry**) is the name of a port city mentioned in the 1st century Periplus Maris Erythraei in connection with overseas trading in ancient India.
- **Tamralipti:** This port was located in the present day town of **Tamluk, in Midnapur, West Bengal**. The name 'Tamralipta' comes from **tamra or copper**, which was mined nearby at Ghatsila in Singbhum district of Bihar and exported through this port.
- **Sopatama/Marakkanam:** It is situated in Tamil Nadu
- **Masulipatnam** situated in Andhra Pradesh.
- **Dasarna** in Orissa.
- **Tagara:** Situated in **Maharashtra** connecting Kalyana with Vengi.

7.6. EARLY HUMANS LIVED IN NORTHERN INDIA 80,000 YEARS AGO

Why in news?

An archaeological excavation carried out in the trenches at Dhaba in the upper Son river valley in Madhya Pradesh has found evidence of the continuous human occupation in this area almost 80,000 years ago.

More on news

- The excavation unearthed a **large tool industry (Lithic Industry)** spanning the period of the Toba super-eruption.
 - The **large Megalithic tools** were dated between approximately 80,000 years and 65,000 years and the **small tools** were dated at approximately 50,000 years.
 - Therefore, **suggesting a continuous inhabiting** of this region by humans undisturbed by the super-eruption.
 - The tools strongly resemble stone tool assemblages from the **African Middle Stone Age (MSA)** and **Arabia**, and the earliest artefacts from **Australia**, suggesting that it is likely the product of Homo sapiens as they dispersed eastward out of Africa.

Significance of the findings with respect to Human Population Dispersal

- This finding is important in the face of **competing theories** on the first presence of human populations in different regions of the world and on human dispersal from Africa.
 - The common view with respect to Homo sapiens migration was that modern humans spread out of Africa only in the last 50,000 years.
 - In recent times, the fossil evidences have also suggested that, modern humans were already out of Africa by 200,000 years ago in Greece, in Arabia and China by 80-100,000 years ago etc.
- It also rules out the volcanic winter hypothesis.
 - **About 74,000 years ago**, the Toba volcanic super-eruption, centred around Sumatra, is believed to have caused an almost decade-long spell of cold weather — a **volcanic winter** — across many parts of the Earth.
 - There is an argument that this induced winter not only led to the **cooling of the Earth's surface** for almost a thousand years since the eruption, but also destroyed huge populations across Asia.

7.7. NEOLITHIC AGE SIVA LINGA DISCOVERED

Why in News?

Recently, an 18-foot Siva linga has been discovered by at the **Bhairaveswara Swamy Temple** atop the **Mopuru hillock**, in Andhra Pradesh.

Details

- The linga was believed to have been naturally formed during the **Neolithic age** dated back to 3,000 - 2,800 B.C.
- The discovery of the Siva linga has thrown light on the **religious practices** of Neolithic civilisations during which people used to worship idols of Gods and Goddesses in **standing posture**.

About Neolithic Age

- Neolithic (New Stone Age) followed the **Paleolithic** Period, or age of chipped-stone tools, and preceded the **Bronze Age**.
- It was characterized by stone tools shaped by **polishing or grinding**, **dependence on domesticated plants or animals**, settlement in permanent villages, and the

appearance of such crafts as pottery and weaving.

- **Important Neolithic sites in India:** Burzahom and Gufkral (Kashmir), Chopani Mando (U.P.), Brahmgi and Tekkalkota (Karnataka), Chirand (Bihar).

7.8. NAGARDHAN EXCAVATIONS

Why in news?

Recent archaeological excavations at **Nagardhan** in Ramtek taluka, near Nagpur, have provided concrete evidence on the life, religious affiliations and trade practices of the **Vakataka dynasty**.

Findings of the excavation

- **Place:** Nagardhan was urban centre and called **Nandhivardhan** and it served as the **capital** of the **eastern branch of Vakataka kingdom**.
- **About Queen Prabhavati Gupta:** She took over the Vakataka kingdom, after the sudden demise of Rudrasena II.
- **Clay sealings:** These sealings have been excavated for the first time, showing that there was a successor female ruler within the Vakataka dynasty.
 - These sealings bear her name in the **Brahmi script**, along with the depiction of a **conch**, which is a sign of the **Vaishnava** affiliation held by the **Guptas**.
 - These sealings could have been used as an official royal permission issued from the capital city.
 - **Vakataka people traded with Iran and beyond through the Mediterranean Sea.**
- **Religion:** The Vakataka rulers **followed the Shaiva sect of Hinduism**, but the queen's powers allowed her to choose a deity of worship.
 - The practice of worshipping **Narasimha** in **Maharashtra** emerged from Ramtek, and that Queen **Prabhavati Gupta** had a pivotal role in propagation of Vaishnava practices in the **Vidarbha** region of Maharashtra.
- **Temples:** Many **temples** indicating affinity to the Vaishnava sect, such as **Keval Narsimha, Rudra Narsimha** are traced to Ramtek, and were built during the reign of Queen Prabhavati Gupta.
- **Occupation: Animal rearing was one of the main occupations.** Remains of seven species of domestic animals — cattle, goat, sheep, pig, cat, horse and fowl — were traced.
- The **copperplate** issued by Queen Prabhavati Gupta has also been excavated. It



shows a genealogy of the Guptas, mentioning the Queen's grandfather Samudragupta and her father Chandragupta II.

- **An intact idol of Lord Ganesha**, which had no ornaments adorned, too was found from the site. This confirmed that the **elephant god was a commonly worshipped deity in those times.**

About Vakataka Dynasty

- Vakataka Empire succeeded the **Satvahanas in the Deccan between 3rd and 5th centuries CE.** They were contemporary to the Guptas ruling in the Northern India at the time.
- Their **kingdom** extended from the **southern edges of Malwa and Gujarat in the north to the Tungabhadra River** in the south as well as from the Arabian Sea in the west to the edges of Chhattisgarh in the east.
- **Vindhyashakti**, a Brahmin chieftain, founded the Vakataka empire.
- Vakataka rulers forged many matrimonial alliances with other dynasties of their times. The daughter of **Gupta emperor Chandragupta II**, **Prabhavatigupta** was married to **Vakataka king, Rudrasena II.**
- The Vakatakas were **patrons** of arts, architecture and literature. They followed the **Shaivite** faith.
- The rock-cut Buddhist Viharas and Chaityas of **Ajanta Caves** were built under the patronage of **Vakataka King, Harishena.**

7.9. BUDDHIST MONASTRIES IN NEWS

- **Bojjannakonda and Lingalmetta Monastries:** These are the **twin rock cut Buddhist monasteries** at Sankaram village in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh. They date back to the 3rd century BC.
 - **These sites have seen three forms of Buddhism** – Theravada period when Lord Buddha was considered a teacher, the Mahayana, where Buddhism was more devotional, and Vajrayana, where Buddhist tradition was more practised as Tantra and esoteric form.
- Visakhapatnam is also famous for Buddhist sites at Thotlakonda, Appikonda, and Bavikonda.
- **Moghalmari Monastery**
 - A study of inscriptions on clay tablets recovered recently from the Buddhist monastic site at Moghalmari in West Bengal confirmed the presence of two monasteries — **Mugalayikaviharika and Yajñapindikamahavihara.**
 - ✓ The monasteries date back to 6th century CE and were functional till the 12th century CE.
 - ✓ The **presence of two monasteries** dating to the same period **within a single compound** is unique in eastern India.
 - Moghalmari is **located on the left bank of Subarnarekha River in the district of West Medinipur, West Bengal.**
 - The site is considered the **largest and oldest archaeological excavation in West Bengal.**
 - It is **also known as Dantapur Buddhist Monastery** and was documented in the travel journal (called Si-yuki) of the Chinese Buddhist monk and scholar **Xuanzang** (Huen Tsang) who visited India in the 7th century CE.
- **Kirti Jheypa Monastery**
 - It is Tibetan Buddhist Monastery in **Dharamshala.**
 - It was built in 1992 to house Tibetan exile monks from Tibet.
- **Lamayuru Monastery**
 - Yungdrung Tharpaling Monastery, known as Lamayuru, is the most ancient monastery of **Ladakh.**
 - It is the **main seat of Drikung Kagyu tradition** (Tibetan Buddhism) in the lower part of Ladakh.
 - Its history dates back to the 11th century, when a scholar named **Mahasiddhacharya Naropa** laid the foundation stone of this monastery.

8. PERSONALITIES

8.1. GURU NANAK

Why in news?

Recently 550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak was celebrated.

About Guru Nanak

- Guru Nanak is the **founder and first Guru of Sikhism**.
- He was born in 1469 at Talwandi Rai Bhoi (renamed later as **Nankana Sahib**) near Lahore.
- It is said that in 1499 he got enlightenment and heard '**God's Call**' to dedicate himself completely to the service of humanity.
 - He undertook **preaching tours (Udasis)** to spread his message.
 - He undertook five such udasis from 1500-1524 AD in which he not only covered most parts of India but also travelled to places like Mecca, Sri Lanka, Nepal etc.
- In the later years of his life, Guru Nanak settled down at the **township of Kartarpur** ("creator's town"), on the banks of river Ravi in Punjab.
 - The **recently inaugurated Kartarpur Corridor** connects the **Dera Baba Nanak Sahib Gurdwara** in India's state of Punjab to the **Gurdwara Darbar Sahib Kartarpur** shrine in Narowal district of Pakistan's Punjab province.
 - It runs across over Ravi River.
 - The **Gurdwara Darbar Sahib** was ordered by Maharaja of Patiala between 1921-1929.
- Guru Nanak died at the age of 70. He appointed **Bhai Lena as his successor** and renamed him as **Guru Angad**.
- Guru Angad compiled the compositions of Guru Nanak, to which he added his own in a new script known as **Gurmukhi**.
- Compositions of Guru Nanak and other Sikh gurus and the writings of other figures like Shaikh Farid, Sant Kabir, Bhagat Namdev were compiled in **Guru Granth Sahib**, the holy scripture of the Sikhs.
- Most of the biographical accounts of Nanak's life come from the **Janamshakhis**(literally birth stories).
- These are writings which profess to be biographies of Guru Nanak, written at various stages after his death.

