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# Contents

● Lothal: World's Earliest Known Dock.....	1
● Mohenjo Daro: UNESCO's World Heritage Site.....	2
● UNESCO's Convention on Intangible Cultural Heritage .....	3
● World Heritage Nomination 2022-2023 .....	4
● Three Sites in Tentative List of World Heritage Sites .....	5
● Devayatanam: Conference on Temple Architecture .....	6
● Jagannath Temple .....	7
● Puri Heritage Corridor Project .....	7
● Martand Sun temple .....	8
● Malcha Mahal.....	9
● Megalithic Burial Sites .....	9
● Panini's Ashtadhyayi & Grammar's Greatest Puzzle .....	10
● Excavations of Iron in Tamil Nadu .....	10
● Keeladi Findings .....	11
● PRASHAD Scheme .....	13
● Revamping Monument Mitra Scheme .....	13
● Kanheri Caves .....	14
● Dickinsonia Fossil.....	14
● Evolution of Coinage System in India .....	15
● Dokra Metalcraft .....	16
● Lord Nataraja .....	17
● Statue of Peace of Swami Ramanujacharya .....	17
● Shiva Kumaraswami .....	18
● Basava Jayanti.....	19
● Thiruvalluvar .....	20
● Sant Tukaram .....	20
● Dhamma Dipa International Buddhist University .....	20
● ASI Discovers 1,300-yr-old Buddhist Stupa .....	21
● ASI finds Buddhist Caves in Bandhavgarh Forests .....	22
● Mahavir Jayanti .....	23
● Sufism .....	24
● National Tribal Dance Festival 2022 .....	25
● Wangala Dance .....	26
● Traditional New Year Festivals .....	26
● Makar Sankranti .....	27
● Importance of Regional Language.....	28

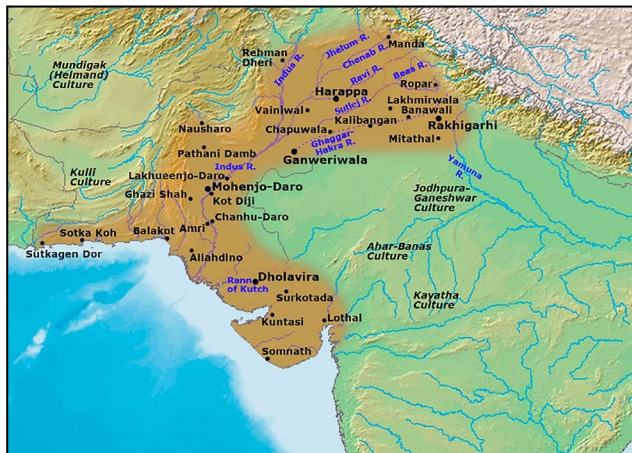
- Hindi Diwas ..... 29
- Rural Tourism ..... 29
- Tourism Working Group in Rann of Kutch..... 30
- Visva-Bharati to be World’s First Living eritage University ..... 30
- Patan Patola ..... 31
- Cultural Significance of PM’s Gifts for QUAD Leaders ..... 31
- Baliyatra ..... 33



## Lothal: World's Earliest Known Dock

### Why in News?

Recently, the Prime Minister has reviewed the construction of the **National Maritime Heritage Complex (NMHC) site** at Gujarat's Lothal.



### Where is Lothal?

#### ➤ About:

- **Lothal** was one of the **southernmost sites of the Indus Valley civilization (IVC)**, located in the Bhāl region of what is now the state of Gujarat.
- The port city is believed to have been built in **2,200 BC**.
- Lothal was a thriving trade center in ancient times, with its trade of **beads, gems and ornaments reaching West Asia and Africa**.
- The meaning of Lothal (a combination of Loth and (s) thal) in Gujarati is **"the mound of the dead"**.
  - Incidentally, the name of the city of **Mohenjo-daro (also part of the Indus Valley Civilisation, now in Pakistan)** means the same in Sindhi.
- 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**.

#### ➤ Discovery:

- Indian archaeologists started the search for cities of the Harappan Civilisation post-1947 in Gujarat's Saurashtra.

- Archaeologist SR Rao led the team which discovered **a number of Harappan sites at the time, including the port city of Lothal**.

- Excavation work was carried out in Lothal between **February 1955 and May 1960**.

#### ➤ Identification of Dockyard:

- The National Institute of Oceanography in Goa discovered **marine microfossils and salt, gypsum crystals at the site**, indicating that sea water once filled the structure and it was definitely a dockyard.
- In later excavations, ASI unearthed a **mound, a township, a marketplace, and the dock**.
- Adjacent to the excavated areas stands the archaeological site museum, where some of the **most prominent collections of Indus-era antiquities in India** are displayed.

### What is the Heritage Value of Lothal?

- Lothal was nominated in April 2014 as a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**, and its application is pending on the tentative list of UNESCO.
- The excavated site of Lothal is the **only port-town of the Indus Valley Civilisation**.

#### What are the Important Sites of IVC?

- **Harappa in present Pakistan** – granaries with big platform, stone symbol of lingam and yoni, mother goddess figure, wheat and barley in wooden mortar, dice, copper scale and mirror.
- **Mohenjo-daro in present Pakistan** - bronze dancing girl, the sculpture of bearded priest, the great bath, the great granary.
- **Dholavira in Gujarat** – giant water reservoir, unique water harnessing system, stadium, dams and embankments, inscription comprising 10 large sized signs like an advertisement board.
- **Ropar in Punjab** – dog buried with human oval pit burials.
- **Balathal and Kalibangan in Rajasthan** – bangle factory, toy carts, bones of camel, decorated bricks, citadel and lower town.
- **Banawali in Haryana** – toy plough, barley grains, oval-shaped settlement, the only city with radial streets.
- **Alamgirpur in Uttar Pradesh** – impression of a cloth on a trough.

Note:

## Mohenjo Daro: UNESCO's World Heritage Site

### Why in News?

Pakistan's Department of Archaeology warned that **heavy rainfall in the Sindh** province threatened the **World Heritage status of Mohenjo Daro**.

What threatens the Heritage Site?

- Between August 16 and 26, 2022, the **archaeological ruins of Mohenjo Daro received a record 779.5 mm of rain**, which had resulted in **"considerable damage to the site"** and partial falling of several walls, including the protection wall of the stupa dome".
  - Muneer Area, Stupa, Great Bath and other important sites of these ruins have been badly affected by the natural disaster.
- It is feared that the ruins of Mohenjo Daro might be removed from the World Heritage list, therefore the authorities of Sindh have called for **urgent attention towards conservation and restoration work** at the site.

### What are the Key Points of Mohenjo Daro?

- The site of Mohenjo Daro, literally meaning 'Mound of the Dead' is one of the important sites of **Indus Valley Civilization (IVC)**.
  - Sites of the **Indus Valley Civilisation** have been found in a **large area extending from Sutkagen Dor in Balochistan near the Pakistan-Iran border to Alamgirpur in Meerut district of Uttar Pradesh** and from Manda in Jammu to Daimabad in Maharashtra.
  - Other important sites of the Harappan civilization in India are at **Lothal and Dholavira in Gujarat, and Kalibangan in Rajasthan**.
- Along with Harappa, Mohenjo Daro is the **best-known site of the bronze age (3300 BC to 1200 BC) urban civilization**.
- It flourished in the Indus Valley between roughly **3,300 BC and 1,300 BC**, with its 'mature' phase spanning the period **2,600 BC to 1,900 BC**.
- Civilization went into decline in the **middle of the second millennium BC** for reasons that are believed to include **catastrophic climate change**.
- Excavation of Mohenjo Daro was started in 1920 and continued in phases until 1964-65, even now **only a small part of the site has been excavated**.

- The prehistoric antiquity of Mohenjo Daro was established by **Rakhal Das Banerji of the Archaeological Survey of India in 1922**.
- The site is **famous for its elaborate town planning with street grids** with brick pavements, developed water supply, drainage, and covered sewerage systems, homes with toilets, and monumental buildings such as the **Great Granary and the Great Bath**.
- At its peak, it was estimated to have between 30,000 and 60,000 residents with a **highly evolved social organization**.
- The ruins of the sprawling city of unbaked brick 510 km northeast of Karachi and 28 km from Larkana in Sindh were recognised as a **UNESCO World Heritage site in 1980**.

### What are UNESCO's World Heritage Sites?

#### ➤ About:

- 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.

#### ➤ Sites:

- There are around **1,100 UNESCO listed sites across its 167 member countries**.
- In **2021**, 'Liverpool — Maritime Mercantile City' in the United Kingdom was deleted from the World Heritage List due to **"the irreversible loss of attributes** conveying the outstanding universal value of the property".
  - In 2007, the UNESCO panel **delisted the Arabian Oryx Sanctuary in Oman** after concerns over poaching and habitat degradation, and the Elbe Valley in Dresden, Germany, in 2009 after the construction of the Waldschloesschen road bridge across the Elbe River.

#### ➤ Sites in India:

- India is home to a total of **3691 monuments and sites**. Of these 40 are designated as **UNESCO World Heritage Sites**.

Note:



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- Including places like the Taj Mahal, **Ajanta Caves and Ellora Caves**. **World Heritage Sites** also include natural sites like the **Kaziranga National Park in Assam**.
  - Harappan city of **Dholavira** in Gujarat as India's **40<sup>th</sup> world heritage site**.
  - **Ramappa Temple (Telangana)** was India's 39<sup>th</sup> World Heritage Site.
  - **Khangchendzonga National Park**, Sikkim has been inscribed as India's first and the only "Mixed World Heritage Site".
- In 2022, the Union Ministry of Culture nominated **Sacred Ensembles of the Hoysalas temples** for consideration as a World Heritage site for the year 2022-2023.

## UNESCO's Convention on Intangible Cultural Heritage

### Why in News?

India has been elected to the **Intergovernmental Committee of UNESCO's 2003 Convention** for the Safeguarding of the **Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH)** for the 2022-2026 cycle.

- India has served **as a member of the ICH Committee twice** — from 2006 to 2010 and from 2014 to 2018.
- Earlier, **Durga Puja** in Kolkata was inscribed on the **UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) of Humanity**.

### What is Intangible Cultural Heritage?

- Intangible cultural heritage is the **practices, expressions, knowledge and skills that communities, groups and sometimes individuals recognise** as part of their cultural heritage.
- Also called **living cultural heritage**, it is usually **expressed in one of the following forms**:
  - Oral Traditions
  - Performing Arts
  - Social Practices
  - Rituals and Festive events
  - Knowledge and Practices concerning nature and the universe
  - Traditional Craftsmanship

### What is UNESCO's Convention for Safeguarding the Intangible Heritage?

#### ➤ About:

- The Convention of the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage was adopted by the **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)** in **2003** and entered into force in 2006.
- It comprises **24 members** and is **elected in the General Assembly of the Convention** according to the principles of equitable geographical representation and rotation.
- Members of the Committee are **elected for a term of four years**.

#### ➤ Purpose:

- **To safeguard the expressions of intangible cultural heritage** that are endangered by the processes of globalization.
- **To ensure respect for the intangible cultural heritage** of the communities, groups and individuals.
- **To raise awareness at the local, national and international levels** of the importance of intangible cultural heritage.

#### ➤ Publications:

- Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.
- List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding.
- Register of good safeguarding practices.

### Which Indian

### Elements were Recognized as ICH?

- India has **14 intangible cultural heritage elements** on the prestigious UNESCO Representative List of ICH of Humanity.
- Other than the Durga Puja there are **13 Traditions in India recognised by UNESCO as ICH**.

#### Existing Tra.ditions of India Recognised by UNESCO

1.	Tradition of Vedic chanting, 2008
2.	Ramlila, the traditional performance of the Ramayana, 2008
3.	Kutiyattam, Sanskrit theatre, 2008
4.	Ramman, religious festival and ritual theatre of the Garhwal Himalayas, India, 2009
5.	Mudiyettu, ritual theatre and dance drama of Kerala, 2010

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6.	Kalbelia folk songs and dances of Rajasthan, 2010
7.	Chhau dance, 2010
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
11.	Yoga, 2016
12.	Nowruz, 2016
13.	Kumbh Mela, 2017

## 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 **12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> 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 ?

- **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 reincarnations 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 Trikota 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.

