

CULTURE

Classroom Study Material

(April 2024 to October 2024)



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1. MONUMENTS, TEMPLES AND OTHER ARCHITECTURE

1.1. DELISTING OF MONUMENTS

Why in the News?

The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) intends to **delist 18 centrally protected monuments out of 24 "untraceable" monuments.**

More on the News

- These 18 monuments were “untraceable” and it **was assessed as lacking national importance.**
- Untraceable monuments** were protected monuments, under the ASI.
 - Monuments facing delisting:** Kos Minar No.13 (Haryana), Gunner Burkhill's tomb (Jhansi), Telia Nala ruins (Varanasi).
 - Kos Minar are **medieval Indian milestones along the Grand Trunk Road in northern Indian subcontinent**, that were introduced by the **16th-century ruler Sher Shah Suri.**
 - Decision was based on the report** by the Ministry of Culture.

HQ: New Delhi



About The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)



Genesis: Founded in 1861 by **Alexander Cunningham** also known as the "Father of Indian Archaeology".



Ministry: Ministry of Culture



About: Premier organization for the **archaeological researches, protection and maintenance of ancient monuments** of the cultural heritage.



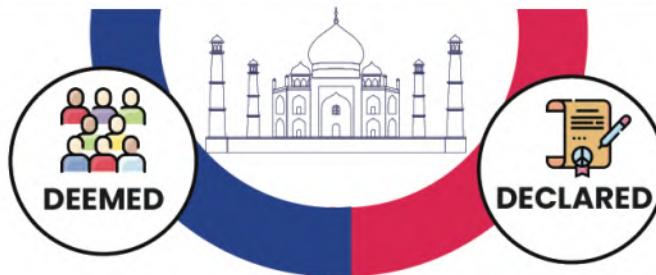
Mandate:

- Regulates all archaeological activities in the country as per the provisions of **Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (AMASR) Act, 1958 and Antiquities and Art Treasure Act, 1972.**
- In charge of **protection and maintenance of centrally Protected Monuments (CPMs)/Sites of national importance** including World Heritage Property etc.

About “Delisting” of monument

- Delisting** means it will no longer receive conservation, protection, and maintenance from the ASI in accordance of **Section 35 of AMASR Act, 1958**
- Once delisted, **regular construction and urbanization** activities can take place in the area.
- The Act empowers the **Central Government to declare**, whether an ancient and historical monument or **archaeological site and remains have ceased to be of national importance.**
- There is **no term called “Missing Monuments”** in the **AMASR Act** and the term only came into existence as it was used by the CAG Audit team on their Report.

Monuments of National Importance



Under **Section 3** of **AMASR Act**, it includes **all ancient and historical monuments and archaeological sites and remains** which have been **declared** by the:

- **Ancient and Historical Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (Declaration of National Importance) Act, 1951**, or
- **By Section 126 of the States Reorganisation Act, 1956**, to be of **national importance**.

Under **Section 4** of **AMASR Act**, it includes **any ancient monument or archaeological sites and remains** which is

- **Declared by the Central Government** through notification in the Official Gazette and are **not included in section 3**.



Legal Framework

- **Article 49 (DPSP)** of the Constitution directs the **state to protect monuments and places and objects of national importance across the country**.
- **The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (AMASR) Act, 1958** provides for preservation of ancient/historical monuments, archaeological sites, and remains of national importance.
 - **Regulates archaeological excavations** and protects sculptures, carvings, etc.
 - **Section 4: Empowers Central Government** to declare monuments of National Importance.
- **National Monuments Authority (NMA)** under the Ministry of Culture established by AMASR (Amendment and Validation) Act, 2010.
 - **Functions of NMA:**
 - > Protects and preserves monuments/sites by managing prohibited and regulated areas.
 - > Grants permissions for construction in prohibited/regulated areas near centrally protected monuments.

1.2. NALANDA UNIVERSITY

Why in the News?

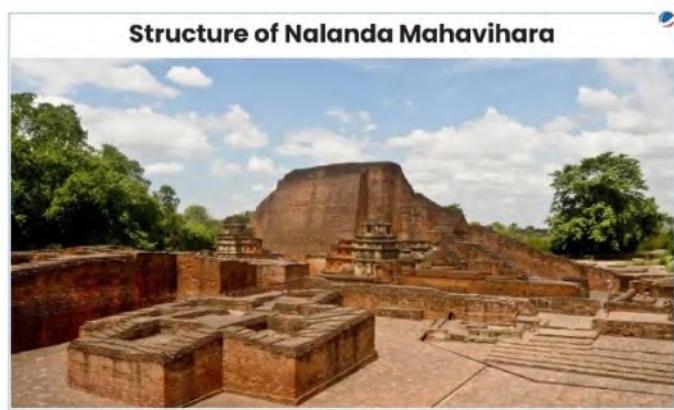
Recently, the **Prime Minister inaugurated the new campus of Nalanda University in Rajgir (Bihar)**.

More on the News

- The new Nalanda University, envisaged as a **centre of inter-civilisational dialogue**, is also a '**Net Zero Green Campus**'
- It is located **near the ancient Nalanda ruins** and was established under the Nalanda University Act 2010.
 - The decision at the **2nd East Asia Summit (EAS)** in the Philippines (2007) provided the basis to establish **Nalanda University**.

About Ancient Nalanda University

- **Establishment:** Founded by **Kumargupta I** in the 5th century CE and remained a centre of learning till the 12th century CE.
- **Architecture**
 - It was a monastic University, a **Mahavihara** (residential and educational buildings).
 - It also includes **stupas**, **shrines**, and important artworks in **stucco**, **stone** and **metal**.
- **Educational Excellence**
 - **Major Disciplines:** **Vedas**, **Theravada Buddhism** (means the way of the elders in Pali), **Mahayana Buddhism** (means great vehicle in Sanskrit), **Vajrayana Buddhism** (form of Tantric Buddhism), fine arts, medicine, astronomy, politics, and war strategy.
 - **Admissions:** Strictly by **merit**. **Exams were conducted by trained gatekeepers**.
 - **Library:** "Dharma Gunj" or "Mountain of Truth," holding over nine million books across nine floors.
- **Patrons:**
 - **King Harshavardhana of Kannauj** (7th century CE), **Pala rulers** (8th – 12th century CE).
 - It is said that **King Asoka** gave offerings to the **Chaitya of Sariputra** at Nalanda and erected a temple there.
- **Destroyed in 1205 AD** by Turkish general **Bakhtiyar Khalji** under Qutbuddin Aibak.
 - Rediscovered by **Sir Francis Buchanan** in the early 19th century.
- **Recognition:** The ruins of Nalanda were declared as a **UNESCO's World Heritage Site** in 2016.



Important personalities at Nalanda

- According to Pali Buddhist literature, Nalanda was **visited by Buddha**.
- **Sariputra** and **Moggallana**, two of **Buddha's chief disciples**, hailed from the Nalanda region.
- According to Jaina texts **Mahavira Vardhamana** spent as many as **fourteen rainy seasons in Nalanda**.

Prominent Teachers

- **Aryabhatta**: The renowned mathematician and inventor of zero, **studied and taught at Nalanda**.
- **Nagarjuna**: A Mahayana philosopher
- **Dinnaga**: Founder of the school of Logic
- **Dharmapala**: Brahmin scholar
- **Abhayakaragupta**: A renowned **tantric practitioner** was simultaneously abbot of the **Mahabodhi, Nalanda and Vikramashila monasteries**.
- **Naropa**: Belonged to the **tantric lineages of the Tibetan traditions**, and was **head of Nalanda** in the years 1049-57.

Foreign travellers:

- Scholars from **China, Korea, Japan, Tibet, Mongolia, Sri Lanka, and South East Asia**.
- The Chinese scholars **I-Qing** and **Xuan Zang** visited Nalanda in the 7th century CE.
- **Xuan Zang** studied **yogashastra** at Nalanda under **Chancellor Shilabhadra**, the highest authority in **yoga**.

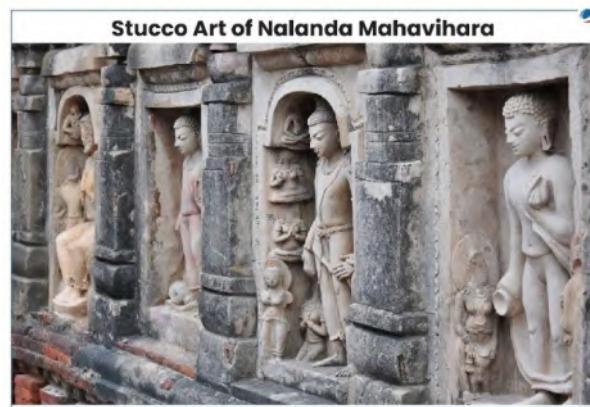
Architectural Features of Nalanda

- **Structure and Layout:**
 - **Built in Kushan style** with cells around courtyards, along the north-south axis.
 - **Viharas** (residential-scholar buildings) and **Chaityas** (temples).
 - **Introduced quincunxial (five-fold) form** in chaityas, influencing regional temples.
- **Architectural Significance:**
 - **Earliest planned university**.
 - **Influenced Buddhist art** in Malayan archipelago, Nepal, Myanmar, and Tibet.

- Enabled transition from **Mahayana to Vajrayana Buddhism** through its art.

Sculptural Art of Nalanda Mahavihara

- **Origins:** The sculptural art of Nalanda evolved from the **Buddhist Gupta art of Sarnath**.
 - **Depictions of crowned Buddhas** occur commonly only **after the tenth century**.
- **Synthesis:** By the ninth century, a blend of the **Sarnath Gupta idiom, local Bihar traditions, and Central Indian styles** led to the distinctive **Nalanda school of sculpture**.
 - Various brahmanical images not conforming to the Sarnath style have also been found at Nalanda.
- **Nalanda School of Sculpture**
 - **Stone:** Defined by precise **facial features, three-dimensional forms**, and delicate ornamentation.
 - > Sculptures have detailed **back slabs and minimal crowding**.
- **Metal Sculptures:**
 - 7th to 12th centuries; part of the Pala Period.
 - Initially followed Gupta traditions from Sarnath and Mathura.
 - **Early phase:** Mahayana deities like Manjusri, Avalokiteshvara.
 - **Later phase:** Vajrayana deities such as Vajrasharada, Khasarpiana.



Other Buddhist Centres of Learning

Centre	Details
Takshila	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Located in the Pakistan, discovered by Alexander Cunningham in the mid-19th century.● Recognised as UNESCO World Heritage site in 1980.● Noted pupils included grammarian, Panini (author of Ashtadhyayi), physician, Jivaka, and a skilled exponent of statecraft, Chanakya (author of Arthashastra)
Vikramshila	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Located near Bhagalpur, Bihar, it was established by the King Dharmapala of Pala Dynasty.● Atisha Dipankara (known for reviving Buddhism in Tibet) and Vasubandhu was alumnus of Vikramshila.
Odantipuri	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Located in Bihar.● Second oldest university in India. Odantapuri was established in the 8th century by the Pala ruler Gopal I. Many Tibetan scholars studied here.
Nagarjunakonda	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Now located in Andhra Pradesh.● Named after Nagarjuna, profounder of the doctrine of Sunyavada, who belonged to Mahayana Buddhism.
Ratnagiri	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Considered to have rivaled Nalanda as a center for Buddhist learning, particularly in Mahayana & Tantrayana (Vajrayana) Buddhism.● Together with other Buddhist sites – Lalitagiri and Udayagiri, Ratnagiri completes the set of Diamond Triangle of Buddhist centers in Odisha.
Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Valabhi (Gujarat)● Jagaddala (now in Bangladesh)

1.3. SHREE JAGANNATH TEMPLE

Why in the News?

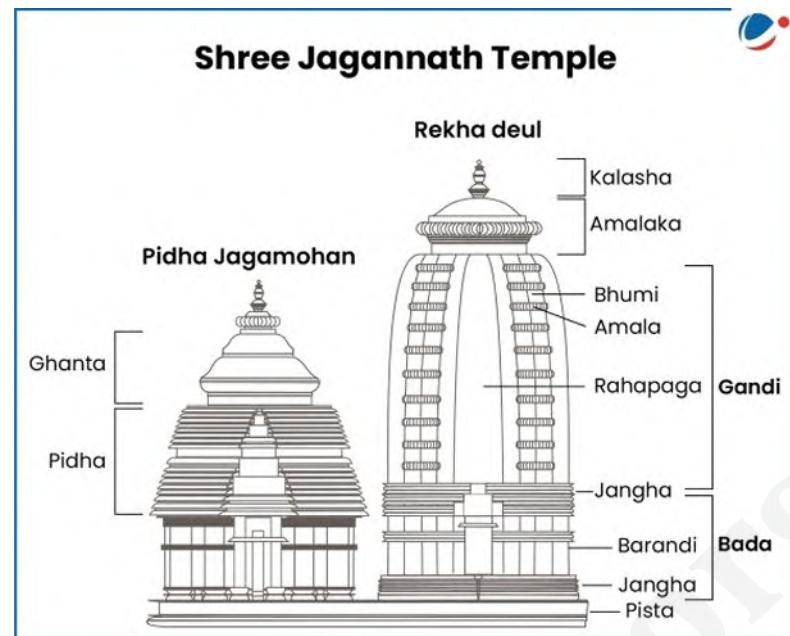
Ratna Bhandar, the sacred treasury of Shree Jagannath Temple, Puri **reopened after 46 years**.

About Shree Jagannath Temple, Puri, Odisha (White Pagoda)

- Dedicated to **Lord Jagannath** (incarnation of Lord Vishnu), Sister **Devi Subhadra** and elder brother **Lord Balabhadra** (holy trinity).
 - The **Ratna Bhandar** also has **jewels** of the holy trinity.
- Built during rule of **Anantavarman Chodaganga Deva**, the founder of **Ganga dynasty** in first part of **12th century A.D.**

Architectural style of Shree Jagannath Temple

- Architecture style:** Kalinga Architecture, a distinct substyle within the Nagara style, has four components:
 - Vimana or Deula (Garbhagriha):** Built in style of **nagara type Rekha deula** characterized by curvilinear tower known as **sikhar**.
 - Jagamohana:** It is in form of **Pidha deula**, in which sikhara has tiers of diminishing pidhas or platforms.
 - Natamandapa:** Audience/Dancing Hall
 - Bhogamandapa:** Hall for residuary offerings.
 - On both sides of outer wall of main temple, figures of **Vishnu**, **four on either side are carved which altogether depict 24 forms of Vishnus**, like Keshava, Madhava, Damodara and Narayana etc.



About Ratna Bhandar

- Located on northern side of **Jagamohana** (assembly hall of temple).
- Comprises of **Bahar Bhandar** (outer chamber) and **Bhitar Bhandar** (inner chamber).
- Additionally, **Magji Ladoo** (Odisha's Dhenkanal district), one of the 'chappan bhog' prasad at Shree Jagannath Temple got **Geographical Indication (GI) Tag**.

1.4. VIRUPAKSHA TEMPLE

Why in the News?

The Virupaksha temple's pavilion or the '**saalu mantap**' collapsed following torrential rains.

About Virupaksha Temple

- Temple is dedicated to **Lord Virupaksha** (or Pampapathi), a form of Shiva and consort of local goddess, **Pampadevi**.
- Located at **Hampi (Karnataka)**, which was the **capital city of Vijayanagara kingdom** (14th CE - 16th CE).
- It is part of the **Group of Monuments at Hampi** which is a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**.
- It is a prime example of **Dravida style of temple architecture**, characterized by its grand **gopurams**, **Vimana**, intricate carvings, and **pillared halls**.

Temple History

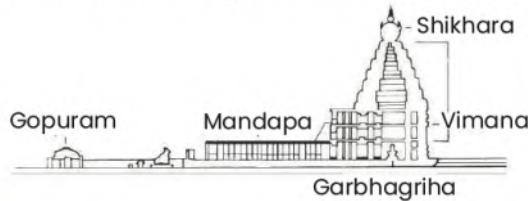
- The Virupaksha temple was built over centuries with inscriptions suggesting that the **earliest shrine was built in 740 CE by Chalukyan Queen Lokamahadevi** to commemorate her husband's victory over the kings from the South.
- Pallavas, Chalukyas, Hoysalas and Cholas** greatly contributed to the temple but it was substantially **enlarged with establishment of Vijayanagara Empire**.

- **Vijayanagara's Sangama Kings** transformed the shrine into a major religious monument and Tuluvas greatly expanded the temple.
 - **Krishnadeva Raya (1509-29 CE)** constructed a hall in front of the main shrine to mark his accession. He also **constructed the eastern gopuram**.

Features of Dravida Temple Architecture

- **Garbhagriha** has one of the smallest towers as it is usually the oldest part of the temple.
- Temple is **enclosed within a compound wall** with an entrance gateway known as **Gopuram**.
- Shape of main temple tower known as **Vimāna** is similar to a **stepped pyramid that rises geometrically** rather than curving **Shikhara** of **Nagara style**.
- Mandapa is the **entrance to the temple that incorporates space for a large number of worshippers or to facilitate music and dance**.
- **Dvarapalas (door-keepers) sculptures** guarding the temple.
- **A large water reservoir or a temple tank** in temple compound.

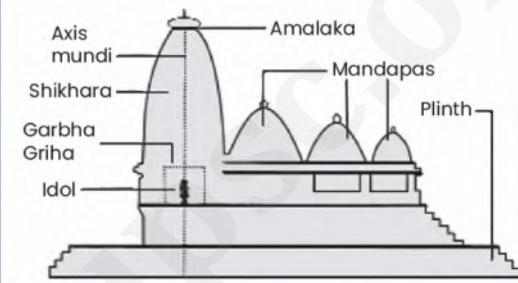
Dravida Temple Architecture



Other Schools of Temple Architecture

- **Nagara School:**
 - **Popular in northern India.**
 - **Built on a stone platform** with steps leading up to it.
 - **Panchayatan style:** Here the main shrine is built on a rectangular plinth with four smaller subsidiary shrines at the four corners.
 - There were **no water tanks** or reservoirs
 - **Two major characteristics** of this style:
 - > **Crucified ground plan:** Square temple with number of graduated projections, **rathakas** in the middle of each face.
 - > **Curvilinear tower:** A tower (**sikhara**) gradually curving inwards and capped by aspheroid slab with ribs round the edge (**Amalaka**) give the elevation.
 - **E.g.** Sun Temple in Modhera, Somnath Temple, etc.
- **Vesara School:**
 - This style has **features of both Nagara and Dravidian style**.
 - **Patronised by:** Chalukyas, Rashtrakutas and Hoysalas.
 - Departing from Dravidian style it **does not have covered ambulatory** around sanctum.
 - **E.g.** Lad Khan temple at Aihole, Temples at Badami, Virupaksha temple at Pattadakal.

Nagara Style of Temple Architecture



About Vijayanagara Empire (1336-1646)	
Successive dynasties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sangama Dynasty: Established by Harihara I and Bukka Raya I. • Saluva Dynasty: Ascended to power after the decline of the Sangama Dynasty. • Tuluva Dynasty: Under their rule, the empire reached its zenith. • Aravidu Dynasty: Marked by internal conflicts and external pressures.
Extent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the rule of Krishnadevaraya, the land between the Tungabhadra and Krishna rivers (the Raichur doab) was acquired (1512), the rulers of Orissa were subdued (1514) and severe defeats were inflicted on the Sultan of Bijapur (1520).
Political Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amara-Nayakas were military commanders who were given territories to rule by the Raya i.e. the King. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ They collected taxes and retained part of revenue for personal use and maintenance of elephants and horses, maintenance of temple and irrigation works.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ayagar system had twelve functionaries, collectively known as 'ayagars' were appointed by the government in each village and once allotted. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The office became hereditary.
Land administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Amaram' and 'Bhandaravada' were the land in possession of amaranayakas. The nayakas engaged Kaniyalar for the cultivation of these land. 'Manyas' were the tax free lands given to temples
Architectural Marvels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Virupaksha Temple The Vithala Temple Complex The Hazara Ram temple Hampi complex is a UNESCO World Heritage Site
Literature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amuktamalyada (work in statecraft) and Jambavati Kalyanam (Sanskrit play) by Krishnadevaraya. Krishnadevaraya's court had 'Ashtadiggajaru' who were eight scholars of different vocation.

