



Drishti IAS Presents...



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Drishti IAS, 641, Mukherjee Nagar,
Opp. Signature View Apartment,
New Delhi

Drishti IAS, 21
Pusa Road, Karol Bagh
New Delhi - 05

Drishti IAS, Tashkent Marg,
Civil Lines, Prayagraj,
Uttar Pradesh

Drishti IAS, Tonk Road,
Vasundhara Colony,
Jaipur, Rajasthan

e-mail: englishsupport@groupdrishti.com, Website: www.drishtias.com

Contact: 011430665089, 7669806814, 8010440440

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Anubhava Mantapa in Basavakalyan: Karnataka

Why in News

Recently, the Chief Minister of Karnataka has laid the foundation stone for the 'New Anubhava Mantapa' in Basavakalyan, the place where 12th century poet-philosopher Basaveshwara lived for most of his life.

Key Points

- **About the New Anubhava Mantapa:**
 - It will showcase the 12th Century Anubhava Mantapa (often referred to as the "first Parliament of the world") established by Basaveshwara in Basavakalyan where philosophers and social reformers held debates.
 - The building will adopt the Kalyani Chalukya style of architecture.
 - Later Chalukyas, popularly known as the Chalukyas of Kalyan or Kalyani Chalukyas form an integral part of ancient Karnataka history of early medieval period.
- **Basaveshwara:**
 - He was an Indian philosopher, social reformer and statesman who attempted to create a casteless society and fought against caste and religious discrimination.
 - Basava Jayanthi is an annual event celebrated in the honour of the birth of Vishwaguru Basaveshwara.
 - The tradition of Lingayatism is known to have been founded by him.
 - **Philosophy:**
 - His spiritual discipline was based on the principles of Arivu (true knowledge), Achara (right conduct), and Anubhava (divine experience) and it brought social, religious and economical revolution in the 12th century.
 - This path advocates a holistic approach of Lingangayoga (union with the divine). This comprehensive discipline encompasses bhakti (devotion), jnana (knowledge), and kriye (action) in a well balanced manner.
 - He gave two more very important socio-economic principles. They are:

- **Kayaka (Divine work):** According to this, every individual of the society should take up the job of his choice and perform it with all sincerity.
- **Dasoha (Equal distribution):**
 - There must be an equal income for equal work.
 - The worker (Kayakajeevi) may lead his day-to-day life by his hard earned income. But he should not preserve the money or property for tomorrow. He must utilise the surplus money for society and the poor.

➤ Vachana Reformist Movement:

- The main aim of the Vachana (poetry) movement, led by Basaveshwara in the 12th century, was welfare of all.
- It attempted to address class, caste and to some extent gender issues in a given societal milieu.

Related News: Basava Jayanti: Birth Anniversary of Guru Basaveshwara

Maghi Mela

Why in News

For the first time in over several decades there will be no political conferences at the historic Maghi Mela.

- **Maghi Mela** is held in Muktsar, Punjab every year in January or in the month of Magh according to the Nanakshahi calendar.
 - Nanakshahi calendar was designed by Sikh scholar Pal Singh Purewal to replace the Bikrami calendar, to work out the dates of gurpurab and other festivals.

Key Points

- **About Maghi:**
 - Maghi is the occasion when Sikhs commemorate the sacrifice of forty Sikhs, who fought for Guru Gobind Singh Ji.
 - The eve of Maghi is the common Indian festival of Lohri when bonfires are lit in Hindu homes to greet the birth of sons in the families and alms are distributed.
- **Significance**

Note:



- The day of Maghi is observed to **honour the heroic fight of the Chali Mukte, or the Forty Liberated Ones**, who **sacrificed their own lives defending** an attack by the Mughal imperial army marching in pursuit of **Guru Gobind Singh**.

Yakshagana

Why in News

Recently, a Yakshagana artiste died while performing on stage.

Key Points

- Yakshagana is a traditional theatre form of **Karnataka**. It is a **temple art** form that **depicts mythological stories and Puranas**.
- It is performed with massive headgears, elaborate facial make-up and vibrant costumes and ornaments.
- Usually recited in Kannada, it is also performed in **Malayalam** as well as **Tulu (the dialect of south Karnataka)**.
- It is **performed with percussion instruments** like chenda, maddalam, jagatta or chengila (cymbals) and chakratala or elathalam (small cymbals).
- The most popular **episodes are from the Mahabharata** i.e. Draupadi swayamvar, Subhadra vivah, etc. and **from Ramayana** i.e. Rajyabhishek, Lav-Kush yuddh, etc.

Theatre Forms	State	Theme
Nautanki	Uttar Pradesh	Often draws on romantic Persian literature for its themes.
Tamasha	Maharashtra	Evolved from the folk forms such as gondhal, jagran and kirtan.
Bhavai	Gujarat	Subtle social criticism laced with humour.
Jatra	West Bengal/Orissa and eastern Bihar	Originated in Bengal as a result of the Bhakti movement . Initially known as Krishna jatra due to Chaitanya's (spiritual founder of Gaudiya Vaishnavism) influence.
Koodiyattam	Kerala	Oldest traditional theatre forms of India, it follows the performative principles of the ancient tradition of Sanskrit theatre. In 2001, Koodiyattam was officially recognized by UNESCO as a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity .
Mudiyettu	Kerala	Traditional ritual theatre and folk dance drama from Kerala that enacts the mythological tale of a battle between the goddess Kali and the demon Darika . The ritual is a part of the bhagavathi or bhadrakali cult.
Bhaona	Assam	A creation of Srimanta Sankardeva (an Assamese saint-scholar), these plays were written in Brajavali, a unique Assamese-Maithili mixed language , and are primarily centered on Hindu deity, Krishna .
Maach	Madhya Pradesh	It is a sung folk theatre that has a semi sacred character, blending religious and secular themes.
Bhand Pather	Kashmir	Satire, wit and parody are commonly used in this folk drama that incorporates local mythological legends and contemporary social commentary.

Jagannath Temple

Why in News

Recently, the **Shree Jagannath Temple Administration**

(**SJTA**) announced that devotees don't need to produce their **Covid-19 negative report** for getting entry into the shrine in Puri from 21st January 2021.

Key Points

- The temple is believed to have been constructed in the **12th century by King Anatavarman Chodaganga Deva of the Eastern Ganga Dynasty**.
- It is called '**Yamanika Tirtha**' where, according to the Hindu beliefs, the power of 'Yama', the god of death, has been nullified in Puri due to the presence of Lord Jagannath.
- This temple was called the "**White Pagoda**" and is a **part of Char Dham pilgrimages (Badrinath, Dwaraka, Puri, Rameswaram)**.
- In front of the entrance stands the Aruna stambha or sun pillar, which was originally at the **Sun Temple in Konark**.

Related News: [Centre Withdrew Draft Heritage Bylaws on Jagannath Temple](#)

Harvest Festivals in India

Why in News

The harvest festivals like **Lohri, Makar Sankranti and Pongal** have recently been **celebrated all across the country**.

Key Points

- **Makar Sankranti:**
 - The day marks the onset of summer and the **six months auspicious period for Hindus known as Uttarayan**, the northward movement of the sun.
 - As a part of the official celebration of '**Uttarayan**', the Gujarat government has been hosting the **International Kite Festival since 1989**.
 - The festivities associated with the day are known by different names in different parts of the country - **Lohri by north Indian Hindus and Sikhs, Sukarat in central India, Bhogali Bihu by Assamese Hindus, and Pongal by Tamil and other South Indian Hindus**.
- **Lohri:**
 - It marks the end of the winter season and is traditionally believed to welcome the sun to the northern hemisphere.

Note:



- It is observed a **night before Makar Sankranti**, this occasion involves a **Puja Parikrama (revolve)** around the bonfire with prasad.

➤ **Pongal:**

- Also known as Thai Pongal, the four-day occasion is **observed in the month of Thai**, when crops such as rice are harvested and people show their gratitude to the almighty and the generosity of the land.
- Tamilians celebrate the occasion by making **traditional designs known as kolams** in their homes with rice powder.

➤ **Bihu:**

- It is celebrated when the **annual harvest takes place in Assam**. People celebrate **Rongali/Magh Bihu** to mark the **beginning of the Assamese new year**.
- It is believed that the festival started from the time when people of the valley **started tilling the land**. Bihu is believed to be as old as **river Brahmaputra**.

➤ **Makaravilakku festival in Sabarimala:**

- It is celebrated at the sacred grove of Lord Ayyappa at Sabarimala.
- It is an **annual seven-day festival**, beginning on the day of Makar Sankranti when the sun is at the summer solstice.
- Makara Vilakku ends with the ritual called '**Guruthi**', an offering made to appease the god and goddesses of the wilderness.



Revival of Monpa Handmade Paper

Why in News

Recently, the **Monpa Handmade Paper (1000-year old heritage art)** of Arunachal Pradesh has been revived by **Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC)**.



Key Points

➤ **About Monpa Handmade Paper:**

- The fine-textured handmade paper, which is called **Mon Shugu** in the local dialect, is integral to the vibrant culture of the local tribes in Tawang.
- The paper has great historic and religious significance as it is the paper **used for writing Buddhist scriptures and hymns** in monasteries.
- The Monpa handmade paper is made from the bark of a local tree called Shugu Sheng, which has medicinal values too.

➤ **Revival Program:**

- KVIC commissioned a Monpa handmade paper making unit in Tawang which not only aimed at

Note:



reviving the art but also engaging the local youths with this art professionally and earn.

- The revival is aligned with the Prime Minister's Mantra of **Vocal for Local**.

Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC)

- KVIC is a statutory body established under the **Khadi and Village Industries Commission Act, 1956**.
- The KVIC is charged with the planning, promotion, organisation and implementation of programmes for the development of Khadi and other village industries in the rural areas in coordination with other agencies engaged in rural development wherever necessary.
- It functions under the **Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises**.

Jallikattu

Why in News

As the assembly polls are to be held in Tamil Nadu in 2021, the **Pongal festival** and **Jallikattu**, the traditional bull-taming sport, have caught the attention of the Political Parties in the country.

Key Points

- **About Jallikattu:**
 - A tradition over 2,000 years old, Jallikattu is a **competitive sport** as well as an event to honour **bull owners** who rear them for mating.
 - It is a violent sport in which contestants try to tame a bull for a prize; if they fail, the bull owner wins the prize.
 - It is popular in **Madurai, Tiruchirappalli, Theni, Pudukkottai and Dindigul** districts of Tamil Nadu known as the **Jallikattu belt**.
 - It is celebrated **during the Tamil harvest festival, Pongal**.
- **Legal Interventions on Jallikattu:**
 - In 2011, the Centre added bulls to the **list of animals whose training and exhibition is prohibited**.
 - In 2014, the Supreme Court banned the bull-taming sport, ruling on a petition that cited the **2011 notification**.
 - The **state government has legalised these events**, which has been challenged in the court.

- In 2018, the Supreme Court referred the Jallikattu case to a Constitution Bench, where it is **pending now**.

➤ Conflict to be Resolved:

- Whether the Jallikattu tradition can be protected as a **cultural right of the people of Tamil Nadu which is a fundamental right**.

● Article 29 (1) against Rights of animals.

- Article 29 (1) mandates that "any section of the citizens residing in the territory of India or any part thereof having a distinct language, script or culture of its own shall have the right to conserve the same".

➤ Position in Other States for Similar Sports:

- Karnataka too passed a law to save a similar sport, called **Kambala**.
- Except in Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, where bull-taming and racing continue to be organised, these sports remain **banned in all other states** including Andhra Pradesh, Punjab and Maharashtra due to the 2014 **ban order from the Supreme Court**.

Thiruvalluvar Day

Why in News

The Prime Minister remembered Thiruvalluvar on the occasion of **Thiruvalluvar Day (15th January 2021)**, observed to mark the birth anniversary of Tamil poet and philosopher.

Key Points

➤ About the Thiruvalluvar Day:

- It was **first celebrated on 17th-18th May in 1935**.
- In the **present time**, it is **usually observed either on 15th or 16th January in Tamil Nadu** and is a **part of Pongal** celebrations.

➤ About Thiruvalluvar:

- Thiruvalluvar, also called **Valluvar**, was a **Tamil poet-saint**.
- The period when he lived is debated, as is his **religious identity**.
 - He is believed to have lived between the 3rd-4th century or 8th-9th century.
 - He is thought to be linked to **Jainism**. However, Hindus have also claimed that **Thiruvalluvar** belonged to hinduism.

- Dravidian groups also count him as a saint, as he dismissed the caste system.
- He had contributed the Tirukkural or 'Kural' to the Sangam literature.
- Tirukkural is comprised of 133 sections of 10 couplets each is divided into three books:
 - Aram (virtue),
 - Porul (government and society), and
 - Kamam (love).
- The Tirukkural has been compared to the great books of the world's major religions.

Tholpavakkoothu: Kerala

Why in News

Recently, a shadow leather puppet in Kerala's famous temple art Tholpavakkoothu has been animated by a robot.



Key Points

- **About:**
 - It is a traditional temple art in Kerala having its roots in Palakkad and neighbouring regions.
 - It is a fine example of the integration of Aryan and Dravidian cultures.
 - It is a ritual art performed during the annual festivals in the Kaali temples of Palakkad district.
 - It is also known as Nizhalkkoothu and Olakkoothu.
 - The theme of the play is based on the Kamba Ramayana (the Tamil version of the epic).
- **The Show:**
 - This entertainment art is performed on a special stage called koothumadam in the temple courtyard.

- It is performed using the mythological figures along with the use of fire and lighting of lamps behind the screen.
- The chief puppeteer is known as 'Pulavan'.
- **Musical Instruments Used:**
 - Ezhupara, Chenda and Maddalam etc.

Regional Names of Shadow Puppetry in India

- State - Name
- Andhra Pradesh - Tholu bommalata
- Karnataka - Togalu gombeyaata
- Maharashtra - Charma bahuli natya
- Odisha - Ravanachhaya
- Kerala - Tholapavakkoothu
- Tamil Nadu - Thol bommalata

Pandit Bhimsen Joshi Jayanti

Recently, the Prime Minister paid homage to Pandit Bhimsen Joshi, the classical music vocalist, on his centenary birth anniversary.

Key Points

- **About:**
 - Pandit Bhimsen Joshi was born on February 4, 1922.
 - **Important Recognition:** He received the Bharat Ratna in 2008.
 - **Work:** He is remembered for his famous ragas including Shuddha Kalyan, Miyan Ki Todi, Puriya Dhanashri and Multani etc.
 - He belonged to the Kirana Gharana.
 - He belonged to the school of Hindustani classical music.
- **Hindustani Music:**
 - **Origin:**
 - Hindustani Music is one of the two distinct schools of Indian Classical Music practised mainly in North India. The other school of Indian Classical Music is Carnatic music which is practised mainly in Southern India.
 - The historical roots of both the music types belong to the Bharata's Natyasastra.
 - Hindustani Music is vocal-centric. The major vocal forms associated with Hindustani classical music are the khayal, Ghazal, dhrupad, dhammar, Tarana and thumri.

- Most of the Hindustani musicians trace their descent to Tansen.

○ Gharanas:

- A Gharana is a **system of social organisation linking musicians** or dancers by lineage or apprenticeship, and by adherence to a particular musical style.
- Function in **guru-shishya parampara**, i.e. disciples learning under a particular guru, transmitting his musical knowledge and style.

Gharana	Place	Founder
Gwalior	Gwalior	Nanthan Khan
Agra	Agra	Hajisujan Khan
Rangeela	Agra	Faiyyaz Khan
Jaipur Atrauli	Jaipur	Alladiya Khan
Kirana	Awadh	Abdul Wahid Khan
Banaras	Varanasi	Ram Sahai

Vijayanagar King Krishnadevaraya

Why in News

The **first-ever epigraphical reference (an inscription) to the date of death of Vijayanagar king Krishnadevaraya** has been **discovered at Honnenahalli in Tumakuru district, Karnataka**.

- Normally, the death of kings was not recorded in the inscriptions and this was one of those rare records.