Note:



### What are the Characteristics of Hoysala Architecture?

- Hoysala architecture is the building style developed under the rule of the Hoysala Empire between the 11<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> 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.

## Three Sites in Tentative List of World Heritage Sites

### Why in News?

Recently, three sites- Gujarat's **Vadnagar** town and the iconic **Sun Temple at Modhera**, and the **Rock-cut Sculptures of Unakoti in Tripura** have been added to the tentative list of **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage Sites**.

### What are the Key Facts about Three Sites?

#### ➤ Vadnagar:

- It is located in the **Mehsana district in Gujarat** is a city with deep historical roots.
  - Also called Chamatkarpur, Anandpur, Snehpur and Vimalpur, the city of Vadnagar was mentioned in the **Puranas** as well.
- Home to many archaeological treasures, Vadnagar is famous for its torans, a pair of 12<sup>th</sup> century Solanki-era columns, 40 feet tall and built in red and yellow sandstone to celebrate a war victory.
- In 640 AD, Chinese Buddhist traveller, **Hiuen Tsang** visited the city, and is said to have mentioned it in his travelogue.
- During excavations in 2008-09, ruins of a Buddhist monastery were also unearthed in Vadnagar.
- Vadnagar is home to **Tanariri Performing Arts College**, named so to honour the valour of two sisters, Tana and Riri, who had sacrificed their lives when asked by Akbar to sing in his court, which was against their custom.

#### ➤ Modhera Sun Temple:

- The Sun Temple at **Modhera** is located on the left bank of the river **Pushpavati**, a tributary of river **Rupan** in **Becharaji taluka of Mehsana district**.
  - This east-facing temple is built with bright yellow sandstone.
- The temple description states that it is built in **Maru-gurjara architectural style**, consists of the main temple shrine (**garbhagriha**), a hall (**gadhamandapa**), an outer hall or assembly hall (**Sabhamandapa or rangamandapa**) and a sacred pool (**Surya Kunda**), which is now called **Ramakunda**.
  - **Ramakunda** is a massive rectangular stepped tank perhaps the grandest temple tank in India.

Note:



- Every year, at the **time of the equinoxes**, the **sun shines directly into this central shrine** of the temple.
- **Rock-cut Sculptures of Unakoti:**
  - It is **Shaivite pilgrimage** and dates back to 7th or 9th century if not earlier.
  - **Unakoti means one less than a crore** and it is said that **these many rock cut carvings** are available here.
  - As per Hindu mythology, when **Lord Shiva was going to Kashi along with one crore gods and goddesses**, he made a night halt at this location.
    - He asked all the gods and goddesses to wake up before sun rise and proceed for Kashi.
    - It is said that **in the morning, except Shiva himself, no one else could get up** so Lord Shiva set out for Kashi himself **cursing the others to become stone images**.
    - As a result, we have **one less than a crore stone images and carvings at Unakoti**.
  - The images found at Unakoti are of **two types, namely rock-carved figures and stone images**.
    - Among the **rock cut carvings**, the **central Shiva head and gigantic Ganesha figures** deserve special mention.
      - The **central Shiva head** is known as 'Unakotiswara Kal Bhairava'.
      - On each side of the head-dress of the central Shiva, **there are two full size female figures – one of Durga standing on a lion and another female figure on the other side**.
      - In addition, **three enormous images of Nandi Bull** are found half buried in the ground.
  - Every year a **big fair popularly known as 'Ashokastami Mela'** is held in the month of April which is visited by thousands of pilgrims.

#### What is UNESCO's Tentative List?

- UNESCO's tentative list is an **inventory of properties which each state party intends to consider for nomination**.
  - As per Operational Guidelines, 2019 of **UNESCO**, it is **mandatory to put any monument/site on the tentative list 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 now has now 52 sites** on the tentative list.

## 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.

- It is a part of the celebration under **Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav** and is being organized on 25<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> 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.

### 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**.

Note:

- 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.

## Jagannath Temple

### Why in News?

Recently, **Odisha Governor Ganeshi Lal** has backed the entry of **foreign nationals inside the world-famous Jagannath Temple** in Puri, wading into a debate that has lasted for decades and periodically triggered controversy.

- Currently, **only Hindus are allowed inside the shrine** to offer prayers to the deities in the **sanctum sanctorum**.
- A sign at the **Lion's Gate (main entrance)** of the Temple clearly states: **"Only Hindus are allowed."**

### What are the Key Facts about Jagannath Temple?

- The temple is believed to have been constructed in the 12<sup>th</sup> century by **King Anatavarman Chodaganga Deva** of the Eastern Ganga Dynasty.
- Jagannath Puri temple 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).
- The temple is known for its **unique architecture, which includes a massive compound wall and a large temple complex** with multiple towers, halls, and shrines.

- The temple's main attraction is the **Annual Rath Yatra festival**, in which the three main deities of the temple, **Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra** are taken out in a grand procession on a chariot.
- The temple is also known for its unique food offering, the **Mahaprasad**, which is prepared in the temple kitchen and is distributed among the devotees.



### What are the Other Popular Monuments of Odisha?

- **Konark Sun Temple (UNESCO World Heritage Site)**
- **Lingaraja Temple**
- **Tara Tarini Temple**

## Puri Heritage Corridor Project

### Why in News?

The Odisha government's ambitious temple corridor project in Puri has become a subject of political controversy.

### What is the Puri Heritage Corridor Project?

- It is a **redevelopment project of the Odisha government in Puri to create an international heritage site, including the Jagannath temple**. Though conceived in 2016, it was unveiled in December 2019.
- Under the umbrella project falls the **Shree Jagannatha Heritage Corridor (SJHC) or the Shree Mandira Parikrama Project**, for the revamp of the area around the temple.

### Why has the Project become a Subject of Controversy?

- Experts and members of civil society objected to the use of heavy machinery for digging, citing the **possibility of an adverse impact on the 12<sup>th</sup> Century temple**.

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- Questions started being raised about whether the construction around the temple had the due permissions and clearances.
- The **Jagannath temple has been designated a monument of national importance by the Archaeological Survey of India** and is a centrally protected monument.
  - Massive demolition and construction works are taking place within a 100 and 200-meter area of the temple which is **prohibited by the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (Amendment and Validation) Act (AMSAR) 2010**.

### **What is the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (Amendment and Validation) Act (AMSAR) 2010?**

- As per the AMSAR (Amendment and Validation) Act, **construction is prohibited within a 100-meter periphery of a protected area**.
- The area extending to 200 meters around the monument in all directions is called a **regulated area**.
- As per the provisions of the AMSAR Act, the **National Monuments Authority (NMA), set up in 2011 under the Ministry of Culture**, is charged with protecting and preserving ASI-protected sites by managing the prohibited and regulated area in the periphery of such a site.
- If construction has to be undertaken in a regulated or prohibited area, permission from the NMA is required.
- The term **“construction”** as defined in the AMSAR Act **does not include the construction of public toilets, urinals, and “similar conveniences”**.
  - It also does not include works for the supply of water, electricity or “provision of similar facilities for publicity”.
- Besides, an impact assessment is also required to be done by the NMA before development around a monument if the built-up area of the monument is beyond 5,000 square meters.

## **Martand Sun temple**

### **Why in News?**

The Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor participated in a religious ceremony held in the ruins of the **8th century Martand Sun temple**, a protected

monument under the Archaeological Survey of India. This temple has been recognised as a **“Site of national importance”**.



### **What is the Martand Sun Temple?**

- The Martand Sun Temple also known as **Pandou Laidan is a Hindu temple dedicated to Surya (the chief solar deity in Hinduism)** and built during the 8<sup>th</sup> century CE. Martand is another Sanskrit synonym for Surya.
- It was built by the **third ruler of the Karkota Dynasty, Lalitaditya Muktapida**.
- It is now in ruins, as **it was destroyed by the orders of Muslim ruler Sikandar Shah Miri**.
- The temple is **located five miles from Anantnag in the Indian union territory of Jammu and Kashmir**.
- From the ruins and related archaeological findings, it can be said it was an excellent specimen of Kashmiri architecture, which had blended the Gandharan, Gupta and Chinese forms of architecture.
- The temple **appears in the list of centrally protected monuments** as Kartanda (Sun Temple).

### **What are the Key Points of the Karkota Dynasty?**

- The Karkota dynasty established their power in Kashmir (early 7<sup>th</sup> century) and it emerged as **a power in central Asia and northern India**.
- Durlabh Vardhana was the founder of the Karkota dynasty.
- The **Karkota rulers were Hindus and built spectacular Hindu temples at Parihaspur (capital)**.
- They also patronised Buddhism as some stupas, chaityas and viharas have been found in the ruins of their capital.

Note:



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## Malcha Mahal

### Why in News?

The Delhi government is about to renovate the 14<sup>th</sup> century monument Malcha Mahal.



### What is Malcha Mahal?

- It was built in **1325** by the then Sultan **Firoz Shah Tughlaq** and was, for a long time, used as a hunting lodge.
- It later **became the residence of the descendants of the Nawab of Awadh.**
- It is said that it came to be known as '**Wilayat Mahal**' after **Begum Wilayat Mahal of Awadh, who claimed that she was a member of the royal family of Oudh.** She was given the palace by the government in 1985.
- When she died by suicide in 1993, it came into the ownership of her daughter Sakina Mahal, and son Prince Ali Raza (Cyrus), who died in 2017, his sister passed away some years before that.

### Who was Feroz Shah Tughlaq?

- He was born in 1309 and ascended the **throne of Delhi after the demise of his cousin Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq.**
- He was the third ruler of the **Tughlaq dynasty** that ruled over Delhi from 1320 to 1412 AD. Tughlaq was in **power from 1351 to 1388 AD.**
- He was the **one who started the imposition of Jaziya.**
  - Jaziya' or 'Jizya' implies a **per capita yearly taxation historically levied in the form of financial charge on permanent non-Muslim subjects of a state governed by Islamic law** to fund public expenditures of the state.

- He provided the **principle of inheritance to the armed forces where the officers were permitted to rest and send their children to the army** in their place. However, they were not paid in real money but by land.
- The British called him the '**father of the irrigation department**' because of the many gardens and canals that he built.

### What are the Key Points of Tughlaq Dynasty?

- The Tughlaqs were a **Muslim family of Turkic origin.** The dynasty reached its **zenith point between AD 1330 and 1335** when **Muhammad Bin Tughlaq** led military campaign.
- Its rule was marked by **torture, cruelty and rebellions, resulting in the rapid disintegration of the dynasty's territorial reach after 1335 AD.**
- The Tughlaq's provided three competent rulers – **Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq (AD 1320-1325), Muhammad-bin-Tughluq (AD 1325-1351) and Firuz Shah Tughluq (1351 to 1388 AD).**
- **Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq** was the **founder of the dynasty.**

## Megalithic Burial Sites

### Why in News?

According to recent findings, **Andhra Pradesh** has the **largest anthropomorphic burial site collection** in **Tirupati district.**

- Anthropomorphic sites are **those marked by a representation of human form** above the megalithic burials.



### What are Megaliths?

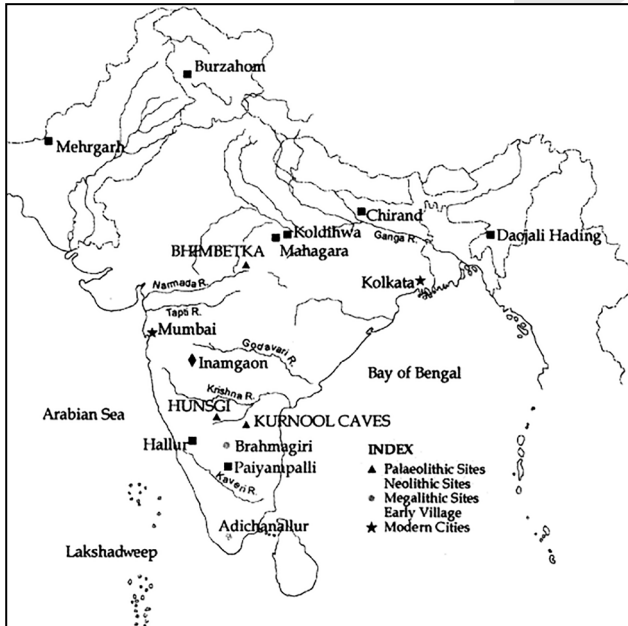
- A megalith is a **large stone that has been used to construct a prehistoric structure or monument, either alone or together with other stones.**

Note:



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- Megaliths were constructed either as burial sites or commemorative (non-sepulchral) memorials.
  - The **former are sites with actual burial remains**, such as dolmenoid cists (box-shaped stone burial chambers), cairn circles (stone circles with defined peripheries) and capstones (distinctive mushroom-shaped burial chambers found mainly in Kerala).
- The urn or the sarcophagus containing the mortal remains was usually made of terracotta. Non-sepulchral megaliths include memorial sites such as menhirs.
- In India, archaeologists trace the majority of the megaliths to the **Iron Age** (1500 BC to 500 BC), though some sites precede the Iron Age, extending up to 2000 BC.
- Megaliths are spread across the Indian subcontinent. The majority of megalithic sites are found in **Peninsular India**, concentrated in the states of **Maharashtra** (mainly in Vidarbha), **Karnataka**, **Tamil Nadu**, **Kerala**, **Andhra Pradesh**, and **Telangana**.