1.5. OTHER TEMPLES AND ARCHITECTURE IN NEWS

1.5.1. GANDHI SAROVAR/ KEDARNATH TEMPLE

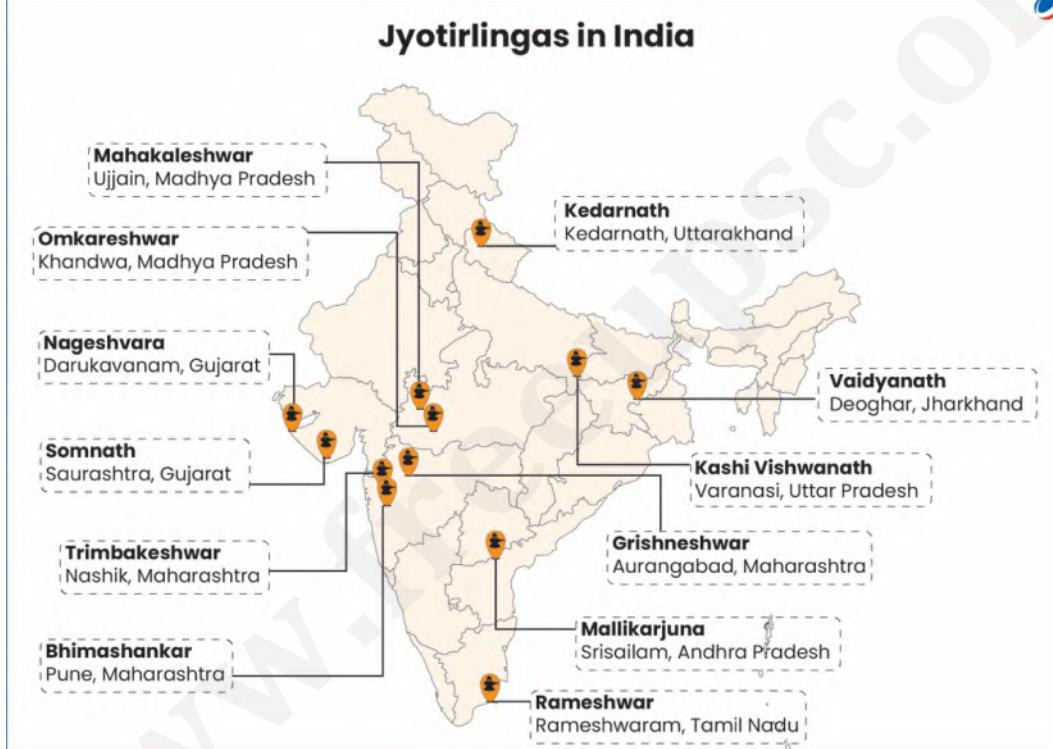
A massive avalanche hit the **Gandhi Sarovar** also known as **Chorabari Tal** located near **Kedarnath Temple** in **Uttarakhand**.

Gandhi Sarovar

- Originally known as **Kanti Sarovar**.
- Originates from the **Chorabari Bamak Glacier**.
- It is believed that at this **Lake Lord Shiva** imparted the knowledge of yoga to the Saptrishis.

Kedarnath Temple

- One of the 12 Jyotirlingas** (dedicated to bhagwan Shiva) in India.
- A part of the **Char Dham circuit** in the state (Yamunotri, Gangotri, and Badrinath are the remaining 3).



1.5.2. SANGAMESHWAR TEMPLE

Sangameswar Temple is **submerged due to flooding in Krishna river**.

- Sangameswara temple in Nandyal district (Andhra Pradesh) **submerges annually in the backwaters of the Srisailam dam**.

Sangameshwar Temple

- The temple is **dedicated to the Lord Shiva**.
- It was **built by the Chalukya dynasty** on the confluence of rivers Krishna and Bhavansi along with five other tributaries Veni, Tunga, Bhadra, Bheemarathi and Malapaharini (hence the name Sangameswara).



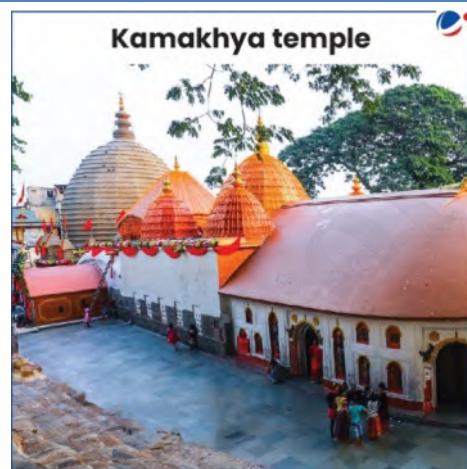
Other Sangameshwar Temples in India:

- Sri Ketaki Sangameshwara Swamy Temple, Telangana**
- Sangameshwar temple, Bhavani, Tamil Nadu**
- Sangameshwar temple, Karnataka** (part of a Group of monuments at Pattadakal which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site).

1.5.3. KAMAKHYA TEMPLE

Ambubachi Mela at Kamakhya temple in Assam has started.

- The festival **commemorates the yearly menstruation of Goddess Kamakhya**.



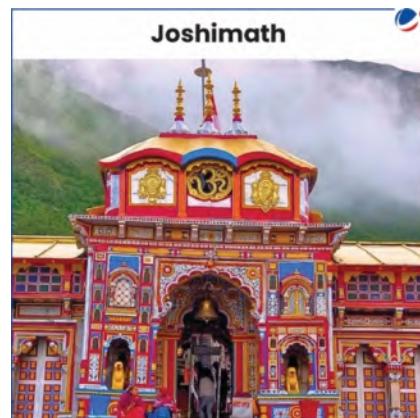
Kamakhya temple

- Located on the **Nilachal hills** (or Kamagiri).
- Reconstructed in mid 16th century by the Koch dynasty** (original temple was destroyed by Kala Pahar).
 - Nilachal Style of architecture** is used in the reconstruction of the temple.
 - Architecture style: Upper Burma** (from the migration of Tais) mixed with **Pala Style of Bengal**, later evolved into the **Ahom Style** of architecture.
- It is **one of the 51 Shakti shrines** (believed to be the place where the reproductive organ of Goddess Sati settled).
 - A centre of **Tantrik worship**.
 - Here the **beliefs and practices of the Aryan and non-Aryan communities converge**.

1.5.4. JYOTIRMATH OR JOSHIMATH

The **Centre approved** the Uttarakhand government's proposal for renaming the **Joshimath tehsil in Chamoli district to Jyotirmath**,

- The renaming was also approved for **Kosiakutoli tehsil in Nainital district to Pargana Shri Kainchi Dham**.



About Jyotirmath

- It is **one of the four cardinal mathas** established by **8th century philosopher Adi Shankaracharya** across India to promote Advaita Vedanta philosophy.
 - Advaita Vedanta philosophy is **a version of Vedanta translated as non-dualism**.
 - According to it, **Brahman - the ultimate, transcendent and immanent God** of the latter Vedas - appears as the separate world because of its **creative energy (māyā)**.
- It is believed that **Adi Shankaracharya** performed penance in Jyotirmath under a tree known as **Amar Kalpvriksha**.
- It is also known as **winter abode of Lord Badrinath**.
- It is a base camp for mountaineers attempting to climb **Nanda Devi peak**.

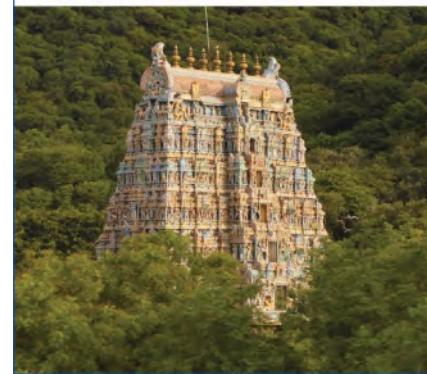
1.5.5. ALAGAR TEMPLE, TAMIL NADU

The procession of the Lord Kallazhagar back from the Vaigai river marked the end of the **Chithirai festival**.

About Alagar Temple

- Located on the **foothills of Alagar hills** in Madurai, Tamil nadu
- The temple is **one of the 108 abodes of Lord Vishnu**, worshipped here in the name of Kallazhagar.
- It has **six corridors surrounded by fort walls**.
- The temple also **finds mention in Tamil epic Silappadikaram** and in the **hymns of the Alvars**.
- The pillars of mandapam are depicted in the **Nayaka art style**.

Alagar Temple, Tamil Nadu



1.5.6. SRI MADHAVA PERUMAL TEMPLE

Inscriptions found at Sri Madhava Perumal Temple, which has largely remained submerged by Bhavanisagar dam, **revealed a 1000 years old trade route**.

About Trade Route

- The route **connected the Kongu region in western Tamil Nadu with southern Karnataka and Kerala** by crossing the **River Bhavani and River Moyar**.
- In 1338, **Veera Siddha Keththaya Dhandanayaka** constructed the Sri Madhava Perumal Temple.
- Temple is dedicated to **Thondreeshwaramudiayar (Lord Shiva)**.
- The area came under the **Hoysala rulers**.

Sri Madhava Perumal Temple



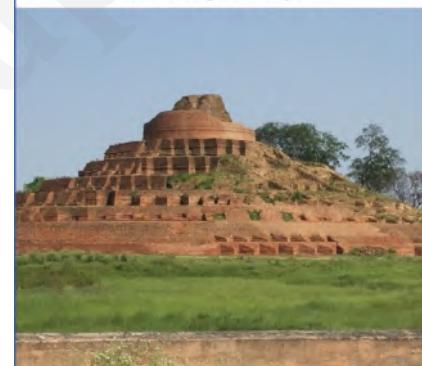
1.5.7. KESARIYA STUPA

Kesariya stupa is believed to be the **tallest and largest Buddhist stupa** in the world.

About Kesariya stupa

- Location:** East Champaran, Bihar.
- Structure:** Built in **circular shape** and structure is made of **bricks, mud, and lime mortar**.
 - Height of 104 feet**, taller than Borobodur Stupa in Java, a world heritage monument.
 - Chinese travellers **Fa-Hien (5th century CE)** and **Hiuen Tsang (7th century CE)**, who travelled to India, also mention this stupa.
- Importance:** It is believed that stupa was built to **commemorate the spot where Lord Buddha gave his 22nd sermon** and to mark the place where he announced his impending death.
 - Buddha announced **his previous existence as a 'Chakravarti Raja' at this stupa**.
 - Buddha also asked Licchavis to return to Vaishali** after giving them "Begging Bowl."
 - To mark the spot, the Licchavis built the Stupa here.
 - In course of time, **during the Maurya, Sunga and Kushana period**, it became a **brick stupa** with several additions and enlargements.

Kesariya Stupa

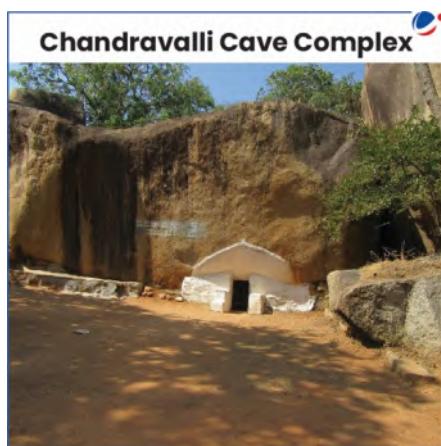


1.5.8. CHANDRAVALLI CAVE COMPLEX

Situated in the Chitradurga district of Karnataka, the cave complex was in the news due to its need for repair and maintenance.

About Chandravalli cave complex

- Origin:** Dating back to **prehistoric times**, with evidence of human habitation from the Iron Age. It is also known also as the **Ankali Math**.
- Physical Description:** Chambers include a **place of worship with a Shiva linga**, rooms for visitors and sadhus, a drawing room, a bedroom, a water outlet connected to an internal tank, and a library.
- Geography:** Nestled between two giant monolithic rocks, it is surrounded by three hills - **Chitradurga, Kirabankallu, and Jolagudda**.
- Dynasties and Artifacts:** Satavahana, Hoysala, Vijayanagara, Roman, and Chinese periods, including painted pottery, coins, and inscriptions.
 - A notable rock inscription by **King Mayurasharma of the Kadamba dynasty** from AD 450 marks its historical significance.
 - Mythologically connected to King **Chandrahasa of Kuntala**, adding a layer of legend to its history.
- Cultural Significance:** Believed to have been used by saints from Ankalagi for meditation and possibly as an educational center (**Gurukul**).



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2. SCULPTURES, PAINTINGS AND OTHER FORMS OF ART

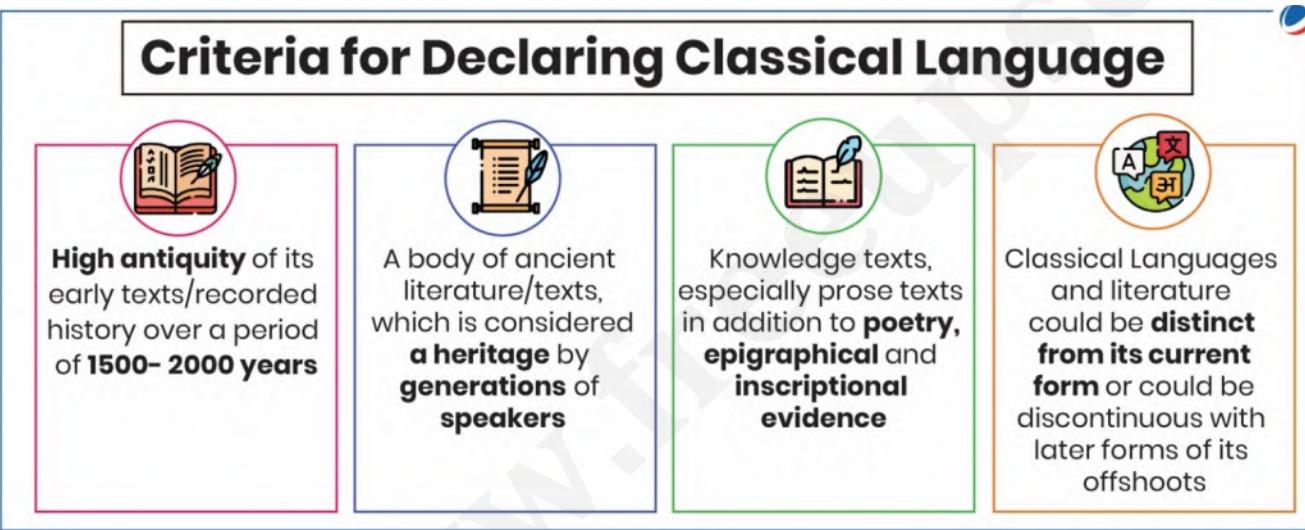
2.1. CLASSICAL LANGUAGE

Why in the News?

Recently, Union Cabinet has approved Classical Language status to **Marathi** (Maharashtra), **Pali and Prakrit** (Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh), **Assamese** (Assam) and **Bengali** (West Bengal) languages.

About Classical Language

- In 2004, the Government of India, for the first time, **created a new category of languages** known as **Classical Languages**.
 - Linguistic Experts Committee** (LEC) was constituted by **Ministry of Culture** under **Sahitya Akademi** in 2004 to examine the proposed languages for the status of Classical Language.
- Other Classical Languages:** **Tamil** (2004), **Sanskrit** (2005), **Telugu & Kannada** (2008), **Malayalam** (2013) and **Odia** (2014).
 - All are listed in the Eighth Schedule** of the Constitution.
- Criteria for declaring a language as classical was revised by LEC in 2024.
 - 'Original literary tradition'** norm was dropped from revised 2005 criteria as LEC observed that **it was very difficult to prove or disprove original literary tradition**.
- Benefits of declaration:** Two major awards each year for scholars, **dedicated centre for studies** and UGC is prompted to establish **Professional Chairs** for these languages in Central universities.



About New Classical Languages

- Prakrit: Closely related Indo-Aryan languages.**
 - They were the **language of masses** as opposed to Sanskrit, which was restricted to elites and high literature.
 - Prakrit reflects regional subtypes.** Buddhist literature is in Pali, one of the Prakrits.
 - Inscriptions of pre-Gupta times** especially the **Ashokan edicts** are in Prakrit.
 - By the time of the Guptas**, the Prakrits were standardized and had **lost their local character**.
- Pali:** It has traditionally been **identified with Magadhi Prakrit**. Buddhist philosophical works like Dhammapada and stories like Jataka Tales are in Pali.
 - Pali is known as **language of Theravada Buddhist canon**. Pali Canon falls into three general categories or pitaka (basket). Together known as Tipitaka ("three baskets"), these include:
 - Vinaya Pitaka (Discipline Basket):** Rules or discipline of Buddhist sangha monastic order.

- > **Sutta Pitaka (Sayings Basket):** Largest basket. It has discourses and sermons of Buddha himself, as well as some religious poetry.
- > **Abhidhamma Pitaka:** Buddhist philosophy.
- Key terms include "citta" (consciousness), "cetasika" (mental factors), "rūpa" (materiality), and "nibbāna" (final liberation).
- **Marathi:** Indo-Aryan language.
 - Modern Marathi descends from **Maharashtri Prakrit**, a Prakrit dialect used in western India which was the **official language of the Satavahanas**.
 - **Earliest evidence:** Copper-plate inscription found in Satara (739 CE).
- **Bengali & Assamese:** Origin in **Magadhi Prakrit**, a form of Prakrit popular in East India, and the **official language of Magadha court**.

Other Important Prakrit Language

- **Ardhamāgadhī**, associated with the **ancient kingdom of Magadha**, in modern Bihar, and the subsequent Mauryan Empire.
 - Mahāvīra, the founder of Jainism, was born in Magadha, and the **earliest Jain texts were composed in Ardhamāgadhī**.
- **Saurasena**, spoken originally in the western part of modern Uttar Pradesh.
 - Saurasena was particularly used in drama, by women and respectable people of the lower orders.
- **Maharastri**, spoken in the north-western Deccan.
 - Maharastri was a literary language, especially popular for lyric songs.

Steps taken to promote classical languages

- **Dedicated Institutions:**
 - **For Sanskrit:** Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan, New Delhi; Maharishi Sandipani Rashtriya Ved Vidya Pratishtan, Ujjain; Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeetha, Tirupati; etc.
 - **For Telugu and Kannada:** Centres of Excellence for Studies in respective languages at Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL) established in 2011.
- **National Education Policy, 2020:** Focuses on promotion of all Indian Languages including classical languages.
- **University Grants Commission** supports the creation of Professional Chairs in central universities focusing on the classical languages of India.
- **National Mission for Manuscripts:** Its key objectives are **documentation, conservation, digitization and online dissemination** of manuscript heritage of India.
 - Most of the Indian scripts have been used for writing 70% of manuscripts are in the Sanskrit language. Other 30% of manuscripts are in languages like Assamese, Bengali, Malayalam, Marathi, Odia, Tamil etc.

2.2. THOLU BOMMALATA

Why in the News?

Sangeet Natak Akademi is reviving an ancient theatre performance of **Tholu Bommalata** puppetry which is on the brink of extinction.

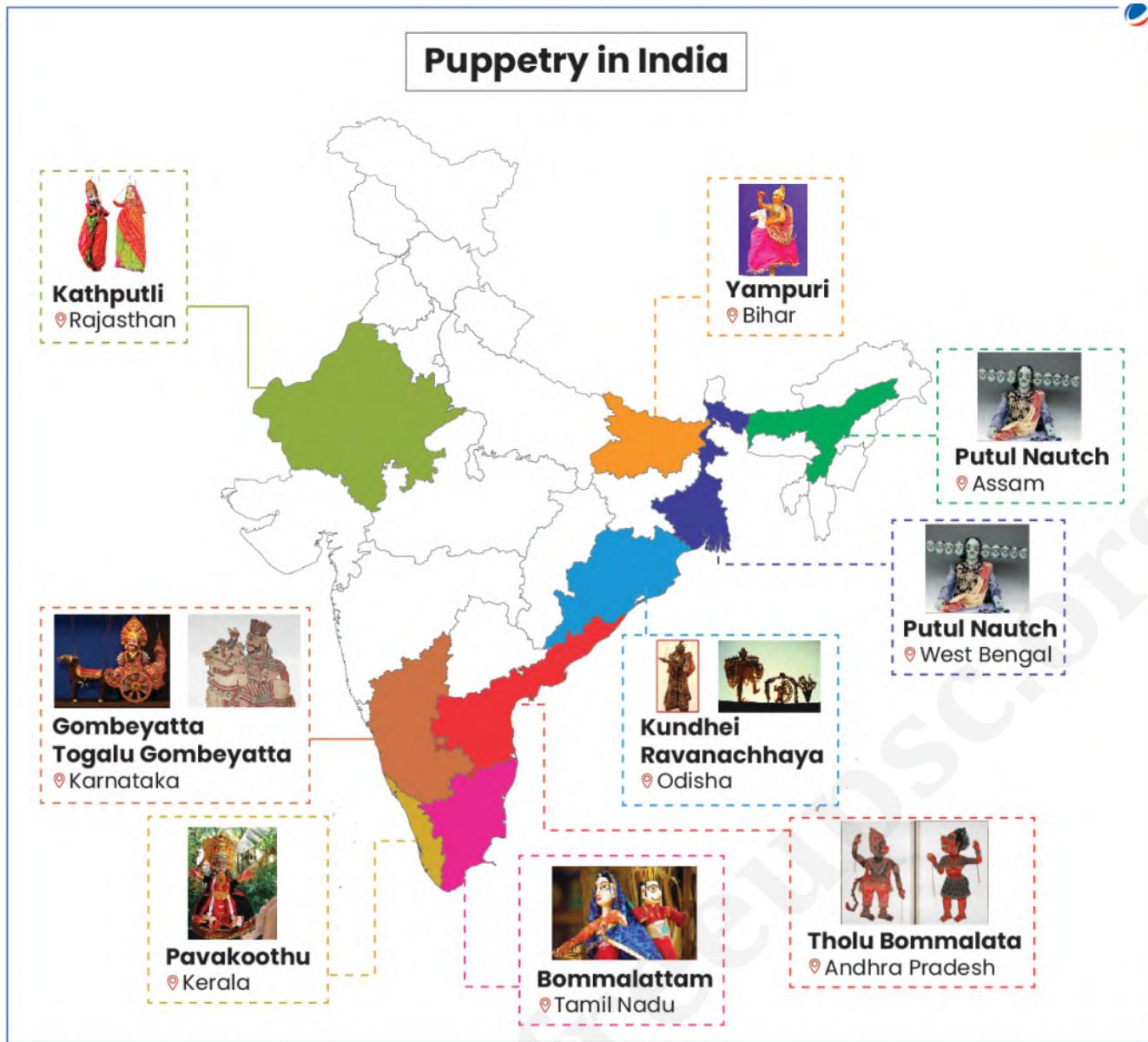
About Tholu Bommalata

- Also known as the **dance of leather dolls**.
- It is mainly performed in the **Godavari region of Andhra Pradesh**.
- **Made from goatskin**, they are projected on a small screen, like colour photographic transparencies.
- **Major screen characters:** Animals, birds, gods, and demons
- **Major themes:** Ramayana and Mahabharata



Types of Puppetry in India

<p>String Puppets</p> <p>Puppets with jointed limbs controlled by strings, allowing greater flexibility and articulation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regions: Rajasthan, Odisha, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu. Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kathputli (Rajasthan) Gombeiyatta (Karnataka) Bommalattam (Tamil Nadu - a mix of Rod and String puppetry) Kundhei (Odisha). 	<p>Shadow Puppets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flat figures. They are cut out of leather, which has been treated to make them translucent. Regions: Odisha, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, and Tamil Nadu. Examples: Ravanachhaya (Odisha), TogaluGombeyatta (Karnataka), TholuBommalata (Andhra Pradesh).
<p>Glove Puppets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Also known as sleeve, hand, or palm puppets representing social themes, stories of Radha Krishna, etc. Regions: Uttar Pradesh (UP), Odisha, West Bengal, and Kerala. Examples: Pavakoothu is the traditional glove puppet play of Kerala. 	<p>Rod Puppets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extension of glove puppets, but often much larger and supported and manipulated by rods from below. Regions: West Bengal and Odisha. Examples: Putul Nach, Yampuri (Bihar).