Key Points

- **Krishnadevaraya:**
 - He was the ruler of the **Tuluva dynasty** of **Vijayanagar empire** (1509-29 AD).
 - His rule was characterised by expansion and consolidation.
 - He is credited with building some fine temples and **adding impressive gopurams** to many important south Indian temples.
 - He **also founded** a suburban township near Vijayanagar called **Nagalapuram** after his mother.
 - He composed a work on statecraft in Telugu known as the **Amuktamalyada**.
- **Vijayanagara Empire:**

- Vijayanagara or “city of victory” was the name of both a city and an empire.
- The empire **was founded in the fourteenth century** (1336 AD) by **Harihara and Bukka** of the Sangama dynasty.
 - They **made Hampi the capital city**. In 1986, Hampi was declared a **World Heritage site by UNESCO**.
- It stretched from the **river Krishna** in the north to the extreme south of the peninsula.
- Vijayanagar Empire was **ruled by four important dynasties** and they are:
 - Sangama
 - Saluva
 - Tuluva
 - Aravidu

Related News: Linguistic Culture of Indus Valley

Ancient Buddhist Monastery Found in Jharkhand

Why in News

The **Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)** has unearthed a **Buddhist** monastery, believed to be at least 900 years old, buried under a mound in a village near Juljul Pahar of Sitagarhi Hills in Jharkhand.

- Earlier an ancient Buddhist shrine, buried under a similar mound was found, close to this site.

Key Points

- **Artifacts Unearthed:**
 - Four statues of **deity Tara in Varad Mudra** (gesture of hand showing dispensing of boons).
 - **Nagri Script on Tara Statue:** Nagri was a **previous version of Devnagri script** and the words indicate Buddhist religious affiliation.
 - Six statues of the **Buddha in Bhumisparsha Mudra** (gesture of hand showing five fingers of right hand towards the earth symbolising the Buddha's enlightenment).
 - A **sculpture** which appears to be that of **Shaivite deity Maheswari** - with a coiled crown and chakra - indicating cultural assimilation in the area.

Note:





Vajrayana

- Vajrayana means “The Vehicle of the Thunderbolt”, also known as **tantric Buddhism**.
- This Buddhist school **developed in India around 900 CE**.
- It is **grounded on esoteric elements and a very complex set of rituals** compared with the rest of the Buddhist schools.

Khwaja Monuddin Chishti

Why in News

Recently a ‘Chadar’ was offered on behalf of the Prime Minister at the Ajmer Sharif Dargah of **Sufi Saint Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti** on the occasion of 809th Urs.

- The Urs festival is an annual festival held at Ajmer in Rajasthan which commemorates the death anniversary of Sufi saint Moinuddin Chishti.

Key Points

- **About Sufism:**
 - Sufism is a **mystical form of Islam**, a school of practice that focuses on the spiritual search for God and shuns materialism.
 - It is a form of Islamic mysticism which **stresses on asceticism**. There is a lot of emphasis on devotion towards God.
 - In Sufism, **self discipline** is considered an essential condition to gain knowledge of God by sense of perception.
 - Unlike orthodox Muslims which emphasise on external conduct, the Sufis **lay stress on inner purity**.
 - Sufis believe **service to humanity** is tantamount to service to God.
- **Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti:**

- Moinuddin Hasan Chishti was **born in Sijistan (modern-day Sistan) in Iran** in 1141-42 CE.
- After Muizzuddin Muhammad bin Sam of Ghor had already defeated Prithviraj Chauhan in the Second Battle of Tarain (1192) and established his rule in Delhi, **Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti started living and preaching in Ajmer**.
- **His shrine in Ajmer** has been visited by rulers like Muhammad bin Tughlaq, Sher Shah Suri, Akbar, Jahangir, Shah Jahan, Dara Shukoh and Aurangzeb.

➤ Chishti Order (Chishtiya):

- Chishtiya Order was founded in India by **Khwaja Moin-Uddin Chishti**.
- It **emphasised the doctrine of the unity** of being with God (waḥdat al-wujūd) and members of the order were also pacifists.
- They **rejected all material goods** as distractions from the contemplation of God.
- They **abstained from connection with the secular state**.
- Recitation of the names of God, both aloud and silently (dhikr jahrī, dhikr khafī), formed the cornerstone of Chishtī practice.
- The Chishty teachings were carried forward and popularised by **disciples of Khwaja Moin-Uddin Chishti** like Khwaja Qutbuddin Bakhtiyar Kaki, Fareeduddin Ganj-e-Shakar, Nizam uddin Auliya and Naseeruddin Charagh.

➤ Other Major Sufi Orders:

- **Suhrawardi Order:**
 - It was **founded by Sheikh Shahabuddin Suhrawardi Maqtul**.
 - The Suhrawardis, unlike the Chishtis, accepted maintenance grants from the Sultans.
- **Naqshbandi Order:**
 - It was **founded by the Khwaja Baha-ul-din Naqsh band**.
 - In India, this order was **established by Khwaja Bahauddin Naqshbandi**.
 - From the beginning, the mystics of this Order **stressed on the observance of the Shariat**.
- **Qadiriyya Order:**
 - It was **popular in Punjab**.
 - **Sheikh Abdul Qadir of Badaun** founded it in the 14th century.
 - They were **supporters of the Mughals** under Akbar.

Note:



Guru Ravidas Jayanti

Why in News

Guru Ravidas Jayanti is celebrated on Magh Purnima (27th February 2021), the full moon day in the month of Magh according to the Hindu lunar calendar.

Key Points

- **About Guru Ravidas:**
 - He was a **14th century saint and reformer of the Bhakti movement** in North India.
 - It is believed that he was **born in Varanasi** in a cobbler's family.
 - He gained prominence due to his **belief in one God** and his unbiased religious poems.
 - He dedicated his whole life to the **abolition of the caste system** and openly despised the notion of a Brahminical society.
 - His devotional songs made an instant impact on the Bhakti Movement and his poems were included in '**Guru Granth Sahib**', the religious text of the Sikhs.

Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav 2021

Why in News

The third and final leg of 11th edition of the Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav 2021 took place at Murshidabad, West Bengal.

- Various colourful performances were given by the local artists, including '**Baul Gaan**', '**Alkup Gaan**', '**Leto gaan**', '**Jhumuriya**' and **Ranpa folk dances**.

Key Point

- Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav is the flagship festival of the **Ministry of Culture**.
- It has been organised since 2015 with the active participation of **Seven Zonal Culture Centres**.
- It was started with an intention to **exhibit the rich cultural heritage of the country** in all its rich and varied dimensions namely, Handicrafts, Cuisine, Painting, Sculpture and Performing Arts- Folk, Tribal, Classical and Contemporary- all at one place.

- Till date, Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsavs have been held at various places such as Delhi, Varanasi, Bengaluru, Tawang, Gujarat, Karnataka, Tehri and Madhya Pradesh.

Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat

- It was launched in 2015 to **promote engagement amongst the people** of different States/UTs so as to enhance mutual understanding and bonding between people of diverse cultures, thereby securing stronger unity and integrity of India.
- It is an initiative of the **Ministry of Education**.
- The broad objectives of the initiative are as follows:
 - To **CELEBRATE** the Unity in Diversity of our nation and to maintain and strengthen the fabric of traditionally existing emotional bonds between the people,
 - To **PROMOTE** the spirit of national integration through a deep and structured engagement between all Indian states and Union Territories through a year-long planned engagement between states,
 - To **SHOWCASE** the rich heritage and culture, customs and traditions of different states for enabling people to understand and appreciate the diversity that is India, thus fostering a sense of common identity,
 - To **ESTABLISH** long-term engagements, and
 - To **CREATE** an environment which promotes learning between states by sharing best practises and experiences.
- **Every State and UT in the country would be paired with another State/UT for a time period**, during which they would carry out a structured engagement with one another in the spheres of language, literature, cuisine, festivals, cultural events, tourism etc

Zonal Cultural Centres

- The centres aim to strengthen the ancient roots of Indian Culture and evolve and enrich composite National Culture.
- There are seven Zonal Cultural Centres (ZCC) in India.
 - Eastern Zonal Cultural Centre Kolkata, North Central Zone Cultural Centre Allahabad, North east Zone Cultural centre Dimapur, North Zone Cultural centre Patiala, South Central Zone Cultural Centre Nagpur, South Zone Cultural Centre Thanjavur, West Zone Cultural Centre Udaipur,

- These ZCCs organize various cultural activities and programmes all over the country on a regular basis.
- Other schemes of ZCCs - Award to Young Talented Artists, Guru Shishya Parampara, Theatre Rejuvenation, Shilpgram, Octave and National Cultural Exchange Programme (NCEP).

Sahitya Akademi Award

Why in News

Recently, Marathi writer Nanda Khare **refused to accept the Sahitya Akademi award** for his novel "Udya", published in 2014.

Key Points

- **About Sahitya Akademi Award:**
 - Sahitya Akademi award **established in 1954**, is a literary honour that is conferred **annually by Sahitya Akademi**, India's National Academy of letters.
 - Akademi gives **24 awards annually to literary works** in the languages it has recognized and an equal number of awards to literary translations from and into the languages of India.
 - **Besides the 22 languages** enumerated in the Constitution of India, the Sahitya Akademi has **recognised English and Rajasthani** as languages in which its programme may be implemented.
 - The Sahitya Akademi award is the **second-highest literary honour** by the Government of India, **after the Jnanpith award**.
- **Criteria for Choosing Awardee:**
 - The author must be of **Indian Nationality**.
 - Book/work eligible for the award **must be an outstanding contribution to the language and literature** to which it belongs.
 - When equal merit for books of two or more are found, certain criteria like total literary contribution and standing of authors shall be taken into consideration for declaring the award.

Jnanpith Award

- The Jnanpith award is the **highest literary award** in India and can only be conferred **annually upon an Indian citizen**.

- **English** along with other languages mentioned in **Indian Constitution (8th Schedule)** is considered for the Award.
- The prize carries a cash award of Rs. 11 lakhs, a citation, and a bronze replica of Vagdevi (Saraswati), the goddess of learning.
- It is sponsored by the **cultural organization Bharatiya Jnanpith**.
- For 2018, author **Amitav Ghosh** became the **first English language writer** to become a Jnanpith laureate.
- Akkitham Achuthan Namboothiri in Malayalam language is the latest recipient of the award for the year 2019.

Other Sahitya Akademi Awards

- **Sahitya Akademi Bal Sahitya Puraskar** is given to an author based on his/her total contribution to **children literature** and relates to books first published during the five years immediately preceding the year of Award.
- **Sahitya Akademi Yuva Puraskar** relates to books published by an **author of the age of 35 and below**.

Haridwar Kumbh Mela

Why in News

The Centre has written to the Uttarakhand government about the need for stringent measures to control the spread of Covid-19 during the ongoing Kumbh Mela in the state (at Haridwar).

Key Points

- Kumbh Mela comes under **UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity**.
 - Kumbh Mela is the **largest peaceful congregation of pilgrims** on earth, during which participants bathe or take a dip in a sacred river.
- It takes place on the banks of the **Godavari river in Nashik**, the **Shipra river in Ujjain**, the **Ganges in Haridwar**, and the **confluence of the Ganges, Yamuna, and the mythical Saraswati river in Prayag**. The confluence is referred to as the '**Sangam**'.
 - As it is held in four different cities in India, it involves different social and cultural activities, making this a **culturally diverse festival**.

Note:



UNESCO List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity

- This coveted list is made up of those intangible heritage elements that help demonstrate diversity of cultural heritage and raise awareness about its importance.
- The list was established in 2008 when the Convention for Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage came into effect.
- Intangible Cultural Heritage of India, recognized by UNESCO:

13 ICH traditions recognised by UNESCO

1. Tradition of Vedic chanting, 2008	8. Buddhist chanting of Ladakh: recitation of sacred Buddhist texts in the trans-Himalayan Ladakh region, Jammu and Kashmir, India, 2012
2. Ramlika, the traditional performance of the Ramayana, 2008	9. Sankirtana, ritual singing, drumming and dancing of Manipur, 2013
3. Kutiyattam, Sanskrit theatre, 2008	10. Traditional brass and copper craft of utensil making among the Thatheras of Jandiala Guru, Punjab, India, 2014
4. Ramman, religious festival and ritual theatre of the Garhwal Himalayas, India, 2009	11. Yoga, 2016
5. Mudiattu, ritual theatre and dance drama of Kerala, 2010	12. Nowruz, 2016
6. Kalbelia folk songs and dances of Rajasthan, 2010	13. Kumbh Mela, 2017
7. Chhau dance, 2010	

Shigmotsav: Goa**Why in News**

The **Goa government** has limited the **Shigmotsav (Shigmo festivities)** parades to three locations only (Panaji, Ponda and Mapusa), owing to rising cases of **Covid-19** in the state.

Key Points

- **About:**
 - Shigmo is the celebration of a 'rich, **golden harvest of paddy**' by the **tribal communities** of Goa.
 - Agricultural communities including the **Kunbis, Gawdas and Velips** celebrate the festival that **also marks the onset of spring**.
- **Two Variants of the Festival:**
 - **Dhakto Shigmo:** It is celebrated by the rural population, farmers and the labour class.
 - **Vhadlo Shigmo:** It is of greater importance and is celebrated by everyone.
- **Celebrations:**
 - **Time:**
 - Shigmo celebrations **last over a fortnight** in the months of **Phalgun-Chaitra** months of the Hindu calendar that **correspond with March-April** every year.

Dances:

- Folk dances like **Ghode Modni** (a dance of equestrian warriors), **Gopha** and **Phugadi**.

Shigmo Street Parade:

- Shigmo street parade floats as the highlight. It is held as **an annual affair** in the state capital, Panjim and other major cities like Margao, Mapusa, Vasco, and Ponda.
- These **colour-parties** usually see **people dressed in vibrant clothing performing traditional folk dances** to depict the **historical legacy of the Maratha War that backs this festival**.
- The float parades have, over the years, been a draw for tourists both domestic and international.

Other Names:

- Shigmo is celebrated all over India but in different names:
 - **North India** -Holi.
 - **Assam and Bengal** -Dolyatra.
 - **South India** -Kamadahan.
 - **Maharashtra** -Shimga.

Poet Sarala Das**Why in News**

The Vice President addressed **Odia Adikabi Sarala Das's 600th birth anniversary** function in Cuttack.

- Sarala Das was one of the great scholars of **Odia literature**.

Key Points

- He was the **first scholar who wrote his works in Odia in 15th century A.D.**

Odia Language

- Oldest of the eastern group of the **Indo-Aryan family**, Odia is derived from **Ardhamagadhi Prakrit**.
- **Odia** is one of the six languages that got **Classical Status in India**.
- A language officially **"scheduled,"** in the **Indian constitution**.
- It is also the **main official language of the Indian state of Odisha**.

- Best known for three Odia books, **Mahabharata, Vilanka Ramayana and Chandi Purana**.
- He also wrote the book **Laxmi Narayana Vachanika**.
- He started writing his Mahabharata in the **reign of Kapilesvar, otherwise known as Kapilendra, the famous Gajapati king of Odisha (AD 1435–67)**.

Traditional New Year Festivals

Why in News

The Vice President of India greeted the people on festivals '**Chaitra Sukladi, Gudi Padwa, Ugadi, Cheti Chand, Vaisakhi, Vishu, Puthandu, and Bohag Bihu**'.

- These festivals of the spring season mark the beginning of the **traditional new year in India**.

Key Points

- **Chaitra Sukladi:**
 - It marks the **beginning of the new year of the Vikram Samvat** also known as the Vedic [Hindu] calendar.
 - Vikram Samvat is **based on the day when the emperor Vikramaditya defeated Sakas**, invaded Ujjain and called for a new era.
 - It is the **first day during the waxing phase** (in which the visible side of the moon is getting bigger every night) **of the moon in the Chaitra** (first month of Hindu calendar).
- **Gudi Padwa and Ugadi:**
 - These festivals are **celebrated by the people in the Deccan region** including Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra.
 - The common practice in the celebrations of both the festivals is the festive food that is prepared with a mix of sweet and bitter.
 - A famous concoction served is jaggery (sweet) and neem (bitter), called **bevu-bella** in the South, signifying that life brings both happiness and sorrows.
 - **Gudi** is a doll prepared in **Maharashtrian** homes.
 - A bamboo stick is adorned with green or red brocade to make the gudi. This gudi is placed prominently in the house or outside a window/door for all to see.
- For **Ugadi**, doors in homes are adorned with **mango leaf decorations called toranalu or Torana** in Kannada.
- **Cheti Chand:**
 - **Sindhis celebrate the new year as Cheti Chand**. Chaitra month is called 'Chet' in Sindhi.
 - The day **commemorates the birth anniversary of Uderolal/Jhulelal**, the patron saint of Sindhis.
- **Navreh:**
 - It is the **lunar new year that is celebrated in Kashmir**.
 - It is the Sanskrit word 'Nav-Varsha' from where the word 'Navreh' has been derived.
 - It **falls on the first day of the Chaitra Navratri**.
 - On this day, Kashmiri pandits look at a **bowl of rice** which is considered as a symbol of riches and fertility.
- **Vaishakhi:**
 - It is also pronounced as **Baisakhi**, observed by **Hindus and Sikhs**.
 - It marks the **beginning of Hindu Solar New year**.
 - It commemorates the formation of **Khalsa panth** of warriors under **Guru Gobind Singh in 1699**.
 - Baisakhi was also the day when colonial British empire officials committed the **Jallianwala Bagh massacre** at a gathering, an event influential to the Indian movement against colonial rule.
- **Vishu:**
 - It is a **Hindu festival celebrated in the Indian state of Kerala, Tulu Nadu region in Karnataka, Mahé district of Union Territory of Pondicherry, neighbouring areas of Tamil Nadu and their diaspora communities**.
 - The festival marks the first day of **Medam, the ninth month in the solar calendar** followed in Kerala.
- **Puthandu:**
 - **Also known as Puthuvaram or Tamil New Year**, is the first day of the year on the Tamil calendar and traditionally celebrated as a festival.
 - The festival date is set with the solar cycle of the lunisolar Hindu calendar, as the first day of the Tamil month Chithirai.
- **Bohag Bihu:**
 - **Bohag Bihu** or **Rongali Bihu** also called **Xaat Bihu** (seven Bihus) is a traditional aboriginal ethnic festival celebrated in the state of **Assam** and other parts

Note:



of northeastern India by the indigenous ethnic groups of Assam.