Teachings

- He believed that **God is Formless (Nirankar)**, and there is '**One God**' (Ek Onkar) that dwells in every one of his creations, and that all human beings

can have **direct access to God without the need of any rituals or priests**.

- Setting up a unique spiritual, social and political platform based on **equality and fraternal love**, Guru Nanak attacked the **citadel of the Hindu Caste System, and condemned the theocracy of Mughal rulers**.
- His idea of liberation was not that of a state of inert bliss but rather the **pursuit of active life** with a strong sense of social commitment.
- His followers ate together in the common kitchen (langar), irrespective of their former creed, caste or gender.
- Guru Nanak founded and formalised the 3 pillars of Sikhism.
 - **Naam Japna**- meditation on God through reciting, chanting, singing, and constant remembrance followed by deep study & comprehension of God's Name and virtues.
 - **Kirat karni**- To honestly earn by one's physical and mental effort while accepting both pains and pleasures as god's gifts and blessings.
 - **Vand Chakna**- The Sikhs were asked to share their wealth within the community by practising Vand Chakna- "Share and Consume together".

8.2. TIPU SULTAN

Why in News?

Karnataka government has announced to remove Tipu Sultan's history lessons from textbooks in the state and also public celebrations of Tipu Jayanti will not be held.

About Tipu Sultan

- Tipu Sultan became the ruler of the Kingdom of Mysore after the death of his father Hyder Ali in 1782 during 2nd Anglo-Mysore War.
- Tipu Sultan is seen as the fearless "**Tiger of Mysore**" and a brilliant **military strategist** who, in a short reign of 17 years, mounted the most serious challenge that the East India Company faced in India.
- However, because of the help given by Nizam of Hyderabad and Marathas, in 4th Anglo-Mysore War, Tipu **was defeated and killed on 4 May 1799** while defending his fort of Seringapatam.
- With Tipu gone, Wellesley imposed the **Subsidiary Alliance** on the reinstated Wodeyar king, and Mysore became a client state of the East India Company.

- **Achievements of Tipu Sultan-**
 - **Trade-** He built a navy to support trade and commissioned a “state commercial corporation” to set up factories.
 - **Agriculture-** modernized agriculture, gave tax breaks for developing wasteland, built irrigation infrastructure and repaired old dams, and promoted agricultural manufacturing and sericulture.
 - **Diplomacy-** He earned the trust of various international allies such as the French, the Amir of Afghanistan and the Sultan of Turkey, to assist him in his fight against the British. Moreover, he was the founder-member of the ‘**Jacobin Club of Mysore**’ that served allegiance to the French.
 - **Administration-** He planted a **LIBERTY TREE in Seringapatnam** and declared himself Citizen Tipoo. Just as there is evidence that Tipu persecuted Hindus and Christians, there is also evidence that he patronized Hindu temples and priests, and gave them grants and gifts.
- Ranjit Singh belonged to the **Sukerchakia misl**.
- He ruled over a region spanning the border into modern-day China and Afghanistan. His rule was called '**Sarka-i-Khalsa**'.
 - He was given the title **Lion of Punjab (Sher-e-Punjab)** because he stemmed the tide of Afghan invaders in Lahore.
- **Secular Character of state:** Under his tenure, the Sikh Empire was very secular and allowed men from different religions as well, to rise to commanding positions of authority.
- **Modernization of Army:** He modernized his army using services of European officers, to train the infantry and the artillery.
 - He appointed French General Jean Franquis Allard to modernise his army.
 - **Sikh Khalsa Army** was formed, to prevent the British from colonizing Punjab during his lifetime.
- **Social and Cultural Contribution:** The **gold and marble work of the iconic Golden Temple** in Amritsar was done under his patronage.
 - He is also credited with funding **Hazoor Sahib gurudwara** at the final resting place of Guru Gobind Singh in Nanded, Maharashtra.
 - He had **coins struck in the name of the Sikh Gurus**, the revered line of Sikh leaders, and proceeded to administer the state in the name of the Sikh commonwealth.
 - The **Kohinoor diamond**, which is currently in the possession of the Queen of England, was once a part of Ranjit Singh's treasure.

Reasons for his image as a tyrant

- **British accounts-** British authors like James Kirkpatrick and Mark Wilks have presented an account of Tipu Sultan as a tyrant.
 - However, various historians like Irfan Habib and Mohibbul Hasan have argued that these authors had a strong vested interest in presenting him as a tyrant as both authors had taken part in the wars against Tipu Sultan and were closely connected to the administrations of Lord Cornwallis and Richard Wellesley.
- **Territorial ambitions and religious policy-** Tipu raided Kodagu, Mangaluru, and Kochi. In all these places, he is seen as a tyrant who burnt down entire towns and villages, razed hundreds of temples and churches, and forcibly converted Hindus.

Treaty of Amritsar of 1809

- It was signed between Maharaja Ranjit Singh and the **British East India Company** (Lord Minto) in 1809 which stipulated that **perpetual friendship subsist** between the British government and the State of Lahore.
 - It **fixed the Sutlej River** as the eastern boundary of his territories.
 - Treaty is **said to have shattered Ranjit Singh's dream of establishing Sikh supremacy** over the territories between Jamuna and Satluj rivers as the extension of his power beyond river Satluj was prevented.

8.3. MAHARAJA RANJIT SINGH

Why in News?

Recently statue of **Maharaja Ranjit Singh (1780-1839 AD)** was unveiled on his 180th death anniversary at the Lahore Fort, Pakistan.

About Maharaja Ranjit Singh

- He was a Sikh leader who ruled Punjab in 19th century.
- Punjab during 1700s was ruled by powerful chieftains who had divided the territory into Misls.
 - Ranjit Singh overthrew the warring Misls and established a unified Sikh empire after he conquered Lahore in 1799.

8.4. ISHWAR CHANDRA VIDYASAGAR

Why in news?

Recently the statue of **Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar** was vandalised during the violent clashes that broke out in Kolkata.



About Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar (1820-1891)

- He, received the title **Vidyasagar** (ocean of knowledge) for his outstanding academic performance, was a legendary educationist, a Sanskrit scholar and a social reformer who **questioned oppressive social traditions** of Hindu society.
- He was invited by the Fort William College to teach Bengali to the European recruits and later he went on to become the head of the Sanskrit Department. In 1846, he joined the **Sanskrit College**.
- He came to the conclusion that **merging of Eastern and Western culture would remove superstition and prejudice**.

A Social Reformer

- **Making of the modern Bengali society:** Though a Sanskritist, he interpreted custom and tradition in the **language of logic and rationality** and upheld the rights of the **individual over collective** identities. As a part of larger social movement called the **Bengal Renaissance**, his contributions are:
 - **Campaign for Widow remarriage:** It was in 1854 that he began the campaign for widow remarriage by writing against the practice in the **Tattwabodhini Patrika**.
 - ✓ He challenged the Brahminical authorities and proved that widow remarriage is sanctioned by Vedic scriptures (he discovered a stanza from the **Parashara Samhita**, an ancient legal text which favoured widow remarriage).
 - ✓ In 1855, he filed a petition before the government, seeking legislation that would allow widow remarriage, which finally resulted in the passing of the **Widow Remarriage Act, 1856**.
 - ✓ He even married his son Narayan Chandra to an adolescent widow in 1870 to set an example.
 - **Admissions to backward castes:** After joining the Sanskrit College in 1846, he went against convention to admit students from lower castes to study Sanskrit. He cited the **Bhagavata Puran** to argue that there was “no direct prohibition in the Shastras against the Shudras studying Sanskrit”.
 - **Campaign against Polygamy** among Kulin Brahmins. Though the movement did not result in legislation, its social impact was considerable.

- **Child Marriage:** By vigorously challenging the barbaric practice of **child marriage** he demanded raising of the marriageable age of the girl child. British administration passed the **Age of Consent Act in 1891**, which legally abolished child marriage.

Education Reforms

- He is credited with the role of thoroughly **remodeling medieval scholastic system** prevailing in Sanskrit College and bringing about modern insights. He introduced:
 - Inclusion of English and Bengali as the medium of learning, besides Sanskrit.
 - Courses of European History, Philosophy and Science alongside of Vedic scriptures.
 - Modern concepts like class routine and weekly off day as part of the School reforms.
 - Concepts of Admission fee and tuition fee for the first time.
- **Women's education:**
 - He lobbied for opening of school for girls and outlined suitable curriculum that also enabled them to be **self-reliant through vocations**.
 - He initiated **Nari Siksha Bhandar, a fund** to lend support for the cause of women education.
 - He opened 35 schools for women throughout Bengal and was successful in enrolling 1300 students.
 - He maintained his support to John Bethune to establish the first permanent girls' school in India, **the Bethune School** in 1849.
 - He spent the last two decades with the Santhal tribes in Jharkhand, where he opened the first school for tribal girls.
- **Contribution to literature:**
 - Bringing a revolution in the way Bengali language was written and taught, his book, **'Borno Porichoy'** (Introduction to the letter), is still used as the introductory text to learn Bengali alphabets.
 - Wrote student-friendly Sanskrit grammars 'Upakramonika' and 'Byakaran Koumudi' in Bengali.
 - **Translation** of several Sanskrit books into Bengali, including **Kalidas's Shankuntala**.
 - Wrote two volumes on the mistreatment of widows, which set the tone for major social reform in the state.
- **Contributions to Journalism:** He was associated with journals like 'Tattwabodhini Patrika', 'Somprakash', and 'Hindu Patriot' etc.



- He set up the **Normal School for training teachers** enabling uniformity in teaching methods and founded the **Metropolitan Institution in 1872**.
- He **established the Sanskrit Press** to publish school text books at affordable prices.

8.5. ASHFAQULLAH KHAN

Why in news?

Recently, Uttar Pradesh cabinet approved a proposal to set aside Rs 234 crore for a zoological garden, in Gorakhpur, to be named after the **freedom fighter and revolutionary Shaheed Ashfaqullah Khan**.