2.3. PAINTINGS IN NEWS

Painting Type	Key Features	Cultural/Geographical Context
Sohrai Painting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practiced in mural art form on mud house walls. Uses natural pigments, twigs, rice straw, or fingers. Depicts animals, birds, and nature (agrarian lifestyle). Awarded GI tag. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Origin: Hazaribagh district, Jharkhand. Made during Sohrai festival by tribal women. 

Mata ni Pachedi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Religious textile folk art. Depicts the divine feminine at the center, surrounded by devotees, flora, and fauna. Painted in maroon, black, and white using bamboo-stick pens or kalam. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Origin: Gujarat, inspired by Kalamkari. Associated with Vaghari community. Meaning: "Behind the idol of Mother Goddess." 	
Kumittipathi Rock Art	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3000 years old. Drawn using inorganic white pigment with natural gum. Depicts elephants, chariots, and early dwellers' lives. Uniquely found inside a cave (unlike typical rock shelters). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Location: Kumittipathi, Tamil Nadu. Represents ancient life and early dwellers. 	
Kerala Mural Paintings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Known for sketching excellence (contrasting Ajanta murals' color emphasis). Depicts Hindu mythology and epics. Scenes from Hindu epics illustrated in 'Chithrakandas.' Peak period: 14th century AD (150+ temples with murals). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Origin: Kerala (8th century AD). The earliest known murals are at the Tirunandikara cave temple Famous locations: Kumaranallur Devi Temple, Guruvayur, Ettumanoor, Mattancherry Palace. Influenced by Bhakti movement and nature. 	

2.4. OTHER IMPORTANT NEWS

2.4.1. KUCHIPUDI DANCE

Reports highlighted that artist of Kuchipudi dance **struggling for survival.**

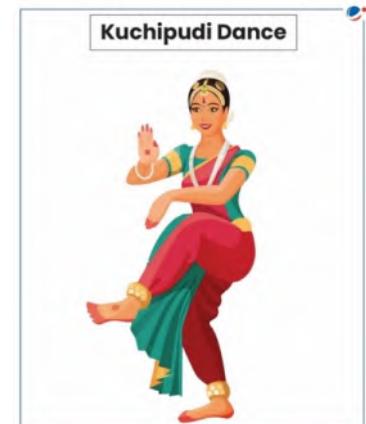
About Kuchipudi

- Classical Indian dance** form, originated in the **Kuchipudi village of Andhra Pradesh.**
- Used to be confined to men** earlier, now evolved with the **dominance of women dancers** across India.

Key Features:

- Known for **its quick moves, lively eye expressions, etc.**
- Tarangam** (dance move performed on the edge of a brass plate with the help of feet).
- Has 2 forms-** traditional **musical dance-drama** and **the solo dance.**
- Siddhendra Yogi**, a Vaishnava poet and visionary, conceived the Kuchipudi style of Yakshagaana (folk dance of Karnataka) in the **17th century.**

8 Classical dances are Bharatnatyam, Kathak, Kathakali, Kuchipudi, Odissi, Sattriya, Mohiniyattam and Manipuri.



2.4.2. MOHINIYATTAM

Kerala Kalamandalam has **lifted gender restrictions** for boys to learn Mohiniyattam.

About Mohiniyattam

- It is the **classical solo dance form of Kerala**.
- Conventionally a solo dance performed by **female artists**, it emotes a play through dancing and singing.
- References of Mohiniyattam can be found in **texts Vyavaharamala written in 1709 by Mazhamagalam Narayanan Namputiri** and in **Ghoshayatra**, written later by poet Kunjan Nambiar.
- **Major themes:** Love and devotion to God usually Lord Vishnu or his incarnation Lord Krishna as lead character.
- **Characteristics**
 - 40 different basic movements called **adavukal**.
 - **Graceful, swaying body movements** with no abrupt jerks or sudden leaps.
 - Lays emphasis on **acting**.
- **Instruments used:** Maddalam, Mridangam, Veena, Kuzhitalam or Cymbals, Edakka etc.

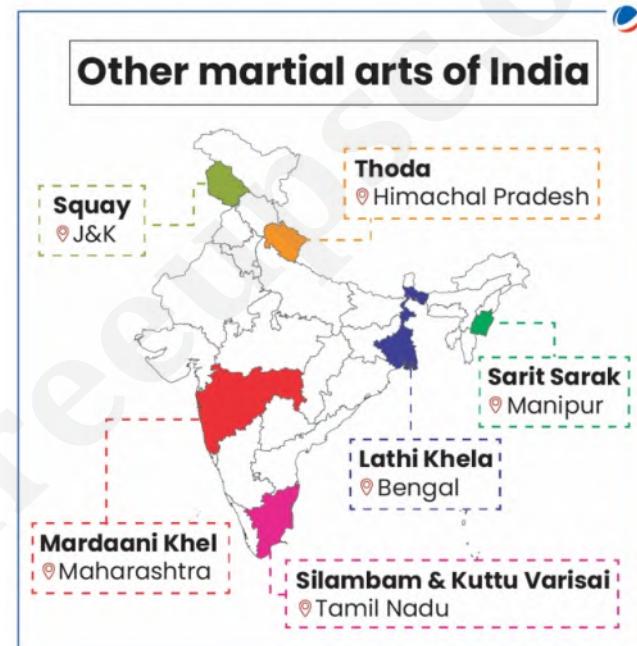


2.4.3. KALARIPPAYATTU

Union Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports has recognised the **Indian Kalaripayattu Federation** as the Regional Sports Federation to promote 'Kalaripayattu' in the country.

About Kalaripayattu

- **Developed:** Kerala. One of the most ancient martial arts in the world.
- **Key Features:** High-flying acrobatics, graceful movements, and employs deadly weapons at ease.
- **Philosophy:** Martial arts, Ayurveda, yoga, and meditation.
- **Training Goals:** Physical fitness, self-defense, healing, and mental discipline.
- **2 main styles:**
 - **Vadakkan or Northern style** predominantly practiced in the Malabar region of Kerala.
 - **Thekkenn or Southern Style** practiced mainly in the Travancore region.
- Became part of **Khelo India Youth Games** in 2021 along with three other Indigenous Games. The games include: **Gatka (Punjab)**, **Kalaripayattu**, **Thang-Ta (Manipur)** and **Mallakhamba (Maharashtra)**.



2.4.4. VACHANA LITERATURE

Fa.Gu. Halakatti, renowned for his role in revitalizing Vachana Literature was remembered on his birth anniversary.

About Vachana Literature

- "That which is spoken" is the literal meaning of the term "**vachanas**".
- Type of **Kannada rhythmic composition** (also known as Kannada poetry) which originated in the 11th century and thrived throughout the 12th century as element of the **Sharana movement**.

- **Guru Basavanna** spearheaded the Sharana movement in Karnataka.
- tenets of Sharana Samskriti:
 - > **Arivu** (Knowledge, awareness),
 - > **Achara** (Practice)
 - > **Anubhava** (spiritual experience)
 - > **Kayaka** (earning through physical labour)
 - > **Dasoha** (offering a portion of what is earned to a needy without any ‘Aham’ (I am the giver).
- **Madara Chennaiah**, an eleventh century **cobbler-saint** who lived in the time of the Western Chalukyas’ rule, is considered as the “**father of Vachana poetry**” by certain researchers.

2.4.5. THANJAVUR VEENA

Known for its contribution to arts, the temple town Thanjavur in Tamil Nadu is celebrated for its unique veena crafting.

Types of Veena:

- **Hindustani Classical Music:** Rudra veena and Vichitra veena
- **Carnatic Classical Music:** Saraswati veena and Chitra veena

About Thanjavur Veena (or Saraswati Veena)

- Thanjavur is the **only place where Saraswati veena is made**.
- **Recognition:** First musical instrument in India to receive the Geographical Indication (GI) tag.
- **Two types:**
 - **Ottu Veena:** Parts are made separately and then assembled.
 - **Ekantha Veena:** Carved from a single piece of wood.
- **Cultural Symbol:** Goddess **Saraswathi**, the deity of learning and arts.
- **Craftsmanship:** Jackfruit wood is used to make the Veena and involves crafting **three main parts:** resonator (kudam), neck (dandi), and tuning box.

3. IMPORTANT SITES IN THE NEWS

3.1. CHARAIDEO MOIDAM

Why in the News?

Assam's Charaideo Moidam was officially inscribed on the **UNESCO's World Heritage List**.

More on the News

- The decision was taken during the **46th World Heritage Committee (WHC)** session in Delhi.
- It is the **first time a site from the North East** has made it to the UNESCO World Heritage List under the **Cultural Category** by International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS).
- India's total UNESCO World Heritage sites now stand at 43** with 3 being in Assam (including Kaziranga National Park and Manas National Park).

Other Indian Initiatives at the 46th Session

- For the first time India hosted the meeting of WHC.
- India announced a **\$1 million grant for UNESCO** conservation efforts, especially in the Global South.
- India and the USA signed a Cultural Property Agreement (CPA)** to prevent illegal trafficking and return artifacts.
- CPA aligns with the **1970 UNESCO Convention on preventing illicit trade in cultural property**.

About UNESCO World Heritage Committee



Genesis: Established in 1972 under the World Heritage Convention during UNESCO's 17th session.



Objectives: Known as the "Five Cs" – Credibility, Conservation, Capacity Building, Communication, and Communities.



- Key Role:**
- Makes final decisions on World Heritage List inscriptions.
 - Manages the World Heritage Fund and provides financial aid to State Parties.
 - Monitors conservation efforts of listed sites.



Members: Includes 21 State Party representatives elected by the General Assembly for six-year terms. India was elected for the 2021–2025 term.



- Key Partners:**
- ICCROM:** Promotes cultural heritage conservation.
 - ICOMOS:** Works on preserving architectural and landscape heritage.

About Charaideo's Moidams

- Location:** Foothills of **Patkai Ranges**, Eastern Assam.
- Royal Necropolis:** Home to the **royal necropolis** of the **Tai-Ahom dynasty** (13th–19th century CE) and are comparable the Egyptian Pyramids.
 - Moidam means 'Home for Spirit' and it **symbolizes heaven- earth continuum**.
 - Buranjis**, a genre of historical chronicles from the Ahom dynasty, serve as **reliable sources on the Royal Necropolis landscape**.
- Architectural Features:** Banyan trees and the trees used for coffins and bark manuscripts were planted and **water bodies were created near Moidams**. Each Moidam consists of:
 - An **earthen mound** (Ga-Moidam) topped by a **central shrine** (Chou Cha Li)
 - An **octagonal wall** (Garh) symbolizing the Tai universe
 - A **brick-and-stone vault** (Tak) with a grave-pit (Garvha)
- Protection Officers:** Protected by special officers called **Moidam Phukans** and a guard group known as **Moidamiya**.

- Insights in Afterlife Belief:** Moidams have **grave goods** and sometimes even servants (**requirement in their afterlife**).
- Burial Practices:** During pre-17th century CE bodies were embalmed and entombed and later cremated ashes were buried.
 - Provides **critical evidence of the Tai-Ahoms' localization process over time.**
- Cultural continuity:** Annual rituals such as **Me-Dam-Me-Phi** (ancestor worship) and **Tarpan** (libation ceremony) are **still performed**, maintaining a 600-year-old tradition.
- Discovery:** Ground plan of a Moidam was published in the journal of the **Asiatic Society of Bengal**, in 1848 by **Sergeant C. Clayton**.

Other Burial Practices in India

Period	Practice & Features
Neolithic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Burzahom (Srinagar) has the evidence of pit burials (oval shape), and accompanied with animal skeletal remains such as wild dogs and antler's horn.Part of UNESCO's tentative list.
Harappan Civilization	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Dead bodies were generally placed in a north-south orientation on their back.Harappa: Coffin burial.Lothal: Pairs of skeletons of a male and a female buried together.Life after death: Careful placement of bodies with ornaments and other objects.
Megalith	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Stone erect structures for dead.Origin: Neolithic-Chalcolithic period (such as urn burial from Chalcolithic site of Inamgaon, Maharashtra).General association with iron. Hence, also referred as Iron Age.The belief on 'Death and Afterlife' is perceived through grave goods and pottery and other offerings.<ul style="list-style-type: none">Hire Benkal, Megalith Site in Gangavati Taluka, Koppal District, Karnataka is under consideration under the tentative list of UNESCO.

About Ahom Dynasty (13th-19th Century AD)

- Established by:** Sukaphaa, a Shan prince of Mong Mao who came to Assam after crossing the Patkai Mountains.
 - Descendants of the **Tai race who migrated from China's Yunnan province** along the Indian-Myanmar border.
- Administration:** Power heavily vested in the Council of Ministry despite being a monarchy.
 - A king could only be appointed with the concurrence of the Patra Mantris.
 - During three periods in the 14th century, there were no kings at all for lack of a suitable candidate.
- Cultural:** Adopted **Shaivism and the Shakti movement** and built temples across Assam including the Kamakhya Devi temple, which was rebuilt and patronised by the Ahoms.
- Downfall:** Ended with the Burmese invasion of Assam and the subsequent annexation by the British East India Company following the **Treaty of Yandaboo in 1826**.

3.2. KOZHIKODE: INDIA'S FIRST 'CITY OF LITERATURE'

Why in the News?

Kerala celebrates Kozhikode's recognition as **India's first UNESCO 'City of Literature'**.

About Kozhikode

- Location:** Kozhikode or Calicut is located on the **Malabar coast**.
 - The term "**calico**," a fine **hand-woven cotton cloth**, is believed to be derived from Calicut.
- History:**
 - Ruler:** In the medieval Age, it was ruled by the Samoothiris (Zamorins).
 - City of Spices:** Traded in spices like **black pepper and cardamom** with **Jews, Arabs, Phoenicians, and Chinese** for more than 500 years.

- Foreign travelers:

- Ibn Battuta (author of Rihla from Morocco): **14th Century**.
- Vasco da Gama (Portuguese) and Abdur Razzaq (Persian) visited the city in the **fifteenth century**.

Contemporary significance:

- It has a **robust literary foundation** with over **500 libraries** and **more than 70 publishers**.
- In **2012** it was given the tag of "**City of Sculptures**" (Shilpa Nagaram) because of the various architectural sculptures located in various parts of the city.
- Kerala also announced that **June 23** will be celebrated annually as '**City of Literature**' Day in Kozhikode.

3.3. WORLD CRAFT CITY (WCC)

Why in the News?

After Jaipur, Malappuram and Mysore, **Srinagar has become the fourth Indian city** to get tag of 'World Craft City' by the World Crafts Council International (WCCI).

More on the News

- The recognition comes three years after the city of Srinagar was **designated as part of the UNESCO Creative City Network (UCCN) for crafts and folk arts in 2021**.

About UCCN

Genesis: Established in 2004 to promote cooperation among cities that use creativity as a strategic factor for sustainable urban development.



Cities covered: **350 cities worldwide** are part of the network.



Seven creative fields covered: Crafts and Folk Art, Design, Film, Gastronomy, Literature, Media Arts, and Music.



Other Indian cities on UCCN: Listed by field—Music (Gwalior, Chennai, Varanasi), **Film** (Mumbai), **Gastronomy** (Hyderabad), **Crafts and Folk Art** (Jaipur and Srinagar)

**About World Craft City**

- Launched **in 2014** by the WCCI.
- It recognizes role of **local authorities, craftspeople, and communities** in cultural, economic, and social development worldwide.
- Establishes a **dynamic network of craft cities** across the globe, aligning with the principles of the **creative economy**.
- **Srinagar's Local Crafts:** Local crafts include **Pashmina shawls, walnut wood carving, hand-knotted carpet, Kani shawl, Khatamband (ceiling design), Sozni craft (needle embroidery), Jalakdozi (chain stich rugs), Namdha (handmade rug), Basholi Painting (depicting Vaishnavism), papier mâché etc.**

About WCCI

- Founded by: **Ms. Aileen Osborn Vanderbilt Webb, Ms. Margaret M. Patch, and Smt Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay** at the 1st World Crafts Council General Assembly in New York in 1964.
 - **Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay (Mangalore)** was the **first woman to run for a legislative seat** in India (Madras provincial elections).
 - **Contribution:** **National School of Drama, Sangeet Natak Akademi, Central Cottage Industries Emporium, and the Crafts Council of India.**
- It is **affiliated with UNESCO** under Consultative Status.
- **HQ (for 2021-2024): Kuwait.** However, the Headquarters of WCCI **changes according to different terms.**

3.4. KEELADI EXCAVATION

Why in the News?

Recently, archaeologists at Keeladi in Tamil Nadu, have unearthed a crystal quartz weighing unit from the **Sangam era**.

About Keeladi Excavation site

- Keeladi is a small village situated on the **banks of the Vaigai River** in the Sivaganga district of Tamil Nadu.
- The excavation at Keeladi began in 2015 by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and the Tamil Nadu Archaeology Department.

Significance of Keeladi Excavation

- Crucial evidence for **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).
- Linked to Sangam age**
- Urban settlement** and proof of internal and external trade.
- Existence of Industries:** Spindle whorls, copper needles, terracotta seal, dyeing industry and a glass bead industry.
- Tamil Brahmi script** on Pottery.



About Sangam Period (period of ancient Tamil Nadu, Kerala, from 6th century BCE to 3rd century CE.)

- Sangam refers to **assemblies or gatherings of poets and scholars**.
 - Notable female poets: **Avvaiyar, Nachchellaiyar, and Kakkaipadiniyar**.
- The **social classification of Varna** was known to Sangam poets.
- Three Sangams:** First and third at **Madurai (TN)**, the Second Sangam at **Kapadapuram (TN)**.
- Vattakirutal** was a Tamil ritual of fasting till death, widespread during the Sangam age.
- Literature:** Tolkappiyam (earliest), Ettuthokai and Pathuppattu.
 - The twin epics - Silappathigaram and Manimegalai.

Related News: Brahmi Inscription in Andhra Pradesh

A Brahmi inscription was recently discovered in Dharanikota village, near Amaravati in Andhra Pradesh.

Inscriptions at Dharanikota village

- Medium of Inscription:** On a memorial pillar depicting two daughters, **Hatana and Viniya**, along with an attendant.
- Script and Language:** Written in **Prakrit language using Brahmi characters** from the 2nd century C.E.
- Cultural and Historical Significance:** The area around Dharanikota, especially Amaravati, is known for its **Buddhist stupas, monasteries, and artifacts**.

About Brahmi Script

- Origins:** It is **one of the oldest writing systems in India**, believed to have originated around the 3rd century BCE, with its most famous early use in **Ashoka's edicts**.
- Characteristics:** It's an **abugida**, where each character represents a consonant with an inherent vowel.

3.5. HARAPPAN CIVILISATION

Why in the News?

It has been 100 years since John Marshall, then director general of the Archaeological Society of India, announced the discovery of "Harappa civilization" on September 20, 1924.