- It marks the beginning of the **Assamese New Year**.
- It usually falls in the **2nd week of April**, historically signifying the time of harvest.

World Heritage Day

Why in News

Every year, **18th April** is celebrated as '**International Day for Monuments and Sites**', also known as '**World Heritage Day**'.

- The **theme** for the year 2021 is "**Complex Pasts: Diverse Futures**".

Key Points

- **Background:**
 - The **International Council on Monuments and Sites** (ICOMOS) established the day in 1982 and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) approved it in 1983.
 - The aim of the Day is to create awareness about Heritage among communities.
- **UNESCO's World Heritage Sites:**
 - A World Heritage Site is a place that is listed by UNESCO for its special cultural or physical significance.
 - The list of World Heritage Sites is **maintained by the international 'World Heritage Programme'**, administered by the UNESCO World Heritage Committee.
 - This is embodied in an international treaty called the **Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage**, adopted by UNESCO in 1972.
- **World Heritage Sites in India:**
 - Currently, there are **38 World Heritage Sites located in India**.
 - Of these, **30 are 'cultural'**, such as the **Ajanta Caves, Fatehpur Sikri, Hampi monuments and the Mountain Railways of India**, and **7 are 'Natural'**, including **Kaziranga, Manas and Nanda Devi National Parks**.
 - In 2019, '**Jaipur City**' became the 38th addition to the India list under 'Culture'.

- **One** is classified as '**Mixed**', the **Khangchendzonga National Park**.

UNESCO

- It was founded in 1945 to develop the "intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind" as a means of building lasting peace. It is located in **Paris, France**.
- **Major Initiatives of UNESCO:**
 - **Man and Biosphere Programme**
 - **World Heritage Programme**
 - **Global Geopark Network**
 - **Network of Creative Cities**
 - **Atlas of World Languages in Danger**

ICOMOS

- It is a global **non-governmental organisation associated with UNESCO**. It is located in Paris, France.
- Its mission is to promote the conservation, protection, use and enhancement of monuments, building complexes and sites.
- It is an **Advisory Body of the World Heritage Committee** for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention of UNESCO.
 - As such, it **reviews the nominations of cultural world heritage** and ensures the conservation status of properties.

Lingaraja Temple

Why in News

Recently, the Odisha Government has restricted public entry into the **Lingaraj Temple** after four sevayats (priests) tested positive for the **novel coronavirus**.

- In **August 2020**, the government had decided to give a **facelift to the temple, akin to its pre-350-year structural status**.

Key Points

- Lingaraj Temple, **built in 11th century AD**, is **dedicated to Lord Shiva** and is considered as the **largest temple of the city Bhubaneswar (Odisha)**.
 - It is believed to have been **built by the Somvanshi King Yayati I**.
- It is **built in red stone** and is a classic example of **Kalinga style of architecture**.

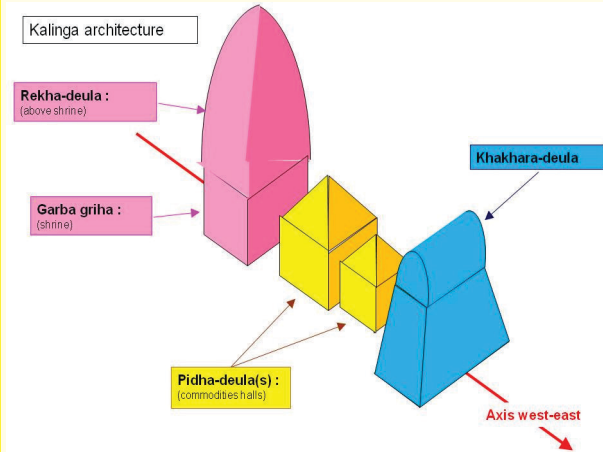
- The temple is **divided into four sections** - **Garbha Griha** (sanctum sanctorum), **Yajna Shala** (the hall for prayers), **Bhoga Mandap** (the hall of offering) and **Natya Shala** (hall of dance).
- Lingaraj is referred to as **‘Swayambhu’** – self-originated Shiving.
- Another important aspect of the temple is that it **signifies the syncretisation of Shaivism and Vaishnavism sects in Odisha**.
- The **presiding deity in the Temple is known as Hari-Hara**; Hari denotes Lord Vishnu and Hara meaning Lord Shiva.
- The temple is **out of bounds for non-Hindus**.
- The other attraction of the temple is the **Bindusagar Lake**, located in the north side of the temple.
- **Other Important Monuments in Odisha:**
 - **Konark Sun Temple** (UNESCO World Heritage Site)
 - **Jagannath Temple**
 - **Tara Tarini Temple**
 - **Udaygiri and Khandagiri Caves**

Kalinga Architecture

- **About:**
 - The Indian temples are broadly divided into **Nagara, Vesara, Dravida and Gadag styles of architecture**.
 - However, the **temple architecture of Odisha corresponds to altogether a different category** for their unique representations called **Kalinga style of temple architecture**.
 - This style **broadly comes under the Nagara style**.
- **The Architecture:**
 - In Kalinga Architecture, basically a **temple is made in two parts**, a tower and a hall. The **tower is called deula** and the **hall is called jagmohan**.
 - The **walls of both the deula and the jagmohan are lavishly sculpted** with architectural motifs and a profusion of figures.
 - The most repeated form is the **horseshoe shape**, which has come from the earliest times, starting with the large windows of the chaitya-grihas.
 - It is the **deula which makes three distinct types** of temples in Kalinga Architecture:
 - **Rekha Deula**.
 - **Pidha Deula**.

- **Khakhara Deula**.

- The former two are associated with Vishnu, Surya and Shiva temples while the third is mainly with Chamunda and Durga temples.
- The **Rekha Deula and Khakhara Deula** houses the sanctum sanctorum while the **Pidha Deula** constitutes outer dancing and offering halls.



Mahavir Jayanti

Why in News

The Prime Minister of India greeted the people on the occasion of **‘Mahavir Jayanti’** (25th April 2021).

- Mahavir Jayanti is **one of the most auspicious festivals in the Jain community**.

Key Points

- **About Mahavir Jayanti:**
 - This day marks the birth of **Vardhamana Mahavira**, who was the **24th** and the **last Tirthankara** and who succeeded the **23rd Tirthankara, Parshvanatha**.
 - According to Jain texts, Lord Mahavira was **born on the 13th day of the bright half of the moon in the month of Chaitra**.
 - **Celebration:** Usually, a procession is called with the idol of Lord Mahavira called the **Rath Yatra**. **Reciting stavans** or Jain prayers, statues of the lord are given a ceremonial bath called **abhisheka**.
- **About Lord Mahavira:**
 - **Mahavira** was born to **King Siddhartha of Kundagrama** and **Queen Trishala**, a Lichchavi

Note:



princess in the **year 540 BC** in the **Vajji kingdom**, identical with modern day **Vaishali in Bihar**.

- Mahavira belonged to the **Ikshvaku dynasty**.
- Lord Mahavir was named **Vardhamana**, which means **"one who grows"**.
- Mahavira taught **ahimsa** (non-violence), **Satya** (truth), **asteya** (non-stealing), **brahmacharya** (chastity) and **aparigraha** (non-attachment) to his disciples and his teachings were called **Jain Agamas**.
- Ordinary people were able to understand the teachings of Mahavira and his followers because **they used Prakrit**.
- It is believed that the Mahavira passed away and attained moksha (liberation from the cycle of birth and death) at the age of **72 in 468 BC** at a place called **Pavapuri** near modern **Rajgir in Bihar**.

Jainism

- The word **Jaina** comes from the **term Jina**, meaning **conqueror**.
- **Tirthankara** is a Sanskrit word meaning **'Ford maker'**, i.e., one who is able to ford the river, to cross beyond the perpetual flow of earthly life.
- **Jainism attaches** utmost importance to **ahimsa** or **non-violence**.
- It preaches **5 mahavratas** (the 5 great vows):
 - **Ahimsa** (Non-violence)
 - **Satya** (Truth)
 - **Asteya or Acharya** (Non-stealing)
 - **Aparigraha** (Non-attachment/Non-possession)
 - **Brahmacharya** (Celibacy/Chastity)
- Among these **5 teachings**, the **Brahmacharya** (Celibacy/Chastity) was added by **Mahavira**.
- The **three jewels or Triratna of Jainism** include:
 - **Samyak Darshana** (right faith).
 - **Samyak Gyana** (right knowledge).
 - **Samyak Charitra** (right conduct).
- **Jainism** is a religion of **self-help**.
 - **There are no gods** or spiritual beings that will help human beings.
 - **It does not condemn** the varna system.
- In later times, it got divided into **two sects**:
 - **Shvetambaras** (white-clad) under **Stalabahu**.
 - **Digambaras** (sky-clad) under the leadership of **Bhadrabahu**.

- The important **idea in Jainism** is that the entire world is animated: even stones, rocks, and water have life.
- **Non-injury to living beings**, especially to humans, animals, plants, and insects, is central to Jain philosophy.
- According to Jain teachings, the **cycle of birth and rebirth is shaped through karma**.
- **Asceticism and penance** are required to free oneself from the cycle of karma and achieve the liberation of the soul.
- The **practice of Santhara** is also a part of Jainism.
 - It is the ritual of fasting unto death. **Swetambara** Jains call it **Santhara** whereas **Digambaras** call it **Sallekhana**.

Six Sites in Tentative List of World Heritage Sites

Why in News

Recently, **six Indian places** have been **added to the tentative list of UNESCO's** (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) **world heritage sites**.

- The submissions were made by **Archaeological Survey of India**, which is responsible for the **conservation and preservation** of Indian monuments.

Key Points

➤ Tentative List:

- As per **Operational Guidelines, 2019 of UNESCO**, it is mandatory to put any monument/site on the **Tentative List (TL)** for **one year** before it is considered for the final **nomination dossier**.
 - Once the **nomination** is done, it is sent to the **World Heritage Centre (WHC)**.
- India has **48 sites** in the **TL** as of now.
- **About New Six Places in TL:**
 - **Satpura Tiger Reserve** (Madhya Pradesh):
 - Home to 26 species of the Himalayan region including reptiles, and 42 species of Nilgiri areas. It is the **largest tiger-occupied forest** and also has the **largest tiger population**.
 - **Ghats of Varanasi** (Uttar Pradesh):
 - The ghats date back to the **14th century** but most were rebuilt, along with Varanasi, in the **18th century** by Maratha rulers.

Note:



- They have special significance in **Hindu mythology**, and are **primarily used for bathing** and **Hindu religious rituals**.
- **Megalithic Site of Hire Benkal (Karnataka):**
 - This **2,800-years-old megalithic site** is **one of the largest prehistoric megalithic settlements** where some funerary monuments are still intact.
 - The granite structures are **burial monuments** that may also have served many **ritual purposes**. Due to the **extremely valuable collection** of **Neolithic monuments**, the site was proposed for recognition.
- **Maratha Military Architecture in Maharashtra:**
 - There are **12 forts** in Maharashtra dating back to the era of the **17th-century** Maratha king Chhatrapati Shivaji. They are **Shivneri, Raigad, Torna, Rajgad, Salher-Mulher, Panhala, Pratapgad, Lohagad, Sindhudurg, Padmadurga, Vijaydurg and Kolaba**.
 - These forts offer new insight in various forms of architecture including rock cut features, construction of perimeter walls in layers on hill tops and slopes, temples, palaces, markets, residential areas, and almost every form of medieval architecture.
- **Bhedaghat-Lametaghat in Narmada Valley- Jabalpur (Madhya Pradesh):**
 - **Bhedaghat**, referred to as the **Grand Canyon of India**, is a town in the **Jabalpur district**.
 - It is known for its **marble rocks** and their various **morphological forms** on either side of the Narmada river which flows through the gorge.
 - Several **dinosaur fossils** have been found in the **Narmada valley**, particularly in the Bhedaghat-Lameta Ghat area of Jabalpur.
 - **River Narmada** narrows down on its way **through marble rocks** and plunges in a waterfall giving out the **appearance** of a **smoke cascade**.
- **Temples of Kanchipuram (Tamil Nadu):**
 - Kanchipuram is known for its spirituality, serenity, and silk.
 - It is **situated on the banks of River Vegavathi**.
 - This historical city once had **1,000 temples**, of which only **126** (108 Shaiva and 18 Vaishnava) now remain.

- Its rich legacy has been the endowment of the **Pallava dynasty**, which made the region its capital between the 6th and 7th centuries and lavished upon its architectural gems that are a fine example of **Dravidian** styles.

Vesak Celebration

Why in News

The Prime Minister addressed “**Virtual Vesak Global Celebrations**” on **Buddha Purnima**.

- The event is being organised by the **Ministry of Culture** in collaboration with the **International Buddhist Confederation (IBC)** and will witness the participation of all the **supreme heads** of the **Buddhist Sanghas** from **around the world**.

Key Points

- **Buddha Purnima:**
 - It is celebrated to mark the **birth of Gautam Buddha**, the founder of **Buddhism**.
 - It is also **known as Vesak**. In **1999**, it became a **UN-designated day**, to acknowledge the contribution of Buddhism to society.
 - It is considered a ‘**triple-blessed day**’ - as **Tathagata Gautam Buddha’s birth, enlightenment, and Maha Parnirvana**.
 - **Buddha Purnima falls on a full moon night**, usually between April and May, and it is a gazetted holiday in India.
 - Many devotees visit **Mahabodhi Temple**, a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**, located in **Bodh Gaya, Bihar**, on this occasion.
 - **Bodhi Temple** is the location **where Lord Buddha is said to have attained enlightenment**.
- **About Gautam Buddha:**
 - He was **born as Siddhartha Gautama** in circa **563 BCE**, in **Lumbini** and belonged to the **Sakya clan**.
 - **Gautam attained Bodhi (enlightenment)** under a **pipal tree** at **Bodhgaya, Bihar**.
 - **Buddha gave his first sermon in the village of Sarnath**, near **Varanasi** in **Uttar Pradesh**. This event is known as **Dharma Chakra Pravartana** (turning of the wheel of law).

Note:



- He died at the age of 80 in 483 BCE at Kushinagara, Uttar Pradesh. The event is known as **Mahaparinibban** or **Mahaparinirvana**.
- He is **believed to be the eighth of the ten incarnations of Lord Vishnu (Dashavatar)**.

Buddhism

- **Buddhism** started in India over 2,600 years ago.
 - The **main teachings of Buddhism** are encapsulated in the basic concept of four **noble truths** or **ariya-sachchani** and **eight-fold path** or **ashtangika marg**.
 - **Dukkha (Sufferings)** and its extinction are **central to the Buddha's doctrine**.
 - The essence of Buddhism is the **attainment of enlightenment or nirvana** which was not a place but an experience and could be attained in this life.
 - There is **no supreme god or deity** in Buddhism.
- **Buddhist Councils:**

Buddhist Council	Patron	Venue	Chairman	Year
First	Ajatasatru	Rajgriha	Mahakashyapa	483 BC
Second	Kalashoka	Vaishali	Sabbakami	383 BC
Third	Ashoka	Patliputra	Mogaliputra	250 BC
Fourth	Kanishka	Kundalban (Kashmir)	Vasumitra	72 AD

- **Schools of Buddhism:**
 - Mahayana (Idol Worship), Hinayana, Theravada, Vajrayana (Tantric buddhism), Zen.
- **Buddhism Texts (Tipitaka):**
 - **Vinaya Pitaka** (rules applicable to monastic life), **Sutta Pitaka** (main teaching or Dhamma of Buddha), **Abhidhamma Pitaka** (a philosophical analysis and systematization of the teaching).
- **Contribution of Buddhism to Indian Culture:**
 - The **concept of ahimsa** was its chief contribution. Later, it became one of the cherished values of our nation.
 - Its **contribution to the art and architecture of India** was notable. The **stupas at Sanchi, Bharhut, and Gaya** are wonderful pieces of architecture.
 - It **promoted education through residential universities** like those at **Taxila, Nalanda, and Vikramasila**.
 - The **language of Pali and other local languages** developed through the teachings of Buddhism.

