

2019



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CURRENT AFFAIRS

**INDIAN CULTURE AND
HISTORICAL EVENTS**

18th November- 23rd November



BusinessLine



1. Heritage Week

Why in News?

On the occasion of **World Heritage Week 2019**, Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation Limited (IRCTC), the tourism arm of Indian Railways is launching Heritage Week Special Tour Package from Mumbai to Ahmedabad.

- The tour will cover the following heritage sites:
 - **Rani ki Vav** - Patan, Gujarat.
 - **Modhera Sun Temple** - Mehsana district, Gujarat.
 - **Champaner-Pavagadh Archaeological Park** - Panchmahal district, Gujarat.

World Heritage Week

- World Heritage Week is marked around the world from November 19-25, after UNESCO declared the designated period a few decades ago.
- Its objective is to increase awareness about the preservation of invaluable heritage and celebrate the architectural and cultural legacy.
- India currently has **38 UNESCO World Heritage Sites**.

Rani ki Vav

- Also known as the **Queen's Stepwell**, Rani ki Vav is a distinctive form of **subterranean water architecture**.
- It is located on the banks of the **Saraswati River**.
- Vavs are stepwells developed to collect and store water for drinking, bathing, washing clothes, and irrigating crops.
- The sculptures in stepwell depicts numerous Hindu deities and the central theme is the **Dashavatara (ten incarnations) of Vishnu**.
- It was built in the **Maru-Gurjara architectural style (Chalukya style)**, by the **Solanki dynasty** during the 11th century AD.
- The temple is oriented east to west.
- The stepwell is designed as an inverted temple, with seven levels of stairs, highlighting the sanctity of water.
- Rani Ki Vav is depicted on the INR 100 note.

Modhera Sun Temple

- The temple is dedicated to the **solar deity Surya**.
- It is situated on the bank of the **river Pushpavati at Modhera village**.
- It was built during the reign of Bhima I of the **Solanki dynasty**, in 1026-27 CE.
- The Sun Temple has a magnificent kund known as the **Ramakund**, built in rectangular shape containing **108 shrines to various gods and demi-gods**.

Champaner-Pavagadh Archaeological Park

- Champaner-Pavagadh Archaeological Park, a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**, is a concentration of largely unexcavated archaeological, historic and living cultural heritage properties cradled in a landscape which also **includes prehistoric (chalcolithic) sites**.
- The park is located at the **regional Capital City of Champaner** built by Mehmud Begda in the 16th century.
- The site also includes fortifications, palaces, religious buildings, residential precincts, agricultural structures and water installations, from the 8th to the 14th centuries. **It presents a blend of Hindu and Muslim architecture.**
- The Kalikamata Temple on top of Pavagadh Hill is considered to be an important shrine, attracting large numbers of pilgrims throughout the year.
- The site **is the only complete and unchanged Islamic pre-Mughal city.**

2. Birth Anniversary of Rani Laxmibai

Why in News?

The Prime Minister paid tributes to Rani Laxmibai on her 191st birth anniversary.

- Rani Lakshmibai or the queen of Jhansi is remembered for her role in the Indian Rebellion of 1857.

Rani Laxmibai

- She was born on 19th November 1828 in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh.
- Laxmibai was married to the King of Jhansi, Raja Gangadhar Newalkar in 1842.
- In 1853, when the Maharaja of Jhansi died, Lord Dalhousie refused to acknowledge the child and applied the Doctrine of Lapse to annex the state.
- However, the Laxmibai opposed Lord Dalhousie's decision.
- She fought bravely against the British particularly Sir Hugh Rose to save her empire from annexation.
- She died fighting on the battlefield on June 17, 1858.
- When the Indian National Army started its first female unit (in 1943), it was named after the valiant queen of Jhansi.

Doctrine of Lapse

- It was an annexation policy followed widely by **Lord Dalhousie** when he was **India's Governor - General** from 1848 to 1856.
- According to this, any dependent princely state where the ruler did not have a legal male heir, the right of ruling over the State reverted or lapsed to the East India Company.

- As per this, any adopted son of the Indian ruler could not be proclaimed as heir to the kingdom.
- The adopted son would **only inherit** his foster father's **personal property and estates**.
- The adopted son would also not be entitled to any pension that his father had been receiving or to any of his father's titles.
- This challenged the Indian ruler's long-held authority to appoint an heir of their choice.
- By applying the doctrine of lapse, Dalhousie annexed the States of:
 - Satara (1848)
 - Jaitpur, and Sambalpur (1849)
 - Baghat (1850)
 - Udaipur (1852)
 - Jhansi (1853)
 - Nagpur (1854)

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