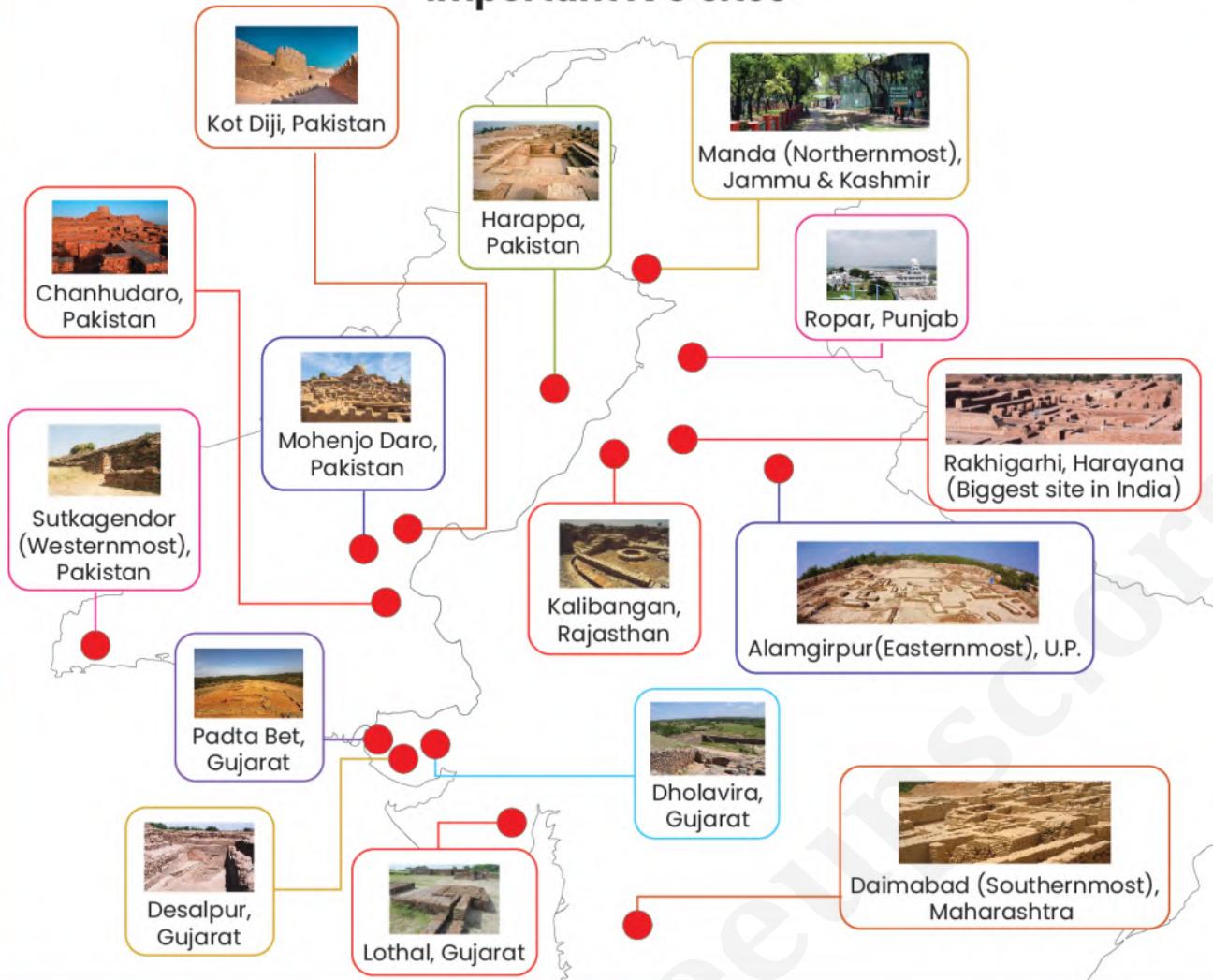
About Harappa Civilization or Indus Valley Civilisation

- Background:** Discovered first at Harappa in modern day Punjab province of Pakistan in **1921** by **Daya Ram Sahni**.
 - **Bronze-age civilization.**
- Location:** It spans across 2,000 sites in **India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan**. Most of the sites are found located between Indus and Saraswati River basins.
- Time-Period:** **6000 BCE to 1300 BCE.**
 - **Early Harappan (6000 BCE-2600 BCE)** is a formative phase.
 - **Mature Harappan (2600 BCE-1900 BCE)**, the urban phase of the civilization.
 - **This decadent phase (1900 BCE-1300 BCE)** is termed as Late Harappan.

Key Features of Harappa Civilization

Particulars	Key Features
Town planning and Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Town Planning<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Grid Pattern: Rectangular grid pattern with roads at right angles.○ Use of Burnt Bricks: Joined with gypsum mortar (In contemporary Egypt dried bricks were used).○ Underground drainage system connecting all houses to the street drains.● Architecture: Included large citadels, granaries, the famous Great Bath at Mohenjo-daro, and multi-story buildings.
Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Agriculture: Wooden ploughshare.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Main crops: Wheat, Rice, millets, barley, lentil, chickpea and sesame etc. Earliest to produce cotton in the world (Greeks called it Sindon).● Domestication of Animals: Oxen, buffaloes, goats, sheep, pigs, dogs, cats, asses, humped bulls camels were domesticated.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Elephants & Rhinoceros were well known to them.
Craft	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Spinning, boat-making, seal making, terracotta manufacturing (potter's wheel), goldsmiths, bead making.● Materials: Carnelian (red colour), jasper, crystal, quartz and steatite; metals like copper, bronze and gold; and shell, faience and terracotta or burnt clay.● Seals made from Steatite primarily used for commercial purposes, as amulets, as form of identification, for educational purposes as well.● Iron was not known to the people.
Arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Bronze Casting: 'Lost wax' technique or Cire Perdue for bronze casting. E.g., 'Dancing Girl' standing in a 'tribhangā' dancing posture.● Stone Statues: Bearded man (made of Steatite) found in Mohenjo-daro interpreted as a priest. Red sandstone figure of a male torso (found in Harappa).● Terracotta Figures: E.g., Mother Goddess, mask of horned deity, toys, etc
Trade and Commerce	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Internal and foreign trade: The use of standardized weights and measures.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Mesopotamian records called Indus region as Meluha and mentions two intermediate trading stations i.e., Dilmun (Bahrain) & Makan (Makran coast).○ Exports: Grain, jewelry and pottery.○ Imports: thin copper and precious stones.
Religion & Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Deities: Male deity Pasupati (proto-Siva) represented in seals as sitting in a yogic posture and female deity Mother Goddess represented in terracotta figurines. Phallus (Linga) worship was also prevalent.● No temples have been found.● Nature Worship: Trees (e.g., pipal) and animals were also worshipped by Harappans.
Writing System	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Pictographic script: Written in boustrophedon style i.e., writing in right to left in one line & then left to right in next line.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ However, it has not been deciphered yet.

Important IVC sites



3.6. LOTHAL

Why in the News?

The Union Cabinet has approved development of **National Maritime Heritage Complex (NMHC)** at Lothal, Gujarat

More on the News

- NMHC is **being developed under the Sagarmala Programme** by the Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterway in Public-Private Partnership (PPP) mode.
- **Historical significance of Lothal:** It is located between **Bhogavo and Sabarmati rivers** near Gulf of Khambat.
 - It is a prominent city of **Indus-Valley Civilization (IVC)** and had the **oldest man-made dry-dock** (2400 BC ago).
 - Discovery of a dry-dock at Lothal gives an insight into the **knowledge of tides, winds and other nautical factors** that existed during that period.

About NMHC

- **Aim:** To showcase **India's rich maritime heritage from ancient times to the present**.

- **Key projects:** NMHC involves a **world-class Lighthouse Museum, coastal state pavilions, a maritime-themed eco-resort, etc.**

About India's Maritime Heritage

- **Early Days (3000 – 2000 BC):** IVC had maritime trade link with **Mesopotamia**.
- **Vedic Age (2000 – 500 BC):** Earliest reference to maritime activities is contained in the **Rig Veda**.
- **Age of the Nandas and Mauryas (500 – 200 BC):** Navy of the **Magadh kingdom** is considered to be **world's first ever recorded instance of a navy**.
- **Satavahana Dynasty (200 BC-220 AD):** First native Indian rulers to issue their **coins with inscriptions of ships**.
- **Gupta Dynasty (320-500 AD):** Ports were opened which **revived maritime trade with European and African countries**.
- **Marathas:**
 - Under **Shivaji**, the Maratha navy held off Portuguese and British for 40 years.
 - > He also built **coastal forts** like **Vijaydurg and Sindhudurg**.
 - **Kanhoji Angre** took over as the Sarkhel (Admiral) of the Maratha fleet in 1699. He **recaptured all the forts that had been lost by the Maratha navy to the Siddis**.
- **Southern Dynasties:**
 - **Cholas (3rd-13th Century):** Developed **maritime trade with Southeast Asia** and spread Indian culture.
 - **Pandyas (6th-16th Century):** Trade links with **Rome, Egypt, and China**; controlled **pearl farming**.
 - **Cheras (12th Century):** Trade with **Greeks and Romans**, utilized **monsoon winds for trade routes**.

3.7. OTHER SITES IN NEWS

3.7.1. NEOLITHIC AGE ROCK CARVINGS IN GOA'S MAUXI VILLAGE

Archaeological Survey of India has confirmed neolithic age rock carvings in Goa's Mauxi village. Rock carvings were found etched into the meta basalt rock along the dry riverbed of the **Zarme river**.

- The carvings are of animals such as zebus, bulls, and antelopes, alongside footprints and cupules (**hemispherical cup-shaped depressions**)

Prehistoric rock paintings of India

Upper Paleolithic Period

- In India, **earliest paintings** have been reported from this period.
- **Linear representations, in green and dark red, of animal figures**, such as bison, elephants, tigers etc. besides **stick like human figures**.
- **Sites:** Bhimbetka (Madhya Pradesh), Jwalapuram (Andhra Pradesh).

Mesolithic Period

- **Largest number of paintings** belong to this period.
- **Human scenes** predominate and depict **hunting in groups and community dances**.
- **Animals** were painted in **naturalistic style** and **humans** in **stylistic manner**.
- **Sites:** Pachmarhi and Adamgarh Hills (Madhya Pradesh)

Neolithic-Chalcolithic Period

- **Pottery and metal tools** are shown but vividness and vitality disappear.
- Predominant colours are **white and red**, possibly made by **grinding haematite and limestone** respectively.
- **Men appear adventurous** and **animals** are shown more **youthful and majestic**;
- **Sites:** Chambal region, Daimabad (Maharashtra).

3.7.2. SRIKAKULAM

Several historians, academics, writers, and heritage enthusiasts have been working diligently to restore the prominence of Srikakulam's forgotten history.

History

- Its former name was **Chicacole**, used by British colonial regime.
- It was once part of **Kalinga Dynasty (3rd century BCE)**.
 - Later it came under **Gajapati Kingdom** during the medieval period, followed by **Eastern Chalukyas of Vengi**.
 - It was also part of **Kakatiya and Vijayanagara Empires**.

Cultural sites

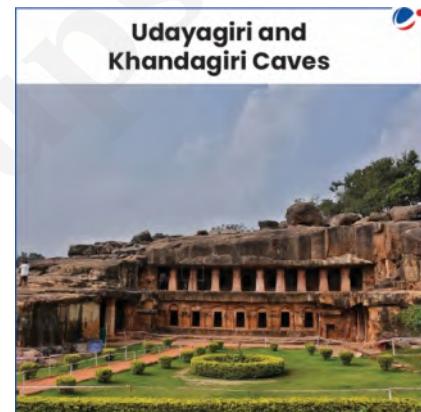
- **Buddhist sites:** Salihundam (Buddhism spread to Sumatra and other eastern countries from here) and Danthapuri.
- **Jainism sites:** Tangamayyakonda and Rottavalasa villages.
- **Hindu temples:** Srimukhalingam, Srikurmam and Arasavilli.
- **Neolithic era caves:** Nandi Hills.

About Kalinga Dynasty

- **Region:** Modern-day Odisha and parts of Andhra Pradesh
- **Mauryan Conquest:** **Kalinga War (261 BCE)**, where **Emperor Ashoka of the Mauryan Empire annexed Kalinga**, leading to his conversion to Buddhism due to the war's brutality.
- **Key Ruler:** **Kharavela (2nd century BCE)** is known for his **cultural patronage for Jainism, caves (Udayagiri & Khandgiri) and the Hathigumpha inscription** which provides details of his reign.

About Udayagiri and Khandagiri Caves

- The caves are situated on two adjacent hills, Udayagiri and Khandagiri, mentioned as Kumari Parvata in the Hathigumpha inscription.
- Built on the **Kumari mountain range**.
- **Earliest examples of rock-cut cave tradition in Odisha.**
- They were built around 2nd century BC by King Kharavela of the **Meghavahana dynasty** for Jain monks.
- Udayagiri caves are famous for the **Hathigumpha inscription** which is carved out in **Brahmi script** highlighting military campaigns undertaken by Kharavela.
- There are **other sets of Vaishnavite caves built during Gupta period** in Udayagiri near Vidisha in Madhya Pradesh.



3.7.3. NEW ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES IN TELANGANA

Recently, new archaeological sites have been discovered in Telengana.

About New Sites Discovered

- **Ooragutta:** An Iron Age megalithic site.
- **Two new rock art sites at Damaratogu** in Gundala mandal of Bhadravathi Kothagudem district.
- **Devarlabanda Mula:** Has only depictions of animals and no humans or weapons.
 - Usually in this region, a type of megalithic monument known as '**Dolmenoid Cists**' are found.
 - Dolmenoid cists are **chamber tombs which are semi-subterranean**.
 - Three basic types of megaliths: The **chamber tombs, unchambered tombs, and megaliths not connected with burials**.
 - Live a semi-nomadic life and have not been colonised at one place in a defined reserve forest.

3.7.4. PHANIGIRI (TELANGANA)

Department of Archaeology and Museums have unearthed a **coin hoard at Phanigiri site in Suryapet district (Telangana) belonging to Ikshvaku period.**

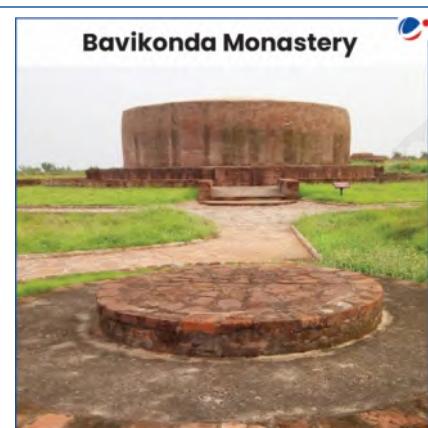
About Phanigiri

- Phanigiri means **hillock of snake hood**.
- It is **Buddhist site** located ~110 kms from Hyderabad.
- **Excavations here have unearthed: Mahastupa, Chaitya Grihas, viharas, and life-size Stucco of Bodhisattva**, Brahmi label inscriptions of **Satavahana and Ikshvaku times** (2nd – 3rd Century A.D.) etc.
- The thorana's panel shows that **both Mahayana and Hinayana sects** co-existed here.

3.7.5. BAVIKONDA MONASTERY

Due to **budget constraints in recent years**, Bavikonda maintenance and repairs at the site remain suboptimal.

- It is part of the 'Shalihundam-Thotlakonda- Bavikonda- Bojjnakonda- Amravati- Anupu in Andhra Pradesh' **Buddhist Circuit under the Swadesh Darshan Scheme**.



About Bavikonda Monastery

- Bavikonda is located near Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh.
- The name 'Bavikonda' means a hill of wells as earlier the place **had several wells where rainwater used to be stored**.
- Bavikonda Monastery dates back to the **3rd century BCE**.
 - It has a **Theravada** (Hinayana Buddhism) **Buddhist complex** with structures like a **Mahastupa, Acharya Vihara, Chaitya Griha, Buddha Pada platforms, and votive stupas**.

4. PERSONALITIES

4.1. BHAGWAN MAHAVIR JAIN

Why in the News?

Recently, Prime Minister inaugurated the 2550th Bhagwan Mahaveer Nirvan Mahotsav on the occasion of Mahavir Jayanti.

•

ABOUT JAINISM

Originated around Rig Vedic Age

Founded by a lineage of 24 Great Teachers known as Tirthankaras

First tirthankara was Rishabdeva, 23rd was Parsvanath and 24th was Vardhamana Mahavira

Sects in Jainism Svetambara and Digambara

BHAGWAN MAHAVIRA JAIN

Born in 540 BC at Vaishali (in present day North Bihar)

His father Siddhartha was chief of the Jnatri clan, his mother Trishala was a Lichchhavi princess

Abandoned household at the age of 30 and attained Kevala Jnana (omniscience) at the age of 42 to become jina.

Propagated religion through Kosala, Magadha, Mithila, Champa etc

Passed away at age of 72 at Pavapuri (near present day Rajgir)

DOCTRINE OF JAINISM

Five cardinal Vows

 Satya Do not speak a lie	 Brahmacarya Lead a celibate life	 Ahimsa Do not commit violence	 Aparigraha Do not acquire property	 Asteya Do not Steal
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Triratna of Jainism

 Right faith	 Right Knowledge	 Right Conduct
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Jainism believes in God but places him below Jina

Believes in Theory of Karma and transmigration of Soul.

Believes that even the most inanimate objects have a soul.

FAMOUS COUNCILS

S.No.	Year	Location	President	Remarks
1.	300 BC	Patliputra	Sthulabhadra	Compilation of Mahavira's teachings into 12 Angas
2.	512 AD	Vallabhi	Devridhigani	Systematic coding of Mahavira's teachings into 11 angas as the 12th was lost by that time

PT 365 - Culture

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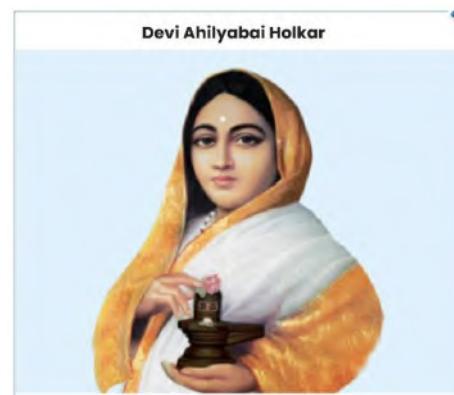
4.2. DEVI AHILYABAI HOLKAR

Why in the News?

Recently, the **300th birth anniversary** of Malwa queen Devi Ahilyabai Holkar was celebrated on May 31, 2024.

About Devi Ahilyabai Holkar (1725 –1795)

- **Birth:** Born in Chondi village, Ahmednagar in 1725.
- **Father:** Mankoji Rao Shinde
- **Husband:** Khanderao Holkar
- **Father-in-Law:** Malhar Rao Holkar (founder of the Holkar dynasty)
 - He was officer of Peshwa Baji Rao and **posted in Malwa to collect ‘Chouth’ and ‘Sardeshmukhi’**
- **Queen of Malwa in 1767:** Became ruler of Malwa after her husband's death (he was killed in **the battle of Kumbher in 1754**) and Father in Law's Death (1766).
 - She had appointed **Tukoji Rao Holkar (adopted son of Malhar Rao Holkar)** as the commander of her army.
 - She established **Maheshwar** in Madhya Pradesh as **the seat of the Holkar dynasty**.



Key Contributions:

- **Temple Reconstruction:**
 - **Kashi Vishvanath Temple, Varanasi** (Uttar Pradesh): Western bank of Ganga and is **one of the twelve Jyotirlinga**.
 - **Somnath Temple** (dedicated to Lord Shiva), **Gujarat coast**: Believed to be the **first jyotirlinga** (devotional shrine of Lord Shiva).
 - > Raided by **Mahmud Ghazni** (1024), and attacked by **Delhi Sultanate** (1297 and 1394) and **Aurangzeb** (in 1706).
 - > A description of Somnath Temple was given by **Al-Biruni**.
- **Patronized Arts:** Sanskrit scholar **Khushali Ram** and Marathi poet **Moropant and Shahir Anantaphandi**.
 - **Moropant**: He wrote 'Political commentary on Ramayana and Mahabharata', 'A number of Akhyanes based on puranas', 'Aryabhata' and 'Kekavati'.
 - **Shahir Anantaphandi**: He was known for composing **Lavani and Powadas**.
- **Social Development:** Women education, widow remarriage, and resisted evil practices like Sati and Untouchability.
 - **Mainstreaming Bhil and Gond tribes** and lower castes.
- **Economic:** **Maheswar and Indore** became the **center of trade and commerce**. She also promoted the **Maheswari weaving industry**.
 - **Maheswar “Sarees & Fabric”** is registered as Handicraft goods in Geographical Indications (GI).

About Holkar Dynasty

- **Part of Maratha Confederacy.**
 - Other prominent members included: **Bhonsle of Nagpur, Gaekwad of Baroda, Sindhia of Gwalior**.
- **Third Anglo-Maratha War:** Malhar Rao II (1811 to 1833), who ruled the Holkar Dynasty played a pivotal role in the Third Anglo-Maratha War (1817-1819).
 - After Malhar Rao II was **defeated in the battle of Mahidpur** the **Treaty of Mandsaur was signed in 1818** which henceforth governed relations between the Holkars and the British.

4.3. NANA JAGANNATH SHANKAR SETH

Why in the News?