- It had also **promoted the spread of Indian culture to other parts of Asia**.
- **UNESCO's Heritage Sites Related to Buddhism:**
 - Archaeological Site of Nalanda Mahavihara at Nalanda, Bihar
 - Buddhist Monuments at **Sanchi**, MP
 - Mahabodhi Temple Complex at Bodh Gaya, Bihar
 - **Ajanta Caves** Aurangabad, Maharashtra.

Related News: Asadha Poornima Dhamma Chakra Day

Begum Sultan Jahan

Why in News

Recently, the death anniversary of Begum Sultan Jahan was observed.

- She was a Philanthropist, Prolific writer, Feminist, Symbol of Women Empowerment, **First female Chancellor of Aligarh Muslim University**.



Key Points

- **Ruler of Bhopal:**
 - She was the **last Begum of Bhopal**. Ruled from **1909 to 1926** after which she was succeeded by her son.
 - Fourth female ruler of Bhopal.
 - Set up the **municipality system**, introduced **municipal elections** and constructed a **walled city and a palace** for herself.
- **Feminist Icon:**
 - Her progressive policies for women, at a time when they were shackled by the forces of patriarchy, have made her a feminist icon even today.
 - Constructed a **Meeting Hall for Ladies in Lahore in 1913**.

Note:



- Organised an exhibition called 'Numaish Masunuaat e Hind' in Bhopal to encourage women and promote handicrafts.
- **Philanthropist:**
 - Established the **Sultan Jahan Endowment Trust** with a corpus of Rs three lakhs for helping needy students.
 - **Funded** a Madrasa in Deoband (UP), Nadwatul Uloom in Lucknow and even Madarsa Sultania in Mecca, Saudi Arabia.
 - Institutions such as **Lady Hardinge Medical College, Delhi and some renowned colleges in Bombay and Calcutta** received generous grants from her.
- **Educationist:**
 - **Authored a book, Dars-e-Hayat**, about the education and parenting of young girls.
 - Started a nursing school called **Lady Minto Nursing School**.

Tulu Language

Why in News

The **Tulu speakers**, mainly in **Karnataka and Kerala**, have been **requesting the governments to give it official language status and include it in the eighth schedule to the Constitution**.

- In 2020, there was a demand to include Tulu in the new **National Education Policy (NEP)**.

Key Points

- **About 'Tulu' Language:**
 - Tulu is a **Dravidian language** spoken mainly in two coastal districts **Dakshina Kannada** and **Udupi of Karnataka** and **Kasaragod district of Kerala**.
 - This region is informally known as **Tulu Nadu**. There has been a demand for separate statehood for Tulu Nadu.
 - The **oldest available inscriptions** in Tulu are from the period **between 14th to 15th century AD**.
- **Tulu Art and Culture:**
 - Tulu has a **rich oral literature tradition** with folk-song forms like **paddana**, and traditional folk theatre **yakshagana**.
- **Case for Recognition:**

Official Language or Languages of a State

- **Part XVII of the Indian Constitution** deals with the official language in **Articles 343 to 351**.
- **Article 345** of the Constitution says "the Legislature of a State may by law adopt any one or more of the languages in use in the State or Hindi as the language or languages to be used for all or any of the official purposes of that State".

Eighth Schedule of the Constitution

- The **Constitutional provisions** relating to the Eighth Schedule **occur in Article 344 (1) and 351 of the Constitution**.
- The **languages listed under Eighth Schedule** are:
 - (1) Assamese, (2) Bengali, (3) Gujarati, (4) Hindi, (5) Kannada, (6) Kashmiri, (7) Konkani, (8) Malayalam, (9) Manipuri, (10) Marathi, (11) Nepali, (12) Oriya, (13) Punjabi, (14) Sanskrit, (15) Sindhi, (16) Tamil, (17) Telugu, (18) Urdu (19) Bodo, (20) Santhali, (21) Maithili and (22) Dogri.
- Languages are added through **Constitutional Amendments**.

- **Article 29 of the Constitution:** It deals with the "**Protection of interests of minorities**". It states that any section of the citizens residing in any part of India having a distinct language, script or culture of its own, shall have the right to conserve the same.

Yuelu Proclamation:

- The Yuelu Proclamation was **adopted at the first international conference on language resources protection** in Changsha, Central China's Hunan province **in 2018 by UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization)**.
- It calls upon the international community, states, governments and non-governmental organizations, among others, to reach a consensus on the **protection and promotion of linguistic diversity** in the world.

Sant Kabir Das Jayanti

Why in News

Recently, **Sant Kabir Das Jayanti** was observed on **24th June, 2021** to mark the birth anniversary of **Sant Kabirdas**.

Note:



- Kabirdas Jayanti is celebrated on the **Jyeshtha Purnima tithi**, as per the **Hindu lunar calendar**.

Key Points

➤ About:

- **Sant Kabir Das** was born in the city of **Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh**. He was a **15th century mystic poet, saint and social reformer** and a proponent of the **Bhakti Movement**.
 - Kabir's legacy is still going on through a sect known as **Panth of Kabir**, a religious community that considers him as the founder.
- **Teacher:** His early life was in a Muslim family, but he was strongly influenced by his teacher, the Hindu bhakti leader **Ramananda**.
- **Literature:** Kabir Das' writings had a great influence on the Bhakti movement and includes titles like **Kabir Granthawali, Anurag Sagar, Bijak, and Sakhi Granth**.
 - His verses are found in Sikhism's scripture **Guru Granth Sahib**.
 - The major part of his work was collected by the fifth Sikh guru, **Guru Arjan Dev**.
 - He was best known for his two-line couplets, known as '**Kabir Ke Dohe**'.
- **Language:** Kabir's works were written in the **Hindi language** which was easy to comprehend. He used to write in couplets to enlighten people.

➤ Bhakti Movement:

- **Beginning:** The movement probably **began in the Tamil region** around the **6th and 7th century AD** and achieved a great deal of popularity through the poems of the **Alvars (devotees of Vishnu)** and **Nayanars (devotees of Shiva)**, the Vaishnavite and Shaivite poets.
 - The **Alvars** and **Nayanars** travelled from place to place singing hymns in Tamil in praise of their gods.
 - The **Nalayira Divyaprabandham** is a composition by the **Alvars**. It is frequently described as the Tamil Veda.
- **Classification:** At a different level, historians of religion often classify bhakti traditions into two broad categories: **saguna (with attributes)** and **nirguna (without attributes)**.

- The **saguna** included traditions that focused on the **worship of specific deities** such as Shiva, Vishnu and his avatars (incarnations) and forms of the goddess or Devi, all often conceptualised in anthropomorphic forms.
- **Nirguna bhakti** on the other hand was worship of an abstract form of god.

○ Social Order:

- This movement was **responsible for many rites and rituals associated** with the worship of God by Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs of Indian subcontinent. For example, Kirtan at a Hindu Temple, Qawwali at a Dargah (by Muslims), and singing of Gurbani at a Gurdwara.
- They were often **opposed** to the establishment and all **authoritarian monastic order**.
- They also strongly criticized all **sectarian zealotry** and **caste discrimination** in society.
- Hailing from **both high and low castes**, these poets created a formidable body of literature that firmly established itself in the popular narratives.
- All of them claimed relevance for religion in social life, in the sphere of real human aspirations and social relationships.
- Bhakti poets **emphasized surrender to god**.
- The movement's major achievement was its **abolition of idol worship**.

○ Role of Women:

- **Andal** was a woman **Alvar** and she saw herself as the beloved of Vishnu.
- **Karaikkal Ammaiyar** was a devotee of Shiva and she adopted the path of extreme asceticism in order to attain her goal. Her compositions were preserved within the **Nayanar tradition**.

○ Important Personalities:

- **Kannada Region:** In this region, the movement began by **Basavanna** (1105-68) in the 12th century.
- **Maharashtra:** The Bhakti movement began in the late 13th century. Its proponents were known as the **Varkaris**.
 - Among its most popular figures were **Jnanadev (1275-96)**, **Namdev (1270-50)** and **Tukaram (1608-50)**.
- **Assam:** **Srimanta Sankardeva** (a Vaishnava saint born in 1449 AD in Nagaon district of Assam. He started the **neo-Vaishnavite movement**).

Note:



- **Bengal: Chaitanya** was a renowned saint and reformer of Bengal who popularised the Krishna cult.
- **Northern India:** From the 13th to the 17th centuries, a large number of poets flourished who were all Bhakti figures of considerable importance.
 - While **Kabir, Ravi Dass and Guru Nanak** spoke of the formless god (nirgun bhakti), **Meerabai** (1498-1546) from Rajasthan composed and sung devotional verses in praise of Krishna.
 - **Surdas, Narasimha Mehta and Tulsidas** also made priceless contributions to the canon of Bhakti literature and enhanced its glorious legacy.

TIMELINE
SOME MAJOR RELIGIOUS TEACHERS IN THE SUBCONTINENT

c. 500-800 CE	Appar, Sambandar, Sundaramurti in Tamil Nadu
c. 800-900	Nammalvar, Manikkavachakar, Andal, Tondaradippodi in Tamil Nadu
c.1000-1100	Al Hujwiri, Data Ganj Bakhsh in the Punjab; Ramanujacharya in Tamil Nadu
c.1100-1200	Basavanna in Karnataka
c.1200-1300	Jnanadeva, Muktabai in Maharashtra; Khwaja Muinuddin Chishti in Rajasthan; Bahauddin Zakariyya and Fariduddin Ganj-i Shakar in the Punjab; Qutbuddin Bakhtiyar Kaki in Delhi
c.1300-1400	Lal Ded in Kashmir; Lal Shahbaz Qalandar in Sindh; Nizamuddin Auliya in Delhi; Ramananda in Uttar Pradesh; Chokhamela in Maharashtra; Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri in Bihar
c.1400-1500	Kabir, Raidas, Surdas in Uttar Pradesh; Baba Guru Nanak in the Punjab; Vallabhacharya in Gujarat; Abdullah Shattari in Gwalior; Muhammad Shah Alam in Gujarat; Mir Sayyid Muhammad Gesu Daraz in Gulbarga, Shankaradeva in Assam; Tukaram in Maharashtra
c.1500-1600	Sri Chaitanya in Bengal; Mirabai in Rajasthan; Shaikh Abdul Quddus Gangohi, Malik Muhammad Jaisi, Tulsidas in Uttar Pradesh
c.1600-1700	Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi in Haryana; Miyan Mir in the Punjab

Note: These time frames indicate the approximate period during which these teachers lived.

National Maritime Heritage Complex: Lothal

Why in News

The **Ministry of Culture (MoC)** and **Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW)** signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for 'Cooperation in Development of National Maritime Heritage Complex (NMHC)' at Lothal, Gujarat.

Key Points

- **About:**
 - NMHC will be developed in Lothal region of Gujarat.

- It would be developed as an **international tourist destination**, where the maritime heritage of India from ancient to modern times would be showcased.
- The unique feature of NMHC is the **recreation of ancient Lothal city**, which is one of the prominent cities of the **ancient Indus valley civilization**.

➤ About Lothal:

- **Lothal** was one of the southernmost cities of the ancient **Indus Valley Civilization** located in Gujarat.
- Construction of the city began **around 2400 BCE**.
- According to the **Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)**, Lothal had the **world's earliest known dock**, which connected the city to an ancient course of the Sabarmati river on the **trade route between Harappan cities in Sindh and the peninsula of Saurashtra**.
- Lothal was a **vital and thriving trade Centre in ancient times**, with its trade of beads, gems, and valuable ornaments reaching the far corners of West Asia and Africa.
 - The techniques and tools they pioneered for bead-making and in metallurgy have stood the test of time for over 4000 years.
- The Lothal site has been **nominated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site**, and its application is **pending on the tentative list of UNESCO**.

Indus Valley Civilization

- Also known as **Harappan Civilization** that flourished around 2,500 BC, in the western part of South Asia, in contemporary **Pakistan and Western India**.
- It was home to the **largest of the four ancient urban civilizations of Egypt, Mesopotamia, India and China**.
- It was **basically an urban civilization** and the people lived in well-planned and well-built towns, which were also the centers for trade.
 - They had wide roads and a **well-developed drainage system**.
 - The houses were **made of baked bricks** and had two or more storeys.
- The highly civilized Harappans **knew the art of growing cereals**, and wheat and barley constituted their staple food.
- **By 1500 BC, the Harappan culture came to an end**. Among various causes ascribed to the decay of Indus

Note:



Valley Civilization are the recurrent floods and other natural causes like earthquakes, etc.



Humayun's Tomb: Mughal Architecture

Why in News

Recently, the **Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)** notified that all centrally protected monuments, sites, and museums across the country including the Humayun's Tomb will reopen for visitors from 16th June 2021.

- Humayun's tomb in Delhi is a fine specimen of the great **Mughal architecture**.
- **ASI**, under the Ministry of Culture, is the **premier organisation for the archaeological research and protection** of the cultural heritage of the nation.

Key Points

- **Humayun's Tomb:**
 - **About:**
 - This tomb, **built in 1570**, is of particular cultural significance as **it was the first garden-tomb on the Indian subcontinent**.
 - It was built under the patronage of Humayun's son, the **great Emperor Akbar**.
 - It is also called the '**dormitory of the Mughals**' as in the cells are **buried over 150 Mughal family members**.
 - It is **an example of the charbagh** (a four quadrant garden with the four rivers of Quranic paradise represented), with pools joined by channels.
 - The **United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)** recognized it as a **World Heritage Site in 1993**.

➤ Mughal Architecture:

○ About:

- This is a building style that flourished in **northern and central India** under the patronage of the Mughal emperors from the **mid-16th to the late 17th century**.
- It became so widespread especially in north India that these can be seen further in the **colonial architecture of Indo-Saracenic style**.

○ Important Features:

- **Mixed Architecture:** It was a **blend of Indian, Persian, and Turkish** architectural style.
- **Diversity:** Different types of buildings, such as **majestic gates (entrances), forts, mausoleums, palaces, mosques, sarais**, etc.
- **Building material:** Mostly, **red sandstone and white marble** were used.
- **Speciality:** Specific features such as the **Charbagh style** of the mausoleums, pronounced **bulbous domes**, slender turrets at the corners, **broad gateways**, beautiful **calligraphy, arabesque**, and **geometric patterns** on pillars and walls, and palace halls supported on pillars.
 - The **arches, chhatris, and various styles of domes** became **hugely popular** in the Indo-Islamic architecture and were further developed under the Mughals.

Silambam

Why in News

Recently, an Indian named Ganesan Sandhirakasan **has won the top prize** in a government-initiated competition for migrant workers in Singapore **for his performance of Silambam**.

Key Points

➤ About:

- Silambam is an **ancient weapon-based martial art** that emerged in **Tamilakam, which is now the Tamil Nadu region of India**. It is **one of the oldest martial arts in the world**.
- The term Silambam contains a meaning which itself reveals about the sport, **silam stands for a 'mountain'** and **bam stands for bamboo** which is the main weapon used in this form of martial arts.

Note:



- It is closely linked to the Kerala martial art **kalaripayattu**.
- **Foot movement** are key elements to silambam and kutta varisai (empty hand version).
- **Weapons Used:**
 - **Bamboo staff**- It is the main weapon and the length of the bamboo staff depends on the height of the practitioner.
 - **Maru** - a thrusting weapon which is made from horns of deer.
 - **Aruva** (sickle), **Savuku** (a whip), **Vaal** (curved sword), **Kuttu Katai** (spiked knuckle duster), **Katti** (knife), **Sedikuchi** (cudgel or short stick).
- **Origin:**
 - It is believed to have **originated somewhere around 1000 BC** and it was brought by the sage **Agastya Munivar**.
 - **Sillappadikkaram** and many other works of **Sangam literature** mentions about the practice and it dates back to **2nd century BC** whereas oral folk tales traces it back even further around **7000 years**.
 - But according to recent surveys and archaeological excavations, **it has been confirmed that Silambam was practiced from at least 10,000 BC**.

