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Important Facts For Prelims (2nd April 2019)

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Thakurani Jatra Festival

- Recently, celebrations of the **biennial Thakurani Jatra festival** started in **Berhampur, Odisha**.
- During the festival, **Goddess Budhi Thakurani** is taken from the main temple at Thakurani Temple Street to her temporary abode at Desi Behera Street, where she stays till the festival ends.
- The first Thakurani Yatra was **celebrated in April 1779**. The festival goes on for **32 days**.
- The goddess is considered to be a **family member of Desibehera, the leader of the Dera community**, the weaver clan that has made Berhampur famous as the silk city.

Reiwa: Japan's New Era

- The Japanese government has announced that the reign of the **next Japanese emperor will be known as the "Reiwa" era**.
- The term for the new era is made up of the two characters **Rei and Wa**. Rei can mean **"commands" or "order"**, as well as **"auspicious" or "good"**. While, **Wa often means "harmony"**, and is also used in the Japanese word for "peace" - "hei-wa".
 - The name draws from the **7th century poetry collection "Manyoshu."**
 - This is the **first era name** to have been **inspired by a Japanese, rather than Chinese, work of classical literature**.
- The new era takes effect on **May 1, 2019** with the **coronation of Crown Prince Naruhito (126th emperor of the Chrysanthemum Throne)**.
 - Chrysanthemum Throne is a **common name given to the Imperial throne of Japan**.
 - It is the **oldest continuing monarchy** in the world.
 - Under the provisions of the current Constitution of Japan, the Emperor is a **"symbol of the state and the unity of its people"**; he has **no real political power** but is regarded as a ceremonial Head of State and constitutional

monarch.

- Current emperor Akihito is stepping down on April 30, 2019 in the **first abdication in 200 years**, bringing his era of **“Heisei” to an end**.
 - The **era of “Heisei,” which means “achieving peace,”** was the first without a war in Japan’s modern history, but is also remembered as lost years of economic deflation and natural disasters.
 - This **era began in 1989, when Akihito succeeded his father Emperor Hirohito**, who ruled during the Showa period and is now known as the Showa Emperor. It will come to a close on April 30, the day Akihito abdicates.
- The announcement allows only a month ahead of the switch for government, businesses and other sectors to adjust to the change that still affects many parts of Japan’s society, even though the system is not compulsory.