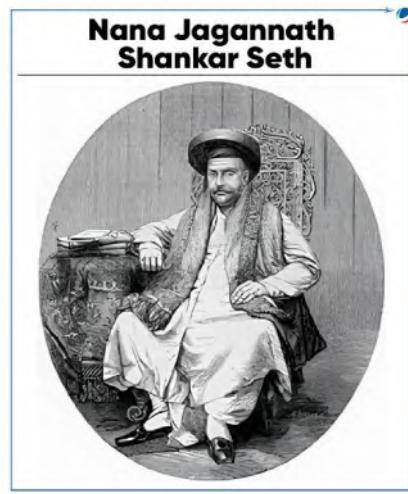
Maharashtra cabinet has recently decided to ask the Ministry of Railways to rename Mumbai Central station after Nana Jagannath Shankarseth.

About Nana Jagannath Shankarseth

- **Early life of Nana Jagannath Shankarseth (1803- 1865)**
 - **Birth:** Born in a Brahmin family in **Murbad in Thane district, Maharashtra.**
 - **Father:** Shankar Murkute
 - **Mother:** Bhawani Bai Murkute.
 - **Ideals and Influences:** He was greatly inspired by the merchant and philanthropist **Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy.**

Key Contributions

- **Architect of Mumbai:** Plan buildings, streets, and avenues in Bombay.
- **Education Patronage:** Donated family-owned land for the establishment of schools, emphasizing education for girls.
 - He founded the **Native School of Bombay**, which evolved into the **Elphinstone College in 1856.**
- **Culture:** Promoted the **Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Museum** in Byculla, constructed **Bhawani Shankar Temple** and a Ram temple.
- **Railway Project:** He was member of the committee that gave impetus to the project for the **first train in India** that ran between Boribunder and Thane on April 16, 1853.
- **Political Contributions:** He was the first:
 - Indian nominated to the Legislative Council of Bombay.
 - Indian Member of Asiatic Society of Mumbai.



Legacy and influence

- Described as 'Architect of Modern India' by the renowned scholar of economics, **Gangadhar Gadgil.**
- Influenced freedom fighters like **Dadabhai Naoroji** and **Justice Ranade.**

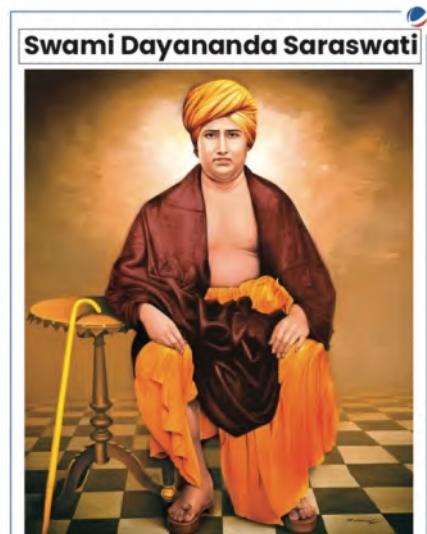
4.4. SWAMI DAYANANDA SARASWATI

Why in the News?

The government has formed a high-level committee to oversee 200th year-long celebrations commemorating the 200th birth anniversary of Dayanand Saraswati.

About Swami Dayanand Saraswati (1824-1883)

- He was a **social reformer** born on 12th February 1824 at **Morvi in Kathiawar (Gujarat).**
- **Original name:** Mula Shankara
- In 1860, under **Swami Virajananda Saraswati** at Mathura, he began to study Panini and Patanjali and started preaching.
- **Literary work:**
 - Wrote **Satyarth Prakash** in Hindi.
 - **Veda Bhasya Bhumika**, an introduction to his Vedic commentary and
 - **Veda Bhasya**, a Vedic commentary in Sanskrit on the Yajurveda.



Dayanand's philosophy

- **Vedic ideology:** Denouncing idolatry and ritualistic worship.
 - Believed in the infallible authority of the Vedas.
 - His book "Satyarth Prakash" emphasised the "return to Vedic principles" that he believed had been lost over time.
 - He gave the slogan "**Go back to Vedas.**"
 - **Advocation of Dharma:** Free from any partiality and as an embodiment of truthfulness.

- **Caste system:** He claimed that **caste is not supposed to be hereditary but rather** on the basis of an individual's talents and disposition.
 - > **Advocated for significant reform within it.**
 - > Against the **practice of untouchability** and advocated **Vedic education for all castes.**
- **Women & Education:** He opposed **child marriage and forced widowhood.**
 - > **He campaigned for the education of women.**
 - > The burden of compulsory education **was to be shouldered by the king/state.**
 - > **Complete overhaul of the education system** by introducing **Anglo-Vedic schools** to offer Indian students an updated curriculum in Vedic and English.
- **Political philosophy: Two central ideas-**
 - '**Enlightened Monarchy**' -from Manusmriti—that is, a monarchy thoroughly rooted in obedience to Dharma.
 - **Elective representation, i.e. democracy.**
- **Social movements:** He started the **cow protection movement and the Shuddhi program.**
 - Shuddhi program aimed to **bring back the people who transformed their religion to Islam and Christianity from Hinduism.**
- **National movement:**
 - **First to give the call for Swaraj** as "India for Indians" in 1876, a call later taken up by Lokmanya Tilak.
 - **Criticism of the British from a religious point of view** as well as providing an ancient Indian alternative.
 - **Inspired by Swadeshi.**

Arya Samaj (1875) and Vedic Schools

- **Arya Samaj was established in Bombay by Dayanand Saraswati**, and its constitution was finalized at Lahore.
- **Monotheistic Hindu order that rejected ritualistic excesses and social dogmas.**
- The main aim is to make the universe the best place by all means for human beings to live in i.e. **Krinvanto Vishwamaryam.**
- It was the first Hindu organization to introduce **proselytization in Hinduism.**
- **Some principles of Arya Samaj which is based on the idea of universalism**
 - The source of pure knowledge is God.
 - Ethical justifications of actions are a must.
 - Rays of knowledge must dispel the darkness of ignorance.
- Opened a vast number of **educational institutions and orphanages** (First Dayanand Anglo Vedic (DAV) school in Lahore in 1886).
- In 1892, there was a **split in Arya Samaj into Gurukul (conservative) and college group(radical).**
- The leader of the conservative wing **was Swami Shraddhanand** and the radical group was Lala Hansraj.
- The split was due to the kind of language that was to be promoted and the kind of food to be followed.

4.5. SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

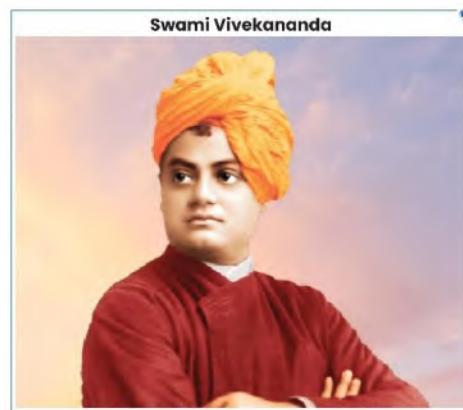
Why in the News?

The Prime Minister recently visited the **Vivekananda Rock Memorial** and the **Tiruvalluvar statue** on the nearby rocks at **Kanyakumari (Tamil Nadu).**

About Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902)

Early Life:

- **Birth:** Swami Vivekananda, born Narendra Nath Datta on **January 12, 1863, in Kolkata.**
- His birth anniversary is celebrated as **National Youth Day.**
- **Parents:** Vishwanath Datta and Bhuvaneshwari Devi
- **Spiritual Guru:** Sri Ramakrishna
- **Prominent disciples:** Margaret Noble (Sister Nivedita)



About Vivekananda Rock Memorial

- Built in 1970 and is believed to be at the place where **Swami Vivekananda meditated once**.
- It is surrounded by the **Laccadive Sea**, where the Bay of Bengal, the Indian Ocean, and the Arabian Sea converge.
- It is also believed to be the rock where **Goddess Kanyakumari prayed to Lord Shiva**.

Contributions and Legacy

- **Preached Vedant philosophy:** Uttara Mimāṃsā is called Vedānta. It incorporates Advaita system, Viśiṣṭādvaita system and the Dvaita system
- **World's Parliament of Religions at Chicago:** His address of 1893 was hailed as an “orator by divine right” and a “Messenger of Indian wisdom to the Western world.”
- **Established Ramakrishna Mission:** Established in 1897, the mission engages in various forms of social service, including running hospitals, schools, colleges, etc.
- **Promoting scientific temperament:** In 1893, he met Jamsetji Tata and inspired him to establish **Indian Institute of Science (IISC)** which was founded in Bangalore in 1909.

4.6. SHRI RATAN NAVAL TATA

Esteemed Indian industrialist and philanthropist, Ratan Naval Tata (1937-2024) has passed away.

Accomplishments under his Exemplary Leadership

- **Tata Group's revenue surged from \$5 billion to over \$100 billion.** It is one of the largest employers in India.
- **Launched Tata Nano.**
- PETA India awarded Tata Motors **Cow-Friendly Future Award** for using vegan interiors in its AVINYA Concept car.
- **Awards:** Padma Bhushan (2000), Padma Vibhushan (2008), Ernst and Young Entrepreneur of Year – Lifetime Achievement (2013) etc.

Shri Ratan Naval Tata



5. AWARDS

5.1. BHARAT RATNA

Why in the News?

P. V. Narasimha Rao, Chaudhary Charan Singh, MS Swaminathan, and others received India's highest civilian award Bharat Ratna.

About Bharat Ratna

- Granted by President to individuals for outstanding service across any field.
- Recommendations: Made by the Prime Minister of India to the President (No formal recommendations for this are necessary)
- Recognition: Recipients receive a Sanad (certificate) signed by the President along with a medallion.
 - Notably, the award does not come with any monetary grant.
- Establishment: by former President Dr. Rajendra Prasad on January 2, 1954.
- Regulations: Article 18(1) of the Indian Constitution prohibits awardees from using 'Bharat Ratna' as a title, prefix or suffix to their name.
 - However, they are allowed to include 'Awarded Bharat Ratna by the President' or 'Recipient of Bharat Ratna Award' in their biodata, visiting cards, letterheads, etc.
- Initial Awardees: Dr. Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan, Dr. CV Raman, and Chakravarti Rajagopalachari were the first recipients of the Bharat Ratna in 1954.
 - Notably, the award is also open to non-Indians, as demonstrated by the likes of Mother Teresa, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, and Nelson Mandela.
- Additional Information:
 - Initially, the award was not conferred posthumously, but this changed in 1966.
 - The youngest recipient and first sportsperson to be honored with the award was Sachin Tendulkar in 2014.
 - A maximum of three awards can be given each year, with an exception occurring this year 2024 and in 1999 when five and four individuals received the honor respectively.

Design of Bharat Ratna Medal

- Shape and Inscriptions: It designed in the shape of a peepal leaf, with 'Bharat Ratna' inscribed in Devanagari script beneath a sunburst figure.
- Reverse Side: It features the phrase 'Satyameva Jayate' written in Devanagari script, placed under an inscription of the state emblem.
- Materials: The emblem, sun, and rim of the award are made of platinum, while the inscriptions are crafted in burnished bronze.
- Production: manufactured at Kolkata's Alipore Mint.



5.2. NOBEL PRIZES

About Nobel Prize

An **international award** administered by the Nobel Foundation in Stockholm, Sweden, and based on the last will of **Alfred Nobel (in 1895)**.

Categories	Awarded By
Physics	Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences
Chemistry	Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences
Economics	Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences
Literature	Swedish Academy, Stockholm, Sweden
Medicine or Physiology	Nobel Assembly at Karolinska Institute, Stockholm, Sweden
Peace	Norwegian Nobel Committee

Winners Receive



2024 Winners

- » **Literature:** South Korean author Han Kang.
 - › Major works: The Vegetarian, The White Book, Human Acts and Greek Lessons
- » **Peace:** Japanese organization Nihon Hidankyo
 - › Major works: its efforts to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons

NOTE: The other Nobel Prizes have been covered in the respective PT365 Subjects.

5.3. OTHER IMPORTANT AWARDS

5.3.1. PADMA AWARDS

President conferred Padma Awards at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi.

About Padma Awards

- **Instituted in 1954**, these are one of the highest civilian honours of India **announced annually on Republic Day**.
- Given in **three categories** **Padma Vibhushan** (for exceptional and distinguished service), **Padma Bhushan** (distinguished service of a high order) and **Padma Shri** (distinguished service).
- Given in various disciplines and fields like **art, medicine, literature and education, sports** etc.
- **Normally not conferred posthumously**. However, in highly deserving cases, Government could consider giving an award posthumously.
- **Award does not amount to a title and cannot be used as a suffix or prefix to name**.

5.3.2. ANUBHAV AWARDS

7th Anubhav Awards Ceremony is to be held in Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.

About Anubhav Awards

- **Given by:** Department of Pension & Pensioners' Welfare

- **Based on:** Anubhav Write ups,i.e, sharing of experiences by retiring central government employees/pensioners on **Anubhav Portal**.
- **Aim:** to foster good governance and administrative reforms in future on the basis of the experience shared by retiring employees.

5.3.3. GALLANTRY AWARDS

President has approved **103 Gallantry awards to Armed Forces and Central Armed Police Forces personnel** on Independence Day 2024.

About Gallantry Awards

- **Order of precedence of awards:** Param Vir Chakra, Ashoka Chakra, Mahavir Chakra, Kirti Chakra, Vir Chakra and Shaurya Chakra.
- **Announced twice in a year** - first on occasion of Republic Day and then on occasion of Independence Day.
- **Wartime Gallantry Awards i.e. Param Vir Chakra, Maha Vir Chakra and Vir Chakra** instituted in 1950.
- **Ashoka Chakra Class-I, Class-II and Class-III** were instituted in 1952. Later renamed as **Ashoka Chakra, Kirti Chakra and Shaurya Chakra** respectively in 1967.
- These are **Peacetime Gallantry Awards**.

5.3.4. NATIONAL FILM AWARDS

70th National Film Awards for the year 2022 have been announced.

About National Film Awards

- Established in **1954** and were initially called ‘State Awards’.
- **2 President’s Gold Medals, 2 certificates of merit, and 12 silver medals for regional films** were presented in the earlier years.
- Awards have been administered by the Directorate of Film Festivals since **1973**.
- Awards are given in **3 categories: Feature Films, Non-Feature Films, and Best Writing in Cinema**.
- **Most Film Friendly State award** is also given, along with the National Film Awards, to a **State of India that has been helpful in furthering the growth of the film industry**.

5.3.5. UNESCO’S PRIX VERSAILLES AWARD

‘Smritivan Earthquake Memorial Museum’, India’s **largest memorial and museum**, was shortlisted for **UNESCO’s Prix Versailles Award**.

UNESCO’s Prix Versailles Award

- **About:** Granted annually at UNESCO since 2015, the Prix Versailles **consists of architecture awards that showcase the finest contemporary achievements worldwide**.
- **Categories:** Award is categorized in **24 World Titles including Airports, Campuses, Passenger Stations, Sports, Museums, Emporiums, Hotels, and Restaurants**.
- **Project specification:** Projects must be **innovative, creative, reflect local heritage, be ecologically efficient**, and promote social interaction and participation.
 - The **Official list** aligns with the principles of **intelligent sustainability** and takes into consideration projects’ **ecological, social and cultural impacts**.
 - **Significance:** It highlights the primary **role of the Laureates in beautifying and improving the living environment**.
 - **Other Recognized Indian project:** In December 2023 **Kempegowda International Airport, Bengaluru** (Karnataka) was honored with the UNESCO’s 2023 Prix Versailles, and named among the ‘World’s most beautiful airports’.

About Smritivan Earthquake Memorial Museum

- **Establishment:** Built in the memory of **2001 Gujarat Earthquake victims**, museum was inaugurated in 2022.
 - The 2001 Gujarat Earthquake had a magnitude of **7.9 on the Richter scale**, with **Bhuj as the epicenter**.
- **Location:** Situated on **Bhujiyo Dungar hill (Gujarat)** which also **harbours Bhujio Fort** built by **Roa Godji** for the defence of Bhuj in 1723. Fort is named after **Bhujang Naag**, the snake temple.
- **Miyawaki Forest:** One of the world's largest Miyawaki forests is located at the museum.
 - The Miyawaki method, developed by Japanese botanist Akira Miyawaki, involves **planting different types of native trees in close proximity** to promote rapid growth and biodiversity.



About UNESCO World Heritage Committee



Genesis: Established in 1972 under the World Heritage Convention during UNESCO's 17th session.



Objectives: Known as the "Five Cs" – Credibility, Conservation, Capacity Building, Communication, and Communities.



- Key Role:**
- Makes final decisions on World Heritage List inscriptions.
 - Manages the World Heritage Fund and provides financial aid to State Parties.
 - Monitors conservation efforts of listed sites.



Members: Includes 21 State Party representatives elected by the General Assembly for six-year terms. India was elected for the 2021–2025 term.

Key Partners:



- **International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM):** Promotes cultural heritage conservation.
- **International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS):** Works on preserving architectural and landscape heritage.

5.3.6. DADASAHEB PHALKE AWARD

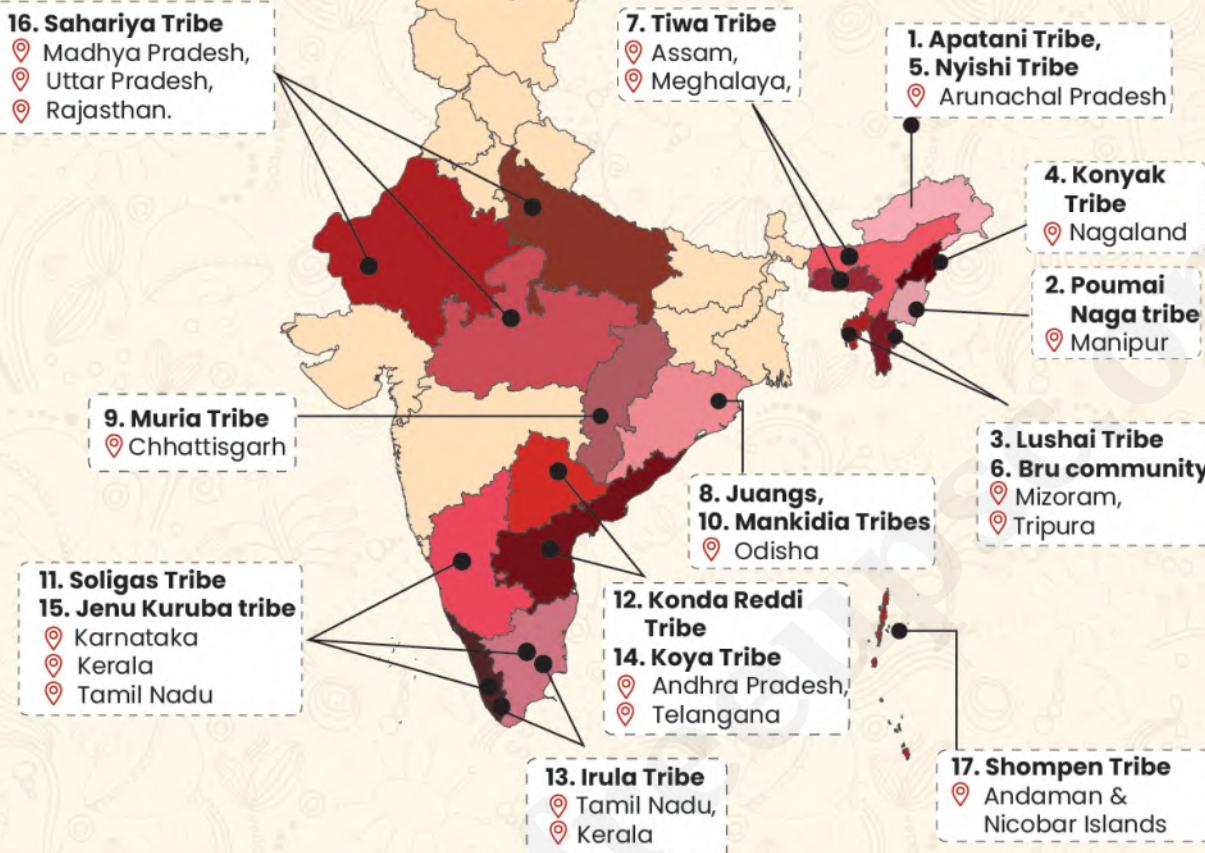
Dadasaheb Phalke Lifetime Achievement Award for 2022 to be conferred on eminent actor Mithun Chakraborty.

About Dadasaheb Phalke Award

- The Dadasaheb Phalke Award is **India's highest award in the field of cinema**.
- It is presented annually by the **Directorate of Film Festivals**.
- It was instituted in **1969** in honour of the **birth centenary year of Dadasaheb Phalke**, considered the father of Indian cinema.
- The recipient receives a **Golden Lotus (Swarna Kamal)** medallion, a shawl, and a **cash prize** (currently ₹10 lakhs).
- Some notable winners: **Satyajit Ray** (1985), **Amitabh Bachchan** (2018), **Rajinikanth** (2021), and **Waheeda Rehman** (2023).

6. TRIBES IN NEWS

TRIBES IN NEWS



TRIBES OF NORTH-EAST INDIA

1. Apatani Tribe



Researchers from the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) have recorded a **new species of forest-dwelling horned frog from the Talle Wildlife Sanctuary** (Arunachal Pradesh).