## Panini's Ashtadhyayi & Grammar's Greatest Puzzle

### Why in News?

Recently, a Cambridge scholar Dr Rishi Rajpopat's has claimed to have solved **Sanskrit's biggest puzzle**—a grammar problem found in the '**Ashtadhyayi**'.

### What is Ashtadhyayi?

- Written more than 2,000 years ago, **Ashtadhyayi** or '**Eight Chapters**', is an ancient text written by the scholar **Panini** towards the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC.
- It is a linguistic text that set the **standard for how Sanskrit was meant to be written** and spoken.
- It delves deep into the **language's phonetics, syntax and grammar**, and also offers a 'language machine', where one can feed in the **root and suffix of any Sanskrit word**, and get **grammatically correct words** and sentences in return.
- The Ashtadhyayi laid down more than 4,000 grammatical rules.
  - Later Indian grammars such as the Mahabhasya of Patanjali (2nd century BC) and the Kasika Vritti of Jayaditya and Vamana (7th century AD), were **mostly commentaries on Panini**.

### Who was Panini, the Father of Linguistics?

- Panini probably lived in the 4th century BC, the **age of the conquests of Alexander and the founding of the Mauryan Empire**, even though he has also been dated to the 6th century BC, the age of The **Buddha** and **Mahavira**.
- He likely lived in **Salatura (Gandhara)**, which today would lie in **north-west Pakistan**, and was probably associated with the **great university at Taksasila**, which also produced **Kautilya** and **Charaka**, the ancient Indian masters of statecraft and medicine respectively.
- By the time Panini's great grammar, the '**Ashtadhyayi**' was composed, Sanskrit had virtually reached its classical form — and developed little thereafter.
- Panini's grammar, which built on the work of many earlier grammarians, effectively **stabilised the Sanskrit language**.
- The earlier works had recognised the root as the basic element of a word, and had classified **some 2,000 monosyllabic roots** which, with the addition of prefixes, suffixes and inflexions, were thought to provide all the words of the language.

## Excavations of Iron in Tamil Nadu

### Why in News?

Recent **carbon dating** of excavated finds in Tamil Nadu pushes evidence of **iron being used in India back to 4,200 years ago**.

Note:



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- Before this, the **earliest evidence of iron use was from 1900-2000 BCE** for the country, and from 1500 BCE for Tamil Nadu.
- The latest evidence dates the findings from Tamil Nadu to 2172 BCE.

### What is the Historical Significance?

- **Production of Agricultural Tools:**
  - Invention of iron technology led to the **production of agricultural tools and weapons**, leading to production required for a civilisation ahead of economic and cultural progress.
  - There is **no known record of iron** being used in the Indus Valley, where copper was first utilized by Indians (1500 BCE).
- **Useful in Deforestation:**
  - Deforestation occurred **only after humans began using iron tools to clear dense forests** and bring land into agriculture, because copper tools would have been difficult to use to clear dense forests and bring land into agriculture.
- **Socio-economic Changes:**
  - With the **latest evidence tracing our Iron Age to 2000 BCE from 1500 BC**, it can be assumed that the cultural seeds were laid in 2000 BCE.
  - Around 600 BCE, iron technology led to massive production triggered by socio-economic changes - the **Tamil Brahmi script**.
  - The Tamil Brahmi scripts were **once believed to have originated around 300 BCE**, until a landmark finding in 2019 pushed the date back to 600 BCE.
  - This dating narrowed the gap between the Indus Valley civilisation and Tamilagam/South India's Sangam Age.

#### Stone Ages

- **Palaeolithic (Old Stone) Age:**
  - Basically, a **hunting and food gathering culture**.
  - **Palaeolithic tools** include sharpened stone, chopper, hand axe, scraper, spear, bow and arrow, etc. and were generally made up of hard rock quartzite.
  - Rock paintings and carvings found at Bhimbetka, Madhya Pradesh reflect upon hunting as the main subsistence activity.

- Palaeolithic age in India is **divided into three phases**: Early or Lower Palaeolithic (50,000 – 100,000 BC), Middle Palaeolithic (100,000 – 40,000 BC) and Upper Palaeolithic (40,000 – 10,000 BC).
- Homo sapiens mark their presence in upper palaeolithic age.

#### ➤ Mesolithic (Middle Stone) Age:

- The age is marked by **transition from Pleistocene period to Holocene period** and favorable changes in the climate.
- The early period of Mesolithic age marks the hunting, fishing and food gathering.
- Domestication of the animals began in this age.
- The tools called Microliths were smaller and had improved geometry than the Palaeolithic age.

#### ➤ Neolithic (New Stone) Age:

- Referred to as the **concluding phase of the Stone Age**, the age heralded the beginning of food production.
- Sedentism (living in one place for a long time) use of pottery, and invention of crafts are characteristics feature of neolithic age.
- The neolithic tools composed of heavy ground tools like pestles, grinders, pounders and also axes and sickles.

#### ➤ Megalithic Culture:

- Megaliths refer to **large stone structures** that were constructed either as burial sites or as commemorative sites.
- In India, **archaeologists trace the majority of the megaliths to the Iron Age** (1500 BC to 500 BC), though some sites precede the Iron Age, extending up to 2000 BC.
- **Megaliths are spread across the Indian subcontinent**. Majority of them are found in peninsular India, concentrated in the states of Maharashtra (mainly in Vidarbha), Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

## Keeladi Findings

### Why in News?

Recently, the **Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)** has submitted a detailed **report on the findings during the first two phases** of the digging at the **Sangam-era site** and their significance.

Note:

- Also, the **Keeladi Site Museum** is coming up in Sivaganga that would house significant ones of the over **18,000 artefacts unearthed so far**.

### What are the Keypoints about Keeladi?

- Keeladi is a tiny hamlet in the **Sivaganga district in south Tamil Nadu**. It is about **12 km south-east to the temple city of Madurai** and is located along the **Vaigai river**.
- The excavations here from 2015 prove that an **urban civilization existed in Tamil Nadu** in the **Sangam age** on the banks of the Vaigai river.

### What is the Significance of the Findings?

- **Linkages with Sangam Age:**
  - The Sangam age is a period of history in ancient Tamil Nadu which was believed to be from the **3rd century BCE to the 3rd century CE** and derives its name from the renowned **Sangam assemblies** of the poets of Madurai from that time.
  - A recent **ASI report has pushed the Sangam age to 800 BCE** based on these archaeological findings.
  - Keeladi could also provide crucial evidence for **understanding the missing links of the Iron Age (12th century BCE to sixth century BCE) to the Early Historic Period (sixth century BCE to fourth century BCE)** and subsequent cultural developments.
- **Potential Linkages with Indus Valley:**
  - The unearthed Keeladi artefacts have led academics to describe the site as part of the **Vaigai Valley Civilization**. The findings have also invited **comparisons with the Indus Valley Civilization** while acknowledging the cultural gap of 1,000 years between the two places.
    - The **gap is filled with Iron Age material in south India**, which serve as residual links.
  - According to Tamil Nadu State Archaeology Department (TNSDA) Keeladi has all the **characteristics of an urban civilization, with brick structures, luxury items and proof of internal and external trade**.
    - It comes across as an **industrious and advanced civilization** and has given evidence of urban life and settlements in Tamil Nadu **during the Early Historic Period**.

### What was the Controversy Surrounding Keeladi?

- After reports of possible links with the Indus Valley Civilization, there was **"no significant finding" in the third round**, which was **seen as an attempt to play down the excavation findings**.
- On the intervention of the Madras High Court, the **TNSDA has been carrying out excavations since 4th round** instead of ASI to unearth more about the history of Tamil civilization.

#### Sangam Age:

- The word 'Sangam' is the Tamil form of the Sanskrit word **Sangha** which means a group of persons or an association.
- The Tamil Sangam was an **academy of poets** who flourished in three different periods and in different places under the patronage of the **Pandyan kings**.
- The **Sangam literature** which was largely consolidated from the **third Sangam**, throws information on conditions of life of people around the beginning of the Christian era.
  - It deals with the **secular matter** relating to the public and social activities like government, war, charity, trade, worship, agriculture, etc.
  - Sangam literature consists of the earliest Tamil works (such as the **Tolkappiyam**), the ten poems (**Pattupattu**), the eight anthologies (**Ettutogai**) and the eighteen minor works (**Padinenkilkanakku**), and the three epics.

#### Tamil-Brahmi Script:

- The Brahmi script was the earliest script that the Tamils used.
- In the late ancient and early medieval period, they started evolving a new angular script, called the **Grantha script**, from which the modern Tamil is derived.

#### Vaigai River:

- It is an **east-flowing river**.
- The Vaigai river basin is an important basin among the 12 basins lying between the **Cauvery and Kanyakumari**.
- This basin is bounded by the **Cardamom Hills and the Palani Hills** on the West and by the **Palk Strait and Palk Bay** on the East.

Note:

## PRASHAD Scheme

### Why in News?

Recently, the President of India laid the foundation stone for the project 'Development of Pilgrimage Facilities at Bhadrachalam Group of Temples' in Telangana.

- Another project named 'Development of Pilgrimage and Heritage Infrastructure at Rudreshwara (Ramappa) Temple' was also laid later on.
- Both these projects have been approved under the **PRASHAD Scheme** of the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India.

### What are the Key Features of the Temples?

- **Bhadrachalam Group of Temples:**
  - The temple at Bhadrachalam is said to be more than 350 years old and is **closely associated with the epic of Ramayana**.
  - It is believed that **Lord Rama with his wife Goddess Sita and brother Lakshmana spent some part of their 14 years of exile at a village called Parnasala**, a part of Dandakaranya forest near Bhadrachalam Temple.
  - These group of temples are situated on the left bank of the Godavari River.
- **Ramappa Temple:**
  - The **Ramappa temple of Lord Shiva, a perfect example of architectural brilliance**, was built in **1213 AD by the Kakatiya rulers** and has been inscribed on **UNESCO's World Heritage list**.
  - This heritage temple attracts over 10 Lakh visitors every year and has a high visibility amongst the tourist circuit.

### What is PRASHAD Scheme?

- **About:**
  - The 'National Mission on Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Augmentation Drive' (PRASAD) was **launched by the Ministry of Tourism in the year 2014-15** with the objective of holistic development of identified pilgrimage destinations.
  - The name of the scheme was **changed from PRASAD to "National Mission on Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Heritage Augmentation Drive (PRASHAD)"** in October 2017.

- After the discontinuation of the HRIDAY scheme of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, the development of Heritage destinations was included in the PRASAD Scheme, changing it to PRASHAD.

- Under the PRASHAD Scheme, **several religious cities/sites have been identified for development such as Amaravati and Srisailem** (Andhra Pradesh), Kamakhya (Assam), Parasuram Kund (Lohit District, Arunachal Pradesh), Patna and Gaya (Bihar), etc.
- **Implementation Agency:**
  - The projects **identified under this scheme shall be implemented through the identified agencies** by the respective State/ Union Territory Government.
- **Funding Mechanism:**
  - The Central Government provides 100% funding for the project components undertaken for public funding.
  - This scheme seeks to leverage the voluntary funding available for **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and the Public-Private Partnership (PPP)** for improved sustainability of the projects under this scheme.

## Revamping Monument Mitra Scheme

### Why in News?

**Private firms** will soon be able to partner with **Archaeological Survey of India** for the upkeep of **1,000 monuments under the Monument Mitra Scheme**, which involves adopting and **maintaining heritage sites**.

