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Important Facts for Prelims (23rd February 2019)

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18th-Century Copy of Gita Govinda

- Victoria Memorial Hall in Kolkata has put on display one of its oldest manuscripts, a **handwritten 18th-century copy of Gita Govinda**, to mark the **International Mother Language Day on 21 February**.
- **Gita Govinda**, an important text of the **Bhakti Movement**, depicts the relationship between **Lord Krishna** and his consort **Radha**.
- **Jayadeva (12 century A.D.)** is the last great name in **Sanskrit poetry**, who wrote the **lyric poetry Gitagovinda** to describe every phase of love between Krishna and Radha – longing, jealousy, hope, disappointment, anger, reconciliation and fruition – in picturesque lyrical language.
- The songs describe the beauty of nature, which plays a prominent part in the description of human love.
- Like many medieval texts, Gita Govinda was translated for centuries. These manuscripts were copied by hand in beautiful handwriting much before the advent of the printing press.
- The form of imagery in the illustrated texts is very similar to the **Bengal Pat Paintings** and the **Bengal School of Art**, which evolved a century after the manuscripts were written.

International Mother Language Day

- International Mother Language Day has been observed every year on **21 February** since 2000 **to promote linguistic and cultural diversity and multilingualism**.
- The idea to celebrate International Mother Language Day was the **initiative of Bangladesh**. It was approved at the **1999 UNESCO General Conference** and has been observed throughout the world since 2000.
- International Mother Language day 2019 **theme** is: “**Indigenous languages matter for development, peacebuilding, and reconciliation**”.

- The UNESCO states that at least 43 percent of the estimated 6,000 languages spoken in the world are endangered.
- It recognizes any language that is spoken by less than 10,000 people is potentially endangered.