⦿ **Named after the Apatani community in Arunachal Pradesh.**

About Apatani Tribe

- ⦿ The tribe Found in **Ziro valley** and known for their effective traditional village council called buyañ.
- ⦿ Region of tribe has been included in **UNESCO's Tentative List** as living Cultural Landscape (where man and environment have harmoniously existed together in a state of interdependence).
- ⦿ **Major Festival:** Dree and Myok
- ⦿ **Key Dance:** Daminda, and Pree dance

2. Poumai Naga Tribe



The Poumai Naga tribe of Purul village of Senapati District, Manipur has banned hunting, trapping and killing of wild animals and birds.

About the Poumai Naga tribe

- ⊖ It is one of the oldest and largest **Naga tribes in Manipur**.
- ⊖ They are geographically located in **Manipur and Nagaland**.
- ⊖ They are known for their **Pouli (Pottery)** and **Poutai (Pou salt)** production.
- ⊖ **Language:** Poula

3. Lushai Tribe



A rare hemi-parasitic terrestrial plant (*Phtheirospermum lusaiorum*) has been found in **Phawngpui National Park of Mizoram**.

- ⊖ Lusaiorum is named after "Lushai" tribe of Mizoram.

About Lushai tribe

- ⊖ Tribe under **Kuki-Chin group of tribes (Mongoloid origin)**.
- ⊖ Main occupations are **Jhum and orange Cultivation**.
- ⊖ Lusai are also known as **Head Hunter community**.
- ⊖ Popular Dance is **Bamboo Dance (Cheraw-dance)**.

4. Konyak Tribe



The Konyak Union, apex body of the Konyak community has sought the **Nagaland** government's intervention in rectifying the "erroneous" boundary line on Google Maps.

About Konyak Tribe

- ⊖ **Mongoloid origin**.
- ⊖ Before Christianity they practised "**Animism**" worshiping different objects of nature.
- ⊖ The **Konyak language** belongs to the Northern Naga sub branch of the Sal subfamily of **Sino-Tibetan**.
- ⊖ They are known as **headhunters** of North East India.
- ⊖ **Patriarchal society**.

5. Nyishi Tribe



Kabak Yano becomes the **first woman from Nyishi tribe of Arunachal Pradesh** to scale Mount Everest.

Nyishi Tribe

- ⊖ Previously known as the **Daffla**, it is **largest ethnic group** in Arunachal Pradesh.
- ⊖ It is **neither based on caste system nor stratified into classes**.
- ⊖ **Polygyny** is prevalent and **Longte** is major festival.
- ⊖ Nyishi believes that they are descendants of **Abo Tani** (progeny of first human being on Earth) and hence Nyishi, Adi, Gallo, Apatani etc. call themselves as **Tani Group of Tribes**.

6. Bru community



For the first time, **Bru voters exercised their franchise** in Tripura Lok Sabha election.

About Bru community

- ④ Also referred to as **Reangs**, **Bru community** has historically resided in **Mizoram**, **Tripura**, and parts of **southern Assam**.
 - **Reangs in Tripura** are categorised as **Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG)**.
- ④ They are ethnically **distinct from the Mizos of Mizoram**.
 - Over 30000 Brus **fled Mizoram following ethnic clashes with Mizo tribes in 1997** and were forced to live in the refugee camps in Tripura.
 - In 2020, a **quadrilateral agreement** (among Centre, Governments of Tripura and Mizoram, and Bru-Reang representatives) was signed to facilitate **permanent settlement of Bru refugees in Tripura**.

7. Tiwa Tribe



The Yangli Festival, a significant cultural event of the Tiwa tribe of Northeast India, was celebrated.

- ④ Held **once every few years to propitiate Goddess Lakshmi for a good harvest**.

About Tiwa Tribe

- ④ **Geographical Distribution:** Mostly in **Assam and Meghalaya**, and some population also reside in **Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, and Nagaland**.
- ④ **Language:** They speak **Tiwa** (also known as Lalung), which belongs to the **Tibeto-Burman language family**.
- ④ **Traditional Dress:** "Sador" for men, a wrap-around cloth, and "Mekhela Chador" for women.

TRIBES OF EAST INDIA

8. Juangs Tribe



District Level Committee approves Habitat Rights for Juangs of Keonjhar, a PVTG in Odisha.

- ④ Other tribes such as **Jaungs of Jajpur, Paudi Bhuyans of Deogarh** in odisha and **Bharia PVTG in Madhya Pradesh and Kamar PVTG and Baiga PVTG in Chhattisgarh** have habitat rights.

About Juang Tribe, Odisha

- ④ **Native:** Hills of Keonjhar, Pallahara in Anugul and the plains of Dhenkanal, they are divided as Hill (Thaniya) and Plain (Bhagudia) Juang.
- ④ **History:** Originally known as **Patuas** because of their traditional attire of leaf skirts.
- ④ **Occupation:** **Shifting cultivation** or toila chasa, with some now moving to settled agriculture. **Decorative combs and tobacco cases**.

Habitat Rights

- ④ Under the **Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006** or **FRA**

9. Muria Tribe



Muria tribes practice the '**deda**', traditional method of preserving seeds.

About Deda Method

- ⊕ Seeds are wrapped in leaves, packed tightly to look like boulders, and woven with Siali leaves.
- ⊕ Benefits: Protection of seed from pests and worms, which can be stored and used upto 5 years.

About Murias

- ⊕ Sub-group of Gond tribe, belonging to **Chhattisgarh**.
- ⊕ Associated with **Muria Rebellion of Bastar (1876)** against Gopinath Kapardas, diwan of Bastar.
- ⊕ Customs: **Dead pillars (Gudi)**, where dead are buried with a stone placed 6 to 7 feet high and **Ghotul** where young boys and girls chose their own life partner.

10. Mankidia Tribes



The habitat rights are formally provided to Mankidia of Odisha under the **FRA Act, 2006**.

About Mankidia Tribes

- ⊕ Particularly Vulnerable Tribes
- ⊕ Semi-nomadic section of the Birhor tribe.
- ⊕ Skill in catching monkeys and trapping small birds and animals.
- ⊕ They live in dome shaped leaf huts, known as **Kumbha**.
- ⊕ Munda branch of Austro-Asiatic language group.

TRIBES OF SOUTH INDIA

11. Soligas Tribe



Soligas Tribe is an **isolated tribal community restricted to only Karnataka & Tamil Nadu** (especially in Biligiri Rangana Hills and Male Mahadeshwara Hills).

- ⊕ Occupation and Lifestyle: Practice **shifting cultivation and hunting**
- ⊕ Speak "**Soliga**" which is one of the **Dravidian Language**.
- ⊕ Traditional festivals are **Rotti habba, Hosa Ragi habba, Mari habba, Gowri habba**, etc.

Other details:

- ⊕ To recognise the efforts of the **Soliga Community in biodiversity and conservation**, a new genus of wasp, '**Soliga Ecarinata**', has been after them.
- ⊕ **Soligas became the first tribal community** living inside a tiger reserve to get legal rights to the forest in 2011.

12. Konda Reddi Tribe



The tribe shared their indigenous knowledge about Indian Laurel tree with Forest officials.

About Konda Reddis

- ⊕ **Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group** inhabiting banks of **river Godavari in Andhra Pradesh**.
- ⊕ They practise Podu cultivation, a type of shifting cultivation.

About Indian Laurel Tree (*Terminalia tomentosa*)

- ⊕ **Deciduous trees** growing up to 30 m tall.
- ⊕ Has the **ability to store water** in its trunk during summers.
- ⊕ Tree is **used in haemorrhage, ulcers, fractures**, etc.
- ⊕ Known as **Indian Silver Oak**, its timber has great commercial value.

13. Irula Tribe



Despite gaining global attention for **extracting and selling snake venom**, Irula tribals are facing an uncertain future.

- ⊕ Irula community plays crucial role in public health by supplying **nearly 80% of venom used for antidotes in India**.

About Irula Tribe

- ⊕ **PVTG in Tamil Nadu**.
- ⊕ Residing in **Nilgiris region of Tamil Nadu** and places great value on practice of ancestor worship.
- ⊕ They are also spread over **Karnataka and Kerala**.
- ⊕ According to anthropological literature, Irula is one of the oldest tribal communities of India belongs to **Negrito race** (migrated from Africa).
- ⊕ **Speak Irula language:** It is written in **Tamil script**.

14. Koya Tribe



Special Enforcement Bureau raids on **Mahua liquor in Andhra Pradesh** have targeted Koya tribe, threatening their traditional practices.

- ⊕ **Mahua (tropical tree) is considered sacred by them.** Its flowers are used for brewing liquor.

About Koya Tribe

- ⊕ **Habitat:** Hills and forests north of **Godavari District (Andhra Pradesh)** and **Malkangiri district (Odisha)**.
- ⊕ **Occupation:** Traditionally, they are **pastoralists and shifting cultivators** but now they have taken to **settled cultivation**.

Culture:

- ⊕ **Speak Koya language**, which belongs to **Dravidian family of languages**.
- ⊕ Koya observes **annual religious festivals i.e., Bija Pandu, Kodta Pandu, Bimud Pandu etc.**

15. Jenu Kuruba Tribe



Recently, the Jenu Kuruba Tribe of the **Western Ghats** was in the news.

About the Jenu Kuruba Tribe

- ⊖ Geographical Presence: They live in **small settlements called "Hadi,"** primarily located in **Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu.**
 - They are also associated with forest regions like **Nagarhole and Bandipur Tiger Reserves.**
- ⊖ **Cultural and Economic Activities:** Traditionally known for **gathering honey**, they also engage in **collecting minor forest produce.**
- ⊖ **Language:** They speak **Jenunudi**, a **language similar to Kannada.**

TRIBES OF NORTH INDIA

16. Sahariya Tribe



Recently, More than **100 cases of malnourished children among Sahariya tribe** have been reported from Baran district of Rajasthan.

About Sahariya Tribe

- ⊖ Sahariyas are **one of the PVTGs** that are mostly inhabited in **Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, and Rajasthan.**
- ⊖ Generally reside in separate basti in the village, called **Saharana.**
- ⊖ **Economic activities:** Agriculture (primarily rainfed), collection of minor forest produce, etc.

TRIBES OF ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR

17. Shompen Tribe



Shompen cast their vote for the first time in Lok Sabha Election.

About Shompen Tribe

- ⊖ One of the **Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups.**
- ⊖ Reside in dense tropical rain forests of **Great Nicobar Island.**
- ⊖ Belong to the **Mongoloid group.**
- ⊖ According to Census (2011), **estimated population of Shompen is 229.**
- ⊖ They are **hunters and gatherers.** They used to hunt wild pig, python, monitor Lizard, crocodile, etc.

7. MISCELLANEOUS

7.1. PILGRIM CORRIDOR PROJECTS

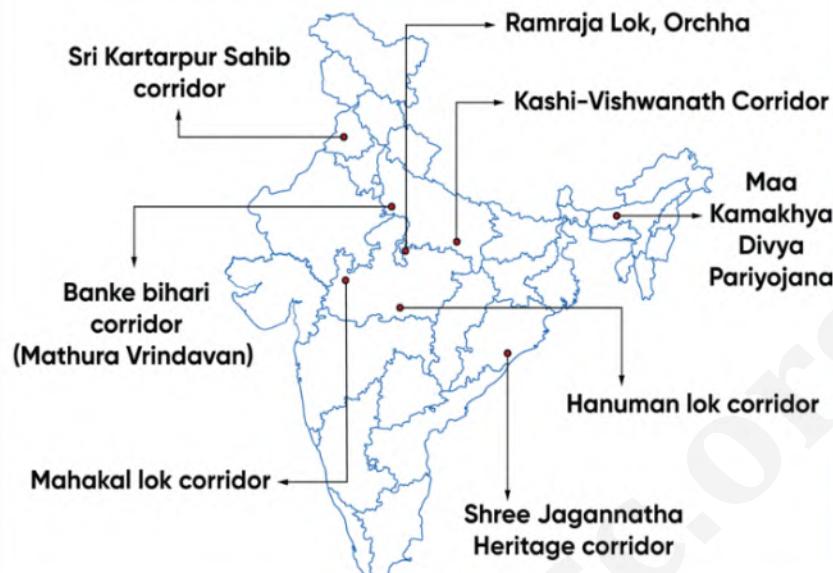
Why in the News?

Union Budget 2024-25 announced that **corridor projects will be built** for the **Vishnupad Temple at Gaya** and the **Mahabodhi Temple at Bodh Gaya** in Bihar.

More on the News

- The **Vishnupad and Mahabodhi Temples** are located about 10 km apart.
- The newly announced corridor project is inspired by the **Kashi Vishwanath Temple Corridor** in Varanasi (UP)
- The foundation stone for the corridor, now also known as **Shri Kashi Vishwanath Dham**, was laid down in 2019.
- It was conceptualised to create an easily accessible pathway to connect Shri Kashi Vishwanath Temple to the banks of the river Ganga.

India's Major Pilgrim Corridor Projects



About Pilgrim Corridor Projects

- Preservation and Restoration:** For example, the **Kashi Vishwanath Corridor** expanded the area around the temple and restored smaller temples including Sheetla Mata Temple, Shri Ram Temple among others.
- Development & Heritage Integration:** Example: Mahakal Lok Corridor features murals from 'Shiv Puran' and iconic gateways.
- Enhanced Visitor Experience.**
- Boost to Tourism and the Economy:** India earned over ₹2.3 lakh crore in foreign exchange from tourism, a 65.7% increase year-on-year (Economic Survey 2023-24).

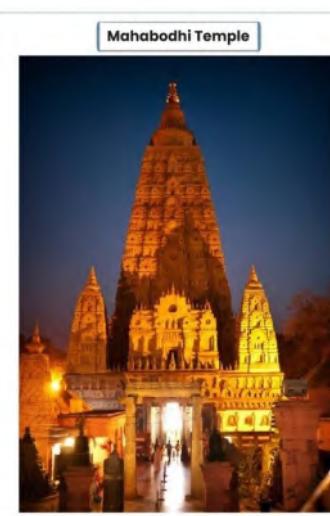
About Vishnupad Temple

- Location:** Gaya, Bihar, on the banks of the Falgu River.
- Dedicated to:** Lord Vishnu and is marked by his footprint, also known as Dharmasila, on a Basalt Rock.
- Footprint is marked by four symbols:** Conch-Shell (Shankha) Wheel (Chakra) Mace (Gada) Lotus (Padma)
- According to Hindu mythology, this footprint marks where **Lord Vishnu subdued the demon Gayasur** by placing his foot on the demon's head.
- Mentioned in the Mahabharat and the Ramayana** (lord Rama performed pind-daan for his father).
- Restoration:** The current structure was restored by Devi Ahilya Bai Holkar, ruler of Indore, in 1787.

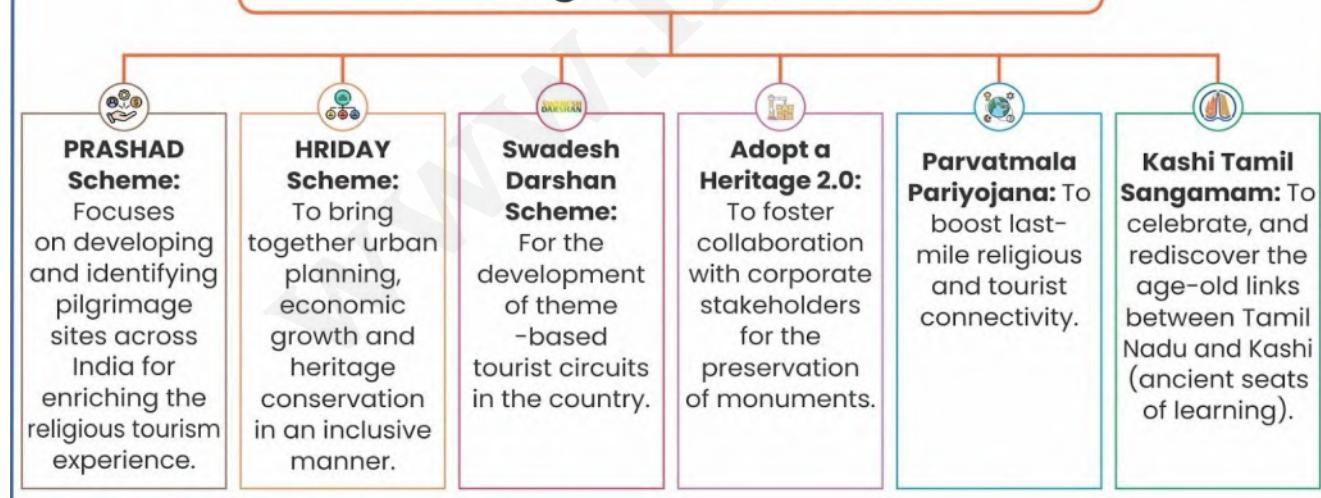


About Mahabodhi Temple Complex

- **Location:** Bodh Gaya, Bihar
- **Global recognition:** UNESCO World Heritage Site
- **Historical Background:**
 - First temple at this site was built by **Emperor Asoka in the 3rd century B.C.**
 - The current temple structure, dating back to the **5th or 6th century from the late Gupta period**, is one of the oldest brick-built Buddhist temples.
- **Main Temple:**
 - The temple is built in the classical Indian temple architecture style with a **curvilinear shikhara (tower) topped by amalaka and kalasha**.
 - > However, the design of the temple is **neither Dravida nor Nagara**.
 - > Narrow like Nagara temple, but it rises without curving like a Dravida one.
 - It has **entrances from the east and the north**.
 - It has a **low basement with mouldings decorated with honeysuckle and geese design** and above this is a series of niches having images of Buddha.
- **Vajrasana (Diamond Throne):**
 - A polished sandstone platform marking the spot where Buddha sat and meditated.
 - It was originally installed by Emperor Asoka to mark the spot where Buddha sat and meditated.
- **Seven Sacred Sites**
 - **Sacred Bodhi Tree:** Located to the west of the temple, it is believed to be a direct descendant of the tree under which Buddha attained Enlightenment.
 - **Other Sacred Places:** Animeshlochan Chaitya (prayer hall), Ratnachakra (Jewelled Ambulatory), Ratnaghar Chaitya, Ajapala Nigrodh Tree (under which Buddha meditated during his Fifth Week, answering the queries of Brahmins), Lotus Pond, and Rajyatana Tree.
 - **Buddha himself mentioned four important places** for the 'Dharma Yatra': **Lumbini**, where Buddha was born; **Bodhgaya**, where he attained enlightenment; **Sarnath**, where he gave his first sermon; and **Kushinagar**, where he achieved Mahaparinirvana (final liberation).



Other Initiatives for Cultural and Heritage Conservation



7.2. KARTARPUR SAHIB CORRIDOR

Why in the News?

Recently, India and Pakistan have agreed to extend the validity of the Agreement on Sri Kartarpur Sahib Corridor for next five years period.

About Dera Baba Nanak - Sri Kartarpur Sahib Pilgrimage

- Gurdwara Sri Kartarpur Sahib falls in district Narowal of Pakistan, about 4.5 k.m. from the international border near the historic town of Dera Baba Nanak, District Gurdaspur, Punjab.
 - Village Kartarpur is located at the west bank of river Ravi.
 - Gurdwara Dera Baba Nanak is on the east bank of River Ravi.



About Agreement on Sri Kartarpur Sahib Corridor

- Signed: 2019 and was valid for 5 years.
- Visa-free travel of Indian pilgrims and Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) cardholders, from India to Gurdwara Darbar Sahib Kartarpur in Pakistan on a daily basis, throughout the year.
 - However, Pakistani Sikhs do not have access to this corridor and cannot visit Dera Baba Nanak in India without first obtaining an Indian visa.
- Required to return the same day.
- Pakistan levy USD 20 on every pilgrim for each visit.
- Under the agreement, there is no restriction on the faith of the pilgrims who travel through the corridor.

Important Sikh Pilgrimage Places

- Gurdwara Janam Asthan (Nankana Sahib, Pakistan)- Birthplace of Guru Nanak
- Gurudwara Ber Sahib (Sultanpur Lodhi, Punjab)
- Akal Takht (Sri Harmandir Sahib (Golden Temple) Amritsar)
- Takht Sri Keshgarh Sahib (Anandpur Sahib, Punjab)
- Takht Sri Damdama Sahib (Talwandi Sabo, Punjab)
- Takht Sri Patna Sahib (Bihar)
- Takht Sri Hazur Sahib (Nanded, Maharashtra)

Significance of Kartarpur Sahib Corridor

- Cultural and religious significance
 - Final resting place of Guru Nanak Dev Ji, where he spent the last 18 years of his life.
 - Guru Nanak is believed to have composed many hymns of the Guru Granth Sahib, the holy book of the Sikhs, in Kartarpur.
 - Community meal, called guru ka langar, was also initiated at Kartarpur.
 - Guru Nanak Dev first practised three pillars of Sikhism here i.e.
 - Kirat Karo (working hard and an honest living); Vand Chhako (share wealth, possessions and talents with others) and Naam Japo (meditation through reciting, chanting and singing) as the path to liberation.