- Revamped scheme would be based on the **Corporate Social Responsibility** model and a new website having the **names of all the heritage sites**, would also be launched.

What is Monument Mitra?

- **Monument Mitra** is the term coined for an entity partnering with the government under the '**Adopt A Heritage**' project.
  - It was launched under the **Ministry of Tourism** earlier and then transferred to the **Ministry of Culture**.
- The project aims to **develop monuments, heritage and tourist sites** across India by inviting corporate entities, public sector companies or individuals to 'adopt' them.

Note:



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## Kanheri Caves

### Why in News?

Recently, the Ministry of Tourism has inaugurated the amenities in Kanheri Caves on the occasion of Buddha Purnima.



### What are the Kanheri Caves?

- **About:**
  - The Kanheri Caves are a group of caves and rock-cut monuments located on the western outskirts of Mumbai. The caves are located within the forests of the **Sanjay Gandhi National Park**.
  - The name **Kanheri** is derived from 'Kanhagiri' in **Prakrit** and occurs in the **Nasik inscription** of the **Satavahana** ruler Vasisthiputra Pulumavi.
  - Kanheri was **mentioned in the travelogues of foreign travellers**.
  - The earliest reference of Kanheri is **ascribed to Fa-Hein** who visited India during 399-411 CE and later by several other travellers.
- **Architecture:**
  - These excavations were **primarily undertaken during the Hinayana phase of Buddhism** but also has several examples of the **Mahayana stylistic architecture** as well as few printings of the **Vajrayana order**.
- **Patronage:**
  - Kanheri flourished under the patronage of Satavahana, Traikutakas, Vakatakas and Silaharas and through donations made by the wealthy merchants of the region.
- **Significance:**

- Kanheri caves are part of our ancient heritage as they provide evidence of evolution and our past.
- The architectural and engineering marvel of heritage sites like Kanheri caves or the **Ajanta Ellora caves** signify the **knowledge about art, engineering, management construction, patience and perseverance that people had back then**.
- Many such monuments back then took **more than 100 years to be built**.
- Its importance is **heightened by the fact that it is the only centre where a continuous progression of Buddhist faith and architecture is observed** as an unbroken legacy right from 2nd century CE to 9th century CE is observed here.

## Dickinsonia Fossil

### Why in News?

Fossils of an extinct species, Dickinsonia, that scientists reported in a **discovery from India's Bhimbetka Rock Shelters in 2021** have been found to be a false alarm.

- Researchers after a closer look at the site revealed the **Dickinsonia fossil** to really be wax smeared on a rock by a beehive.

### What is Dickinsonia?

- **Dickinsonia** is an **extinct primitive animal** that inhabited seabeds around Australia, China, Russia, Ukraine, **in the Ediacaran period, 600-500 million years ago**. It was classified as an animal after discovery of cholesterol molecules in the fossils.
- It is believed to be **one of the earliest animals to have existed on earth**.

### What are the Key Facts of Bhimbetka Rock Shelter?

- **History and Period Span:**
  - The Bhimbetka rock shelters are an **archaeological site in central India that spans the prehistoric Paleolithic and Mesolithic periods**, as well as the historic period.
  - It exhibits the **earliest traces of human life in India and evidence of Stone Age** starting at the site in Acheulian times.
  - It is a **UNESCO World Heritage Site** that consists of seven hills and over 750 rock shelters distributed over 10 km.

Note:



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- **Discovery:** The Bhimbetka rock shelters were founded by V S Wakankar in 1957.
- **Location:** It is located in Raisen District between Hoshangabad and Bhopal in Madhya Pradesh.
  - It is about 40 kilometres south-east of Bhopal in the foothills of the Vindhya Mountains.
- **Paintings:** Some of the Bhimbetka rock shelters feature prehistoric cave paintings and the earliest are about 10,000 years old (c. 8,000 BCE), corresponding to the Indian Mesolithic.
  - Most of these are done in red and white on the cave walls.
  - A multitude of themes were covered in this form of rock art and it depicted scenes like singing, dancing, hunting and other common activities of the people staying there.
    - The oldest of the cave paintings in Bhimbetka is believed to be **about 12,000 years ago**.

## Evolution of Coinage System in India

### Why in News?

Recently, the Government of NCT of Delhi has appealed to the Prime Minister of India to have **images of Goddess Lakshmi and Lord Ganesh printed on the new currency notes**.

- India has a long tradition of coinage with images of gods and goddesses. The **Kushans**, who ruled till 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD, were the **first to use the image of Goddess Lakshmi on their coins**.

### What has been the History of Coinage in India?

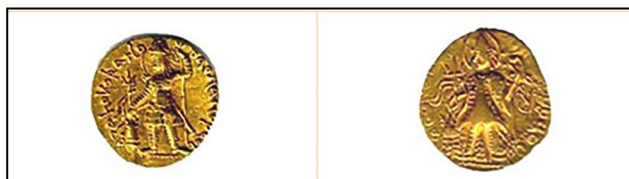
- **Punch Marked Coins:**
  - **The first documented coinage** is deemed to start with 'Punch Marked' coins issued between the 7th-6th century BC and 1st century AD.
  - These coins are called 'punch-marked' coins because of their **manufacturing technique**. Mostly made of silver, these bear symbols, each of which was punched on the coin with a separate punch.
  - **They are broadly classified into two periods:**
    - The first period is attributed to the Janapadas or small local states.
    - The second period is attributed to the Imperial Mauryan period.

- The motifs found on these coins were mostly drawn from nature like the sun, various animal motifs, trees, hills etc.



Punch Marked Coin, Silver Bentbar

- **Dynastic Coins:**
  - The earliest of these coins relate to those of the **Indo-Greeks, the Saka-Pahlavas and the Kushans**. These coins are generally placed between the 2nd century BC and 2nd century AD.
- **Indo Greeks:**
  - Hellenistic traditions characterise the **silver coins of the Indo-Greeks**, with **Greek gods and goddesses** figuring prominently, apart from the portraits of the issuers.
- **Sakas:**
  - **The Saka coinage of the Western Kshatrapas** are perhaps the earliest dated coins, the dates being given in the Saka era which commences in AD 78.
  - The Saka era represents the **official calendar of the Indian Republic**.
- **Kushans:**
  - Kushans, who hailed from the Central Asian region depicted **Oesho (Shiva)**, moon deity **Miro** and **Buddha** in their coinage.
  - Earliest Kushan coinage is generally attributed to **Vima Kadphises**.
  - The Kushan coins generally depicted iconographic forms drawn from **Greek, Mesopotamian, Zoroastrian and Indian mythology**.
  - **Siva, Buddha and Kartikeya** were the major Indian deities portrayed.



- **Satavahana:**
  - The dates of their coming into power are contentious and are variously put between **270 BC to 30 BC**.
  - Their coins were **predominantly of copper and lead**; however, **silver issues are also known**.
  - These coins carried the motifs of fauna like elephants, lions, bulls, horses, etc. often juxtaposed against motifs from nature like hills, tree, etc.

Note:



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- The silver coins of the Satavahanas carried portraits and bilingual legends, which were inspired by the Kshatrapa types.



#### ➤ Western Kshatrapa:

- The legends on the coins were generally in **Greek and Brahmi**, Kharoshti too was used.
- The Western Kshatrap coins are **reckoned to be the earliest coins bearing dates**.
- The common copper coins are the 'bull and hill' and the 'elephant and hill' types.



#### ➤ Gupta:

- Gupta coinage (4th-6th centuries AD) followed the tradition of the Kushans, depicting the **king on the obverse and a deity on the reverse**; the deities were **Indian and the legends were in Brahmi**.
- The earliest Gupta coins are attributed to **Samudragupta, Chandragupta II and Kumaragupta** and their coins often commemorate dynastic succession as well as significant socio-political events, like marriage alliances, the horse sacrifice, or for that matter artistic and personal accomplishments of royal members (Lyrist, Archer, Lion-slayer etc.).



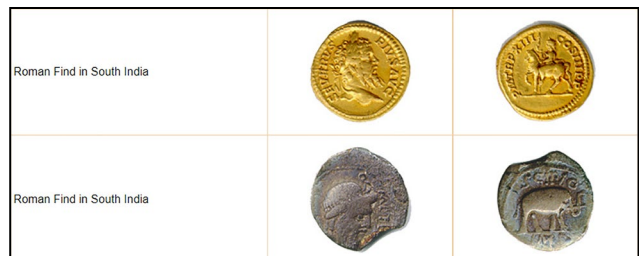
#### ➤ Foreign Coins:

##### ○ British Coins:

- The **British East India Co.** at Madras Presidency minted coins labelled as the **Three Swamy Pagoda**, which depicts **Lord Balaji** flanked by **Sridevi** and **Bhudevi** on either side.

##### ○ Other Coins:

- Ancient India had considerable **trade links with the Middle East, Europe (Greece and Rome) as well as China**. This trade was carried out over land partly along what came to be alluded to as the silk route and partly through maritime trade.
- In South India, which had a thriving maritime trade, Roman coins even circulated in their original form, albeit slashed at times as a gesture disclaiming intrusions of foreign sovereignty.



## Dokra Metalcraft

### Why in News?

West Bengal's Lalbazaar is not just an art hub, but is also becoming a center for dokra, a popular metalcraft.

- In 2018, Dokra craft from West Bengal was presented with the **Geographical Indication (GI) tag**.



Note:

### What is Dokra?

- Dokra is a **form of ancient bell metal craft** practiced by the Ojha metalsmiths living in states like Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, West Bengal and Telangana.
  - However, the style and also the workmanship of this artisan community varies in different states.
- Dhokra or Dokra, is also known as **bell metal craft**.
- The name '**Dhokra**' comes from the **Dhokra Damar tribes**, who are the traditional metal smiths of West Bengal.
  - Their technique of lost wax casting is named after their tribe, hence Dhokra metal casting.
    - The Dokra artifacts are **made in brass and are unique in that the pieces do not have any joints**. The method is combining metallurgical skills with wax techniques employing the lost wax technique, a unique form where mould is used only once and broken, making this art the only one-of-its-kind in the world.
  - The tribe extends from Jharkhand to Orissa to as far ahead to Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan and even Kerala.
- Each figurine takes about a month to make.
- The dancing girl of **Mohenjo-Daro (Harappan Civilization)** is one of the earliest dhokra artefacts that is now known.
- Dokra Art is **still used to craft artefacts, accessories, utensils and jewellery**.

### What are the Other Crafts?

- **Bronze Crafts:**
  - Rare Jain imagery and icons (Karnataka)
  - Pahaldar Lamps (Jaipur and parts of Uttar Pradesh)
  - Pambarthi craft (Telangana)
- **Other Metal Crafts:**
  - Marori work of Rajasthan
  - Tarkashi (Rajasthan)
  - Bidri Craft (Karnataka)

## Lord Nataraja

### Why in News?

Recently, the **Tamil Nadu police** successfully **stopped the scheduled auctioning of a bronze idol of Nataraja by France**.

- The rare variety bronze idol was suspected to have been **stolen from Kayathar in Thoothukudi district half a century ago**.

### What are the Key Facts about Lord Nataraja?

- **Nataraja (Lord of the Dance)**, the **Hindu god Shiva** in his form as the **cosmic dancer**, is represented in metal or stone in many Shaivite temples, particularly in South India.
  - It is an **important piece of Chola sculpture**.
- The **upper right hand** holds the damru (drum), which signifies the **sound of creation**. All creations spring from the great sound of the damru.
  - The **upper left-hand** holds the eternal fire, which represents the **destruction**. Destruction is the precursor and inevitable counterpart of creation.
  - The **lower right hand** is raised in the gesture of **Abhaya mudra** signifying benediction and reassuring the **devotee to not be afraid**.
  - The **lower left-hand** points towards the upraised foot and indicates the **path of salvation**.
- Shiva is dancing on the figure of a small dwarf. The dwarf symbolises **ignorance** and the ego of an individual.
- Shiva is shown as the **source of all movement within the cosmos** and as the god whose **doomsday dance, represented by the arch of flames**, accompanies the dissolution of the universe at the end of an eon.
- The matted and flowing locks of Shiva represent the **flow of river Ganges**.
- In ornamentation, one ear of Shiva has a male earring while the other has a female. This represents the fusion of male and female and is often referred to as **Ardhanarishwar**.
- A snake is twisted around the arm of Shiva. The snake symbolises the **kundalini power**, which resides in the human spine in the dormant stage. If aroused, one can attain true consciousness.
- The Nataraja is surrounded by a nimbus of glowing lights which symbolises the **vast unending cycles of time**.