About Ashfaqullah Khan

- **Ashfaqullah Khan** along with **Ram Prasad Bismil**, was sentenced to death for the **Kakori conspiracy of 1925**.
- He was born on October 22, 1900, in Shahjahanpur, Uttar Pradesh.
- He was **among the dejected youth** that was disappointed when Gandhi called off the **non-cooperation movement**.
- He felt a **“dwindling faith in non-violent strategies”** and started to believe that freedom from the shackles of colonialism called for more **“radical methods”**.
- Ashfaq **composed poems** mostly in **Urdu** and a few in Hindi, under the pen names **Varasi and Hazarat**.
- In the mid-1920s, Ashfaqullah Khan and Ram Prasad Bismil went on to found the Hindustan Republican Association, later renamed **Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA)**.
 - HSRA published its **manifesto** titled **“The Revolutionary” in 1925**, which, stated that “The immediate object of the revolutionary party in the domain of politics is to establish a federal Republic of United State of India by an organized and armed revolution”.

About the Kakori Conspiracy

- In **August 1925**, an armed robbery took place on board the Kakori Express, carrying money.
- The robbery was carried out to fund the activities of the HSRA in which **Bismil, Ashfaqullah Khan** and over 10 other revolutionaries stopped the train and fled with the cash they found in it.
- In a trial which went on for about 1.5 years and ended in 1927, Bismil, Khan, Rajendra Lahiri and Roshan Singh were **sentenced to death**, and the others were given life sentences.

8.6. VINAYAK DAMODAR SAVARKAR

Why in news?

Recently, the 136th birth anniversary of **Vinayak Damodar Savarkar**, the renowned philosopher, was observed.

About Veer Savarkar (1883-1966)

- He was an independence activist, politician, lawyer, writer, and the formulator of the Hindutva philosophy.
- **Major works:** The Indian War of Independence 1857 (It was banned by British), Hindutva (written in Ratnagiri Jail), Hindu-pad paatshahi, Joseph Mazzini.

Various aspects of Savarkar:

- **Freedom fighter:**
 - He established an organization named **‘Mitra Mela’** later renamed as **‘Abhinav Bharat’** which influenced the members to fight for ‘absolute political independence’ of India.
 - He was associated with the India House (England) for which he was arrested in 1910 and later moved to the **Cellular Jail in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands**, (released in 1921).
 - He later founded the **Ratnagiri Hindu Sabha** to preserve ancient Indian culture and worked in the direction of social welfare. Later he joined **Swaraj Party, formed by Tilak**.
 - He became a **fierce critic of the Indian National Congress** and its acceptance of India's partition.
- **Hindutva ideologue:**
 - As a response to Muslim league, Savarkar joined the **Hindu Mahasabha** and popularized the term Hindutva to create a **collective "Hindu" identity** as an essence of Bharat (India).
 - Advocated for validating religious myths/blind faith against the test of modern science, therefore was a **rationalist and reformer**.
 - Serving as the president of the Hindu Mahasabha in 1937, he endorsed the idea of India as a **Hindu Rashtra** and **opposed the Quit India struggle** in 1942.
- **Social reformer:**
 - He was a strong critic of the caste system, which was decided on the basis of birth.

- In 1930, he started the **first pan-Hindu Ganeshotsav**. The festivities would be marked by 'kirtans' rendered by the untouchables.
- Initiated **several temple movements** of Maharashtra, where the untouchables were encouraged to pray (eg in **Patitpavan temple in Ratnagiri**).

About Hindu Mahasabha

- Formed in 1907, it is a party established for safeguarding issues of Hindus.
- **Eminent Hindu leaders** extended this Organization in 1915 on all India basis. They were: Madan Mohan Malaviya, N.C.Kelkar, Lala Lajpat Rai, Veer Savarkar, Dr S.P. Mukherjee, Dr N.B.Khare;
- While not supportive of British rule, the **Mahasabha did not offer its full support to the nationalist movement** either, abstaining from participating in the Civil Disobedience movement of 1930 and the Quit India movement of 1942.
- It celebrates January 30, as **Shaurya Diwas**.

8.7. MUHAMMAD IQBAL

Why in news?

A headmaster of a government primary school in Uttar Pradesh was recently suspended after his students recited a poem written by Muhammad Iqbal.

About Muhammad Iqbal

- Sir Muhammad Iqbal is also known as Allama Iqbal and has written, **“Saare jahan se acha” (known alternatively as Tarana-e-Hind)**.
 - The poem was published in the weekly journal Ittehad in 1904.
- He was born in 1877 in **Sialkot Punjab** (now in Pakistan) into a family with Kashmiri Brahmin ancestry.
- Iqbal was a poet-philosopher whose work promoted the **philosophy of self-hood** and dealt with the **intellectual and cultural reconstruction of the Islamic world**.
- He wrote mostly in **Urdu and Persian**.
- Iqbal's first published collection of poems came out in 1923 and is titled, **“Bang-e-Dara” (Call of the Marching Bell)**.
- Some of his other works include:
 - Zabar-i-Ajam, Bal-i-Jibril (The Gabriel's Wings),
 - Musafir (The Wayfarer),
 - Mysteries of the Selflessness,
 - Secrets of the Self: Asrar-i-Khudi and
 - The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam.

- In 1930, Iqbal delivered a Presidential Address to the 25th Session of the All-India Muslim League in Allahabad (popularly referred as **'Allahabad Address'**) where he expressed his thoughts on **Islam and nationalism, unity of the Indian nation and on the problem of defence**.
- In the year 1931-1932 he **participated in second and third session of Round Table Conference** held in London.
- He later believed that the enforcement and development of the Shariat of Islam is impossible in the country without a free Muslim state or states.
- Iqbal is considered to have given the **vision for the creation of Pakistan and Two-nation theory**, and is called as 'Spiritual father of Pakistan'. Whereas Jinnah is considered to be the one who shaped this vision.

8.8. DARA SHIKOH

Why in news?

The Ministry of Culture recently set up a **7-member panel** of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) to locate the grave of the Mughal prince Dara Shikoh (1615-59), who is believed to be buried somewhere in the **Humayun's Tomb complex in Delhi**.

About Dara Shikoh

- Dara Shikoh, was the eldest son of Mughal emperor Shah Jahan, who in 1642, formally confirmed Dara Shikoh as his heir, granting him the title of **Shahzada-e-Buland Iqbal**.
- He was killed after losing the war of succession against his brother Aurangzeb.
 - **Battle of Samugarh** was decisive struggle in a contest for the throne between the sons (**Aurangzeb and Murād Bakhsh**, on one side, and, **Dara Shikoh** on other) of the Mughal emperor Shah Jahān after the emperor's serious illness in 1657.
- He was **liberal in outlook** and tried to find commonalities between Hindu and Islamic traditions.

Contributions to Art and Culture

- He translated the **Bhagavad Gita** as well as **Upanishads** from their original Sanskrit into Persian in 1657 so that they could be studied by Muslim scholars.
 - His translation is often called **Sirr-e-Akbar** ("The Greatest Mystery"), where he states that the work referred to in the Quran is none other than the Upanishads.

- **Majma-ul-Bahrain**, a short treatise written in Persian, was also devoted to a revelation of the mystical and pluralistic affinities between **Sufic and Vedantic speculation**.
- **'Dara Shikoh Album'** is a collection of paintings and calligraphy assembled during 1630s by Dara Shikoh and presented to his wife **Nadira Banu Begum** in 1641-42.
- He is credited with the **commissioning of several** exquisite examples of **Mughal architecture** such as, the tomb of his wife Nadira Begum (Lahore), the Shrine of Mian Mir (Lahore), the Dara Shikoh Library (Delhi), the **Akhun Mullah Shah Mosque** (Srinagar) and the **Pari Mahal garden palace** (Srinagar)
- Some historians argue that Dara Shikoh, was the total antithesis of Aurangzeb, in that he was deeply syncretic, warm-hearted and generous — but at the same time, he was also an indifferent administrator and ineffectual in the field of battle.
- **Italian traveller Niccolao Manucci** has written down the details of Dara Shikoh's death in his book Travels of Manucci.

8.9. ADI SHANKAR

Why in News?

Govardhan Mutt set up by Adi Shankara at Puri will be out of Odisha government's purview.

About Adi Shankara

- Adi Shankara was an early 8th century **Indian philosopher and theologian** who expounded the **doctrine of Advaita Vedanta**.
 - Advaita Vedanta is a non-dualistic school of Hinduism with its roots in the Vedas and Upanishads which recognizes one reality and one God.
- He explained the basic ideas of Upanishads and advocated the oldest concept of Hinduism which explains the unification of the soul (atman) with the Supreme Soul (Nirguna Brahman).
 - He advocated the existence of the soul and the Supreme Soul.
 - He believed that the Supreme Soul alone is real and unchanging while the soul is a changing entity and that it does not have absolute existence.
- The most important works is his efforts to synthesize the six sub-sects, known as **'Shanmata.'**
- He also founded **'Dashanami Sampradaya,'** which talks about leading a monastic life. While Shankaracharya was a firm believer in ancient

Hinduism, he condemned the 'Mimamsa school of Hinduism' which was purely based on ritual practices.

- He founded four monasteries (mathas) that continue to spread his teachings which are **Sringeri Sharada Peetham, Dvaraka Pitha, Jyotirmatha Peetham and Govardhana matha.**
- He also composed the famous **'Upadesasahasri'** which literally translates to 'a thousand teachings.'

8.10. THIRUVALLUVAR

Why in news?