7.2.1. OTHER GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES IN NEWS

7.2.1.1. KASTURI COTTON BHARAT

Ministry of Textiles empowered all ginners (who operate cotton gins which separate cotton fibre from seeds) in India to produce Kasturi Cotton Bharat brand.

- Kasturi Cotton is premium quality Cotton from India with 100% traceability & certification, utilizing blockchain technology for traceability.

About Kasturi Cotton Bharat

- Joint initiative by the Ministry of Textiles, Cotton Corporation of India, Trade Bodies & Industry.
- Aim:** To work on principle of self-regulation by owning complete responsibility of Branding, Traceability and Certification of Indian Cotton to enhance its global competitiveness and create a sustainable ecosystem.
- Implementing Agency:** Cotton Textiles Export Promotion Council (TEXPROCIL).

7.2.1.2. PROJECT PARI (PUBLIC ART OF INDIA)

Ministry of Culture initiates Project PARI for the 46th World Heritage Committee Meeting.

- First intervention under Project is taking place in Delhi

About Project PARI

- It's being executed by Lalit Kala Akademi (an autonomous institution under the Ministry of Culture) and National Gallery of Modern Art.
- Aim:** Promotes democratization of art through public installations in urban landscapes which transforms them into accessible galleries.
- More than 150 visual artists from all over the country would create artwork in Delhi such as paintings, murals, sculptures etc.
- It includes Thangka painting (Sikkim/Ladakh), Cheriyal painting (Telangana), Bani Thani Painting (Rajasthan), Alpana art (Tripura), etc.

7.2.1.3. PARYATAN MITRA AND PARYATAN DIDI INITIATIVE

Ministry of Tourism has launched a national responsible tourism initiative named of 'Paryatan Mitra & Paryatan Didi' across the 50 tourist destinations in the country.

About Paryatan Mitra and Paryatan Didi Initiative

- Aim:** To elevate overall experience for tourists in destinations, by having them meet 'tourist-friendly' people who are proud Ambassadors and Storytellers for their destination.
 - This is being done by providing tourism related training and awareness to all.
- Vision:** To welcome one and all to experience Incredible India through Incredible Indians
- Special Emphasis:** On training of women and youth to develop new tourism-related products and experiences like food tours, craft tours etc.

7.2.1.4. GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS (GI) TAGS

The Geographical Indications Registry in Chennai has granted the GI tag to several products from various states across India.

<h2>Geographical Indication (GI) Tag</h2>	
 Identifies a good as originating in territory of a member, or a regional locality in that territory, where a given characteristic of good is essentially attributable to its geographical origin,	 Enables right holders to use the indication to prevent its use by a third party.
 Defined in the TRIPS Agreement.	 Does not enable the holder to prevent someone from making a product using same techniques.
 Registered for a period of 10 years and can be renewed again for a period of 10 years at a time.	
Legislation in India	Mechanism
 Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration & Protection) Act, 1999	 Registrar of Geographical indications: Controller-General of Patents, Designs and Trademarks under Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP).
 Geographical Indication of Goods (Regulation and Protection) Rules, 2002	 Supervises functioning of Geographical Indications Registry (GIR). GIR has All-India jurisdiction.

GI Tags



Uttar Pradesh

Pilkhuwa Hand Block Print



Traditional block printing on textiles and wood using natural dyes.

Banaras Metal Casting Craft



Intricate metalwork art from Banaras, known for its **detailed designs**.

Bareilly Cane & Bamboo Craft



Crafting **utility and decorative** items from cane and bamboo.

Tharu Embroidery



Embroidery with **vibrant threads**, reflecting **Tharu culture**.

Bareilly Zari Zardoji



Embroidery with **gold and silver threads**, adding opulence to fabrics.

Banaras Tirangi Barfi



A **tri-colored sweet** made from milk, sugar, and saffron.

Assam

Bodo Narzi



A **semi-fermented food** prepared with **jute leaves** (*Corchorus capsularis*).

Bodo Aronai



Traditional Bodo weaving known for its **vibrant colors and intricate designs**.

Bodo Napham



A dish of **fermented fish** prepared **anaerobically in a tightly sealed container** in two-three months.

Bodo Ondla



A **rice powder curry** flavoured with **garlic, ginger, salt, and alkali**.

Bodo Gwkha – Gwkhwi



A traditional dish of the Bodo community, made with a **variety of herbs and vegetables** during the **Bwisagu festival**.

Bodo Jou Gwran



A variety of rice beer made by the Bodo community which has the **highest percentage of alcohol (about 16.11%)**.

Bodo Jou Gishi



A traditionally **fermented rice-based alcoholic beverage**.

Bodo Maibra Jou Bidwi



Another form of rice beer which is revered and **served as a welcome drink** by most Bodo tribes. It's prepared by fermenting half-cooked rice (mairong) with less water, and adding a little 'amao' (a potential source of yeast) to it.

Note - The Bodo people believe these rice beers **originated from Lord Shiva**, and are **taken as medicine**.

Andaman and Nicobar Islands

Nicobari Canoe - Hodi Craft



Traditional canoes made from hollowed-out tree trunks.

Nicobari Mat



Mats woven from natural fibers, used for sitting and sleeping.

Andaman Karen Musley Rice



A special variety of aromatic rice grown by the Karen community.

Nicobari Tavi-i-Ngaich (Virgin Coconut Oil)



Pure coconut oil extracted traditionally for cooking and health.

Nguat-Kuk' - 'Khawtha' Coconut



A unique coconut variety with health benefits, grown in Nicobar.

Padauk Wood Craft



Craft items from Padauk wood, known for its rich red color.

Nicobari Hut



Traditional huts made from local materials, reflecting indigenous design.

Gujarat

Kutch Ajrakh



Block-printed textiles with geometric and floral patterns using dyes.

7.3. NEW FLAG, INSIGNIA AND LADY JUSTICE AT SUPREME COURT

Why in the News?

Recently, Indian President unveiled new flag and insignia of Supreme Court, whereas Chief Justice of India unveiled 'new lady justice' statue at Supreme Court.

About Lady Justice

- **Origin: Greek and Roman mythology**
 - 1st Roman Emperor Augustus, introduced worship of Justice in the form of goddess **Justitia**.
- **Depiction:** Scales in one hand and a sword in other.
- **Addition of blindfold was done during the Renaissance period (14th century):** as a satire on the corrupt state of legal systems.

- Enlightenment period (17th-18th century):** blindfold came to be reinterpreted as representing impartiality.
 - British introduced Lady Justice in India, 1st in Calcutta High Court in 1872

Significance of New Lady Justice Statue

- Decoloniality:** An aim to shed colonial symbols.
- Saree replaces western attire:** Brings statue closer to Indian tradition.
- Removal of blindfold and open eyes:** Conveys that law is not blind and it 'sees' everyone equally.
 - Open eyes also symbolize knowledge about the complexity and differentiation within society.
- Sword replaced with Indian Constitution:**
 - Symbolizes supremacy of the Constitution and its value in our jurisprudence
 - Justice is deep-rooted into constitutional values rather than punishment
- Preserving of the scales:** Shows that courts will continue weighing evidence impartially and hearing both sides before delivering its final judgment.



Flag of Supreme Court	Insignia of Supreme Court
Flag of Supreme Court 	Insignia of Supreme Court
About Flag and Insignia of Supreme Court <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conceptualised by: National Institute of Fashion Technology, New Delhi. Flag features: Ashok Chakra (Top) Iconic Supreme Court building (Centre) and Book of Constitution (below) Insignia has 'Supreme Court of India' (in roman) and 'Yato Dharmastato Jayah' (in Devanagari script) inscribed on it. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yato Dharmastato Jayah is a Sanskrit term which means "Where there is Dharma, there is victory" 	

7.4. HISTORICAL EVENTS IN NEWS

7.4.1. VAIKOM SATYAGRAHA

Why in the News?

Recently, India celebrated the 100th anniversary of the Vaikom Satyagraha.

Associated Leaders & support

- T.K. Madhavan, K.P. Kesava Menon and K. Kelappan (Kerala Gandhi) are considered the pioneers of the Vaikom Satyagraha movement.

- Issue of temple entry was first raised by Ezhava leader T K Madhavan in a 1917 editorial in his paper **Deshabhimani**.
- In 1921, the **Travancore Congress Committee, led by T.K. Madhavan**, launched a campaign to have the ban lifted.
- In **1923 session of INC in Kakinada**, a resolution was passed by the **Kerala Provincial Congress Committee to take up anti-untouchability as a key issue**.
- **George Joseph**, an independence activist in Kerala, took over the leadership in the absence of Kesava Menon.
- **E. V. Ramasamy Naicker (known as Periyar, Vaikom Veerar)** was a key figure in the Vaikom Satyagraha who mobilized volunteers and garnered public support through his speeches. Among the all persons arrested in movement, only **Periyar got rigorous imprisonment**.
- **Mahatma Gandhi** supported a mass agitation led by Madhavan for temple entry in 1921.
- **Sree Narayana Guru, Mannathu Padmanabhan, E. V. Ramasamy Naicker**, etc also supported the agitation.
- **Women like Nagammai (wife of Periyar), Kannammal** played key roles empowering women.

About the Vaikom Satyagraha

- Historic non-violent temple entry protest that began in Vaikom, in the princely state of Travancore (**Kerala region**), on **March 30, 1924**.
- Against discriminatory exclusion of "lower caste" Hindus from accessing the **Vaikom Mahadeva temple**.
- The lower caste community especially Ezhavas faced the social discrimination which eventually led to the agitation.
- Dressed in khadi and wearing khadi caps, **Govinda Panikkar (Nair), Bahuleyan (Ezhava) and Kunjappu (Pulaya), defied the prohibitionary orders**.
 - The **Akalis of Punjab provided food to the Satyagrahis**.
 - **Christian and Muslim leaders** also supported the movement
- **Lasted for 604 days**: Vaikom Satyagraha was officially withdrawn on **November 30, 1925** after consultations between **Gandhi and W.H. Pitt**, the then police commissioner of Travancore.

Outcome of the Vaikom Satyagraha

- Legal Reforms & initiatives:
 - Temple Entry Proclamation in 1936, a landmark legal victory granting access to lower-caste individuals into temples.
 - Establishment of Travancore Public Service Commission to ensure fairness in government roles.
 - Vaikom Satyagraha brought open the rift between Gandhiji and Periyar:
 - > While **Gandhiji saw it as Hindu reformist movement**, Periyar called it a fight against caste-based atrocities.
 - > **Periyar was not happy with the partial success attained** (only 3 out 4 roads leading to the temple were open for all the castes), and he eventually **quit Congress** months later.

Other Anti-Caste Movements

Year	Movement	Leaders	Details
1873	Satyashodhak Movement	Jyotirao Phule	Emancipation of low castes, untouchables, and widows, Against Brahminic dominion
1916	Justice Party Movement	Dr. T.M Nair, P. Tyagaraja Chetti, C.N Mudalair	Against Brahminic control in government, education, and politics
1924	Depressed Classes Movement	BR Ambedkar	Upliftment of depressed classes, Against untouchability, published Marathi Newspaper titled Bahiskrit Bharat (1927)
1925	Self-Respect Movement	EV Ramaswami Naicker (Periyar)	Against caste system and Brahmin bias, Establishment of Kudi Arasu journal (1910)

7.4.2. HINDUSTAN REPUBLICAN ASSOCIATION (HRA)

Why in the News?

Uttar Pradesh inaugurated year-long celebrations on August 9 to mark **centenary of the ‘Kakori train action of the HRA.**

About Kakori Train Action

- **Execution:** On August 9, 1925, HRA looted a British treasury train near Kakori, Uttar Pradesh.
- **Objective:** To rob the train carrying the British Indian Government treasury to fund revolutionary activities.
- **Key Figures:** Ram Prasand Bismil, Ashfaqullah Khan, and Thakur Roshan Singh, Rajendra Lahiri and Sachindra Bakshi, among others.
- **Kakori Conspiracy Case**
 - Death sentences for **Bismil, Ashfaqullah Khan, Rajendra Nath Lahiri, and Thakur Roshan Singh.**
 - Others received **long-term imprisonment.**

About Lahore Conspiracy Case Utilised for National Cause by revolutionaries

- Used the **courtroom to effectively counter the government's false portrayal** of their actions.
- Organized **hunger strikes** to demand **better conditions and rights for political prisoners.**
- **Jatin Das died** on September 13, 1929, after **63 days of hunger strike**, sparking outrage across India.
- **Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev, and Rajguru were executed on March 23, 1931.**

7.4.3. APARTHEID SYSTEM

Why in the News?

South Africa recently celebrated 30 years of end of Apartheid, a system of racial discrimination.

About Apartheid System

- **About:** Legal system of racial discrimination unique to South Africa imposed by White Europeans on **Non-whites (Black Africans, Coloured and Indians)**
- Institutionalized in 1948, but previous governments had passed many pass laws (precursors of apartheid) during 19th and first half of 20th century.
 - Laws restricted movements of blacks into areas occupied by whites and colored.

Indians in South Africa were divided into three groups:

- **Indentured Indian labourers**, from Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and South India, who had migrated to South Africa after 1890 to work on sugar plantations;
- **Merchants**—mostly Memon Muslims who had followed the labourers; and
- **Ex-indentured labourers** who had settled down with their children in South Africa after their contracts expired.

About Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM)

- First successful transnational social movement in 20th century.
- Aim: Internal campaign to destabilize racist apartheid regime in South Africa, and external campaign for sanctions on Apartheid Regime.
 - Impact: By 1990, apartheid laws were repealed, Mandela was released (1990), and became President in 1994.

Contribution of India in South African Anti- Apartheid Struggle

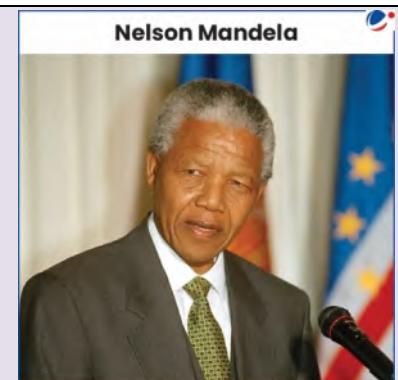
- **Mahatma Gandhi:** Seeds of AAM in South Africa were sown by **Mahatma Gandhi**.
 - He established first **anticolonial and anti-racial discrimination movement** and founded **Natal Indian Congress (1894)** and newspaper **Indian Opinion (1903)**.
 - In **1906**, Satyagrahis under Gandhi's leadership **boycotted 1906 legislation** requiring **Indians to carry registration certificates all times**.
 - When Gandhi **left South Africa in 1915**, he had left behind his legacy of **Phoenix Settlement** (Ashram-like settlement near Durban).
- **Yusuf Mohamed Dadoo:** He was a founder and leader of **Non-European United Front and of Communist Party when it was** revived as a secret organisation.
- **Role of Indian Government:** India was the **first country to sever trade relations with apartheid Government (1946)**.
 - India was first country to bring **issue of South African apartheid to United Nations in 1946**
 - **ANC maintained a representative office in New Delhi** from 1960s onwards. India actively worked for AFRICA Fund to sustain AAM.

Role of UN in South African Anti-Apartheid Struggle:

- Request to UN came after South Africa passed **Asiatic Landownership Act in 1946**, which **restricted Indian land ownership and segregated Indians**.
- **Some of the key actions taken by the UN include:**
 - **UN imposed diplomatic and economic sanctions** on South Africa. In 1971 resolution apartheid was declared as a "crime against humanity".
 - **Legitimizing resistance:**
 - > UN established **Special Committee against Apartheid in 1963** and **Centre against Apartheid in 1976**.
 - > In 1973, **International Convention on Suppression and Punishment of Crime of Apartheid** was approved by UN General Assembly.
 - > UNGA suspended South Africa in 1974 and only readmitted it in 1994 after the democratic transition.

Nelson Mandela (1918 -2013)

- **Early Life:**
 - Born in 1918 in **Eastern Cape of South Africa**.
 - He was **son of a Thembu Chief** (traditional leader).
- **Political Career & Struggle:**
 - **Symbol of AAM** and South Africa's first democratically elected President in 1994.
 - He joined ANC in 1944 and helped form ANC Youth League. Mandela led ANC's nonviolent protest against the apartheid legislation.
 - **Sentenced to life imprisonment** in 1964 and was released in 1990 after 27 years.
- **Philosophy of Mandela:**
 - Also known as '**Gandhi of South Africa**', He was a **strong follower of Gandhi's teachings**.
- **Awards & Legacy:**
 - He was **awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1993**.
 - India conferred him with **Bharat Ratna** and subsequently with **International Gandhi Peace Prize in 2001** for his peacemaking efforts.
 - UN celebrates **Nelson Mandela International Day on 18 July** every year.



7.5. OTHER IMPORTANT EVENTS

7.5.1. SANTHAL REVOLT

June 30 is celebrated as Hool diwas every year in commemoration of rebellion.

About Santhal Rebellion (1855-1856)

- **Leaders:** Siddho, Kanho, Chand, and Bhairav, along with sisters Phulo and Jhano.
- **Location:** Rajmahal Hills
- **Cause:** exploitation and oppression of the Santhals by British colonial authorities and moneylenders.
- Karl Marx has referred to it as India's first organised mass revolution in his book Notes on Indian History.
- **The Santhal Pargana Tenancy Act of 1876 enacted** by the British after the rebellion.
 - The territories called 'Santhal Paraganas' were created.
 - It became illegal for a Santhal to transfer land to a non-Santhal.

7.5.2. ODISHA FAMINE OF 1866

There have been talks about renaming of the prestigious Ravenshaw University in Odisha, named after **Thomas Edward Ravenshaw, who was considered responsible for Odisha Famine.**

About Odisha Famine

- The Famine was also known as '**Na-Anka Famine**' because it occurred during **Gajapati Divyasinghadeva's ninth regnal year.**
- **Causes:** Carelessness of British administrators, natural and economic disasters.
- Occurred during tenure of **Thomas Edward Ravenshaw** (Commissioner of Odisha division).
- **Aftermath:**
 - **Puri Canal or Coast Canal** connecting Hooghly River (West Bengal) to River Matai (Odisha) was built after Famine.
 - Thomas Edward Ravenshaw established number of **vernacular schools** in rural areas with an **emphasis on Odia language**, converted Cuttack Zilla School into **Ravenshaw College**.

7.5.3. BATTLE OF SARAGARHI, 1897

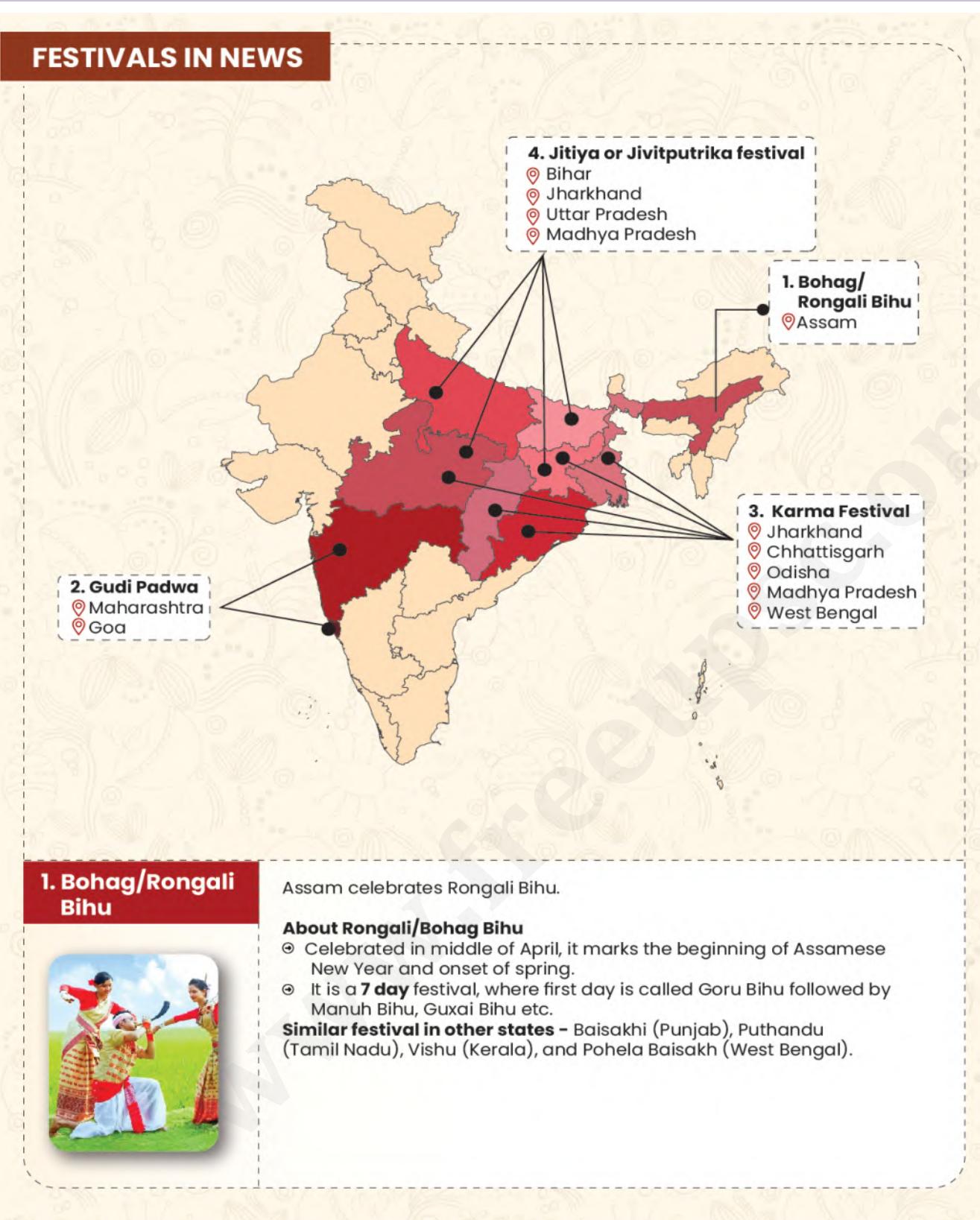
September 12 marks the 127th anniversary of the Battle of Saragarhi

About Battle of Saragarhi

- **Fought between British Raj** (21 soldiers of 36th Sikh Regiment) and over 8,000 **Afriди and Orakzai tribals**.
- It was fought during **Tirah campaign at Saragarhi in North West Frontier Province**.
- Saragarhi, a quaint village on **Samana Range in Kohat, Pakistan** was a vital communication post.
- **Sikh soldiers were led by Havildar Ishar Singh**, who showed extraordinary courage and chose to fight to death.
- **All 21 Sikhs were posthumously awarded Indian Order of Merit**, highest British gallantry award then given to Indian troops.