## Statue of Peace of Swami Ramanujacharya

### Why in News?

Recently, in Srinagar, Union Home Minister Shri Amit Shah unveiled Swami Ramanujacharya's **Statue of Peace**.

Note:



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- Earlier in Feb 2022, the Prime Minister inaugurated the **Statue of Equality**, a statue of **Ramanujacharya**, on the outskirts of Hyderabad, Telangana.
  - India celebrated his 1,000th birth anniversary as the '**Festival of Equality**', upholding the view that the world is one family, '**vasudhaiva kutumbakam**,'"



### Who was Ramanujacharya?

- Born in 1017 in **Sriperumbudur in Tamil Nadu**, Ramanujacharya is revered as a **Vedic philosopher and social reformer**.
  - He was named Lakshmana at the time of his birth. He was also referred to as Ilaya Perumal which means the radiant one.
- He revived the **Bhakti movement**, and his preachings inspired other Bhakti schools of thought. He is considered to be the inspiration for **poets like Annamacharya, Bhakta Ramdas, Thyagaraja, Kabir, and Meerabai**.
- He is famous as the chief proponent of **Vishishtadvaita subschool of Vedānta**.
  - VishishtAdvaita (literally "Advaita with uniqueness; qualifications") is a non-dualistic school of Vedanta philosophy.
  - It is non-dualism of the qualified whole, in **which Brahman alone is seen as the Supreme Reality** but is characterized by multiplicity.
- He went on to **write nine scriptures known as the navaratnas** and composed numerous commentaries on Vedic scriptures.
  - Ramanuja's most important writings include his commentary on the **Vedanta Sutras (the Sri Bhasya, or "True Commentary")**, and his commentary on the **Bhagavad-Gita (the Gitabhasya, or "Commentary on the Gita")**.

- His other writings include the **Vedartha Samgraha ("Summary of the Meaning of the Veda")**, the **Vedantasara ("Essence of Vedanta")**, and **Vedantadipa ("Lamp of Vedanta")**.
- He has also **stressed the need of being in tune with nature and not to over-exploit**.

## Shiva Kumaraswami

### Why in News?

Recently, the Union Minister of Home Affairs inaugurated and participated in the 115<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebrations of **Dr. Shri Shri Shri Shiva Kumaraswami & Guruvandana Mahotsava** in Siddaganga Mutt, Tumkur, Karnataka.

### Who was Shivkumar Swami?

- Shivakumara Swami of Siddhaganga Mutt in Tumkur was a **revered seer of the Lingayat-Veerashaiva faith** and was the **Lingayat religious head of Sree Siddaganga Mutt**.
- He **worked for 88 years to realize the thought of Basaveshwara** and paved the way to bring equality, education and making people spiritually rich.
- In recognition of his social work, **he was conferred with the third-highest civilian award, Padma Bhushan, in 2015** and the Karnataka Ratna in 2007.
- He was **known as a "walking god"** among his followers.

### Who are Lingayats?

- The term Lingayat **denotes a person who wears a personal linga, an iconic form of god Shiva**, on the body which is received during the initiation ceremony.
- Lingayats are the **followers of the 12th-century social reformer-philosopher poet, Basaveshwara**.
- **Basaveshwara was against the caste system and Vedic rituals**.
- The Lingayats are **strict monotheists**. They enjoin the worship of only one God, namely, Linga (Shiva).
- The word '**Linga**' **does not mean Linga established in temples, but universal consciousness** qualified by the universal energy (Shakti).
- Lingayats had been classified as a **Hindu subcaste called "Veerashaiva Lingayats"** and they are considered to be Shaivites.

Note:



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### Why the Lingayats Seek Separate Religion from Hindu?

- Lingayats had distanced themselves from Hindu Veerashaivas because the latter followed the Vedas and supported the caste system, to which Basaveshwara was against.
  - Veerashaivas are the followers of the five peethas (religious centers), called Pancha Peethas.
  - These peethas are set up on similar lines to the four peethas set up by Adi Shankara.

## Basava Jayanti

### Why in News?

The Prime Minister paid tributes to Jagadguru Basaveshwara (Basavanna) on the sacred occasion of Basava Jayanti.

- As per the Hindu calendar, the birth of Basavanna falls on the 3rd day of Vaisahaka month in the Shukla paksha. This usually falls either in April or May of the English calendar.



### Who is Basavanna?

- **About:** Basaveshwara was born in Bagevadi (of undivided Bijapur district in Karnataka) in 1131 AD.
  - A 12<sup>th</sup>-century poet and philosopher, who is celebrated and held in high regard, especially by the Lingayat community, as he was the founder of Lingayatism.
    - The term Lingayat denotes a person who wears a personal linga, an iconic form of God Shiva, on the body which is received during the initiation ceremony.
  - In Kalyana, the Kalachurya king Bijjala (1157-1167, AD) appointed Basaveshwara as a karanika (Accountant) in the initial stage, in his court and later as the Prime minister.

- **Main Teachings:** His spiritual discipline was based on the principles of Arivu (true knowledge), Achara (right conduct), and Anubhava (divine experience) and it brought a social, religious and economic revolution in the 12<sup>th</sup> century.
  - This path advocates a holistic approach to Lingangayoga (union with the divine).
  - This comprehensive discipline encompasses bhakti (devotion), jnana (knowledge), and kriya (action) in a well-balanced manner.
- **Social Reforms:** Basaveshwara is known to have brought about several social reforms.
  - He believed in a society free of the caste system, with equal opportunity for all and preached about manual hard work.
  - He also founded the Anubhava Mantapa, loosely translated as the forum of experiences, an academy which included Lingayat mystics, saints, and philosophers.
- **Other Socio-Economic Principles:** Basaveshwara gave two more very important socio-economic principles.
  - **Kayaka (Divine work):**
    - According to this, every individual in 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 utilize the surplus money for society and the poor.

### Anubhava Mantapa

- Basaveshwara established the Anubhava Mantapa, which was a common forum for all to discuss the prevailing problems of socio, economic and political strata including religious and spiritual principles along with personal problems.
- Thus, it was the first and foremost Parliament of India, where Sharanas (citizens of welfare society) sat together and discussed the socialistic principles of a Democratic set up.
- All those discussions of Sharanas were written in the form of Vachanas.
  - Vachanas were an innovative literary form written in simple Kannada language.

Note:

- His practical approach and act of establishment of 'Kalyana Rajya' (Welfare state) brought a new status and position for all the citizens of the society, irrespective of class, caste, creed and sex.
- Recently, the Chief Minister of Karnataka has laid the **foundation stone for the 'New Anubhava Mantapa'** in Basavakalyan.

## Thiruvalluvar

### Why in News

The Prime Minister of India paid tributes to the Tamil poet and philosopher Thiruvalluvar on **Thiruvalluvar Day**.

- In the present time, the is usually observed either on 15th or 16th January in Tamil Nadu and is a part of **Pongal** celebrations.

### Key Points

- **About:**
  - 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 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> century or 8<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> 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.

## Sant Tukaram

### Why in News?

Recently, Prime Minister inaugurated the **Sant Tukaram Shila Mandir** in the temple town of **Dehu** in the **Pune district**.

- Shila Mandir is a temple dedicated to a slab of stone (shila) on which Sant Tukaram meditated for 13 days.
  - **Shila** refers to a rock that is currently on the Dehu Sansthan temple premises, and that for centuries has been the starting point of **Wari**, the **annual pilgrimage to Pandharpur**.
- The rock where he sat for 13 days is considered pious and a **place of pilgrimage for the wakari sect**.



### Who was Sant Tukaram?

- **About:**
  - Sant Tukaram was a **Warkari saint and poet**.
    - The sect is spread **across Maharashtra** and Sant Tukaram and his works are central to it.
  - He was famously known for **Abhanga devotional poetry** and community-oriented worship through **spiritual songs known as Kirtans**.
  - Also, composed a **Marathi genre of literature called Abhanga poetry** which fused folk stories with **spiritual themes**.
- **His Philosophy:**
  - Tukaram mentions four more people in his Abhangas work who had a major influence on his spiritual development: the previous **Bhakti Saints Namdev, Dnyaneshwar, Kabir, and Eknath**.
  - Tukaram's teachings were regarded as **Vedanta-based**.
- **Social Reform:**
  - His message about a **casteless society and his denial of rituals** had led to a **social movement**.
  - His Abhangs became the strong weapon against the **Brahmanical dominance of society**.

## Dhamma Dipa International Buddhist University

### Why in News?

The foundation stone for the **Dhamma Dipa International Buddhist University (DDIBU)** at **Manu Bankul in Sabroom of South Tripura district** will be laid on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

Note:



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- DDIBU is expected to become the **first Buddhist-run university in India to offer Buddhist education along with courses in other disciplines** of modern education as well.

### What is Buddhism?

- **About:**
  - **Buddhism** started in India over 2,600 years ago.
  - The religion is based upon the teachings, life experiences of its **founder Siddhartha Gautam**.
  - 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**.
    - **Four noble truths:**
      - Suffering (dukkha) is the essence of the world.
      - Every suffering has a cause – **Samudya**.
      - Suffering could be extinguished – **Nirodha**.
      - It can be achieved by following the Atthanga Magga (Eight-Fold Path).
    - **Eight-Fold Paths:** It consists of various interconnected activities related to knowledge, conduct, and meditative practices.
      - Right view
      - Right intention
      - Right speech
      - Right action
      - Right livelihood
      - Right mindfulness
      - Right effort
      - Right concentration
  - The essence of Buddhism is the attainment of **enlightenment or nirvana** which was not a place but an experience that could be attained in this life.
  - There is **no supreme god or deity in Buddhism**.

### ➤ **Buddhist Councils:**

Buddhist Council	Patron	Venue	Chairman	Year
First	Ajatashatru	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.
- **Buddhist 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.
  - **The Buddhist chanting of Ladakh** was included in the **UNESCO's Representative List of Humanity's Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2012**.

## ASI Discovers 1,300-yr-old Buddhist Stupa

### Why in News?

Recently, the **Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)** discovered a **1,300-year-old stupa** right in the middle of a **mining site in Odisha's Jajpur district** at a Khondalite mining site.

- It is the place from where Khondalite stones were supplied for the beautification project around the **12<sup>th</sup> Century Shree Jagannath Temple in Puri**.

Note:

**What are the Findings of the ASI?**

- The stupa may belong to the 7th or 8th century.
- It was found at Parabhadi which is situated near **Lalitagiri**, a major Buddhist complex, having a large number of stupas and monasteries.
  - **Lalitgiri Buddhist site** is believed to be the most sacred among the **three sites (Lalitagiri, Ratnagiri and Udayagiri)** as it unearthed a massive stupa where a relic of Buddha was discovered inside a stone casket.

**What are the Khondalite Stones?**

- Khondalite is a type of **metamorphic rock that is found in the Eastern Ghats** region of India, particularly in the state of Odisha. It is named after the **Khondalite Group of rocks**, which is believed to have formed around 1.6 billion years ago during the Proterozoic era.
- Khondalite is primarily composed of **feldspar, quartz, and mica, and has a distinct pinkish-grey coloration**. It is commonly used as a decorative stone in construction and is particularly prized for its durability and resistance to weathering.
- Khondalite stones were widely used in ancient temple complexes. They are proposed to be used widely to maintain aesthetic value of some projects such as heritage security zone, Jagannath Ballav pilgrim centre, etc.

**What is Stupa?**

- **About:** Stupas were burial mounds prevalent in India from the vedic period.
- **Architecture:** Stupas consist of a cylindrical drum with a circular **anda** and a **harmika** and a **chhatra** on the top.
  - **Anda:** Hemispherical mound symbolic of the mound of dirt used to cover Buddha's remains (in many stupas actual relics were used).
  - **Harmika:** Square railing on top of the mound.
  - **Chhatra:** Central pillar supporting a triple umbrella form.
- **Material Used:** The core of the stupa was made of **unburnt brick** while the outer surface was made by using **burnt bricks**, which were then covered with a thick layer of plaster and medhi and the toran were decorated with wooden sculptures.