Recently, a controversy kicked up in Tamil Nadu after the **image of Thiruvalluvar in saffron-coloured attire was tweeted.**

About Thiruvalluvar

- Thiruvalluvar, **commonly known as Valluvar**, was a Tamil saint, poet, and a philosopher. He is **usually shown with a white shawl in the images.**
- Details about Thiruvalluvar's real name, date and place of birth, religious affiliation and family background are not available. Many researchers put his **birth date between 1st century BC and 2nd century AD.**
- Thiruvalluvar's moral philosophy is **anthropocentric since it focuses on life on this earth** rather than aspiring for heavenly abode.
 - Moreover, he opposed absolutizing and idealizing the problems and making them other-worldly affairs.
- He boldly **advocated a life of discipline, self-control, chastity, non-violence, temperance and devotion.**
- He is best known as the **author of Thirukkural**, a collection of 1330 couplets on ethics, political and economic matters, and love.
- In Thirukkural, through the phrase 'Aadhi Bhagavan', Thiruvalluvar **asserted that the Omnipotent and Omnipresent God was Universal.**

About Tirukkural

- Written in Tamil, it is an ancient treatise on the **Code of Ethics and Universal Human Values.**
- It is a moral compendium which has been classified under three major headings; **aram (righteousness), porul (wealth), ibam (enjoyment).**
 - The ideological implication of these titles is that one must earn wealth through righteous means and enjoyment becomes imminent through that which leads to enlightenment.

- This view is similar to the Sanskrit tradition of dharma, artha, kama and moksha.
- Out of four aspects of life (Purusharthas) Aram, Porul, Inbam and Veedu (Moksha) **Thirukkural addresses only the first three** and advocates the path to Veedu through the others and hence it is called Muppai (3 Elements).
- It attempts to **provide guidelines for the individuals in the society** i.e.- the ascetic, the family members, etc. who are responsible for themselves and to others.

8.11. GURU RAVIDAS JAYANTI

Why in news?

Recently, the birth anniversary of Sant Ravidas was celebrated across the country.

About Sant Ravidas

- Sant Ravidas was a **14th-century poet-saint, social reformer and a spiritual figure** and founder of the **Bhakti movement in North India**.
- His parents belonged to a leather-working **untouchable** community.
- His devotional songs were included in the Sikh scriptures, **Guru Granth Sahib**. He was contemporary of Kabir and Guru Nanak Dev.
- He was a **cobbler by caste**. Ravidas taught **removal of social divisions of caste and gender**, and **promoted unity** in the pursuit of personal spiritual freedoms.
- **Mirabai** became a disciple of Ravidas. The Panch Vani text of the Dadupanthi tradition also includes numerous poems of Ravidas.
- He is considered as the founder of the **Ravidassia religion**, by a group who previously were associated with Sikhism.
- The songs of Ravidas discuss Nirguna-Saguna themes, as well as ideas that are at the foundation of Nath Yoga philosophy of Hinduism.

8.12. VEDANTA DESIKAN

Why in news?

Recently, a postage stamp was launched to commemorate the **750th birth anniversary of Sri Vedanta Desikan**.

About Vedanta Desikan

- One of the most prominent preceptors in the **Sri Vaishnava tradition**, he was a **multi-faceted personality**.
- He is celebrated as '**Sarva-Tantra-Svatantira**' or master of all arts and crafts and awarded the title '**Kavi Tarkika-Kesari**'.

Philosophy-

- The Srivaishnava philosophy got a much wider audience with Vedanta Desikan's writings and preaching.
- One of the essential features of his philosophy was the **aspect of inclusion** that is anyone, irrespective of caste and creed could join the Sri Vaishnava fold, obliterating caste distinctions and thus making it a **truly democratic movement**.
- He illuminated the paths of **devotion and dedication**, of selfless love and affection for humanity and a total submergence in divine ambience.

Srivaishnava tradition

- A denomination **within the Vaishnavism tradition** of Hinduism.
- Though **Nathamuni** (10th century CE) is attributed as the founder, its central philosopher was **Ramanuja** (11th C) who developed the **Vishishtadvaita philosophy**.
- The **most striking difference** between Srivaishnavas and other Vaishnava groups lies in their **interpretation of Vedas**.
- While other **Vaishnava groups** interpret Vedic deities like Indra, Rudra, etc. to be same as their Puranic counterparts, **Srivaishnavas** consider these to be different names and forms of Lord Narayan thus claiming that the **entire Veda is dedicated for Vishnu worship alone**.
- In this tradition, the **ultimate reality and truth** are considered to be the divine sharing of the feminine and the masculine, the goddess and the god.
- The prefix Sri is used for this sect because they give **special importance to the worship of the Goddess Lakshmi**, who they believe to act as a mediator between **God Vishnu and man**.
- **Acharyas:** Yamunacharya, Ramanujacharya, Parasara Bhattar, Pillai Lokacharya, Vedanta Desikan.

8.13. TRAVELOGUES IN DECODING INDIAN HISTORY

Why in news?

In the recently delivered Ayodhya judgement, Supreme Court took note of the account of three European travellers namely Joseph Tieffenthaler, William Finch, and Montgomery Martin.

More about the travellers

Joseph Tieffenthaler

- He was an **18th-century missionary hailing from Italy** who travelled in India for 27 years.
- In India, **he was commissioned at the famous observatory of Sawai Jai Singh**, the Raja of

Jaipur, and was later attached at the Jesuit College in Agra.

- He also lived in **Awadh, where Ayodhya is located, for over five years.**
- In his book '**Description Historiqueet Geographique Del'inde**' he gives details about his travels to Ayodhya.

William Finch

- He is known to have **arrived in India in 1608 at Surat with Sir William Hawkins**, a representative of the East India Company.
- He is said to give the **earliest English language account of Kashmir**, as well as trade routes connecting Punjab and eastern Turkistan and western China.
- Finch **visited Ayodhya between 1608 and 1611**, and did not find any building of importance of Islamic origin.
- William Finch's account has been recorded in the 1921 book '**Early Travels in India (1583-1619)**' by the historiographer Sir William Foster.

Robert Montgomery Martin

- He was an **Anglo-Irish author and civil servant**. He **practised medicine in Ceylon (present day Sri Lanka), East Africa and Australia.**
- Martin then went on to work in Kolkata where he **helped found the paper 'Bengal Herald'**. He later returned to England where he wrote about the British Empire.
- He **wrote the three-volume work 'History, Antiquities, Topography and Statistics of Eastern India'**.
- He had written about the **worship of Lord Ram in the Ayodhya region** and destruction of temples and the erection of mosques.

8.14. OTHER PERSONALITIES IN NEWS

Guru Gobind Singh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guru Gobind Singh (1666 – 1708), born in Patna, was the tenth Sikh Guru. • He founded the Sikh warrior community called Khalsa in 1699. • He became the Sikh guru at the age of nine, following the demise of father, Guru Tegh Bahadur, the ninth Sikh Guru. • He introduced the Five Ks (Kesh, Kangha, Kara, Kirpan and Kacchera), the five articles of faith that Khalsa Sikhs wear at all times. • He finalized the Guru Granth Sahib in 1706 and declared this
--------------------------	---

	<p>text to be the eternal Guru for Sikhs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He was a renowned composer of Carnatic music. He composed mostly devotional compositions, most in Telugu and in praise of Lord Rama. • Of special mention are five of his compositions called the Pancharatna Kritis (five gems). • He is one among the most revered 18th Century Trinity of composers—the others being Shyama Sastry and Sri Muthuswami Dikshithar.
Thyagaraja	
Subramania Bharathi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He was a poet, journalist, freedom fighter and social reformer from Tamil Nadu. • “Kannan Pattu” “Nilavum Vanminum Katrum” “Panchali Sabatam” “Kuyil Pattu” are examples of Bharathi's great poetic output. • He was closely associated with the editorship of Vijaya and India (Tamil weekly).
Savitribai Phule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She was a social reformer of the 19th century. • She is especially remembered for being India's first female teacher who worked for the upliftment of women and untouchables in the field of education and literacy. • She started Mahila Seva Mandal(1852) to raise awareness about women's rights and campaigned against child marriage, while supporting widow remarriage.
Amritlal Vithaldas Thakkar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Popularly known as Thakkar Bapa (1869 –1951), he was an Indian social worker who worked for upliftment of tribal people. • He founded Bhil Seva Mandal in 1922 and Bharatiya Adim Jati Sevak Sangh in 1948 and was also associated with Servants of India Society and Harijan Sevak Sangh. • He became the general secretary of the Harijan Sevak Sangh founded by Mahatma Gandhi in 1932.
100th Birth Anniversary of Oattopanth Thengri	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He was a trade union leader and founder of the Swadeshi Jagaran Manch, Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh and the Bharatiya Kisan Sangh.
V. M. Tarkunde	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He was a prominent Indian lawyer, civil rights activist, and

	<p>has been referred to as the “Father of the Civil Liberties movement” in India.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The founding conference of People’s Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL), one of the largest human rights organization in the country, elected him as the President in 1980.
Kota Rani	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> She is remembered as the last ruler belonging to Hindu Lohara dynasty in Kashmir and died in 1339. She was daughter of Ramchandra, commander-in-chief of Suhadev, who was the king of Kashmir belonging to Lohara dynasty. Lohara dynasty were Hindu rulers of Kashmir from Khasa tribe

	<p>between 1003 and approximately 1320 CE.</p>
Azhvar And Nayanars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alvars (also called as Azhvars) were the famous Tamil Poet Saints. They praised the Hindu God Vishnu and his Avatar Krishna with their own composed songs. Nayanars were the sincere and ardent devotees of Lord Siva. Nalayira Divyaprabandham (“Four Thousand Sacred Compositions”) – one of the major anthologies of compositions of the 12 Alvars was compiled by Nathamuni in 10th Century. It was frequently described as the Tamil Veda.

MONTHLY CURRENT AFFAIRS REVISION 2020

GS PRELIMS + MAINS

ADMISSION OPEN

- Detailed topic-wise up-to-date contextual understanding of all current issues.
- Opportunities for discussion and debate through “Talk to expert” and during offline presentations in class.
- Assessment of your understanding through MCQs and Mains oriented questions after each topic.
- Two to three classes will be held every fortnight.
- The Course plan (35-40 classes) covers important current issues from standard sources like The Hindu, Indian Express, Business Standard, PIB, PRS, AIR, RS/LSTV, Yojana etc.

Scan the QR CODE to download **VISION IAS** app

हिंदी माध्यम में भी उपलब्ध

9. HISTORICAL EVENTS

9.1. PAIKA REBELLION

Why in news?