Other Martial Arts of India

- **Gatka** – Punjab
- **Paika** – Odisha
- **Thag Ta** – Manipur
- **Kalaripayattu** – Kerala
- **Choliya** – Uttarakhand
- **Pang Lhabsol** – Sikkim
- **Musti Yudha** – Uttar Pradesh
- **Mardani Khel** – Maharashtra
- **Pari Khanda** – Bihar

Kalbeliya Dance

Why in News

Recently, due to **Covid-19-Pandemic** an app called **chendavia** is gaining popularity among the students of kalbeliya dance.



Key Points

- **About:**
 - Kalbeliya dances are an expression of the Kalbelia community's traditional way of life.
 - It is associated with a **Rajasthani tribe of the same name**.
 - It was included in the **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organizations (UNESCO)** list of **Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH)** in 2010.
 - **UNESCO's List of Intangible Cultural Heritage** is made up of those **intangible heritage elements** that help **demonstrate diversity of cultural heritage** and raise awareness about its importance.
 - It was **established in 2008** when the **Convention for Safeguarding** of the Intangible Cultural Heritage came into effect.
 - It is generally performed for any joyous celebration and is considered to be an **integral part of the Kalbeliya culture**.
 - Another unique aspect of the Kalbelia dance is that **it is only performed by women while the men play the instruments and provide the music**.
- **Instruments & Dress:**
 - Women in flowing **black skirts dance and swirl, replicating the movements of a serpent**, while men accompany them on the "**khanjari**" instrument and the "**poongi**", a woodwind instrument traditionally played to capture snakes.
 - The **dancers wear traditional tattoo designs, jewellery and garments** richly embroidered with small mirrors and silver thread.
- **Kalbeliya Tribe:**

Note:



- Kalbeliya tribe people **were once professional snake handlers**, today they **evoke their former occupation in music and dance** that is evolving in new and creative ways.
- They **live a nomadic life and belong to the scheduled tribes**.
- The largest number of the population of Kalbeliyas is in **Pali district, then Ajmer, Chittorgarh and Udaipur district (Rajasthan)**.
- **Other Traditional Folk Dances of Rajasthan:** Gair, Kachchhi Ghodi, Ghoomar, Bhavai, etc.

13 ICH traditions recognised by UNESCO			
1. Tradition of Vedic chanting, 2008	8. Buddhist chanting of Ladakh: recitation of sacred Buddhist texts in the trans-Himalayan Ladakh region, Jammu and Kashmir, India, 2012	9. Sankirtana, ritual singing, drumming and dancing of Manipur, 2013	10. Traditional brass and copper craft of utensil making among the Thatheras of Jandiala Guru, Punjab, India, 2014
2. Ramilla, the traditional performance of the Ramayana, 2008	9. Sankirtana, ritual singing, drumming and dancing of Manipur, 2013	11. Yoga, 2016	12. Nowruz, 2016
3. Kutiyattam, Sanskrit theatre, 2008	10. Traditional brass and copper craft of utensil making among the Thatheras of Jandiala Guru, Punjab, India, 2014	11. Yoga, 2016	12. Nowruz, 2016
4. Ramman, religious festival and ritual theatre of the Garhwal Himalayas, India, 2009	11. Yoga, 2016	12. Nowruz, 2016	13. Kumbh Mela, 2017
5. Mudiyettu, ritual theatre and dance drama of Kerala, 2010	12. Nowruz, 2016	13. Kumbh Mela, 2017	
6. Kalbelia folk songs and dances of Rajasthan, 2010	13. Kumbh Mela, 2017		
7. Chhau dance, 2010			

Kuvempu Award 2020

Why in News

Recently, Odia poet **Dr. Rajendra Kishore Panda** has been selected for the **Kuvempu Rashtriya Puraskar (award) 2020**.

Key Points

- **About:**
 - It is a **national award** instituted in memory of the late poet laureate **Kuvempu**.
 - The award is given **annually** to a writer who has **contributed** in any of the **languages recognised by the Constitution of India**.
 - The award carries a **cash award of Rs. 5 lakh**, a **silver medal** and a **citation**.
- **Kuvempu:**
 - **Kuppali Venkatappa Puttappa**, popularly known by his pen name **Kuvempu**, was an Indian poet, playwright, novelist and critic.
 - He is widely regarded as **the greatest Kannada poet of the 20th century**.
 - He was the first Kannada writer to be decorated with the **Jnanpith Award** for his version of the Ramayana titled **'Sri Ramayana Darshanam.'**

Jnanpith Award

- The Jnanpith award is the **highest literary award in India** and can **only be conferred annually upon an Indian citizen**.
- **English along with other languages** mentioned in Indian Constitution (**8th Schedule**) is considered for the Award.
- The prize carries a **cash award of Rs. 11 lakhs**, a **citation**, and a **bronze replica of Vagdevi (Saraswati)**, the goddess of learning.
- It is sponsored by the **cultural organization Bharatiya Jnanpith**.

Sahitya Akademi Awards

- Sahitya Akademi award **established in 1954**, is a literary honour that is conferred annually by **Sahitya Akademi, India's National Academy of letters**.
- Akademi gives **24 awards annually** to literary works in the languages it has recognized and an equal number of awards to literary translations from and into the languages of India.
- Besides the **22 languages enumerated in the Constitution of India**, the Sahitya Akademi has recognised **English and Rajasthani** as languages in which its programme may be implemented.
- The Sahitya Akademi award is the **second-highest literary honour by the Government of India**, after the Jnanpith award.

Gangadhar National Award

- Gangadhar National Award For Poetry is a **literary award given in the field of literature for poetry by Sambalpur University**. It is named after Gangadhar Meher.
- The award carries a **cash prize of Rs 50,000**, a **shawl and citation**.

Kanjeevaram Silk Sari: Tamil Nadu

Why in News

National award winning artisan weaver, B Krishna-moorthy, has created a **repository with samples of all the designs, patterns and motifs traditional to Kanjeevaram silk sari weaving**, preserving fine pieces for next generation.

Note:





Key Points

➤ About Kanjeevaram Sarees:

- Traditionally, the **Kanjeevaram** is a **sari** that is usually handwoven in **mulberry silk** and has **pure gold or silver zari** that renders it a festive quality.
 - Handloom silk saree is identified as the most luxurious and classy fabric in Indian traditional clothing.
- Originating from the village '**Kanchipuram**' in **Tamil Nadu**, Kanjeevaram is considered the queen of silk sarees.
- The **temple architecture of south India** and especially around Kanchipuram has historically served as a mood board for **design inspiration for the traditional Kanjeevaram motifs**.
- Tracing its long and rich history from the **Chola Dynasty**, Kanchipuram sarees today are considered as one of the **oldest and rich legacies of the Indian textile industry**.
- Kanchipuram silk has also received **Geographical indication (GI Tag)** in 2005-06.

➤ Other GI tagged Sarees:

- **Tamil Nadu**: Kandangi Saree, Thirubuvanam silk sarees, Kovai Kora Cotton Sarees
- **Uttar Pradesh**: Banaras Brocade
- **Karnataka**: Ilkal Saree, Molakalmuru Saree
- **Andhra Pradesh**: Uppada Jamdani Sarees, Venkatagiri Sarees, Mangalagiri Saree
- **Kerala**: Balaramapuram Sarees, Kasaragod Sarees, Kuthampully Sarees
- **Telangana**: Gadwal Saree, Pochampally Ikat (logo)
- **Madhya Pradesh**: Chanderi Saree, Maheshwar Sarees

- **Odisha**: Orissa Ikat, Bomkai Saree, Habaspuri Saree
- **West Bengal**: Santipore Saree, Baluchari Saree, Dhaniakhali Saree
- **Maharashtra**: Paithani Sarees and Fabrics, Karvath Kati Sarees and Fabrics
- **Chhattisgarh**: Champa Silk Saree
- **Gujarat**: Surat Zari Craft, **Patola Saree**.

➤ Silk Production in India:

- India is the **second largest producer of silk** in the world, producing around **18% of the world's total silk**.
- There are **five major types of silk of commercial importance**, obtained from different species of silkworms. These are **Mulberry, Oak Tasar & Tropical Tasar, Muga and Eri**.
 - Except mulberry, other non-mulberry varieties of silks are wild silks, known as vanya silks.
- India has the unique distinction of producing all these commercial varieties of silk.
- **South India is the leading silk producing area** of the country and is also known for its famous silk weaving enclaves like Kancheepuram, Dharmavaram, Arni, etc.
- The Government of India in 2017 launched a scheme called "**Silk Samagra**" for the development of sericulture in the country.

India's 40th World Heritage Site: Dholavira

Why in News

Recently, **UNESCO** has announced the Harappan city of **Dholavira** in Gujarat as India's **40th world heritage site**. It is the first site of **Indus Valley Civilisation (IVC)** in India to be included on the coveted list.

- With this successful nomination, India now enters the **Super-40 club for World Heritage Site inscriptions**.
- Apart from **India, Italy, Spain, Germany, China and France** have 40 or more World Heritage sites.
- India has 40 **world heritage sites** overall, which includes 32 cultural, 7 natural and one mixed property. **Ramappa Temple (Telangana)** was India's **39th World Heritage Site**.

Note:



Key Points

➤ About Dholavira:

- It is one of the most remarkable and well-preserved **urban settlements** in South Asia.
- It was **discovered in 1968 by archaeologist Jagat Pati Joshi**.
- After **Mohen-jodaro, Ganweriwala and Harappa in Pakistan** and **Rakhigarhi in Haryana of India**, **Dholavira is the fifth largest metropolis** of Indus Valley Civilization (IVC).
- The site contains ruins of an ancient IVC/Harappan city. It comprises two parts: a **walled city** and a **cemetery** to the west of the city.
 - The walled city consists of a **fortified Castle with attached fortified Bailey and Ceremonial Ground**, and a **fortified Middle Town and a Lower Town**.
 - A series of **reservoirs** are found to the east and south of the Citadel.

➤ Location:

- The ancient city of Dholavira is an archaeological site at **Kachchh District**, in the state of Gujarat, which dates from the 3rd to mid-2nd millennium BCE.
- Dholavira's **location is on the Tropic of Cancer**.
- It is located on Khadir bet island in the **Kachchh Desert Wildlife Sanctuary** in the **Great Rann of Kachchh**.
- Unlike other **Harappan antecedent towns normally located near to rivers and perennial sources of water**, the location of Dholavira in the **island of Khadir bet**.
 - This was **strategic to harness different mineral and raw material sources** (copper, shell, agate-carnelian, steatite, lead, banded limestone, among others).
 - It also facilitated internal as well as **external trade to the Magan (modern Oman peninsula) and Mesopotamian regions**.
- **Distinct Features of the Dholavira Site:**
 - **Cascading series of water reservoirs.**



- **Outer fortification.**
- **Two multi-purpose grounds**, one of which was used for festivities and other as a marketplace.
- **Nine gates** with unique designs.
- Funerary architecture featuring tumulus — **hemispherical structures like the Buddhist Stupas**.
- Multi-layered defensive mechanisms, extensive use of stone in construction and special burial structures.

➤ Decline of Dholavira:

- Its decline also **coincided with the collapse of Mesopotamia**, indicating the **integration of economies**.
 - Harappans, who were maritime people, **lost a huge market**, affecting the **local mining, manufacturing, marketing and export businesses** once Mesopotamia fell.
- Dholavira entered a phase of **severe aridity** due to climate change and rivers like **Saraswati drying up**.
 - Due to a drought-like situation, people started **migrating toward the Ganges valley** or towards south Gujarat and further beyond in Maharashtra.
- Further, the Great Rann of Kutch, which surrounds the Khadir island on which Dholavira is located, used to be navigable, but the sea receded gradually and the **Rann became a mudflat**.

Other

Harappan Sites in Gujarat

- **Lothal:** Before Dholavira was excavated, Lothal, in Saragwala village on the **bank of Sabarmati** in Dholka taluka of Ahmedabad district, was the most prominent site of IVC in Gujarat.
 - It was excavated between 1955 and 1960 and was discovered to be an important port city of the ancient civilisation, with structures made of mud bricks.
 - From a graveyard in Lothal, 21 human skeletons were found.
 - Foundries for making copperware were also discovered.
 - Ornaments made of semi-precious stones, gold etc. were also found from the site.
- **Rangpur** on the **bank of Bhadar river** in Surendranagar district was the first Harappan site in the state to be excavated.

Note:



- **Rojdi** in Rajkot district, **Prabhas** near Veraval in Gir Somnath district.
- **Lakhabaval** in Jamnagar, and **Deshalpar** in Bhuj taluka of Kutch are among other Harappan sites in the state.

Other World Sites in Gujarat

- Other than Dholavira, there are 3 UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Gujarat.
 - Historic city of Ahmedabad
 - **Rani ki Vav, Patan**
 - Champaner & Pavagadh

India's 39th World Heritage Site: Ramappa Temple

Why in News

Recently, **Rudreswara Temple**, (also known as the **Ramappa Temple**) at Mulugu district, Telangana has been inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage list.

- Ramappa Temple was proposed by the government as its only nomination for the **UNESCO World Heritage site** tag for the year 2019.



Key Points

- **About Rudreswara (Ramappa) Temple:**
 - The Rudreswara temple was **constructed in 1213 AD during the reign of the Kakatiya Empire by Recherla Rudra**, a general of Kakatiya king Ganapati Deva.
 - The presiding deity here is **Ramalingeswara Swamy**.
 - The foundation is built with the **“sandbox technique”**, the flooring is granite and the pillars are basalt.

- The **lower part of the temple is red sandstone** while the **white gopuram** is built with light bricks that reportedly float on water.
- The distinct style of Kakatiyas for the gateways to temple complexes, unique only to this region, confirm the **highly evolved proportions of aesthetics in temple** and town gateways in South India.

➤ Sandbox Technique:

- The technique involved filling the pit — **dug up for laying the foundation** — with a mixture of **sand-lime, jaggery (for binding) and karakkaya** (black myrobalan fruit) before the buildings were constructed on these ‘sandboxes’.
- The sandbox in the foundation acts as a **cushion in case of earthquakes**.
- Most of the vibrations caused by earthquakes lose their strength while passing through the sand by the time they reach the actual foundation of the building.

Parsi

New Year: Navroz

Why in News

Navroz festival is being celebrated in India on **16th August in India**.

- **Across the world**, Navroz is celebrated at the time of the **vernal equinox (marking the start of spring)** in the **Northern Hemisphere**.

Key Points

- **About:**
 - Navroz is also known as **Parsi New Year**.
 - Though **celebrated in March globally**, Navroz arrives **200 days later in India** and is celebrated in the month of August as the **Parsis here follow the Shahenshahi calendar** that doesn't account for leap years.
 - In India, Navroz is also known as **Jamshed-i-Navroz**, after the **Persian King, Jamshed**. The king Jamshed is **credited with having created the Shahenshahi calendar**.
 - Interestingly in India, **people celebrate it twice a year** - first according to the Iranian calendar and

Note:



the second according to the Shahenshahi calendar which is followed by people here and in Pakistan. The festival falls between July and August.

- The tradition is **observed by Iranians and Zoroastrian** around the world.
- Navroj was **inscribed in the list of UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity of India in 2009.**

➤ Zoroastrianism:

- Zoroastrianism, one of the **earliest known monotheistic faiths**, is practised by Parsis.
- It was **created over 3,500 years ago** in ancient Iran by **Prophet Zarathustra**.
- It was the **official religion of Persia (now Iran)** from 650 BCE until the emergence of Islam in the **7th century**, and it was **one of the most important faiths** in the **ancient world for over 1000 years**.
- When the **Islamic troops invaded Persia**, numerous Zoroastrians fled to **India (Gujarat) and Pakistan**.
- Zoroastrians (Parsis) are **one of the notified minority communities**.

World Sanskrit Day

Why in News

World Sanskrit Day (Viswa Samskrita Dinam) was celebrated on **22nd August 2021**.

- In India, Sanskrit is a **Classical** and an **Eighth Schedule** language.
- In 2020, the **Uttarakhand Government** decided to develop **'Sanskrit Grams'** across the state to teach use of Sanskrit regularly.

Key Points

➤ Some Important Facts about Sanskrit Language:

- It is considered to be **one of the oldest languages in the world**. It is an **old Indo-Aryan language** in which the most ancient documents, **Vedas**, are **composed in what is called Vedic Sanskrit**.
- Sanskrit used to be a **pan-Indian language in the Vedic period** and most languages in the country have branched out of Sanskrit.
 - It lost, somehow, to modern derivations and regional dialects.
- Classical Sanskrit, a language close to late Vedic as then used in the northwest of the subcontinent, was

elegantly **described in one of the finest grammars ever produced, the Aṣṭādhyāyī** ("Eight Chapters") **composed by Pāṇini** (c. 6th–5th century BCE).