**Examples:**

- **Sanchi Stupa** in Madhya Pradesh is the most famous of the Ashokan stupas.
- **Piprahwa Stupa** in Uttar Pradesh is the oldest one.
- **Stupas built after the death of Buddha:** Rajagriha, Vaishali, Kapilavastu, Allakappa, Ramagrama, Vethapida, Pava, Kushinagar and Pippalivana.
- **Stupa at Bairat, Rajasthan:** Grand stupa with a circular mound and a circumambulatory path.

**ASI finds Buddhist Caves in Bandhavgarh Forests****Why in News?**

The **Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)** discovered Buddhist caves and stupas at Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve in Madhya Pradesh.

**What are the Findings?****Buddhist Caves:**

- 26 Buddhist Caves were discovered dating back to the 2nd and 5th centuries, pertaining to the **Mahayana sect** of Buddhism.
- The caves and some of their remains had '**Chaitya' (rounded) doors** and stone beds typical of Mahayana Buddhism sites.

**Inscriptions in Brahmi text:**

- 24 inscriptions in Brahmi text were, all dating back to the 2<sup>nd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> centuries.
- The inscriptions **mention sites such as Mathura and Kaushambi**, and Pavata, Vejabbhara and Sapatanaairikaa.
- The kings they mention include **Bhimsena, Pothasiri and Bhattadeva**.

**Remains of Temples:**

- The remains of 26 temples dating to the Kalachuri period between 9th-11th centuries and the possibly world's largest **Varaha sculpture also dating to the same period were found**.
  - The **Kalachuri dynasty**, which spread over parts of Gujarat, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh, is also **associated with the earliest Ellora and Elephanta cave monuments**.

Note:



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- The Varaha sculpture is among the many monolithic sculptures of the 10 incarnations of Lord Vishnu.
- Two Saiva mutts have also been found.
- **Remains of the Gupta Period:**
  - Some remains of the **Gupta period**, such as door jambs and carvings in caves, have been found.

#### What are the Key Points of Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve?

- **About:**
  - In 1968, it was notified as a national park and in **1993 was declared a tiger reserve- under the Project Tiger** Network at the neighbouring Panpatha Sanctuary.
- **Historical Significance:** Its mention can be found in the ancient books of the 'Narad Pancharatra' and the 'Shiv Purana' that this place is being associated with Ramayana.
  - The Bandhavgarh Fort is a **great masterpiece of "Treta Yuga"** (one of the ages of mankind in Hinduism).
  - It was ruled by major dynasties including Sengars, the Kalchuris, and the Baghels (believed to rule the regions for the longer period).
- **Geographical Aspect:** It resides on the extreme north eastern border of Madhya Pradesh and the northern edges of the Satpura mountain ranges.



#### What is the Archaeological Survey of India?

- ASI, under the Ministry of Culture, is the **premier organization for the archaeological research and protection of the cultural heritage** of the nation.
- It administers more **than 3650 ancient monuments, archaeological sites and remains of national importance.**

- Its activities include carrying out surveys of antiquarian remains, exploration and excavation of archaeological sites, conservation and maintenance of protected monuments etc.
- **It was founded in 1861 by Alexander Cunningham** the first Director-General of ASI. Alexander Cunningham is also known as the "Father of Indian Archaeology".

## Mahavir Jayanti

### Why in News?

The Prime Minister has greeted people on **Mahavir Jayanti**, recalling the noble teachings of Bhagwan Mahavir, especially the emphasis on peace, compassion and brotherhood.

### What is Mahavir Jayanti?

- **About:**
  - Mahavir Jayanti is **one of the most auspicious festivals in the Jain community.**
  - This day marks the **birth of Vardhamana Mahavira**, who was the 24th and the last Tirthankara 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.**
    - As per the **Gregorian calendar**, Mahavir Jayanti is usually celebrated during the month of March or April.
  - 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.**
- **Lord Mahavira:**
  - Mahavir was born to King Siddhartha of Kundagrama and Queen Trishala, a Lichchhavi princess in the year **540 BC in the Vajji kingdom**, identical with **modern day Vaishali in Bihar.**
  - Mahavira belonged to the **Ikshvaku dynasty.**
  - There are several historians who believe that he was born in a place called Ahalya bhumi and the land has not been plowed for hundreds of years by the family that owns it.
  - Lord Mahavir was named **Vardhamana, which means "one who grows".**

Note:



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- He abandoned worldly life at the age of 30 and **attained 'kaivalya' or omniscience at the age of 42.**
- 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.**

#### What is 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 Sthalabahu.
  - **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 Jaina 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. Svetambara Jains call it Santhara whereas Digambaras call it Sallekhana.

## Sufism

### Why in News?

Recently, a book 'In Search of the Divine: Living Histories of Sufism in India' has been published.

### What is Sufism?

- **About:**
  - 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.
  - In the beginning of 12 AD, some religious people in **Persia turned to asceticism due to the increasing materialism of the Caliphate.** They came to be called the 'Sufis'.
  - In India, Sufi movement **began in 1300 A.D** & came to South India in the 15<sup>th</sup> century.
  - In Sufism, self-discipline was considered an essential condition to gain knowledge of God. While orthodox Muslims emphasize external conduct, the Sufis lay stress on inner purity.
  - Multan and Punjab were the early centers and later on, it spread to Kashmir, Bihar, Bengal and the Deccan.
- **Etymology:**

Note:



- The term 'Sufi' is probably derived from the Arabic 'suf' word which means 'one who wears wool'. This is because woollen clothes were generally associated with ascetics. Another possible origin of the word is 'safa' which means purity in Arabic.

➤ **Stages of Sufism:**

- **1<sup>st</sup> Stage (Khanqah):** Started in 10th century, also called the age of Golden Mysticism
- **2<sup>nd</sup> Stage (Tariqa):** 11-14th century, when Sufism was being institutionalized and traditions and symbols started being attached to it.
- **3<sup>rd</sup> Stage (Tarifa):** Started in the 15th century, at this the stage when Sufism became a popular movement.

➤ **Major Sufi Orders:**

○ **Chisti:**

- Chishtiya Order was founded in India by Khwaja Moin-Uddin Chishti.
- It emphasised the doctrine of the unity of being with God (wahdat 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 popularized by disciples of Khwaja Moin-Uddin Chishti like Khwaja Qutbuddin Bakhtiyar Kaki, Fareeduddin Ganj-e-Shakar, Nizam uddin Auliya and Naseeruddin Charagh.

○ **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 14<sup>th</sup> century.
- They were supporters of the Mughals under Akbar.

## National Tribal Dance Festival 2022

### Why in News?

Artists from across the world take part in the **3rd Edition of National Tribal Dance Festival in Raipur, Chhattisgarh** on the event of **state foundation day**.

- Nearly **1,500 dancers from across India and countries like Mozambique, Mongolia, Tonga, Russia, Indonesia, Maldives, Serbia, New Zealand and Egypt arrived for the festival.**

- National Tribal Dance Festival is one of **Chhattisgarh's grand festivals which celebrates diverse tribal communities** and their culture not just in India but from across the globe.

What are the Indian Folk and Tribal Dances of India?

- **Indian folk and tribal dances** are simple dances, and are performed to **express joy and happiness among themselves.**
- Folk and tribal dances are performed for **every possible occasion, to celebrate the arrival of seasons, birth of a child, a wedding and festivals.**
- **Men and women perform some dances exclusively**, while in some performances **men and women dance together.**

➤ **Major Folk and Tribal Dance Forms of India**

○ **State: Folk/Tribal Dance Form**

- Assam: Bagurumba, Bihu, Bhortal, Jhumur
- Arunachal Pradesh: Bardo Chham
- Chhattisgarh: Raut Nacha
- Goa: Fugdi
- Gujarat: Dandiya Raas, Garba
- Himachal Pradesh: Nati
- Haryana: Ras Leela
- Jammu and Kashmir: Dumhal
- Kerala: Chakyar Koothu, Duffmuttu, Margamkali, Oppana, Padyani, Theyyam, Thirayattam

Note:



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- Karnataka: Hulivesha, Pata Kunitha
- Madhya Pradesh: Grida, Maanch, Matki, Phulpati
- Nagaland: Chang Lo
- Mizoram: Cheraw
- Maharashtra: Lavani, Parvi Nach
- Punjab: Bhangra, Giddha, Kikkli,
- Odisha: Chhau, Goti Pua, Baagh Naach, Dalkhai, Dhap, Gumra, Karma Naach, Keisabadi
- Puducherry: Garadi
- Rajasthan: Ghoomar, Kalbelia, Kachchhi Ghodi
- Tamil Nadu: Parai Attam, Kaaragattam, Kolattam, Mayil Attam, Paampu Attam, Oyilattam, Puliyattam, Poikal Kudirai Attam, Theru Koothu
- Tripura: Hojagiri
- Uttar Pradesh: Mayur Nritya, Charukala
- West Bengal: Gambhira, Alkap, Domni
- Sikkim: Singhi Chaam

## Wangala Dance

### Why in News?

The opening ceremony of the **Rising Sun Water Fest-2022 was conducted** amidst the pristine surroundings of Umiyam Lake (man-made reservoir) at Meghalaya.

- Members of the **Garo tribal community perform Wangala dance** on the occasion of 'The Rising Sun Water Fest-2022'.

### What is Wangala Dance?

- The Wangala is also known as the **Festival of Hundred Drums** and is celebrated with different forms of dances on the tunes of folk songs played on drums and primitive flute made of buffalo horns.
- The festival is celebrated in **honour of the Sun God and marks the end of the long harvest season.**
- The celebration also **signifies the end of a long toil period in the field** for the Garo tribe before the start of the winters.
- For the Garo Tribe in Meghalaya, the **festival is a way to preserve and promote their cultural identity** and they exhibit their tradition in their celebrations.

### Who are the Garo Community?

- The Garos, who call themselves **A'chiks**, are the **second largest tribe in Meghalaya.**

- The other **two major tribes of Meghalaya** are the Khasi People and the Jaintia tribe.
- The Garos have a **strong tradition that they have come from Tibet.** They have a number of dialects and cultural groups. Each of them originally settled at a particular area of the Garo Hills and outlying plain lands.
- However, the **culture of the modern Garo community** has been greatly influenced by Christianity. Nokpantes are the glory of the past and all children are given equal care, rights and importance by modern parents.
- The **Garo marriage is regulated by two important laws**, viz., Exogamy and A'Kim according to the belonging to the same clan. Marriages are not allowed within the same clan.
  - According to the law of A'Kim, a man or a woman who has once contracted marriage will **never be free to remarry person of another clan**, even after the death of his/ her spouse.
- The Garos are **one of the few remaining matrilineal societies** in the world.
  - The individuals **take their clan titles from their mothers.** Traditionally, the youngest daughter inherits the property from her mother.
  - Sons leave the parents' house at puberty, and are trained in the village bachelor dormitory (Nokpante). After getting married, the man lives in his wife's house. Garos are **only a matrilineal society, but not matriarchal.**

## Traditional New Year Festivals

### Why in News?

The President of India has greeted people on the eve of **Chaitra Shukladi, Gudi Padwa, Ugadi, Cheti Chand, Vaisakhi, Vishu, Naba Barsha, Vaisakhadi and Puthandu-Pirappu and Bohag Bihu.**

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

### What are the Traditional New Year Festivals?

- **Vaishakhi:**
  - It is also pronounced as Baisakhi, **observed by Hindus and Sikhs.**

Note:



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- 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 in Kerala**.
- It therefore always **falls in the middle of April in the Gregorian calendar on 14<sup>th</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup> April every year**.

➤ **Puthandu:**

- Also known as **Puthuvarudam** 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.
- It therefore falls on or about **14th April every year on the Gregorian calendar**.

➤ **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 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.

➤ **Naba Barsha:**

- Naba Barsha is the celebration of the new year in **West Bengal** as per the Bengali Calendar.
- It is also **popularly known as the PoilaBaisakh which literally translates to first Baisakhi (a month in the lunisolar calendar of the Bengalis)**.
- The people of Bengal come together and celebrate this new year in their own way by making it loud and magical like every other Bengali festival.
- The festival is celebrated by all castes and religions all across Bengal.