Recently, President of India laid the foundation stone for the Paika Memorial in Odisha's Khurda district to mark **200 years** of the **Paika Rebellion**.

About Paika rebellion

- It was an **armed rebellion** that took place in Odisha against the British East India Company.
- Paikas were the **traditional landed militia of the Gajapati rulers of Odisha**.
- Paikas **owned rent-free land** that had been **given to them for their military service to Kingdom of Khurda**.
- The British, having established their sway over Bengal Province and Madras Province to the north and south of Odisha, occupied it in 1803.
 - The King of Odisha Mukunda Deva-II was a minor then and initial resistance by Jai Rajguru, the custodian of Mukunda Deva-II, was put down brutally.
 - Rulers of Khurda were traditionally the custodians of Jagannath Temple and ruled as the deputy of lord Jagannath on earth. They symbolised the political and cultural freedom of the people of Odisha.
- A few years later, the Paikas under **Baxi Jagabandhu**, the hereditary chief of the militia army of the Gajapati King, rose in rebellion, taking support of tribals and other sections of society.
- They attacked British symbols of power, setting ablaze police stations, administrative offices and the treasury during their march towards Khurda, from where the British fled.
- They were supported by the zamindars, village heads and ordinary peasants.

Causes of Paika Rebellion

- **Contemporary political condition of Khurda:** The hanging of Jai Rajaguru, the deposition of Raja Mukundadeva II and the reorganization of administration in Khurda by the British, enraged the people of Khurda.
- **Faulty revenue policy:** Colonial rule brought new land revenue settlements in the region which led to the Paikas losing their estates and land was transferred to Bengali absentee landlords.
- **The new currency system:** The British changed the currency system from **cowrie** to rupee. The villagers faced a lot of problems in handling the

new currency and they were grossly exploited by the local mahajanans.

- **British salt policy:** The long sea coast of Odisha produced a huge quantity of salt which was used by the people of this land freely. However, the British authority deprived the zamindars and the local people of coastal region of their traditional rights to manufacture salt.

Paika Rebellion as the First war of Independence

- The uprising is said to be an expression against the disruption of traditional way of life of the region due to advent of British.
- It was directly against the colonial masters and due to the large-scale participation of all the section of the society it is sometimes referred as the "First war of Independence".

Suppression of the revolt

- The British were initially taken aback and then suppression followed with many killed and imprisoned. Many more were tortured.
- Some rebels fought a guerilla war till 1819 but were captured and killed.
- Baxi Jagabandhu was finally arrested in 1825 and died in captivity in 1829.
- After the suppression:
 - **Paikas were forced to leave the profession of militia men** of the king and to adopt cultivation and other works as means to earn livelihood.
 - The **price of the salt was reduced** and more salt was made available for the smooth purchase of the people.
 - When Raja Mukundadeva II died on 30 November 1817, his son Ramachandradeva III was allowed to move to Puri. He was allowed an annual pension and to take over the charge of the management of the Jagannath temple of Puri. By this arrangement, the British government won the mind and sentiment of the people of Odisha.

9.2. PAYYANUR

Why in news?

Kerala plans to set up a **Mahatma Gandhi Smriti Museum** at Payyanur, situated on the banks of the Perumba river in Kerala's Kannur district.

Historical Significance of the place

- **The Simon Commission Protest in 1928:** Moyarath Sankaran, A. Lakshmana Shenoy and

Subrahmanyam Thirumunpu were the leaders of 'Simon Go Back' protest in Payyanur.

- **The Salt Satyagraha in 1930:** Under the leadership of 'Kerala Gandhi' K. Kelappan, the satyagraha saw a procession of 33 satyagrahis from Kozhikode to Payyannur which earned Payyanur the distinction of "Second Bardoli".
- **Anti-untouchability movement:** Payyanur was also an epicentre of the anti-untouchability movement. Great leaders of the movement at Payyanur — A.K. Gopalan, K.A. Keraliyan and Vishnu Bharatiyan — ushered boys from the **oppressed Pulaya community** into the Kurumba Bhagavathi Temple.
 - One of the first crusaders against casteism in Payyanur was **Swami Anandatheertha**, a Konkani Brahmin by birth, who was consecrated as 'Swami Anandatheertha' by **Narayana Guru** and fought lifelong for the rights of Dalits.
- **Gandhi's connection:** Gandhiji visited Kerala in 1934 to call on Swami Anandatheertha. He planted a mango tree in his Ashram, which still thrives at that site.

9.3. JALLIANWALA BAGH

Why in News?

Recently, Jallianwala Bagh National Memorial (Amendment) Act 2019 was enacted.

More about News

- The Act seeks to amend the **Jallianwala Bagh National Memorial Act, 1951**.
- It seeks to **make apolitical the trust** that runs Jallianwala Bagh National Memorial by removing the clause pertaining to the President of Indian National Congress as a permanent member of the trust.
- It clarifies that when there is no Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, the leader of the single largest Opposition party will be the trustee.
- It also allows the Central government to **terminate the term of a nominated trustee** before the expiry of the period of his term, without assigning any reason.
- Under the 1951 Act, **the Trustees of the Memorial include:** the Prime Minister as Chairperson, President of the Indian National Congress, Minister in-charge of Culture, Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Governor of Punjab, Chief Minister of Punjab, and three eminent persons nominated by the central government.

Details

- The Anarchical and Revolutionary Crimes Act of 1919, better known as the **Rowlatt Act**, came into force in March 1919, even though every single Indian member of the Central Legislative Council opposed it.
- The Rowlatt Act bestowed on the Government the power :
 - **to set up special courts** consisting of three High Court Judges for specified offences;
 - **to direct execution of bond for good behaviour;** internment within city reporting at police station; and abstention from specific acts; and
 - **to arrest anybody suspected of terrorist activities,** detain them for up to 2 years without trial, search a place without a warrant, and impose severe restrictions on the freedom of the press.
- It shocked most Indians who had expected to be rewarded, not punished, for willingly fighting alongside the British in the First World War.
- Immediately after the passage of the Rowlatt Act, **B.N.Sarma** resigned his office as member of the Imperial Legislative Council.
- **The Madras Satyagraha Sabha** under the leadership of C. Rajagopalachari, A. Rangaswamy Iyengar, G. Harisarvottama Rao and T. Andhinarayana Chetty opposed the Rowlatt Act.
- **Mahatma Gandhi** called for a satyagraha against the act (Rowlatt Satyagraha). The hartal was observed on 6 April 1919 after the Viceroy gave his assent to the Rowlatt Bill.
- But even before the satyagraha there were large-scale violent, anti-British demonstrations in Calcutta, Bombay, Delhi, Ahmedabad, etc.
- In Punjab, the situation was tense under the oppressive regime of lieutenant governor Sir Michael O' Dwyer who had imposed martial law.
 - It was under his orders that Gandhi was arrested at Palwal near Delhi and prevented from entering Punjab.
 - He also directed that Amritsar's popular leaders **Satyapal** and **Saifuddin Kitchlew** be deported to some "unknown place". They had been agitating against the implementation of Rowlatt Act.
 - **On Baisakhi day**, people gathered in the small park for peaceful protest against arrest of their leaders.
 - The army surrounded the gathering under orders from **General Reginald Dyer**, who was given a free hand by **Governor**



Michael O' Dwyer. The only exit point was blocked, and army opened fire on the unarmed crowd, killing more than 1000.

Aftermath

- **Mahatma Gandhi** was overwhelmed by the atmosphere of violence and **withdrew the Rowlatt satyagraha on 18th April, 1919.**
- **Rabindranath Tagore** renounced his knighthood in protest.
- On 14 October 1919, after orders issued by the Secretary of State for India, Edwin Montagu, the Government of India announced the formation of a committee of inquiry into the events in Punjab.
 - Referred to as the Disorders Inquiry Committee, it was later more widely known as the **Hunter Commission.**
 - Congress boycotted this committee.
 - The Hunter Committee did not impose any penal or disciplinary action because Dyer's actions were condoned by various superiors (later upheld by the Army Council).
 - Dyer was initially lauded by conservatives in the empire, but in July 1920 he was censured and forced to retire by the House of Commons. He was disciplined by being removed from his appointment, was passed over for promotion and was prohibited from further employment in India.
- **Mahatma Gandhi**, in 1920, returned the Kaiser-i-Hind medal awarded to him after the Boer War by the British Government as a part of his movement against Punjab and khilafat injustice.
- The corrupt mahants of the Golden temple honoured General Dyer with a saropa (robe of honour), which led to the agitation that resulted in the formation of a committee known as Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee (SGPC), which was given the control and management of the Golden Temple, the Akal Takht, and other Gurudwaras.
- Accepting the report of the Repressive Laws Committee, the Government of India repealed the Rowlatt Act, the Press Act, and twenty-two other laws in March 1922.
- **Udham Singh**, a revolutionary belonging to the Ghadar Party assassinated **Michael O' Dwyer** in London, on 13 March 1940.

9.4. AZAD HIND GOVERNMENT

Why in News?

This year marked 76th anniversary of the formation of Azad Hind Government.

Azad Hind Government

- Subhas Chandra Bose on October 21, 1943, established the **provisional Azad Hind government in Singapore.** He was the leader of Azad Hind Government and also the Head of State of this Provisional Indian Government-in-exile.
- It was a **part of the freedom movement**, originating in 1940s outside India with a purpose of allying with Axis powers to free India from British rule.
- The existence of the Azad Hind Government gave a **greater legitimacy to the independence struggle** against the British.
- The **role of Azad Hind Fauj or the Indian National Army (INA)** had been crucial in bequeathing a much needed impetus to India's struggle for Independence.

Indian National Army (INA)

- The idea of INA was first conceived in Malaya **by Mohan Singh.**
- The Indian National Army was **founded by prisoners of wars** of British Indian Army captured by the Japanese in Singapore, Malaysia and other countries of Southeast Asia during the World War II.
- On 1 September 1942, the **first division** of INA was formed.
- The main task of gathering them and forming the INA was carried out by **Rashbehari Bose**, one of the stalwarts of the freedom movement. Later it was reconsolidated as an army by Subhas Chandra Bose.
- The INA was also at the forefront of **women's equality**, and the formation of a women's regiment, the **Rani of Jhansi Regiment (headed by Captain Laxmi Sehgal)** was formed as an all-volunteer women's unit to fight the British Raj as well as provide medical services to the INA.