- Sanskrit has been written **both in Devanāgarī script and in various regional scripts**, such as Śāradā from the north (Kashmir), **Bāṅglā (Bengali)** in the east, **Gujarātī** in the west, and various **southern scripts, including the Grantha alphabet**, which was especially devised for Sanskrit texts.
- It is considered a **scientific language and is believed to be the most computer-friendly language**.
 - In 1786, English Philologist William Jones suggested in his book **'The Sanscrit Language'** that Greek and Latin were related to Sanskrit.
- The language, however, is **not entirely dead**. A **village in the Shimoga district of Karnataka, called Mattur**, is believed to have preserved the language.
- The **only Sanskrit newspaper in the world is called 'Sudharma'**. The newspaper has been published since 1970 from Mysore in Karnataka and is also available online.
- Some of the eminent **Sanskrit authors are Panini, Patanjali, Adi Shankaracharya, Ved Vyas, Kalidas etc.**

➤ Important Authors and Works in Sanskrit:

- **Bhāsa** (for example, his Svapnavāsavadatta - Vāsavadatta in a Dream), who is assigned widely varying dates but definitely worked prior to Kālidāsa, who mentions him.
- **Kālidāsa**, dated anywhere from the 1st century BCE to the 4th century CE, whose works include Śakuntalā, Vikramorvaśīya, Kumārasambhava and Raghuvamśa.
- Śūdraka and his Mṛcchakatika ("Little Clay Cart"), possibly dating to the 3rd century CE.
- **Ashvaghosha's Buddhacarita** is one of the finest examples of Buddhist literature.
- **Bhāravi and his Kirātārjunīya** ("Arjuna and the Kirāta"), from approximately the 7th century.
- **Māgha**, whose **Śīsupālavadha** ("The Slaying of Śīsupāla") dates to the late 7th century.
- The two epics **Rāmāyaṇa** ("Life of Rāma") and **Mahābhārata** ("Great Tale of the Bhāratas") were also composed in Sanskrit, and the former is esteemed as the first poetic work (ādikāvya) of India.

Shankaracharya Temple

Why in News

Recently, as per the age-old tradition related to the annual Amarnath pilgrimage, the **holy mace (Chhari Mubarak) of Lord Shiva** was brought to the ancient Shankaracharya Temple.

Key Points

➤ About:

- It is also known as the **Jyesteshwara temple or Pas-Pahar by Buddhists**. Persians and Jews call it **Bagh-i-sulaiman** or the **Garden of King Solomon**. Persian inscriptions are also found inside the temple.
- It is on **top of the Shankaracharya Hill (also called Hill of Solomon) on the Zabarwan Mountain in Srinagar, Kashmir**.
 - The temple is considered as the **oldest temple of the valley of Kashmir**.
- It is **dedicated to Lord Shiva**. The temple is at a **height of 1,000 feet** above the plain and overlooks the city of Srinagar.
- The temple **dates to 200 BC**, although the **present structure probably dates to the 9th century AD**.

Shankaracharya

➤ About:

- He was also known as **Adi Shankara**. Born in **Kaladi, Kerala in 788 CE**.
- Propounded the **Doctrine of Advaita (Monism)** and **wrote many commentaries** on the Vedic canon (Upanishads, Brahma Sutras and Bhagavad Gita) in Sanskrit.

➤ Major Work:

- **Brahmasutrabhasya** (Bhashya or commentary on the Brahma Sutra).
- **Bhagovinda Stotra**.
- **Nirvana Shatakam**.

➤ Other Contributions:

- Was responsible for **reviving Hinduism in India** to a great extent when Buddhism was gaining popularity.
- Established four Mathas in the four corners of India and the tradition continues to this day.

- It was **visited by Adi Shankara and has ever since been associated with him**; this is how the temple got the name Shankaracharya.

➤ Structure:

- This ancient temple is built in the **indigenous early Kashmiri style of architecture** and embraces the techniques prevailing in those days.
- The early **Shihara style** is prominently evident in the building design and is indicative of a **horseshoe arch type of pattern**.
- It is a **massive stone structure built on a high octagonal plinth** about thirty feet high.
- The **plinth is surmounted by a low parapet wall**. The shrine consists of a cell, circular inside, with a diameter of thirteen feet.
- The **square building of the temple is supported by the basement**.

Hindi Diwas

Why in News

Every year, **14th September** is celebrated as **Hindi Diwas in India**.

- One of the **reasons behind celebrating this day** is to **prevent the increasing trend of the English language in the nation and the neglect of Hindi**.

Key Points

➤ History of the Hindi Diwas:

- **Hindi**, written in the **Devanagari script**, was adopted as the **official language** of the Republic of India on **14th September, 1949**.
 - Kaka Kalelkar, Maithili Sharan Gupta, Hazari Prasad Dwivedi, Seth Govindadas made **important contributions** to make Hindi the official language.
- The **first Hindi Day** was celebrated in **1953**.
- Besides Hindi, English is the other **official language (Article 343)** of the Constitution).
- Hindi is also an **eighth schedule language**.
- **Article 351** pertains to '**Directive for development of the Hindi language**'.
- Hindi is **not a classical language**.

➤ About the Hindi Language:

Note:



- Hindi got its name from the **Persian word Hind**, meaning '**land of the Indus River**'. Turkish invaders in the **early 11th century** named the language of the region Hindi, 'language of the land of the Indus River'.
- **Hindi is the fifth most spoken language** among the total languages spoken in the world.
 - It is spoken in Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, USA, UK, Germany, New Zealand, United Arab Emirates, Uganda, Guyana, Suriname, Trinidad, Mauritius, and South Africa.

Panj Piare

Why in News

Recently, a controversy erupted in Punjab over the use of the term "**Panj Piare**" for political leaders.

Key Points

- **Part of Sikh Tradition:** The Panj Piare is the term used for the **Five Beloved**: the men **who were initiated into the khalsa** (the special group of **Sikh** warriors) under the leadership of the last of the ten Gurus, **Gobind Singh**.
 - They are deeply **revered by Sikhs** as symbols of steadfastness and devotion.
- **Origin:** Guru Gobind Singh established the institution of Panj Piare while founding the Khalsa **on the day of Baisakhi in 1699**.
 - To preserve the culture, Guru Gobind Singh asked for five men willing to surrender their lives for him and the cause. With great reluctance by nearly everyone, eventually, five volunteers stepped forward.
 - Guru Gobind Singh himself got baptised from them at the same stage to tell the Sikhs that Panj Piaras have **higher authority and decision making power** than anyone in the community.
 - The **original five beloved Panj Piare** who played a vital role in shaping Sikh history and defining Sikhism are:
 - **Bhai Daya Singh** (1661 - 1708 CE) from Lahore
 - **Bhai Dharam Singh** (1699 - 1708 CE) from Hastinapur
 - **Bhai Himmat Singh** (1661 - 1705 CE) from Jagannath Puri

- **Bhai Muhkam Singh** (1663 - 1705 CE) from Dwarka
- **Bhai Sahib Singh** (1662 - 1705 CE) from Bidar
- Since then, every group of five baptised Sikhs is called Panj Piare and accorded the respect enjoyed by the first five Sikhs.

Khalsa Order

- **Guru Gobind Singh established the Khalsa order** (meaning 'The Pure'), soldier-saints.
- The Khalsa **upholds the highest Sikh virtues** of commitment, dedication and a social conscious.
- The Khalsa are men and women who have undergone the Sikh baptism ceremony and who strictly follow the Sikh Code of Conduct and Conventions and wear the prescribed physical articles of the faith (**5K's**: **Kesh** (uncut hair), **Kangha** (a wooden comb), **Kara** (a iron bracelet), **Kachera** (cotton underpants) and **Kirpan** (an iron dagger).

Qutub Minar

Why in News

Recently, steep stairways and wooden ramps among other changes have been brought at the **World Heritage Site of Qutub Minar** that will make the place accessible for disabled and the elderly.

- **Humayun's Tomb** (1993) and **Red Fort Complex** (2007) are other **world heritage monuments** in Delhi.

Key Points

- It is a **five-storeyed red sandstone tower** (72.5 m high) **built by Muslim conquerors in the thirteenth century** to commemorate their final triumph over the Rajput rulers of Delhi (Qutub means victory), while also serving as a tower from where muezzins (criers) call for prayer at the **Quwwatu'l-Islam mosque nearby**.
 - A **7 m-high iron pillar** stands in the courtyard of the mosque.
- Its surrounding contains **Alai-Darwaza Gate**, the masterpiece of **Indo-Muslim art (built in 1311)**.
- The building process of Qutub Minar took about 75 years. Its construction was **started by Qutub-ud-din Aibak** (1206-1210) in 1193 and **finished by Iltutmish** (1211-1236).

Note:



- In 1368, it was repaired by the rulers of the day, Muhammad-bin-Tughluq (1325-51) and Firuz Shah Tughluq (1351-88).
- The minar (tower) is engraved with fine **arabesque decorations** on its surface, mainly **verses from the Quran**.
- Qutub Minar and its monuments were **declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1993**.

Kushinagar International Airport

Why in News

The **Kushinagar Airport in Uttar Pradesh** is the **latest entrant in India's list of international Airports**. The airport is expected to provide seamless **connectivity to people from South east and East Asian countries for Buddhist Pilgrimage Tourism**.

- Kushinagar is the **centre of the Buddhist circuit**, which consists of pilgrimage sites at Lumbini, Sarnath, Gaya and others.

Key Points

- **Kushinagar Airport and Cultural Diplomacy:**
 - The inauguration of Kushinagar International airport is set to be a landmark in the **India-Sri Lanka relations**.
 - On the occasion of Airport's inauguration, Sri Lanka will present to India photographs of two **mural paintings**:
 - One Mural Painting shows **Arahat Bhikkhu' Mahinda**, son of Emperor Ashoka delivering the message of the Buddha to **King Devanampiyatissa of Sri Lanka**.
 - The other shows the arrival of **'Theri Bhikkhuni' Sanghamitta**, the daughter of the Emperor, in Sri Lanka, bearing a sapling of the **'sacred Bodhi tree'** under which Siddhārtha Gautama is believed to have attained enlightenment.
 - The Buddhist circuit reflects the **use of soft power in India's foreign policy**.
 - The emphasis on **Buddhist diplomacy**, will help counter increasing **Chinese influence in Sri Lanka** and improve people to people relations (especially

in the context of the aftermath of **Sri-lankan Civil War**).

- Further, the Buddhist faith, due to its **emphasis on peaceful co-existence and its wide pan-Asian presence**, lends itself well to soft-power diplomacy.

Spread of Buddhism in Sri Lanka

- Buddhism was **first brought to Sri Lanka by a mission sent out from eastern India during the reign of the Mauryan emperor Ashoka** (c. 273–232 BCE).
- The **leader of the mission to Sri Lanka, Mahendra (Mahinda)**, is described as Ashoka's son.

Buddha Path

- Buddha was **born in 563 BC at Lumbini, in Nepal**.
- He preached that one should avoid the excess of both luxury and austerity. He advocated the **"madhyam marg"** (middle path).
- The **eight-fold path** (extraordinary Teachings of the Buddha) comprised the following:
 - Right view;
 - Right resource;
 - Right speech;
 - Right conduct;
 - Right livelihood;
 - Right effort;
 - Right mindfulness;
 - Right concentration.
- The **'Buddha Path'** also refers to the **Eight Great Places of Buddhist Heritage** (referred in Pali as **Aṭṭhamahāṭhānāni**). They are:
 - **Lumbini (Nepal)**- Buddha was born.
 - **Bodh Gaya (Bihar)**- Attained enlightenment.
 - **Sarnath (Varanasi, U.P.)**- First sermon.
 - **Kushinagar (Gorakhpur, U.P.)**- Buddha died.
 - **Rajgir (Bihar)** - Where the Lord tamed a mad elephant.
 - **Vaishali (Bihar)** - Where a monkey offered honey to him.
 - **Sravasti (U.P)** - The Lord took his seat on a thousand petaled lotus and created multiple representations of himself.
 - **Sankasya** (Farrukhabad, Uttar Pradesh)- He descended from heaven.

Note:



Srinagar: UNESCO Creative Cities Network

Why in News

Recently, the **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)** designated Srinagar as a part of **UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN)**.

- After Mumbai, Chennai, Hyderabad, Varanasi and Jaipur, **Srinagar is the sixth Indian city** to achieve this distinction.

Key Points

- **About:**
 - The **Srinagar city** has been designated the **creative city in the field of Crafts and Folk Arts** - only second city in India in this category **after Jaipur**.
 - It will not only give global recognition to the Srinagar city but also help it in **international funding, tie-ups with craft universities** and pitching craft as a product.
 - With this, the capital city of Jammu and Kashmir (Srinagar) **has entered the club of 295 creative cities network** across the world.
 - Every year, UNESCO seeks applications for various cities across the globe for putting them under its UCCN project. The **applications in India are routed through the Ministry of Culture**.
- **UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN):**
 - It was **created in 2004**.
 - It **aims** to "promote cooperation among cities which recognize creativity as a strategic factor in their urban development".
 - **Sustainable Development Goal 11** aims for Sustainable Cities and Communities.
 - The **network covers seven creative fields**: crafts and folk arts, media arts, film, design, gastronomy, literature and music.
- **Indian Cities on UCCN:**
 - Srinagar – Crafts and Folk Arts (2021)
 - Mumbai – Film (2019).
 - Hyderabad – Gastronomy (2019).
 - Chennai – Creative city of Music (2017).
 - Jaipur – Crafts and Folk Arts (2015).
 - Varanasi – Creative city of Music (2015).

UNESCO

➤ About:

- It is a **specialized agency of the United Nations (UN)**. It seeks to build peace through international cooperation in Education, the Sciences and Culture.
- It was **founded in 1945** and is located in **Paris, France**.

➤ Major Initiatives of UNESCO:

- **Man and Biosphere Programme**
- **World Heritage Programme**
- **Global Geopark Network**
- **Network of Creative Cities**
- **Atlas of World Languages in Danger**

➤ Reports:

- UNESCO Science Report
- Global Education Monitoring Report
- **State of the Education Report for India**

Logos of Darjeeling Toy Train as Intellectual Property

Why in News

Recently, **India has finally registered the logos (two) of the iconic 'Toy Train'** internationally as its intellectual property.

- The claim for registration was sent to the **World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO)** with the procedure laid down in WIPO's Vienna Classification (VCL). There is a six-month window to register any counter-claims, following which the Indian government's claim will receive international approval.

Key Points

➤ About:

- The use of these logos anywhere in the world will now require written permission from India and the payment of a fee.
- The **DHR has two logos**, both of which have been patented. The process of registering the logo with the Controller General of Patents, Designs and Trademarks under the Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry was initiated in August 2021. It was then sent to the WIPO.

Note:



- Both logos are over a century old, and popular in world heritage circuits.
- They are used randomly on merchandise and communications materials by various commercial organisations in Europe, the UK and the US; even the West Bengal government has used it in communications and on merchandise in the past.
- **Significance:** This will put the Darjeeling Toy Train's 'Iron Sherpa' blue steam locomotives on the same pedestal as the legendary transalpine Rhaetian Railway in Switzerland, and is likely to boost its recognition and prominence around the world.



Darjeeling Himalayan Railway...
A UNESCO world heritage site



➤ DHR:

- DHR was built in the British era between 1879 and 1881.
- It is located in the foothills of the Himalayas in West Bengal.
- It is the most outstanding example of a hill passenger railway. Its design applies bold and ingenious engineering solutions to the problem of establishing an effective rail link across a mountainous terrain of great beauty.
- It was declared a **UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) World Heritage Site** in 1999.
- **Other Mountain Railways Declared as World Heritage Sites:**
 - **Nilgiri Mountain Railways** located in the Nilgiri Hills of Tamil Nadu (South India) (2005).
 - **Kalka Shimla Railway** located in the Himalayan foothills of Himachal Pradesh (Northwest India) (2008).

WIPO's Vienna Classification

- VCL is an international classification system established in 1973 by the Vienna Agreement Establishing an International Classification of the Figurative Elements of Marks, and administered by the **World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)**.

- WIPO is one of the oldest **specialized agencies of the United Nations**. It is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.
- It consists of a hierarchical system that proceeds from the general to the particular, classifying the **figurative elements of marks into categories, divisions and sections**, on the basis of their shape.