- **After Durga Pooja, this is the second most hyped festival in Bengal**, this festival connects the people of Bengal, especially the Bengalis who are originally Hindu.

## Makar Sankranti

### Why in News

Recently, the PM has greeted people across the nation on the occasion of **harvest festivals** Makar Sankranti, Uttarayan, Bhogi, Magh Bihu and Pongal.

- The festivals celebrate the hard work and enterprise of millions of farmers across the country.

### Key Points

➤ **Makar Sankranti:**

- Makar Sankranti denotes the entry of the **sun into the zodiac sign of Makara (Capricorn) as it travels on its celestial path**.
- 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 is 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.

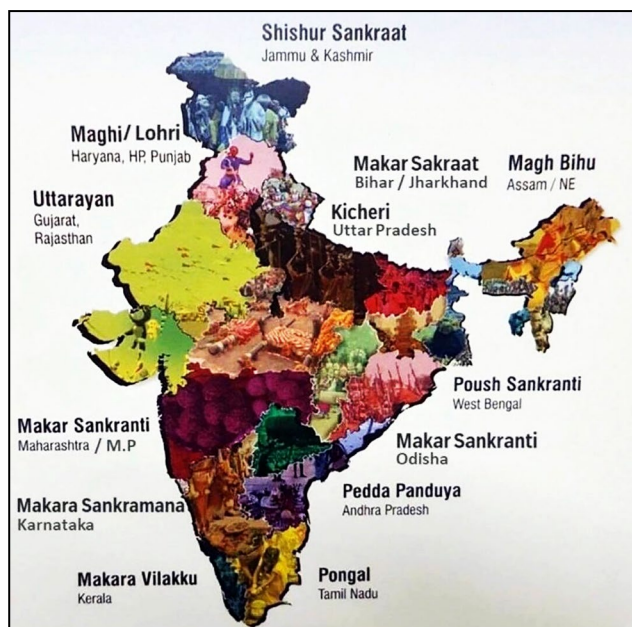
➤ **Bihu:**

- 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.

➤ **Pongal:**

- The word Pongal means '**overflow**' or '**boiling over**'.
- 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.

Note:



## Importance of Regional Language

### Why in News?

Recently, the Chairman of the **University Grants Commission (UGC)** emphasised that early initiation of learning a mother tongue is important for a child's creative thinking.

#### What are Regional Languages?

- Regional language is a term used to refer to a language that is spoken by a sizeable number of people but is not the de facto language of communication in the rest of the country.
  - A language is considered regional when it is mostly spoken by people who reside largely in one particular area of a state or country.
  - Article 343(1) of the **Indian Constitution** states that the official language of the Union shall be Hindi in Devanagiri Script.

#### What are the Initiatives taken by the Government for the Promotion of Vernacular Languages?

- The University Grants Commission is in talks with various regulatory bodies such as **Bar Council of India** for promotion of vernacular languages, therefore, a

committee had been formed under former Chief Justice of India which would look into how institutions could provide legal education in local languages.

- The **All India Council of Technical Education** too had introduced courses in regional languages in 10 colleges.
  - Further, It is also working with the **High-Powered Committee on Indian Language Development** established by the **Ministry of Education** to identify experts as well as 10-12 disciplines so that books could either be translated or written afresh.
  - The regulatory body was aiming at preparing 1,500 books in regional languages in the next one year across different disciplines.
- The **Commission for Scientific and Technical Terminology (CSTT)** is providing publication grant towards the publications of University Level Books in regional languages.
- The **National Translation Mission (NTM)** is being implemented through the **Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL)**.

#### What are the Constitutional Provisions related to Regional Language?

- **Article 345:** 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.
- **Article 346:** The language authorised for use in the Union for official purposes shall be the official language for communication between one State and another State and between a State and the Union.
  - **For example-** If two or more States agree that the Hindi language should be the official language for communication between such States, that language may be used for such communication.
- **Article 347:** It gives the President the power to recognise a language as an official language of a given state, provided that the President is satisfied that a substantial proportion of that state desires that the language be recognised. Such recognition can be for a part of the state or the whole state.
- **Article 350A:** The facilities for instruction in mother-tongue at the primary stage.
- **Article 350B:** It provides for the establishment of a Special Officer for linguistic minorities.
- **Article 351:** It gives power to the union government to issue a directive for the development of the Hindi language.

Note:



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## Hindi Diwas

### Why in News?

On the occasion of Hindi Diwas, Prime Minister of India has said that the Hindi language has brought India special honour globally and its simplicity and sensitivity always attracts people.

### What is the History behind Hindi Diwas?

- Hindi Diwas or the National Hindi Day is **celebrated** every year in India **on September 14** to mark the **day of adoption of Hindi as the official language by the Constituent Assembly of India** in 1949.
- The decision of using Hindi as an official language of India was **legalised by the Constitution of India on January 26, 1950**. India's first prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru decided to celebrate Hindi Diwas on this day.
- Hindi is also an **eighth schedule language**.
  - Hindi is **not a classical language**.
- **Article 351** pertains to the '**Directive for development of the Hindi language**'.

### What are the Government Initiatives to Promote Hindi?

- **Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR)** has established '**Hindi Chairs**' in various foreign universities/institutions abroad to promote Hindi language in foreign countries.
- **LILA-Rajbhasha** (Learn Indian Languages through Artificial Intelligence) is a multimedia based intelligent self-tutoring application for learning Hindi.
- **E-Saral Hindi Vakya Kosh and E-Mahashabdkosh Mobile App**, both initiatives of the Department of Official Language, aim to harness information technology for the growth of Hindi.
- **Rajbhasha Gaurav Puraskar and Rajbhasha Kirti Puraskar** recognise contributions to Hindi.

#### Hindi Language

- Hindi is the **fourth most spoken language in the world**, and is written in Devanagari script. The language got its name from the Persian word 'Hind' - meaning 'land of the Indus River'; and is a descendant of Sanskrit.

- Turk invaders in the early 11<sup>th</sup> century named the language of the region Hindi, 'language of the land of the Indus River'.
- It is the **official language of India, English being the other official language**.
- Hindi is also spoken in some countries outside India, such as in Mauritius, Fiji, Suriname, Guyana, Trinidad & Tobago and Nepal.
- Hindi in its present form emerged through different stages, during which it was known by other names. The earliest form of old Hindi was Apabhramsa. In 400 AD Kalidas wrote a romantic play in Apabhramsa called Vikramorvashiyam.
- The modern Devanagari script came into existence in the 11<sup>th</sup> century.

## Rural Tourism

### Why in News?

Rural Tourism and Rural Homestays (CNA – RT and RH) under the Ministry of Tourism has identified **six niche experiences for tourists wanting to visit rural India**, including agritourism, art and culture, **ecotourism**, wildlife, tribal tourism, and homestays.

- The Ministry of Tourism is also **working on launching the State assessment and ranking criteria** to help foster competition and reach the overarching objectives of promoting sustainable and responsible tourism.

### What is the Concept of Rural Tourism?

- **About:**
  - Rural tourism in India is a form of tourism that **focuses on exploring and experiencing the rural lifestyle and culture**.
  - It involves **traveling to rural areas and participating in various activities** such as farming, handicrafts, and village walks, to gain a deeper understanding of the local culture and way of life.
    - For instance, Tamil Nadu's **Kolukkumalai** is the **highest tea plantation** in the world; Kerala's Dewalokam is a yoga centre on the banks of a river; **Nagaland's Konyak Tea** retreat takes visitors on a trip through tribal culture etc.
- **Scope:**

Note:

- India's rural tourism potential lies in its **diverse and vibrant culture, handicrafts, folk arts, festivals, and fairs**.
- U.S.-based market research firm Grand View Research estimates that agritourism alone will develop at a **Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 11.4% from 2022 to 2030**.

#### What are the Related Initiatives?

- The Government is exploring organic agriculture areas developed under the **Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY)** and **Mission Organic Value Chain Development in North East Region (MOVCD-NER)** for development as rural tourist spots.
- **Best Tourism Village Competition Portal** was launched recently to select the best tourism village from across the country, and also to promote rural tourism in the country
  - The 'Best Tourism Village Competition' will be held in three stages, and will seek entries at district level, state level and finally at the national level.
- The Ministry of Tourism has launched **Visit India Year 2023**, focusing on inbound travel to India, to highlight **varied tourism offerings of our country and showcase them to the global tourists**.
- **PRASHAD (National Mission on Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual and Heritage Augmentation Drive) scheme** was launched by the Ministry of Tourism in 2015.
  - Till date, under PRASHAD scheme, a total of 45 projects for an amount of Rs.1586.10 Crore have been sanctioned.
- **Swadesh Darshan scheme** in 2014-15 with focus on integrated development of theme-based tourist circuits in the country.
  - 76 projects were sanctioned for an amount of Rs.5315.59 Crore under various themes such as eco, heritage, Himalayan, coastal theme etc.

## Tourism Working Group in Rann of Kutch

### Why in News?

As part of **India's G20 presidency**, Gujarat will host the first **Tourism Working Group (TWG)** meeting in the state's **Rann of Kutch** from **7 to 9 February 2023**.

- **Rural and Archaeological tourism** will be the focus area of Tourism. Also, **Dholavira, which is a UNESCO World heritage site**, will be the second spot for foreign delegates.

### What is the Status of the Tourism Sector in India?

#### About:

- India is known for its **diverse cultural heritage, rich history, and natural beauty**, which attract millions of domestic and international tourists each year.
- India offers a wide range of tourism options, including eco-tourism, cruise trips, business travel, sports tourism, educational tourism, **rural tourism, archaeology tourism** and medical tourism.

#### Contribution to Economy:

- In 2021, India was ranked **6th by the World Travel and Tourism Council** in terms of the **total contribution of Travel & Tourism to the country's GDP**.
- The sector contributed **5.8% to India's GDP in 2021 and created 32.1 million jobs**, which is equivalent to 6.9% of total employment in the country.

#### Challenges Related to the Tourism Sector:

- **Infrastructural Constraints:** India faces a shortage of **quality tourist infrastructure**, including accommodations, transportation, and recreational facilities, which limits its potential to attract more tourists.
- **Safety and Security:** India has been faced with **concerns regarding the safety and security of tourists**, especially for **women**. This can deter potential tourists from visiting the country.
- **Lack of Standardization:** India faces a **lack of standardization across the tourism industry**, including accommodations, tour operators, and transport providers, which can negatively impact the overall tourist experience.

## Visva-Bharati to be World's First Living Heritage University

### Why in News?

**Visva-Bharati University**, founded by **Rabindranath Tagore** in 1921, is set to become the **world's first "living heritage university"**. The university is expected to receive the **heritage tag from UNESCO** in **April or May 2023**.

Note:



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- Normally **heritage tag is given to a dead monument**. For the first time in the world, a **living university which is functioning** is going to **get the heritage tag from UNESCO**.

### What are the Key Points

#### Related to Visva-Bharati University?

- It is located in Shantiniketan, West Bengal, India. When founded in **1921**, it was named after **Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore** until **Visva-Bharati Society** was registered as an organization in May 1922.
  - Rabindranath believed in **open-air education and introduced that system at the university**, which prevails to date.
- According to **UNESCO**, in 1922, **Visva-Bharati was inaugurated as a Centre for Culture with exploration into the arts, language, humanities, music** and these are reflected in diverse institutes that continue in their educational programmes like including Hindi studies, Sino-Asian studies, humanities, fine arts, and music.
  - They are based on the founding principles of **excellence in culture and culture studies**.
- Until Independence, it was a college and the institution was given the status of **Central University in 1951 through a Central Act**.
- The **structures within the institutes** of Visva-Bharati University are diverse in architectural expression.
  - **Examples** include the
    - **Kalo Bari** (a mud structure with coal tar finish and sculpture panels)
    - **Mastermoshai studio** (a single-story structure built for the first principal of Kala Bhavan, Nandalal Bose)
    - **Murals and paintings on Cheena and Hindi Bhavan**

## Patan Patola

### Why in News?

Recently, Prime Minister of India gifted a '**Patan Patola**' scarf to the Prime Minister of Italy at the **G20 summit**.

### What is Patan Patola?

- Patola is a **double ikat woven fabric**, usually made from silk in **Patan (North Gujarat)**.



- Ikat is a method of **tie-dyeing the warp or weft before the cloth is woven**.