INA Trials

- A joint court-martial of hundreds of captured INA soldiers, led by Colonel Prem Sehgal, Colonel Gurbaksh Singh Dhillon, Major General Shah Nawaz Khan, was held during 1945- 46 at the Red Fort.
- Leaders of independence movement Jawaharlal Nehru, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Kailashnath Katju,

Bhulabhai Desai, Asaf Ali, along with Muslim league defended the comrades of Bose despite difference of ideology.

- **The famous INA trial sparked off massive unrest** across the country, including the strike by the ratings (sailors) and officers of the Royal Indian Navy and Air Force – from the ports of Mumbai and Karachi to Madras, Vishakhapatnam and Calcutta in February 1946. The airmen too struck work at various places including Karachi and Kalaikunda (now in West Bengal).
- Historians termed this unrest as **"the last nail in the coffin"** of the British Empire.

9.5. NEHRU-LIAQUAT AGREEMENT

Why in news?

The debate on **The Citizenship Amendment Bill** in Parliament included multiple references to the Nehru-Liaquat Agreement that was signed in Delhi in 1950.

About Nehru Liaquat agreement

- The Nehru-Liaquat agreement signed by Jawahar Lal Nehru and Pakistan's Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan, is also known as the **Delhi Pact**.
- It was a bilateral agreement signed between India and Pakistan in order to **provide a framework for the treatment of minorities in the two countries**.
- The agreement was **signed in the backdrop of large-scale migration of people belonging to minority communities between the two countries** in the wake of attacks by the majority communities in their respective territories.

Key provisions of the Agreement

- Governments of both the countries agreed to **provide and protect Minority rights including political, cultural and economic rights** like - complete equality of citizenship, irrespective of religion, freedom of movement within each country, freedom of occupation, speech and worship etc.
- Both Governments **declared these rights to be fundamental** and agreed to take suitable measures to enforce them effectively.
- **Setting up of Commission of Enquiry** to look into the causes of disturbances and to suggest measures to prevent them in future.
- Refugees were allowed to return unharmed to dispose of their property.

- Measures were to be taken for safe return of abducted women and recovery of looted property.
- **Forced conversions were unrecognized.**

9.6. PRIVY PURSE ABOLITION

Why in News?

This year marks **50 Years to Privy Purse Abolition**.

Details

- In December 1971, by the **26th Amendment** Indira Gandhi abolished India's princely order, terminating the privileges enjoyed by retired maharajas and nawabs since the integration of their states in 1949.
- The Privy Purse was a **payment made to the ruling families of erstwhile princely states** as part of their agreements to first integrate with India in 1947 after the independence of India and later to merge their states in 1949 whereby they lost all ruling rights.
- As defined from 1949 under **Article 291 of the Indian Constitution, a privy purse would be a fixed, tax-free sum guaranteed to the former princely rulers and their successors**. The sum was intended to cover all expenses of the former ruling families, including those incurred for religious and other ceremonies, and would be charged on the Consolidated Fund of India.
- It was stated that the concept of rulership, with privy purses and special privileges unrelated to any current functions and social purposes, is incompatible with an egalitarian social order. Government have, therefore, decided to terminate the privy.

9.7. OTHER EVENTS

Treaty of Versailles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • June 28th marked the 100th anniversary of Treaty of Versailles, signed on 28th June 1919 between Germany & Allied Powers that brought World War I to an end. • The treaty was a consequence of 6 months of Allied negotiations at Paris Peace Conference in 1919. • The provisions of the treaty were majorly decided by Britain (under David Lloyd George), France (under Georges Clemenceau) and USA (under Woodrow Wilson). Both Russia and Germany were not given representation at the conference.
75th Anniversary of the Liberation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During World War II, government of Nazi Germany killed approx. 17 million people in camps specifically designated for killings. Of these,



of Auschwitz	<p>camp at Auschwitz, Poland was largest in size.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 1979, UNESCO added the Auschwitz memorial to its list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites. In 2005, the UN-designated January 27 as the International Holocaust Remembrance Day. Holocaust was a period during World War II, when millions of Jews and other people were killed because of their identity.
Battle of Çanakkale/ Gallipoli	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is also called as Dardanelles campaign. In World War I, during this campaign Ottoman army faced off against the Allied forces on Gallipoli peninsula (Turkey) from 1915 to 1916. It was an unsuccessful attempt by the Allied Powers to control the sea route from Europe to Russia by taking control of Dardanelles, strategic strait connecting Sea of Marmara to Aegean Sea and Mediterranean Sea.
Battle of Bhima Koregaon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was fought on 1 January 1818 between British East India Company and the Peshwa faction of the Maratha Confederacy led by Peshwa Baji Rao II. It was part of Third Anglo Maratha war. Dalit-dominated (Mahars) British Army had defeated a Peshwa army in Koregaon. The battle attained a legendary stature for Dalits, who consider the win as a victory of the Mahars against the injustices perpetuated by the Peshwas.
Battle of Imphal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Imphal Peace Museum has been set up at Red Hill outside Imphal

	<p>(Manipur) to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Imphal (during Second World War 1939-45).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Battle of Imphal was fought between armies of Japan and Allied forces (British). It was at this battle that the Japanese march through Asia was stopped.
Cellular Jail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is also known as Kālā Pānī (Hindi for black waters), was a colonial prison in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. The prison was used by the British especially to exile political prisoners. Many distinguished people were imprisoned in the Cellular Jail. Some of them are Diwan Singh Kalepani, Fazl-e-Haq Khairabadi, Yogendra Shukla, Batukeshwar Dutt, Maulana Ahmadullah, Movli Abdul Rahim Sadiqpuri, Ali Ahmed Siddiqui, Maulvi Liaquat Ali, Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, Babarao Savarkar, Sachindra Nath Sanyal.
Visva-bharti University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Located in Shantiniketan (West Bengal), it was founded by Rabindranath Tagore in 1921. It was declared to be a central university and an Institution of National Importance by an Act of Parliament in 1951.
Gujarat Vidyapeeth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gujarat Vidyapith was established by Mahatma Gandhi in 1920. Gandhiji was its life-long chancellor. It is one of the Vidyapiths established during the Non-Cooperation movement. Others include Kashi Vidyapith and Bihar Vidyapith.

10. PRIZES AND AWARDS

10.1. NOBEL PRIZES

Why in news?

Nobel Prizes for Literature and Nobel Peace Prize were awarded recently.

Nobel Prize for Literature: The Swedish Academy announced two winners - one for 2019 and one for 2018 - because the prize was not awarded last year.

- Austrian author **Peter Handke** has won the **2019 Nobel Prize in Literature**. Peter Handke was awarded "for an influential work that with linguistic ingenuity has explored the periphery and the specificity of human experience."
- The **Nobel Prize in Literature 2018** was awarded to the Polish author **Olga Tokarczuk** "for a narrative imagination that with encyclopedic passion represents the crossing of boundaries as a form of life."
 - She also won the **Man Booker International Prize, 2018**.

Nobel Peace Prize: The Nobel Peace Prize 2019 is awarded to **Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali** "for his efforts to achieve peace and international cooperation, and in particular for his decisive initiative to resolve the border conflict with neighboring Eritrea."



Resolution of the conflict

- Ethiopia and Eritrea, long-time foes, restored relations in July 2018 after years of hostility.
- **Abiy Ahmed Ali** signed a "Joint Declaration of Peace and Friendship," with Eritrean President Isaias Afwerki. They announced the resumption of trade, diplomatic, and travel ties between their two countries, and "a new era of peace and friendship" in the war-bloodied Horn of Africa.

- A second agreement was signed between the two countries in September 2018 in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

10.2. AWARDS BY SANGEET NATAK AKADEMI

Why in news?

Recently, the Sangeet Natak Akademi has announced multiple awards.

About Sangeet Natak Akademi

- It was the **first national academy of arts** setup by the Government of India in 1952. It is registered as a society under the Societies Registration Act, 1986.
- It functions as the **apex body of the performing arts** in the country, preserving and promoting the vast intangible heritage of India's diverse culture expressed in the forms of music, dance and drama.
- The academy also collaborates with international organisation like the UNESCO to save the cultural heritage of the country.
- **Awards by Sangeet Natak Akademi**
 - **The Fellowship of the Akademi** is the most prestigious and rare honor, which is restricted to 40 numbers at any given time. This year it has been awarded to: Zakir Hussain (Tabla), Sonal Mansingh (Bharatnatyam and odissi), Jatin Goswami (Sattriya) and K.Kalyanasundaram Pillai (Bharatnatyam).
 - **Sangeet Natak Akademi Awards:** forty-four artists from the field of Music, Dance, Theatre, Traditional/ arts forms etc. have been awarded this year.
 - **The Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar** is conferred upon artists with the objective of **identifying and encouraging outstanding young talents** in diverse fields of performing arts and giving them national recognition early in their life. It is open to all Indian nationals upto 40 years of age. It is not given posthumously.

10.3. PORTUGAL SETS UP GANDHI PRIZE

Why in News?

Portuguese Prime Minister Antonio Costa recently announced setting up of a Gandhi Citizenship Education Prize.

Details

- The announcement was made while attending the second meeting of the **National Committee for the Commemoration Mahatma Gandhi's 150th Birth Anniversary**.
- The prize would be **inspired by Gandhi's thoughts and quotes** and **will be given every year**.
- The **first edition** of the prize would be **dedicated to animal welfare**.
- Prime Minister of Portugal is the **only foreign Prime Minister to be a member of the National Committee for Commemoration of 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi**.
- The National Committee was constituted for commemorating the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi at the national and international level.
 - This Committee is chaired by the President and includes Vice-President, Prime Minister, Chief Ministers of all states, representatives from across the political spectrum, Gandhians, thinkers, and eminent persons from all walks of life.
 - The Committee also has two former Secretaries-General of the United Nations - Kofi Annan and Ban Ki-Moon as its member.