Reopening Kartarpur Corridor

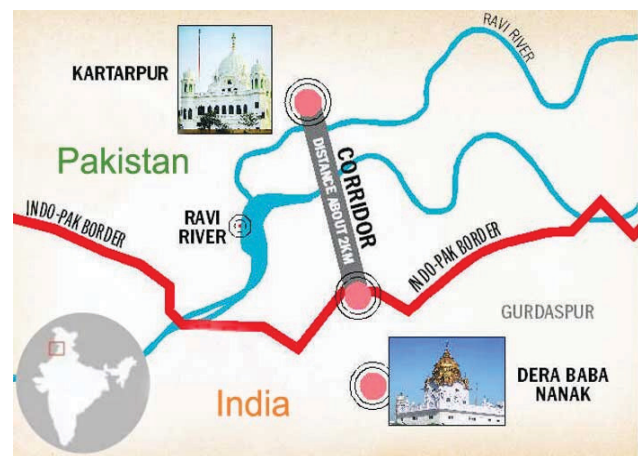
Why in News

The government is considering reopening the Kartarpur Sahib Gurudwara corridor to Pakistan to allow Sikh pilgrims to cross over, more than 20 months after it was shut down due to the **Covid-19 pandemic**.

- Government is considering opening the route by 19th November (2021), the **birth anniversary of the Sikh founder Guru Nanak**, known as Gurburab or "Prakash Parv".

Key Points

- **About:**
 - The corridor is **one of the rare new initiatives between India and Pakistan** amidst ties that have been in a downward spiral in 2019 after the Pulwama attack, Balakot strikes and the decision to amend **Article 370** on Jammu and Kashmir, which led to the recall of diplomats on both sides and cancellation of all trade relations.
 - The project is also unique as **visa-free "Human corridors"** of this sort are normally used for **emergency situations**: refugees fleeing violence or humanitarian disasters, not for pilgrimages.



Note:



➤ **Kartarpur Corridor:**

- The Kartarpur corridor connects the Darbar Sahib Gurdwara in **Narowal district of Pakistan with the Dera Baba Nanak shrine in Gurdaspur district** in India's Punjab province.
- The corridor was built to **commemorate 550th birth anniversary celebrations of Guru Nanak Dev**, founder of Sikhism on 12th November 2019.

Kashi Vishwanath Corridor

Why in News

Recently, the Prime Minister has **inaugurated Phase 1 of the Kashi Vishwanath Corridor Project in Uttar Pradesh's Varanasi**.

- 23 buildings – tourist facilitation centre, Vedic Kendra, Mumukshu Bhavan, Bhogshala, city museum, viewing gallery, food court among others — have been inaugurated as part of the project.

Key Points

➤ **About:**

- It is the massive makeover and the **first after the 1780 AD when the Maratha queen Ahilyabai Holkar of Indore renovated the Kashi Vishwanath temple and the area surrounding it**.

➤ **Significance:**

- It **connects the iconic Kashi Vishwanath temple and the ghats along the river Ganga**.
 - Kashi Vishwanath Temple is **one of the most famous Hindu temples dedicated to Lord Shiva**.
 - The temple stands on the western bank of the holy river Ganga, and is **one of the twelve Jyotirlingas, the holiest of Shiva temples**.
- It will help **boost tourism by providing the pilgrims and travellers with amenities such as wider and cleaner roads and lanes, better lighting with bright street lights, and clean drinking water**.

Durga Puja on UNESCO's ICH

Why in News

Recently, **Durga Puja in Kolkata** has been inscribed on the **UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) of Humanity**.

- It is the **first festival in Asia** to achieve recognition as UNESCO ICH of Humanity.
- Earlier, UNESCO announced the Harappan city of **Dholavira in Gujarat as India's 40th world heritage site**.

Key Points

➤ **Durga Puja:**

- Durga Puja is a **five-day festival** which begins on the **fifth night of the nine-day Navratri festival** and ends on the tenth day, which is Dashami.
- During this time, people collectively worship and invoke Goddess Durga, who is regarded as the feminine energy of the cosmos, also known as 'Shakti'.
- It is **one of the largest cultural carnivals** and street art festivals of the country.
- During this time, **intricately-designed clay models of the Goddess are worshipped** in 'pandals' and pavilions where people get together.
 - Folk music, culinary, craft, and performing arts traditions are a part of the celebration.
- Though originating in West Bengal, which has the **largest Bengali community in the country**, the festival is **celebrated in many other parts of India**, and also the world.

13 ICH traditions recognised by UNESCO

1. Tradition of Vedic chanting, 2008	8. Buddhist chanting of Ladakh: recitation of sacred Buddhist texts in the trans-Himalayan Ladakh region, Jammu and Kashmir, India, 2012
2. Ramilla, the traditional performance of the Ramayana, 2008	9. Sankirtana, ritual singing, drumming and dancing of Manipur, 2013
3. Kutiyattam, Sanskrit theatre, 2008	10. Traditional brass and copper craft of utensil making among the Thatheras of Jandiala Guru, Punjab, India, 2014
4. Ramman, religious festival and ritual theatre of the Garhwal Himalayas, India, 2009	11. Yoga, 2016
5. Mudiattu, ritual theatre and dance drama of Kerala, 2010	12. Nowruz, 2016
6. Kalbelia folk songs and dances of Rajasthan, 2010	13. Kumbh Mela, 2017
7. Chhau dance, 2010	

Tamil Literature: Sangam Period

Why in News

Recently, the Minister of State for Education, released the **Hindi translation of Tolkāppiyam and the Kannada translations of 9 books of Classical Tamil literature**.

- Tamil literature **goes back to the Sangam Era**, named after the assembly (sangam) of poets.

Key Points

➤ **About:**

Note:



○ Sangam Period:

- The period roughly between the **3rd century B.C. and 3rd century A.D.** in South India (the area lying to the south of river **Krishna and Tungabhadra**) is known as **Sangam Period**.
- It has been named after the **Sangam academies** held during that period that flourished under the royal patronage of the **Pandya kings** of Madurai.
- At the sangams, eminent scholars assembled and functioned as the board of censors and the choicest literature was rendered in the nature of anthologies.
- These literary works were the **earliest specimens of Dravidian literature**.
- South India, during the Sangam Age, was ruled by three dynasties-the **Cheras, Cholas and Pandyas**.

○ Three Sangams:

- According to the Tamil legends, there were three Sangams (Academy of Tamil poets) held in the ancient South India popularly called **Muchchangam**.
 - The **First Sangam**, is believed to be held at **Madurai**, attended by gods and legendary sages. No literary work of this Sangam is available.
 - The **Second Sangam** was held at **Kapadapuram**, only Tolkappiyam survives from this.
 - The **Third Sangam** was also held at **Madurai**. A few of these Tamil literary works have survived and are a useful source to reconstruct the history of the Sangam period.

➤ Sangam Literature:

- The Sangam literature includes Tolkappiyam, Ettutogai, Pattuppattu, Pathinenkilkanakku, and two epics named – Silappathikaram and Manimegalai.
- **Tolkappiyam:** It was authored by Tolkappiyar and is considered the earliest of Tamil literary work.
 - Though it is a work on Tamil grammar, it also provides insights on the political and socio-economic conditions of the time.
 - It is a unique work on grammar and poetics, in its three parts of nine sections each, deals with Ezhuttu(letter), Col (word) and Porul (subject matter).

- Almost all levels of the human language from the spoken to the most poetic lie within the purview of Tolkappiyar's analysis as he treats in exquisitely poetic and epigrammatic statements on phonology, morphology, syntax, rhetoric, prosody and poetics.

- **Ettutogai (Eight Anthologies):** It consists of eight works – Aingurunooru, Narrinai, Aganaooru, Purananooru, Kuruntogai, Kalittogai, Paripadal and Padirrupattu.

- **Pattuppattu (Ten Idylls):** It consists of ten works – Thirumurugarruppadai, Porunararruppadai, Sirupanarruppadai, Perumpanarruppadai, Mullaippattu, Nedunalvada, Maduraikkanji, Kurinjippattu, Pattinappalai and Malaipadukadam.

- **Pathinenkilkanakku:** It contains eighteen works about ethics and morals.

- The most important among these works is **Tirukkural authored by Thiruvalluvar**, the Tamil great poet and philosopher.

- **Tamil Epics:** The two epics **Silappathikaram** is written by **Elango Adigal** and **Manimegalai** by **Sittalai Sattanar**.

- They also provide valuable details about the Sangam society and polity.

Chalcolithic Culture in Central India

Why in News

Recently, **Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)** carried out excavations at two prominent sites of Chalcolithic affiliations in **Central India** (Eran, district Sagar and at Tewar, district Jabalpur) in the state of **Madhya Pradesh**.

Key Points

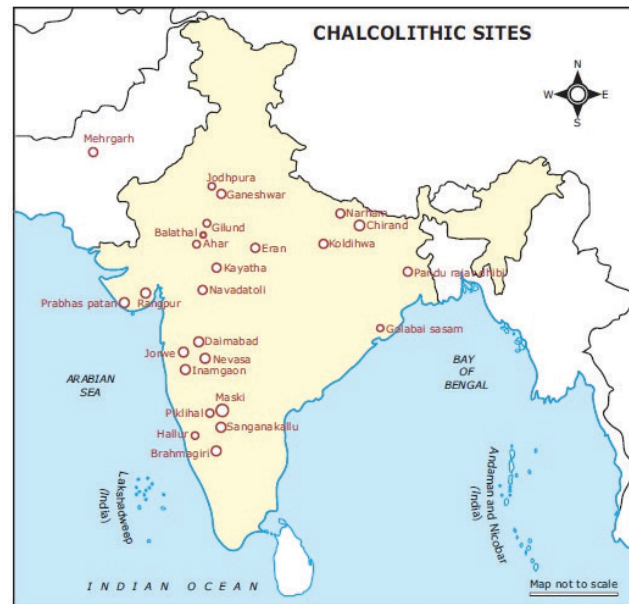
➤ Chalcolithic Culture:

- **About:** The end of the **Neolithic period** saw the use of metals. Several cultures were based on the use of copper and stone implements.
- Such a culture is called **Chalcolithic** and as the name indicates, during the **Chalcolithic (Chalco = Copper and Lithic = Stone) period**, both **metal and stone** were utilised for the manufacture of the equipment in day-to-day life.

Note:



- The Chalcolithic cultures followed the **Bronze Age Harappa culture**.
- It spanned around **2500 BC to 700 BC**.
- **Salient Features:** The Chalcolithic culture of a region was defined according to certain salient features seen in ceramics and other cultural equipment like **copper artefacts, beads of semi-precious stones, stone tools and terracotta figurines**.
- **Characteristics:**
 - **Rural Settlements:** The **people were mostly rural** and lived near hills and rivers.
 - The people of Chalcolithic Age survived on **hunting, fishing, and farming**
 - **Regional Differences:** Regional differences in social structure, cereals and pottery become visible.
 - **Migration:** Migration and diffusion of population groups were often cited as causes for the origin of different cultures within the Chalcolithic period.
 - **First Metal Age of India:** Since this was the first metal age, copper and its alloy bronze which melt at low temperature were used for the manufacture of various objects during this period.
 - **Art and Craft:** The **specialty** of the Chalcolithic culture was **wheel made pottery mostly of red and orange colour**.
 - Different types of pottery were used by the people of the Chalcolithic phase. The Black-and-Red pottery among them was quite common.
 - The **Ochre-Coloured Pottery (OCP)** was also in use.
- **Excavation at Eran during 2020-21:**
 - Eran (ancient Airikina) is situated on the **left bank of the Bina (ancient Venva) river** and surrounded by it on three sides.
 - **Bina river** is a river that flows in Madhya Pradesh state of India. It is a chief **tributary of the Betwa river**, which is itself a **tributary of the Yamuna river**.
 - Eran is located 75 km north-west from Sagar district headquarter.
 - The recent excavation at this site, during 2020-21, has unearthed a variety of antiquities including a **copper coin, an iron arrowhead, terracotta bead, stone beads along with a copper coins, stone**



celt, beads of steatite and jasper, glass, carnelian, terracotta wheel, animal figurines, miniature pots, iron objects, stone querns, pestles and a red slipped terracotta with inscription in Devnagari.

- The occurrence of few specimens of plain, thin grey ware is noteworthy.
- The use of **iron was evidenced by few metallic objects** at the site.
- This excavation at the site also revealed the remains of Chalcolithic culture with four major periods i.e.
 - **Period I:** Chalcolithic (18th -7th BCE),
 - **Period II:** Early historic (7th– 2nd century BCE & 2nd century BCE – 1st century CE),
 - **Period III:** 1st – 6th century CE
 - **Period IV:** late mediaeval (16th – 18th century CE).
- **Excavation at Tewar during 2020-21:**
 - Tewar (Tripuri) village is located 12 km west of Jabalpur district on Jabalpur – Bhopal highway.
 - This excavation revealed **four folds of cultural sequences** i.e. **Kushana, Shunga, Satavahana, and Kalachuri**.
 - Antiquarian **remains in this excavation** include viz remains of sculptures, hopscotch, terracotta balls, Iron nails, copper coins, terracotta beads, implements of Iron and terracotta figurine, in ceramics red ware, black ware, red slipped ware with shapes of handi, bowl, spouted pot, small pot, big jar, etc., structural remains consist of brick wall and structure of sandstone columns.

Note:



Conservation of Konark Sun Temple: Odisha

Why in News

Recently, the **Archeological Survey of India (ASI)** has revealed it is working on a preliminary roadmap to **safely remove sand** from the interiors of **Konark Sun Temple**.

- The sand was filled over a century ago by the **British in Jaga Mohan (assembly hall)** of the Sun Temple for the stability of the temple.

Key Points

➤ Conservation Process:

- The **British administration in 1903** had filled the hall with sand and sealed it in order to maintain the durability of the **thirteenth-century world heritage site**.
 - They had made hole on the top portion of the **Jaga Mohan and poured the sand through that**.
- The need to remove the sand was felt after a study **warned of possible damage caused by the sand settling down** — resulting in a **gap of 17 feet** between the sand layer and the structure.
- To carry out the sand-removing process, ASI is going to be assisted by the **Central Building Research Institute (CBRI) at Roorkee**, which had done a scientific study on the temple's structural stability between 2013 and 2018.

➤ About Konark Temple:

- Konark Sun Temple, located in the **East Odisha near the sacred city of Puri**.
- Built in the 13th century by **King Narasimhadeva I (AD 1238-1264)**. Its scale, refinement and conception represent the strength and stability of the **Eastern Ganga Empire** as well as the value systems of the historic milieu.
 - The Eastern Ganga dynasty also known as Rudhi Gangas or Prachya Gangas.
 - It was the large Indian royal dynasty in the medieval era that reigned from Kalinga from as early as the **5th century to the early 15th century**.
 - The beginnings of what became the **Eastern Ganga dynasty** came about when **Indravarma I** defeated the Vishnukundin king.

- The temple is designed in the shape of a **colossal chariot**.
- It is dedicated to the **sun God**.
- The Konark temple is widely known not only for its **architectural grandeur** but also for the **intricacy and profusion of sculptural work**.
 - It marks the highest point of achievement of Kalinga architecture depicting the grace, the joy and the rhythm of life in all its wondrous variety.
- It was declared a **UNESCO world heritage site** in 1984.
- There are two rows of **12 wheels on each side of the Konark sun temple**. Some say the wheels represent the **24 hours in a day** and others say the 12 months.
- The seven horses are said to **symbolise the seven days of the week**.
- Sailors once called this Sun Temple of Konark, the **Black Pagoda** because it was supposed to draw ships into the shore and cause shipwrecks.
- Konark is the invaluable link in the history of the diffusion of the **cult of Surya**, which originating in Kashmir during the 8th century, finally reached the shores of Eastern India.

➤ Other Important Monuments in Odisha:

- **Jagannath Temple**
- **Tara Tarini Temple**
- **Udaygiri and Khandagiri Caves**
- **Lingaraja Temple**

Kalinga Architecture

➤ About:

- The Indian temples are broadly divided into **Nagara, Vesara, Dravida** and **Gadag** styles of architecture.
- However, the temple architecture of Odisha corresponds altogether to a different category for their unique representations called Kalinga style of temple architecture.
- This style **broadly comes under the Nagara style**.