- It received a **Geographical Indication (GI) tag** in 2013.
- The ancient art of double ikat or Patola woven in pure silk **dates back to the 11<sup>th</sup> century**.
- This peculiar quality has its origins in an intricate and difficult technique of **dyeing or knot dyeing, known as 'bandhani', on the warp and weft separately before weaving**.
  - The Patola fabrics bear an **equal intensity of colours and design on both sides**.
- Patola is **woven on primitive hand-operated harness looms made out of rosewood and bamboo strips**. The loom lies on a slant.
  - The process is **labour-intensive, time-consuming**, and requires a high order of skill and expertise
  - It takes **three to four months to prepare a tie-died design on warp and weft threads for one saree of six yards**.
  - While possessing and wearing a Patola is considered a **matter of pride**, the fabric has largely remained **inaccessible to common people because of its high price**.
- One of the **major practitioners** of this art form is the **Salvi family from Patan**.
- The other commonly worn Patola is the **Rajkot Patola, woven on a flat loom**.
- Before World War II, **Indonesia was the major buyer of Patolas**.

## Cultural Significance of PM's Gifts for QUAD Leaders

### Why in News?

At the **QUAD Summit** held at Tokyo, Indian PM carried with him gifts for leaders of the US, Australia and Japan showcasing India's rich cultural heritage and art forms.

### What are the Gifts and Significance?

- **Sanjhi Art Panel for US President:**
  - The intricate sanjhi panel is based on the theme of **Thakurani Ghat, which is one of the most famous ghats on the banks of the holy river of Yamuna in Gokul**.

Note:



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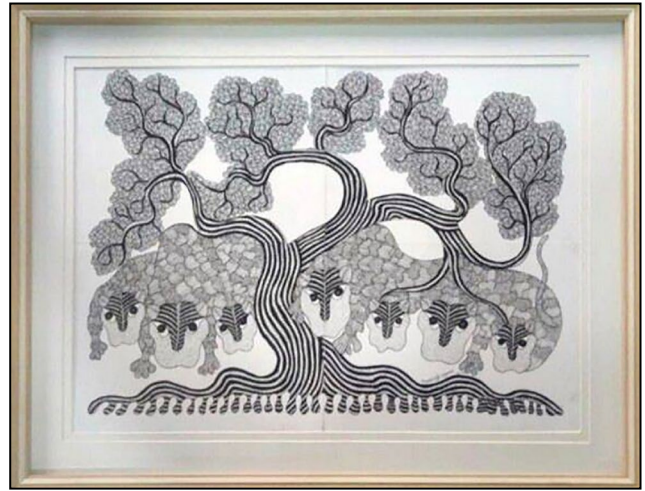
- The traditional art form that **originated out of the cult of Krishna**, involves creating stencils based on incidents from the life of the deity and then hand-cutting these on thin sheets of paper using scissors.



- In olden times, the **stencils were made using rough paper or banana leaves, but now this has changed to handmade** and recycled paper.
- Radha, according to **Hindu mythology**, used to **paint sanjhi patterns on the walls for her beloved Krishna** and later the gopis of Vrindavan followed suit.
  - Later, the form **was used to make ceremonial rangolis in temples** dedicated to Lord Krishna.
- In fact, the term '**sanjhi**' is derived from '**sanjh**' or dusk (Evening) and is related to the practice of making rangolis in temples at dusk.
- In the form of painting, **sanjhi was popularised in the 15th and 16th centuries by the Vaishnava temples** and was practiced by Priests.
  - During the **Mughal period, contemporary themes were added** and several families have continued to practice the form to this day.
  - During the 2010 Commonwealth Games, the **pictograms were inspired by traditional Sanjhi art**.

➤ **Gond art painting for Australian PM:**

- A form of painting practised by one of the largest tribal groups in India, the Gond community in Madhya Pradesh.
- The art in its visual form is often traced to Jangarh Shyam, who in the 1970s and '80s began drawing the largely oral myths and legends of the tribe onto the walls of homes in the village of Patangarh.



- The **dotted patterns, jagged patterns, dots, waves and squiggles** told the tale of their gods and goddesses and as well as the **flora and fauna of the deep forests** in Madhya Pradesh.
  - The prominent names include Bhajju Shyam, Venkat Shyam, Durgabai Vyam, Ram Singh Urveti and Subhash Vyam, among others.
- PM Modi's gift to PM depicts a popular motif in Gond art — the Tree of Life, with intricate patterns and lines that are a trademark of Gond art.

➤ **Wooden hand-carved box with a Rogan painting for Japanese PM:**

- Rogan is a **form of cloth painting that is considered to be more than four centuries old** and is primarily practised in Kutch district of Gujarat.
- The word '**rogan**' comes from Persian, meaning **varnish or oil**.
- The craft **uses paint made from boiled oil and vegetable dyes**, where **castor seeds are hand-pounded to extract the oil and turned into a paste by boiling**.



- Coloured powder is diluted in water and mixed to make pastes in different colours that are stored in earthen pots.

Note:



- Artists place a **small amount of the paint paste into their palms and twirl it with a rod for a textured appearance on the fabric**. The rod never really comes in contact with the fabric and by moving it above, the artist sketches thin lines on the fabric.
- Usually, only half the fabric is painted and it is folded to create a mirror image. While originally only men used to practice the art form, now several women in Gujarat also pursue it.

## Baliyatra

### Why in News?

Recently, the Prime Minister in his address to the Indian diaspora in Bali on the sidelines of the **G20 summit** mentioned the **annual Baliyatra on the banks of the Mahanadi** in Cuttack that **commemorates age-old links between ancient Kalinga and Southeast Asia**.

- Baliyatra of year 2022 also found a place in the Guinness World Records for achieving an impressive feat of origami, the creation of beautiful paper sculptures.

### What is Baliyatra?

- **About:**
  - Baliyatra, literally '**voyage to Bali**' is one of the country's largest open-air fares.
  - **Baliyatra** is a week-long event which **begins on Kartik Purnima (full moon night in the month of Kartik)**
- **Historical/Cultural Significance:**
  - It is **organised every year to commemorate the 2,000-year-old maritime** and cultural links between ancient Kalinga (today's Odisha) and Bali and other South and Southeast Asian regions like Java, Sumatra, Borneo, Burma (Myanmar) and Ceylon (Sri Lanka).
  - According to historians, **popular items of trade between Kalinga and Southeast Asia included** pepper, cinnamon, cardamom, silk, camphor, gold, and jewellery.
  - The Bali Yatra **celebrates the ingenuity and skill of those expert sailors who made Kalinga one of the most prosperous empires** of its time.

### Commercial Significance:

- Baliyatra has a **significant commercial dimension** in addition to its cultural and historical elements.
  - It is a time when people purchase everything from automobiles and electronic devices to local artisanal products at prices that are comparatively low.
  - The district administration allots more than 1,500 stalls to traders through an auction, and the fair is estimated to see business worth more than Rs 100 crore over the period it lasts.

### How is Kalinga

### linked with Southeast Asia?

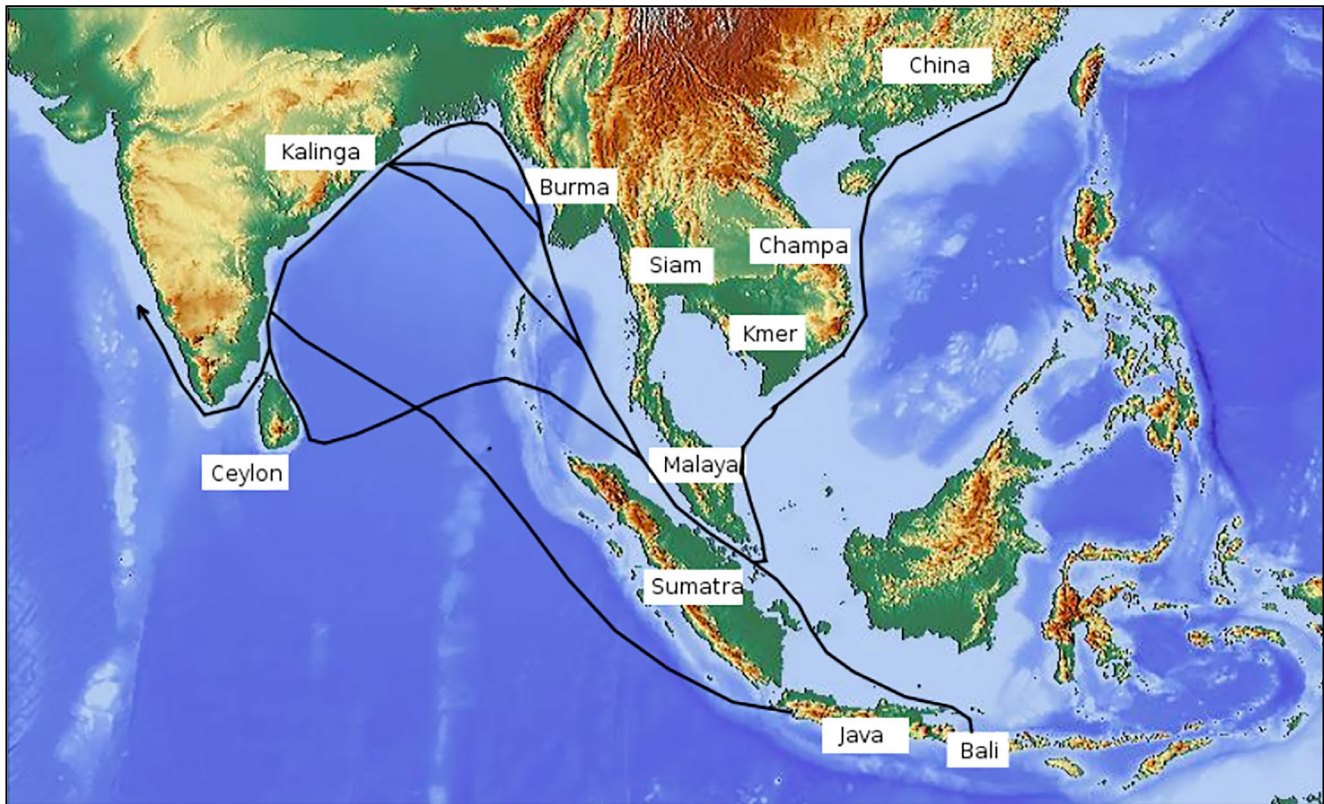
- **Origin – Growth of Ports:** The Kalinga Empire (present-day Odisha) is known for its glorious maritime history. Due to the **geographical location of Kalinga**, this area saw the **growth of ports as early as the 4th and the 5th century BC**.
  - Some of the famous ports, **Tamralipti, Manikpatna, Chelitalo, Palur and Pithunda** allowed India to connect with other countries via the sea. Soon, the Kalingas had trade links with Srilanka, Java, Borneo, Sumatra, Bali and Burma.
    - **Bali formed a part of the four islands** that were collectively called the **Suvarnavdipa**, today known as Indonesia.
- **Kalinga's Ships:** The Kalingas constructed large boats called the '**Boitas**' and with the help of these, they traded with the Indonesian islands.
  - The **Bay of Bengal was once known as the Kalinga Sea** as it was thronged by these ships.
  - The dominance of the Kalingas over the sea routes can be understood from the fact that **Kalidasa in his Raghuvamsa referred to the King of Kalinga as 'The Lord of the Sea'**.
- **Cultural Exchange with Indonesia:** The Kalingas frequently traded with the island of Bali. The trade-in commodities also led to the **interchange of ideas and beliefs**.
  - **Odia merchants formed settlements in Bali** and influenced its culture and ethics which led to the growth of Hinduism in the region.
    - Hinduism blended well with the Balinese concepts and even today,

Note:



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- 'Balinese Hinduism' is practised by a majority of their population.
  - They worship various Hindu Gods such as Shiva, Vishnu, Ganesha and Brahma.
  - **Shiva was considered to be the presiding deity** and believed to be the **elder brother of Buddha**.
- The **Balinese also celebrate Hindu Festivals** such as Shivaratri, Durga Pooja and Saraswati Pooja.
  - The 'Masakapan ke Tukad' festival celebrated in Bali is similar to the Bali Yatra festival in Odisha. Both are celebrated in the memory of their maritime ancestors.



Note:

**Key Points**

**Details**


**Summary**

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**Summary**