10.4. SAHITYA AKADEMI AWARDS 2019

Why in News?

Recently, Sahitya Akademi announced its annual Sahitya Akademi Awards in 23 languages. Award for Nepali will be declared later.

Details

- Sahitya Akademi Awards are given **only to Indian citizens for the most outstanding books of literary merit** published in India in last 5 years in **any of the major Indian languages recognised by the Akademi**.
 - Besides the **22 languages enumerated in the Constitution of India**, the Sahitya Akademi has recognised **English and Rajasthani language**.
 - The winners will be honored with an engraved copper-plaque, a shawl and prize money of Rs 1 lakh.
 - Sahitya Akademi award is the **second-highest literary honour** by the Government of India, **after Jananpith award**.
 - In 1956, **Amrita Pritam** became the first woman to win the Sahitya Akademi Award

for her long poem, 'Sunehade' (Messages).

- **About Sahitya Akademi, India's National Academy of Letters:**
 - It is the **central institution for literary dialogue, publication and promotion in the country** and the only institution that undertakes literary activities in 24 Indian languages, including English.
 - It was setup by the Government of India in 1954 but it **functions autonomously**.
 - It is registered as a society under the Societies Registration Act, 1860.
 - It also **undertakes literary exchange programmes with various countries** to promote Indian literature beyond the shores of India.

10.5. PADMA AWARDS

Why in News?

Padma awards were announced recently on the occasion of Republic day.

About Padma Awards

- Padma Awards is one of the highest civilian Awards of the country, are conferred in three categories, namely,
 - **'Padma Vibhushan'** is awarded for exceptional and distinguished service;
 - **'Padma Bhushan'** for distinguished service of high order and
 - **'Padma Shri'** for distinguished service in any field.
- The **awards were instituted in 1954** to recognize achievements in all fields of activities or disciplines where an element of public service is involved.
 - They are given in various disciplines/ fields of activities, viz.- art, social work, public affairs, science and engineering, trade and industry, medicine, literature and education, sports, civil service, etc.
- They are conferred on the recommendations made by the **Padma Awards Committee**, which is constituted by the **Prime Minister** every year and headed by the **Cabinet Secretary**.
 - The nomination process is open to the public. Even self-nomination can be made.
- All persons without distinction of race, occupation, position or sex are eligible for these awards.
 - However, **Government servants** including those working with PSUs, except doctors and scientists, are **not eligible** for these Awards.

- The total number of awards to be given in a year (excluding posthumous awards and to NRI/foreigners/OCIs) should not be more than 120.
- The award **does not amount to a title and cannot be used as a suffix or prefix to the awardees' name.**
- The awards are announced on the **occasion of Republic Day every year.**
- The awardees are presented a **Sanad** (certificate) signed by the President and a **medallion**. There is **no cash prize.**

10.6. JNANPITH AWARD

Why in News?

Recently, Author **Amitav Ghosh** was felicitated with the 54th Jnanpith Award for his “outstanding contribution to the enrichment of **Indian Literature in English**”.

Details

- He is known for various works like Shadow Lines, The Glass Palace, The Hungry Tide, and Ibis Trilogy — Sea of Poppies, River of Smoke, and Flood of Fire.
- Jnanpith Award is presented annually by the Bharatiya Jnanpith (a literary and research organisation) to an author for their "outstanding contribution towards literature".
 - It was instituted in 1961 and is awarded to Indian citizens (**no posthumous conferral**) writing in Indian languages included in **8th Schedule of the Constitution of India and English** (added after 49th Jnanpith Award).
 - A language which receives the Award in a particular year is not eligible for consideration for the next two years.
 - The first recipient of the award was the Malayalam writer G. Sankara Kurup.

ESSAY

ENRICHMENT PROGRAMME

ADMISSION OPEN

- ▶ Introducing different stages from developing an idea into completing an essay
- ▶ Practical and efficient approach to learn different parts of essay
- ▶ Regular practice and brainstorming sessions
- ▶ Inter disciplinary approaches
- ▶ **LIVE / ONLINE** Classes Available

11. MISCELLANEOUS

11.1. GI TAGS

Why in news?

Kala Kumbh- Handicrafts Thematic Exhibition was organised by Ministry of Textiles in various major cities to promote **Geographical Indication (GI) crafts and heritage of India**.

About GI Tags

- GI is an indication for agricultural, natural and manufactured product which correspond to a specific geographical location or origin (e.g., a town, region, or country).
- Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999 provides for registration of GI goods in India.
- GI Tag acts as a certificate and it is a way of ensuring that similar products from elsewhere cannot be sold under this name.
- **Darjeeling Tea** was the first Indian product to get the geographical indication tag.
- A GI Tag is **valid for a decade**, after which it can be renewed for another 10 years.

Recent GI Tags in News

Name	Salient Features
Palani Panchamirtham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is an 'abhishega prasadam' (food that is a religious offering) for Lord Dhandayuthapani Swamy, the presiding deity of Arulmigu Dhandayuthapani Swamy Temple, situated on Palani Hills in Dindigul District of Tamil Nadu. • It is prepared in a natural method without addition of any preservatives or artificial ingredients. • This is the first time a temple 'prasadam' from Tamil Nadu has been bestowed with the GI tag. • It is prepared under the guidance given by the CFTRI (Central Food Technological Research Institute) Mysore, a government of India undertaking.
Tawlhlohpuan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is a medium to heavy, compactly woven, good quality fabric from Mizoram and is known for warp yarns, warping, weaving & intricate designs that are made by hand.

Mizo Puanchei	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is a colourful Mizo shawl/textile, from Mizoram. • It is an important marriage outfit in the state. • It is also used in Mizo festive dances and official ceremonies.
Tirur Betel leaf	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tirur betel vine is mainly cultivated in Kerala. • It is valued both for its mild stimulant action and medicinal properties (remedy for bad breath and digestive disorders). • It is unique for its significantly high content of total chlorophyll and protein in fresh leaves. • Eugenol is the major essential oil in Tirur betel leaf contributing to its pungency.
Dindigul lock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Dindigul locks (Tamil Nadu) are known for their superior quality and durability. • The locks are made of iron and brass and are entirely handmade. • It is unique as each lock is designed with different lever pattern. • The Dindigul city is also called as Lock City. • Despite unique features, the lock industry for the last few years has been gradually dying due to stiff competition from lock industries in Aligarh and Rajapalayam.
Kandangi Saree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kandangi sarees are hand-woven cotton sarees manufactured in Tamil Nadu. • They are made up of high quality cotton from Coimbatore. • Kandangi cotton sarees are made by weavers of Devanga Chettiar for women of Chettiar community also referred to as Nakarathars or Nattukottai Chettiar. • The main characteristic of these sarees are its bright colours that hold strong. • They are also characterised by large contrast borders covering as far as two-thirds of the saree.

Kolhapuri chappal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GI tag has been granted to Kolhapuri chappal from Kolhapur, Sangli, Satara and Solapur districts of Maharashtra and Dharwad, Belgaum, Bagalkot and Bijapur of Karnataka. • These are eco-friendly handcrafted footwear, famous for its durability and strength. • It's made from processed leather in the villages of Maharashtra. • In 20th century Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj (1874-1922) of Kolhapur encouraged its production and 29 tanning centres were opened during his rule in Kolhapur and footwear began to be traded in Kolhapur.
Idu Mishmi Textiles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Textiles made by the Idu Mishmi, a sub-tribe of the Mishmi tribe (Arunachal Pradesh), are prized possessions with the traditional motifs, usually woven by the women of the community to supplement the family income
Kaji Nemu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is a lemon variety belonging to Assam which has high juice content.
Khola Chilli	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is the first agriculture produce of Goa to get the GI tag. • The unique Khola Chillies are grown on the hill slopes under rainfed conditions only. • Local soil and climate play a crucial role in maintaining the quality of this Chilli variety, which is known for its brilliant red color and medium-pungent taste.
Irish Whiskey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The protection means that only spirits produced in Ireland can use 'Irish Whiskey' on their labels.

11.2. REPUBLIC DAY PARADE 2020

Why in news?

India celebrated its 71st Republic Day on 26th January, 2020.

More on news

- **Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro** was the chief guest for this year's ceremony.

- 22 tableaux comprising of 16 States/UTs and 6 Ministries/Departments were presented at the parade.
- Prime minister paid homage at the National War Memorial and the **first tri-service formation** took part in the celebrations this year.

Cultural Themes at the Parade

- **Kaksar folk Dance:** It is performed by Abhujmaria tribe in Bastar region of **Chhattisgarh**, to invoke the blessings of the deity and to enjoy a rich harvest. It allows the dancers to choose their life partners from the same dance troupe.
- **Gramiya Kalai (folk arts):** **Tamil Nadu's** tableau showcased these folk arts and **statue of Ayyanar**, the guardian folk deity.
- **Bathukamma Festival:** This floral festival celebrated in **Telangana** region during Durga Navratri. Bathukamma is a beautiful flower stack of different seasonal flowers, arranged in seven concentric layers in the shape of a temple gopuram. Goddess Gauri is worshipped in the form of Bathukamma.
- **Bhortal Nritya-** It comes from Barpeta region of **Assam**. It was developed by Sattriya artist Narahari Burha Bhakat. Dancers equipped with cymbals perform on fast beats known as 'Zhiya Nom'.
- **Tribal Museum of Bhopal: Madhya Pradesh's tableau** was based on the Tribal Museum of Bhopal showcasing Gond, Baiga, Korku, Rajwar, Sahariya, Bhil, Bharia tribes.
- **Lord Lingaraj's Rukuna Rath Yatra-** It is an annual festival. Lord Lingaraja is worshipped as both Lord Shiva and Lord Vishnu (Harihara) at the Lingaraj temple in Bhubaneswar, Odisha.
- **Brahmotsavam-** This festival is celebrated in Tirumala Tirupati temple. **Andhra Pradesh** tableau also showcased classical Kuchipudi dance, **Kondapalli** handicrafts and **Kalamkari** paintings using natural colours.
- **Anubhav Mantapa-** It is the Center for Experiences founded by Basavaveshwara, showcasing the first Socio-religious centre of the 12th century Kalyana Karnataka.
- **Living Root Bridges: Meghalaya** is famous for Double-decker (located at Nongriat in Cherrapunji) living root bridge shaped from roots of rubber trees. It is a unique natural phenomenon shaped by human ingenuity.
- **550th anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev: Punjab** tableau depicted principles of Kirat Karo, Naam Japo and Vand Chhako, which form the cornerstone of Sikhism.