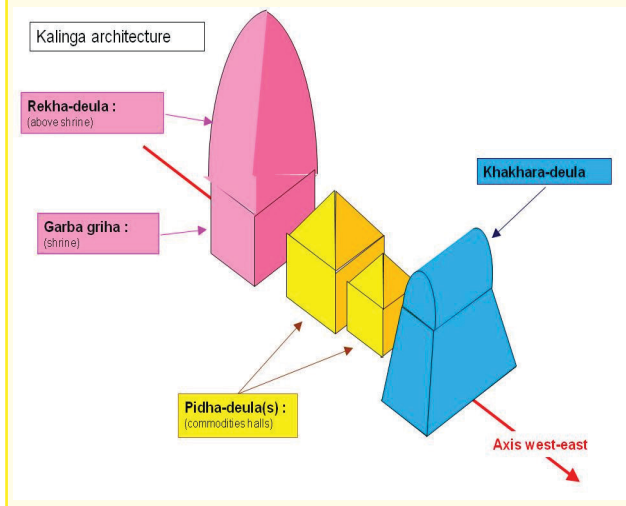
➤ The Architecture:

- In Kalinga Architecture, basically a temple is **made in two parts**, a tower and a hall. The tower is called deula and the hall is called jagmohan.
- The walls of both the **deula** and the **jagmohan** are lavishly sculpted with architectural motifs and a profusion of figures.

Note:



- The most repeated form is the **horseshoe shape**, which has come from the earliest times, starting with the large windows of the chaitya-grihas.
- It is the deula which makes three **distinct types of temples in Kalinga Architecture**:
 - Rekha Deula.
 - Pidha Deula.
 - Khakhara Deula.
- The former two are associated with **Vishnu, Surya and Shiva temples** while the third is mainly with Chamunda and Durga temples.
- The Rekha Deula and Khakhara Deula houses the sanctum sanctorum while the Pidha Deula constitutes outer dancing and offering halls.



Kathak

Why in News

Recently, the famous **Kathak** dancer **Pandit Munna Shukla** died.

- His most noted works include the dance-drama Shan-e-Mughal, Inder Sabha, Ameer Khusro, Anga Mukti, Anvesha, Bahar, Tratak, Kraunch Badh, Dhuni, among others.
- His contribution to the world of dance was awarded the **Sangeet Natak Akademi Award (2006)**, **Sahitya Kala Parishad Award (2003)** and the **Saraswathi Samman (2011)**.

Key Points

- **About:**

- The word Kathak has been derived from the **word Katha which means a story**. It is primarily performed in Northern India.
- It was primarily a temple or **village performance** wherein the **dancers narrated stories from ancient scriptures**. It is one of the **classical dances of India**.

➤ Evolution:

- Kathak began evolving into a distinct mode of dance in the **fifteenth and sixteenth centuries with the spread of the Bhakti movement**.
- The legends of Radha-Krishna were enacted in folk plays called **rasa lila**, which combined folk dance with the basic gestures of the kathak **story-tellers**.
- Under the **Mughal emperors and their nobles**, Kathak was performed in the court, where it acquired its present features and developed into a form of dance with a distinctive style.
- Under the patronage of **Wajid Ali Shah, the last Nawab of Awadh**, it grew into a major art form.

➤ Dance Style:

- Usually a solo performance, the dancer often pauses to recite verses followed by their **execution through movement**.
- The focus is more on footwork; the movements are skillfully controlled and performed **straight-legged** by dancers **wearing ankle-bells**.
- The **tatkaar** is the fundamental footwork in kathak.
- Kathak is the only form of classical dance wedded to Hindustani or North Indian music.
- Some prominent dancers include **Birju Maharaj, Sitara Devi**.

➤ Other Classical Dances in India

- **Bharatanatyam** from Tamil Nadu
- **Kathakali**, from Kerala.
- **Kuchipudi**, from Andhra Pradesh.
- **Odissi**, from Odisha.
- **Sattriya**, from Assam.
- **Manipuri**, from Manipur.
- **Mohiniyattam**, from Kerala.

Kala Kumbh-Artist Workshops

Why in News

As part of grand celebrations of the Amrit Mahotsav, the **Ministry of Culture in collaboration with the Ministry**

Note:



of Defence organised **Kala Kumbh** - artist workshops for painting scrolls.

- The Director General, **NGMA (National Gallery of Modern Art)** along with professors of eminent universities acted as mentors for the scroll painting workshops.

Key Points

- **About:**
 - The **major theme** of these artworks is on the **unsung heroes of the struggle for India's freedom**.
 - Inspiration has also been drawn from the illustrations in the Constitution of India which have been **meticulously done by Nandalal Bose** – one of the leading masters of modern Indian art from the Bengal School along with a team of other eminent artists and calligraphers.
- **National Gallery of Modern Art:**
 - **About:**
 - It is a **national premier Institute that was established in 1954** by then vice-president Dr. S Radhakrishnan in the presence of Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru.
 - NGMA is a **repository of the cultural ethos of the country and showcases the changing art forms through the passage of the last hundred and fifty years** starting from about 1857 in the field of Visual and Plastic arts.
 - **Headquarters:** New Delhi.
 - **Nodal Ministry:** It is run and administered under the **Ministry of Culture**.

Nandalal Bose (1882-1966)

- He was one of the **pioneers of modern Indian art and a key figure of Contextual Modernism**.
- Bose was groomed by **Abanindranath Tagore**, the nephew of **Rabindranath Tagore** as well as the principal artist and creator of the Indian Society of Oriental Art, for five years till 1910.
- Association with the Tagore family and the **murals of Ajanta awakened his idealism for a nationalistic consciousness, commitment toward classical and folk art**, along with its underlying spirituality and symbolism.
- His classic works include **paintings of scenes from Indian mythologies, women, and village life**.

- In his own work, **Bose experimented with the flat treatment of Mughal and Rajasthani traditions** and played with the Sino-Japanese style and technique in his works.
- Bose became principal of the Kala Bhavana (College of Arts) at **Rabindranath Tagore's International University Santiniketan in 1922**.
- The Congress entrusted Bose with the **task of illustrating the pages of the Indian Constitution, when it was being drafted**. Along with his disciple Rammanohar, Bose took up the **task of beautifying and decorating the original manuscript of the Constitution**.
- Today, many critics consider his paintings among **India's most important modern paintings**.
 - In **1976**, the **Archaeological Survey of India** declared his works among the **"nine artists" whose work, "not being antiquities", were to be henceforth considered "to be art treasures, having regard to their artistic and aesthetic value"**.

World Heritage Nomination 2022-2023

Why in News?

Recently, the **Union Ministry of Culture** has **nominated Sacred Ensembles of the Hoysalas temples** for consideration as a **World Heritage site for the year 2022-2023**.

- The sacred ensembles of the **Hoysalas**, built in the **12th-13th centuries** and represented by the **three components of Belur, Halebid and Somnathapura in Karnataka**. All these three Hoysala temples are protected monuments of the **Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)**.
- The **'Sacred Ensembles of the Hoysala'** have been on **UNESCO's Tentative list since 15th April, 2014** and stand testimony to the rich historical and cultural heritage of India.
- Earlier, the **UNESCO's World Heritage Centre (WHC)** had agreed to **publish Hindi descriptions of India's UNESCO World Heritage Sites** on the WHC website.

What are the Features of Belur, Halebid, and Somnathapura temples?

Note:



➤ **Chennakeshava Temple, Belur:**

- Construction of the temple commenced in 1117 AD and took 103 years to complete.
- The temple is dedicated to **Lord Vishnu known as Chennakesava**, which means beautiful (chenna) Vishnu (Keshava).
- The richly sculptured exterior of the temple narrates scenes from the life of Vishnu and his incarnations and the epics, Ramayana, and Mahabharata.
- However, some of the representations of Shiva are also included.

➤ **Hoysaleswara Temple, Halebidu:**

- The Hoysaleswara temple at Halebidu is the **most exemplary architectural ensemble of the Hoysalas extant today**.
- Built in 1121CE during the reign of the **Hoysala King, Vishnuvardhana Hoysaleswara**.
- The temple, **dedicated to Shiva**, was sponsored and built by wealthy citizens and merchants of Dorasamudra.
- The temple is most **well-known for the more than 240 wall sculptures** that run all along the outer wall.
- Halebid has a walled complex containing three **Jaina basadi (temples)** of the Hoysala period as well as a stepped well.

➤ **Keshava Temple, Somanathapura:**

- The Keshava temple at Somanathapura is another **magnificent Hoysala monument, perhaps the last**.
- This is a breathtakingly beautiful Trikuta Temple dedicated to **Lord Krishna** in three forms – Janardhana, Keshava and Venugopala.
- Unfortunately, the main Keshava idol is missing, and the Janardhana and Venugopala idols are damaged.

What are the Characteristics of Hoysala Architecture?

- Hoysala architecture is the building style developed under the rule of the Hoysala Empire between the 11th and 14th centuries, mostly concentrated in southern Karnataka.
- Hoysala temples are sometimes called hybrid or vesara as their unique style seems neither completely Dravida nor Nagara, but somewhere in between.
 - The Hoysala temples have a **basic Darvidian morphology** but show strong influences of the

Bhumija mode widely used in Central India, the **Nagara traditions** of northern and western India, and the **Karntata Dravida modes** favoured by the **Kalyani Chalukyas**.

- Therefore, the **Hoysala architects made considered and informed eclectic selections** of features from other temple typologies which they further modified and then complemented with their own particular innovations.
- The result was the birth of a completely novel **'Hoysala Temple'** form.
- The Hoysala temples, **instead of consisting of a simple inner chamber** with its pillared hall, contain **multiple shrines grouped around a central pillared hall** and laid out in the shape of an intricately-designed star (stellate-plan).
- Since they are **made out of soapstone which is a relatively soft stone**, the artists were able to carve their sculptures intricately. This can be seen particularly in the jewellery of the gods that adorn their temple walls.

Devayatanam: Conference on Temple Architecture

Why in News?

Recently, the **Union Culture Minister** inaugurated **Devayatanam**, a one-of-a-kind conference on temple architecture of India, at **Hampi**, Karnataka.

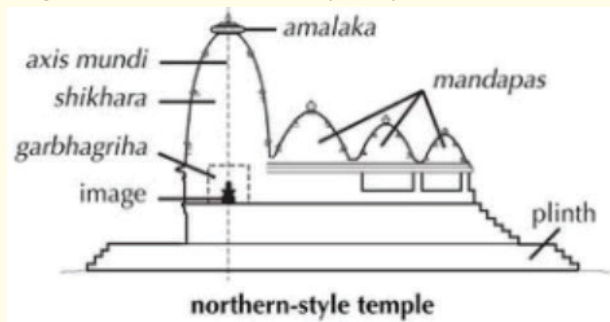
What are the Key Takeaways?

- It is a part of the celebration under **Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav** and is being organized on 25th-26th February by the **Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)** of the Ministry of Culture.
- The **temples of Hampi** are already featured in the **World Heritage List of UNESCO** for their Sheer brilliance, Scale of imagination, and Scintillating architecture.
 - Approximately **10 of India's 40 UNESCO World Heritage Inscriptions** are Hindu Temples in different architectural styles, patterns and symmetry.
 - In 2021, **Rudreswara Temple**, (also known as the Ramappa Temple) at Mulugu district, Telangana has been inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage list.
- Devayatnam, the house of god is **not only a place to worship** and perform rituals but also a centre for

education, fine arts, music, science & technology, rituals & traditions or activities shaping the society.

What is the difference between Nagara and Dravidian Style Temples?

Nagara or North Indian Temple Style



Features:

- In North India it is common for an entire temple to be built on a **stone platform with steps leading up to it**.
- Further, unlike in South India it **does not usually have elaborate boundary walls or gateways**.
- While the earliest temples had just one tower, or shikhara, later temples had several.
- The **garbhagriha is always located directly under the tallest tower**.

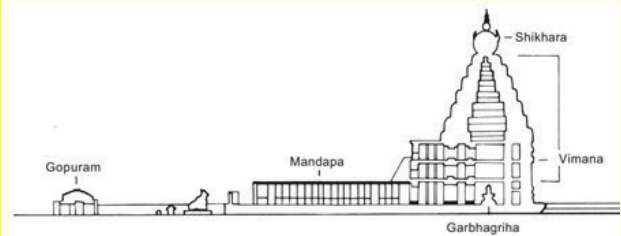
Subdivisions:

- There are many subdivisions of nagara temples **depending on the shape of the shikhara**.
- There are different names for the various parts of the temple in different parts of India; however, the most common name for the simple shikhara which is square at the base and whose walls curve or slope inward to a point on top is called the **'latina' or the rekha-prasada type of shikara**.
- The **second major type** of architectural form in the nagara order is the **phamsana**, which tends to be broader and shorter than latina ones.
 - Their roofs are composed of several slabs that gently rise to a single point over the centre of the building, unlike the latina ones which look like sharply rising tall towers.
- The third main sub-type of the nagara building is generally called the **valabhi type**.
 - These are rectangular buildings with a roof that rises into a vaulted chamber.

Examples:

- Khajuraho Group of temples, Sun temple, Konark, Sun temple at Modhera, Gujarat and Ossian temple, Gujarat.

Dravida or South Indian Temple Style



Features:

- Unlike the nagara temple, the dravida temple is **enclosed within a compound wall**.
- The front wall has an **entrance gateway in its centre, which is known as a gopuram**.
- The shape of the main temple tower **known as vimana in Tamil Nadu**, is like a stepped pyramid that rises up geometrically rather than the curving shikhara of North India.
- It is common to find a **large water reservoir, or a temple tank**, enclosed within the complex.
- Subsidiary shrines are either incorporated within the main temple tower, or located as distinct, separate small shrines beside the main temple.
- Temples **became rich administrative centres**, controlling vast areas of land.

Subdivisions:

- Just as there are many subdivisions of the main types of nagara temples, there are subdivisions also of dravida temples.
- These are **basically of five different shapes**:
 - square, usually called **kuta**, and also caturasra
 - rectangular or **shala or ayatasra**
 - elliptical, called **gaja-prishta** or elephant backed, or also called vrittayata, deriving from wagon vaulted shapes of apsidal chaityas with a horse-shoe shaped entrance facade usually called a nasi
 - circular or **vritta**
 - octagonal or **ashtasra**.

Examples:

- Kanchipuram, Thanjavur or Tanjore, Madurai and Kumbakonam are the most famous temple towns of Tamil Nadu.

Note:

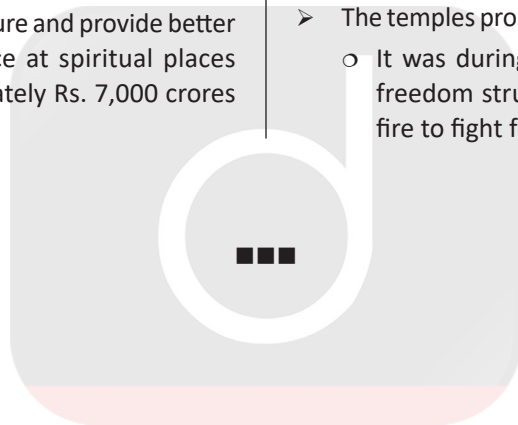


How Has the Government Promoted Temple in Recent Times?

- The Union Government has proposed **Hoysala temples of Belur and Somnathpur** to the **UNESCO World Heritage List**.
- A **grand temple of Lord Ram** that is being built in **Ayodhya**.
- After close to 250 years, the **spiritual capital of India - Kashi**, has been rejuvenated and has more accessibility with amenities and better infrastructure for devotees.
- The state of **Telangana has built 2 large stone carved temples worth Rs. 1,000 crores**.
- The focus is to **make existing spiritual places accessible to devotees** through better infrastructure and world class amenities.
 - **PRASHAD and SWADESH DARSHAN Scheme** to facilitate tourism infrastructure and provide better accessibility and experience at spiritual places with a budget of approximately Rs. 7,000 crores has been conceived.

What is the Significance of Indian Temples?

- Temples have been **centres of Indian art, knowledge, culture, spirituality, innovation and education**.
- There have been **three major styles of setting up temples in India** known as **Nagara, Dravidian and Vesara**.
 - **Dashavatar temple** in Devgarh is of Nagara style which is prevalent between the **Himalayas and the Vindhya mountains**.
 - The **Kailasanathar temple in Kanchi** is a Dravidian style temple, developed on the land of Krishna and Kaveri River.
 - Papanatha temple is one of the examples of Vesara style. **Vesara** is a **hybrid form Nagara and Dravidian style**.
- A **Hindu temple is a combination of art and science** which includes Shilpa sastra, vasthu sastra, geometry and symmetry.
- The temples promote **unity, integrity, and civilization**.
 - It was during the freedom struggle that all the freedom struggles were resolved before temple fire to fight for freedom of the country.



Note:



Key Points

Details

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Summary

Key Points

Details

Summary

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