- 'Save the frog' campaign of the Goa Government and Jammu and Kashmir's 'Back to village' programme was also featured in tableaux.
- **Rani ki Vav – Jal Mandir: Gujarat** presented a tableau based on the unique theme of Rani ki Vav – Jal Mandir located in Patan city. It is a unique architectural marvel that stands as testimony to ancient construction work and craftsmanship.
 - Built in 1083 by Rani Udayamati in memory of her husband King Bhimdev-I, son of Mulraj, founder of the Solanki dynasty; **Rani Ki Vav also holds the distinction of being a UNESCO World Heritage Site.**

11.3. PARSI POPULATION

Why in News?

Recent data show that Parsi population in the country has gone up by 233 since the launch of the Jiyo Parsi Scheme.

Details

- The population of Parsis, a notified minority community under **National Commission of Minorities Act 1992**, had **declined from 1,14,000 in 1941 to 57,264 in 2011**. In this backdrop the scheme was introduced.
- Jiyo Parsi scheme, **launched in 2013**, aims to **arrest the decline in population of the Parsi Community in India.**
- **It comprises of three components:** Advocacy Component, Health of the Community Component and Medical Component.
- The scheme adopts a **scientific protocol and structured interventions** to stabilise the Parsi population.
- Some reasons identified by National Commission for Minorities (NCM) for decline in population of Parsis:
 - Late and non-marriages
 - Fertility decline
 - Emigration
 - Out-Marriages (marriage outside one's own sect); and
 - Separation and divorces.

About Parsis (Zoroastrians)

- Parsis follow **Zoroastrianism**, which was founded by the **Prophet Zoroaster (Zarathustra)** in ancient Iran.
- In the Zoroastrian religion, fire and clean water are agents of ritual purity.
- They emigrated to India to avoid religious persecution by Muslims in around **8th century.**
- They live chiefly in **Mumbai** and also in Karachi (Pakistan) and Bengaluru (Karnataka, India).

11.4. KODAVAS COMMUNITY OF COORG

Why in News?

Recently, Central government decided to **continue** a **British-era rule of exempting** the Kodava community, from obtaining license for firearms such as pistols, revolvers and double-barreled shotguns. The current exemption has been given for a **tenure of 10 years**, till 2029.

About Kodavas

- Kodavas (also known as Kogadu), a well-known **martial community of Coorg region in Karnataka.**
- They **worship weapons during the 'Kailpodh' festival** and are the **only** community in the country who are **exempted from obtaining arm licenses.**
- They are known for its outstanding **contributions** to the **country's defence sector** and hence, Coorg is also called the **Land of Generals.**
- Another **distinguishing characteristic** of this community is the high status given to women like no child marriage, dowry is forbidden and widow remarriage is prevalent.
- **Other important festivals** celebrated by Kodavas are Puttari (to celebrate the first harvest of paddy) and Kaveri Sankramana.

11.5. PASHMINA PRODUCTS RECEIVE BIS CERTIFICATION

Why in news?

Recently, the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has published an Indian Standard for identification, marking and labelling of **Pashmina products to certify its purity.**

Details

- The **Changthangi or Pashmina goat** is a special breed of goat indigenous to Ladakh.
- They are raised for ultra-fine cashmere wool (which grows as a thick, warm undercoat on the goat), known as **Pashmina** once woven.
- The textiles are handspun and were first woven in Kashmir.
 - The nomadic Pashmina herders (**called Changpa**) live in the hostile and tough terrain of Changthang and are solely dependent on Pashmina for their livelihood.

11.6. TRAVEL AND TOURISM COMPETITIVENESS INDEX (TTCI)

Why in News?

India has moved up six places to rank 34th on world TTCI 2019.

Details

- It is produced by the **World Economic Forum (WEF)**.
- It covers 140 economies, measures the set of factors and policies that enable sustainable development of travel and tourism sector which contributes to the development and competitiveness of a country.
- **Ministry of Tourism** has taken several steps for creation of tourism infrastructure in the country so as to attract more tourists, which inter-alia include: Swadesh Darshan - Integrated Development of Theme-Based Tourist Circuits and PRASHAD- Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual, Heritage Augmentation Drive, Iconic Tourist Sites, Adopt A Heritage: Apni Dharohar, Apni Pehchaan etc.

About Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS)

- BIS is the National Standard Body of India established under the **BIS Act 2016** for the harmonious development of the activities of **standardization, marking and quality certification** of goods and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.
- BIS has been providing **traceability and tangibility benefits** to the national economy in a number of ways – providing safe reliable quality goods; minimizing health hazards to consumers; promoting exports and imports substitute; control over proliferation of varieties etc. through standardization, certification and testing.
- It was formerly known as Indian Standards Institution (ISI),
- It is under the **Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution**.

11.7. GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES

<p>‘Digital Bharat Digital Sanskriti’</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Union Minister of State for Culture and Tourism recently launched the e-Portal of Centre for Cultural Resources and Training (CCRT) ‘Digital Bharat Digital Sanskriti’ and CCRT YouTube Channel with an aim to take India to a newer digital pinnacle and to promote Indian culture.
--	---

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For this initiative, CCRT has tied up with Routes 2 Roots, an NGO, for connecting seamlessly all the CCRT Regional Centres
<p>Indian Culture Portal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Ministry of Culture (MoC) recently launched the Indian Culture web portal. • It is the first government authorized portal where knowledge and cultural resources of various organizations of MoC are now available in public domain on a single platform. • It was developed by a team from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Bombay while the curation of the data has been done by Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU). • This project is a part of the Prime Minister’s Digital India initiative to showcase information about the rich tangible and intangible cultural heritage of India both at home and abroad. • Content available on the portal comprises mainly of rare books, e-books, virtual galleries, Indian National Bibliography, cuisine, UNESCO world heritage sites, Musical Instruments of India etc. • The content on the portal is currently available in English and Hindi, with a vision to expand it in other regional languages in future.
<p>Zonal Cultural Centres</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Culture has set up seven ‘Zonal Cultural Centres’ (ZCCs) across the country, having headquarters at Patiala, Udaipur, Allahabad, Kolkata, Dimapur, Nagpur and Thanjavur. • The main objective of these Centres is the development, preservation, promotion and dissemination of the traditional arts of the country.
<p>Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat (EBSB)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Sports organised events under EBSB in various parts of the country to promote the spirit of National integration through sports. • EBSB aims to enhance interaction between people of diverse cultures living in different States and UTs in India, with the objective of promoting greater mutual understanding amongst them. • Under EBSB, each year, every State/UT would be paired with another State/UT for reciprocal interaction between the people.

<p>Swachh Iconic Places (SIP)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is a special clean-up initiative under the Swachh Bharat Mission. • It is focused on select iconic heritage, spiritual and cultural places in the country. • It is coordinated by Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation in association with Ministry of Urban Development, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Tourism & concerned State governments.
<p>Paryatan Parv 2019</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is organised by the Ministry of Tourism, and was held in October, 2019 across the country. • The idea of Paryatan Parv is to propagate the message of ‘Dekho Apna Desh’, with the objective to encourage Indians to visit various tourist destinations of the country. • Paryatan Parv 2019 is dedicated to 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. • It is being organized with the objective of drawing focus on the benefits of tourism, showcasing the cultural diversity of the country and reinforcing the principle of “Tourism for All”. • The three components of Paryatan Parv are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dekho Apna Desh: To encourage Indians to visit their own country. ○ Tourism for All: Tourism Events at sites across all States in the country are being organized. ○ Tourism & Governance: Interactive Sessions & Workshops with Stakeholders on varied themes have been organized.
<p>Bharat parv 2020</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bharat Parv is being celebrated as part of Republic Day celebrations since 2016. • It seeks to encourage Indians to visit different tourism places of India and to inculcate the spirit of ‘Dekho Apna Desh’.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central theme of Bharat Parv 2020 is ‘Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat’ and ‘Celebrating 150 Years of Mahatma Gandhi’. • It is organized by Ministry of Tourism in collaboration with other central Ministries.
--	--

11.8. TRIBES IN NEWS

<p>Bru tribes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bru tribes migrated from Mizoram to Tripura in 1997 due to ethnic violence in their home Brus tribes state. Displaced Brus from Mizoram are living at the refugee camps in Tripura. • Bru Tribes, also known as Riang are spread across the states of Tripura, Assam, Manipur, and Mizoram.
<p>Rabha and Garo Tribes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Rabhas are one of nine Schedule Tribes from the districts on the plains of Assam. • Garos are one of the matrilineal societies living in Garo Hills of Meghalaya.
<p>Juang tribe</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is a particularly vulnerable tribal group found mainly in the Gonsaika hills of Keonjhar district of Odisha. • Their major occupations include: shifting cultivation, hunting and food gathering.
<p>Asur Tribes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asur is among the nine Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) found in Jharkhand. • Asur language figures in the list of UNESCO Interactive Atlas of the World’s Languages in Danger.
<p>Korku Tribes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Korku are an Adivasi ethnic group predominantly found in the Khandwa, Burhanpur, Betul and Chhindwara districts of Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and adjoining areas near the Melghat Tiger Reserve of Maharashtra. • They speak Korku language, which is one of the languages listed in UNESCO Interactive Atlas of the World’s Languages in Danger. • They are excellent agriculturists and have pioneered the cultivation of potato and coffee.

Copyright © by Vision IAS

All rights are reserved. No part of this document may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior permission of Vision IAS