7.6. FESTIVALS IN NEWS

FESTIVALS IN NEWS



2. Gudi Padwa



President conveyed her greetings on eve of Gudi Padwa, and other festivals of welcoming spring season and Indian New Year.

About Gudi Padwa

- ⦿ Gudi Padwa is observed **on first day of Chaitra month**.
- ⦿ It indicates **arrival of spring** and marks **start of new year in Maharashtra**.
- ⦿ **Other Spring festivals across India:**
- ⦿ **Ugadi:** Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Telangana.
- ⦿ **Cheti Chand:** Celebrated by Sindhis.
- ⦿ **Navreh:** celebrated in Jammu and Kashmir.

3. Karma Festival



Karma festival is celebrated in **Jharkhand** and **other easter states of India like Odisha, Chattisgarh, etc.**

About Karma Festival

- ⦿ It is a **harvest festival** popular among **Munda, Ho, Oraon, Baiga, Kharia, and Santhal people**.
- ⦿ **Karam tree**, traditionally seen as a **symbol of Karam Devta/Karamsani**, is worshipped during festival. Karam tree symbolizes fertility, prosperity, etc.
- ⦿ During festival, **branch of Karam tree is carried by Karma dancers**, accompanied by singing & dancing.

4. Jitiya or Jivitputrika festival



Disaster struck in Bihar during participation in Jivitputrika festival in Bihar.

About Jitiya or Jivitputrika festival

- ⦿ It's a Hindu festival observed primarily in **Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, and Nepal**.
- ⦿ It is **celebrated by mothers** who **fast** for well-being, long life, and prosperity of their **children**.
- ⦿ This festival lasts for **3 days** where **first day is known as nahaye-khaye**.
- ⦿ The festival is rooted in Hindu mythology, particularly story of **King Jimutavahana**, whose sacrifice for welfare of others is commemorated during this time.

7.7. SPORTS RELATED NEWS

7.7.1. OLYMPIC GAMES AND INDIA

Why in the News?

India's Olympic ranking fell from **48th in Tokyo (2020)** to **71st in Paris**.

More on the News

- India won **six medals** in Paris with **no gold medals** (one silver, five bronze), down from **seven in Tokyo** (one gold, two silver, four bronze).
- **Paris was still India's third-best Olympic performance.**

- Contrasts with improved performances in other events like the **2022 Commonwealth Games and 2021 Summer Deaflympics**.

About Olympic Games

- **Genesis: 1896 in Athens (Greece)**, with 14 nations competing in nine sports. The Games are **held every four years since then**.
- **Motto:** "Faster-Higher-Stronger".
- **Olympic Flag:** Introduced in 1920, the flag features **five interlocking rings symbolising the 'five parts of the world'**.
- **Olympic Flame:** It symbolizes the **positive values of fire** and with the **Olympic Torch Relay**.
- **Paris 2024:** Included 4 additional sports viz., **breaking** (making its Olympic debut), **sport climbing**, **skateboarding**, and **surfing**.
- **Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS):** It was **created in 1983 to deal** with the associated **legal problems**.
 - It is **recognised by the Paris Convention** signed by the presidents of the **IOC** among others

India and Olympics

- India first participated in the **Olympics in 1900 in Paris**, represented by an **Anglo-Indian Norman Pritchard**.
- The **Indian Olympic Association (IOA)** was **formed in 1927**, with **Sir Dorabji Tata as President**, and it was **recognized** by the IOC the same year.
 - The IOA **coordinates with National Sports Federations to send teams to the Olympics** and other international games.
- India is **preparing to host Olympic 2036**, and aspires to become **top ten sports nation by 2036** and a **top five country by 2047**.

Initiatives to promote sports ecosystem in India

- **Budgetary support:** Budgetary allocation has nearly doubled from 2014-15 to 2023-24.
- **Khelo India program:** For identification and development of athletes at the grassroots and elite levels.
- **Khelo India Rising Talent Identification (KIRTI) programme:** Aimed at school children between 9 and 18 years.
- **Mainstreaming of Sports Activities:** **FIT India Movement** and sports within the **National Education Policy 2020**.
- **National Sports Development Fund scheme:** The Scheme funds a **Developmental Group of Athletes** who are medal prospects for the Olympic Games.
- **Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS):** To provide comprehensive assistance including funding, specialised equipment, international exposure, top-tier coaching, and a monthly allowance to India's top athletes.
- **One School-One Sport policy:** By the **Ministry of Defence** for Sainik Schools so that they can focus on at least one sporting discipline.
- **Retired Sportsperson Empowerment Training (RESET) Programme:** Launched by Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports to empower retired sports persons (20-50 years) with knowledge and skills for career development and increased employability.

7.7.2. OTHER SPORTS RELATED NEWS

7.7.2.1. OLYMPIC ORDER

India's first individual Olympic gold medallist **Abhinav Bindra** has been honoured with the Olympic Order for his outstanding contributions to the Olympic movement.

- Abhinav Bindra **secured the gold at the 2008 Beijing Olympics** in the men's 10-meter air rifle event.

About Olympic Order Award

- Established in 1975, it is awarded to individuals who have rendered distinguished service to the Olympic Movement.
- Highest award presented by the International Olympic Committee (IOC).
- IOC is a non-profit global organization with a vision to 'Build a Better World through Sport'.

7.7.2.2. COMMONWEALTH GAMES (CWG) 2026

Recently, CWG 2026 (will be held in Glasgow) edition was unveiled which features only 10 sports.

- Six of 12 disciplines in which India won a medal at 2022 CWG (contributing 30 out of total 61 medals) have been dropped from 2026 edition.
 - These include badminton, cricket, hockey, squash, table tennis and wrestling.

About CWG

- First held in 1930 in Hamilton, Canada.
- Held every four years. India hosted Games in 2010 at Delhi.

7.7.2.3. CHESS

2024 has been a successful year for Indian Chess with many accomplishments.

Recent Successes of India in Chess

Game	Details
Candidates Chess Tournament 2024	<p>D. Gukesh won the 2024 FIDE Candidates Tournament, becoming the youngest player ever to qualify for the World Chess Championship match.</p> <p>About Candidates Chess Tournament</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Organised in: Toronto, CanadaThe Candidates Tournament was introduced by FIDE in 1950 as part of the World Chess Championship cycle to systematically determine the challenger for the World Chess Champion.
45 th Chess Olympiad	<p>Indian contingent won Gold in both open and women's category at the 45th International Chess Federation (FIDE) Olympiad.</p> <p>About 45th FIDE Chess Olympiad</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Organised in: Budapest, Hungary.44th Chess Olympiad took place for the first time in India (Chennai).Trophy for the winning team in the open section is the Hamilton-Russell Cup.Trophy for the winning team in the women's section is the Vera Menchik Cup.
World Chess Championship 2024	<p>Recently, D. Gukesh became the youngest-ever classical chess world champion (Second Indian after Vishwanathan Anand) by defeating Ding Liren, marking a historic moment for Indian chess.</p> <p>About World Chess Championship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">2024 Championship organized in: SingaporeOrigin: Until 1946, the championship was organized privately.The first FIDE World Championship was a tournament in 1948, won by Mikhail Botvinnik.
World Rapid Chess Championship 2024	<p>Recently, Koneru Humpy won the Women's World Rapid Chess Championship 2024 for second time after 2019.</p> <p>About World Rapid Chess Championship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">It is an annual chess tournament organized by FIDE to determine the world champion in chess played under rapid time controls.<ul style="list-style-type: none">The time control for the rapid games is generally set at 15 minutes per player with a 10-second increment per move from move one.

- The first officially recognized World Rapid Chess Championship took place in 2003 in Cap d'Agde, France.

About FIDE (Fédération Internationale des Échecs)

- It's the **governing body of the sport of chess**, and it regulates all international chess competitions.
- Constituted as a non-governmental institution, it was **recognized by International Olympic Committee as a Global Sporting Organization in 1999**.
- FIDE currently has its headquarters in Lausanne (Switzerland), but it was initially founded in 1924 in Paris under the motto "Gens una Sumus" (Latin for "We are one Family").

7.7.2.4. T20 WORLD CUP

India won the 2024 T20 Cricket World Cup for the second time since 2007 by defeating South Africa in the final held in the USA and West Indies.

About T20 World Cup

- Origin:** Launched in 2007 by the **International Cricket Council (ICC)**, it's the premier international championship for Twenty20 cricket.
- Format:** Shorter format of cricket with **maximum of 20 overs** for each team.
- About ICC (HQ: Dubai, UAE):** ICC is the **global governing body for cricket**, responsible for organizing major international tournaments like the T20 World Cup, Champions Trophy, World Test Championship, etc.

7.8. OTHER IMPORTANT NEWS

7.8.1. PORT BLAIR RENAMED AS SRI VIJAYA PURAM

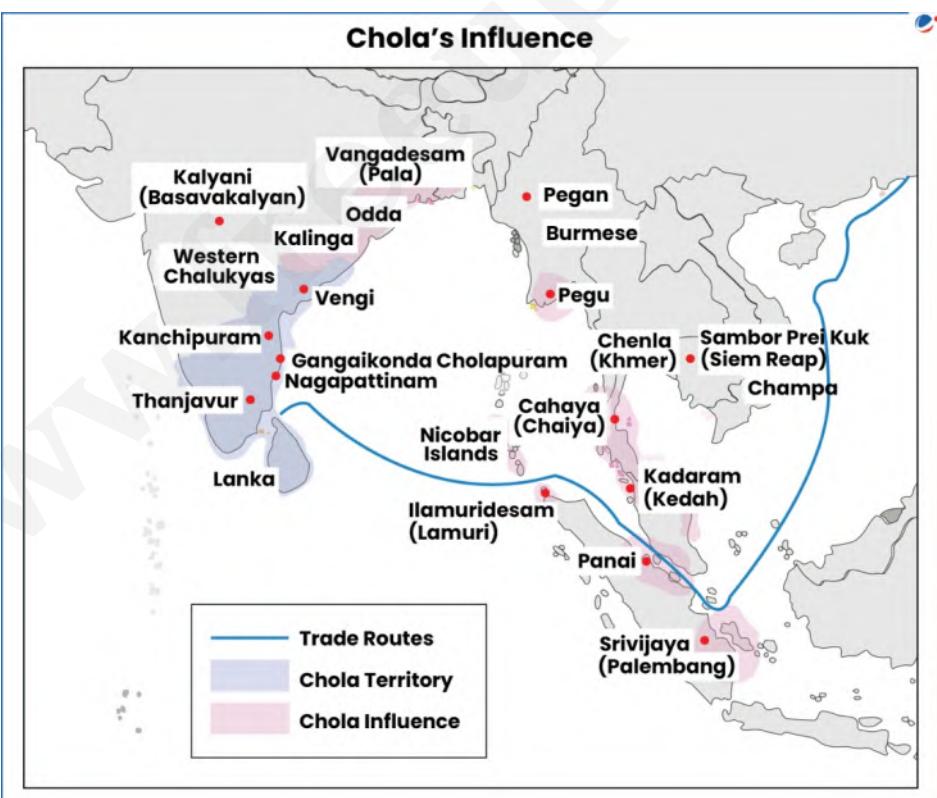
Andaman and Nicobar Island's capital Port Blair renamed as Sri Vijaya Puram

Sri Vijaya Puram represents the victory of **Indian freedom movement** and highlights the unique contribution of the A&N Islands.

- It is the site where **Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose** first unfurled the Tiranga and the **Cellular Jail** is also located here.
- Renaming also marks a departure from the **colonial legacy**, highlighting the **contemporary strategic role** of A&N Island which once served as **naval base** for the **Chola Empire**.

Naval power of Chola Empire

- Major role:** Later Chola rulers **Rajaraja (985-1014)** and **Rajendra I (1014-1044)**.
 - Pursued aggressive military policy.
- Bay of Bengal** was transformed as '**Chola**'



lake'. It enabled flourishing trade with the countries of **Southeast Asia** (under their **Look East Policy**).

- **Key trading centre: Nagapattinam.**

Significant Naval Expeditions

- **Rajaraja** destracted the **Chera navy** at Kandalursalai, etc.
- Also, he **invaded Sri Lanka (annexing its northern part)** and led a conquest to **Maldives**.
- **Rajendra I's naval conquest of Sri Lanka** resulted in the **entire island becoming a Chola province**.
- He launched a major expedition against the **Sailendra Empire** (extending across Malay Peninsula and neighbouring islands), leading to the conquest of several regions in the Malay Peninsula and Sumatra.

7.8.2. WORLD HERITAGE TRANSHUMANCE INITIATIVE

The initiative is led by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) and supported by Azerbaijan.

About Transhumance

- Transhumance is the **traditional practice of seasonal livestock movement**, which involves the migration of human communities along with their herds.
- In 2023, **two transhumance traditions** – Transhumance in **10 European States** and Alpine Pasture season of **Switzerland** – were declared **Intangible Cultural Heritages of Humanity**.

Transhumance Landscapes of India

- The transhumance practice is prevalent in the **Himalayas**, where there are several nomadic tribes such as **Gujars, Bakarwals, Gaddis and Changpas**, who rear sheep and goats.
 - Animals are moved to **subalpine and alpine pastures during summer**, while during winter they are grazed on adjoining plains.
- This system also exists in the **plains**, such as Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh.

7.8.3. UNESCO'S MOW ASIA-PACIFIC REGIONAL REGISTER

Manuscript of three Indian literary works namely **Ramcharitmanas, Panchatantra and Sahṛdayāloka-Locana** have been included in **Memory of the World (MOW)** Asia-Pacific Regional Register along with 17 other works from region.

- The decision was taken at the 10th meeting of the **Memory of the World Committee for Asia and the Pacific (MOWCAP)**, held at Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia.

About MoW Programme

- Launched in **1992**.
- Three Registers: International, Regional and National Register.
- International Register consists of several Indian entries namely Tamil Medical Manuscript Collection, Saiva manuscripts Rig Veda etc.
- It aims to preserve world's documentary heritage, enable universal access to documentary heritage and enhance public awareness about documentary heritages

About Literary Works

- **Ramcharitmanas**
 - Written in the **16th Century** by **Goswami Tulsidas**.
 - An epic poem written in **Awadhi language** and consists of **Seven Kāndas**.
 - **Poetic retelling** of the events of **Ramayana**.
- **Panchatantra**
 - Written by Pt. Vishnu Sharma in Sanskrit.
 - One of the **oldest collections of surviving Indian Fables**.
 - **Consists of five parts** and its most distinguishing feature is the '**Story within story**' structure.
- **Sahṛdayāloka-Locana**

- Written by **Acharya Anandvardhan** in **Sanskrit** and is a text of Indian Poetics.
- Philosopher **Abinava Gupta** has **written a commentary** on it.

7.8.4. SAHITYA AKADEMI

Ruskin Bond was awarded the **Sahitya Akademi Fellowship**.

About Sahitya Akademi Fellowship

- Fellowship is the **highest honour** conferred by Akademi on a writer.
- It is reserved for '**the immortals of literature**'.
- **Major literary of Ruskin Bond:** Vagrants in the Valley, Once Upon a Monsoon Time, Angry River, Strangers in the Night, All Roads Lead to Ganga, etc.

HQ: New Delhi

About Sahitya Akademi

 **Genesis:** Formally inaugurated in **1954** and Registered under the **Societies Registration Act, 1860**.

 **Ministry:** An autonomous body under **Ministry of Culture**.

 **Role:** Undertakes **literary activities in 24 languages** (22 scheduled languages and **English** and **Rajasthani**).

 **Its major awards:** Sahitya Akademi Award, Bhasha Samman.


साहित्य अकादेमी

7.8.5. INTERNATIONAL ABHIDHAMMA DIVAS (IAD)

Ministry of Culture in association with **International Buddhist Confederation (IBC)** observed IAD.

- It also celebrated recent declaration of **Pali as a classical language** by Cabinet.

About IAD:

- It commemorates the day when Lord Buddha **descended** from the **celestial realm (Tāvatimsa-devaloka) to Sankassiya** (now Sankisa Basantapur) in Uttar Pradesh.
 - **Asokan Elephant Pillar at Sankassiya** marks this significant event.
- It coincides with **end of first Rainy Retreat (Vassa)** i.e. period of three months when bhikkhus must reside in one place and **Pavāraṇā festival** (ceremony for conclusion of rainy retreat).

7.8.6. ABHAY MUDRA

'Abhaya mudra' was referred to by the Leader of Opposition in his speech.

About Abhaya Mudra

- **Symbol of fearlessness**
- It is displayed by the **fifth Dhyanī Buddha, Amoghasiddhi** and the posture used by Buddha to tame a mad elephant

Other Mudras associated with Buddha and their meaning

- **Bhumisparsha:** Calling the earth to witness. It is in this posture that Shakyamuni (or Buddha) overcame the obstructions of Mara while meditating on Truth.
- **Dhyana Mudra: Mudra of meditation.** It indicates the perfect balance of thought, rest of the senses, and tranquillity.
- **Dharmachakrapravartana (turning the wheel):** Represents preaching of the dhamma.

7.8.7. CULTURAL PROPERTY AGREEMENT

It was signed by India-US on the sidelines of the **46th World Heritage Committee, New Delhi.**

About the Agreement

- **Aim:** to prevent and curb the illicit trafficking of antiquities from India to the USA.
- CPA restricts the **importation into the United States of certain archaeological material** and ethnological material of Indian origin.
- It shall be helpful in **quick seizure of Indian antiquities** and their repatriation back to India.

Efforts to prevent smuggling of antiquities

- **At Global level:** Article 9 of the **1970 UNESCO Convention** on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property.
 - **The Kashi Culture Pathway**, the Outcome Document of the G20 Culture Working Group endorsed global coalition to bolster the fight against illicit trafficking.
- **At National level:** **Section 3 of the Antiquities and Art Treasure Act, 1972** prevents export of antiquities outside India.
 - **If an antiquity is traced, the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)** is responsible for coordination and recovery of antiquities.

7.8.8. WORLD CELEBRATES 10TH INTERNATIONAL YOGA DAY (IYD)

The **United Nations proclaimed 21 June (Summer Solstice) as IYD** in 2014 to raise awareness worldwide of the many benefits of practicing yoga.

- The draft resolution was **proposed by India** and endorsed by a record **175 member states**.

About Yoga

- **Meaning:** The word "Yoga" is derived from the Sanskrit root yuj meaning "**to join**".
 - It symbolizes the **unity of mind and body**, and a holistic approach to health and well-being.
- It is one of the six Schools of **Indian Philosophy**. Remaining are-Vaishesika, Nyaya, Samkhya, Purva Mimansa and Vedanta or Uttara Mimansa.
- **Genesis:**
 - A number of seals and fossil remains of **Indus Valley Civilisation**, dating back to **2700 BC** indicates that yoga was prevalent in ancient India.
 - The word yoga is referred in **all the four Vedas**.
 - However, systematic reference of yoga is found in **Patanjali's Yogasutra** (2nd century B.C.).
 - > Other book of Patañjali: **Mahabhashya ("Great Commentary")**

Yoga and Cultural Diplomacy

- Yoga has emerged as a key instrument of **India's soft power** and one of India's biggest **cultural exports playing a major role in cultural diplomacy**.
 - **Cultural diplomacy** is the “exchange of ideas, information, art, language and other aspects of culture among nations and peoples in order to foster mutual understanding’.

Summer Solstice (June 21)

- On this day, the **Northern Hemisphere (NH)** is tilted towards the sun and the **rays of the sun fall directly on the Tropic of Cancer**.
- **The North Pole is inclined towards the sun** and the places beyond the **Arctic Circle** experience **continuous daylight for about six months**.
- **The longest day and the shortest night** in the northern hemisphere occur on **this day**.
 - At this time in the **Southern Hemisphere all these conditions are reversed**.

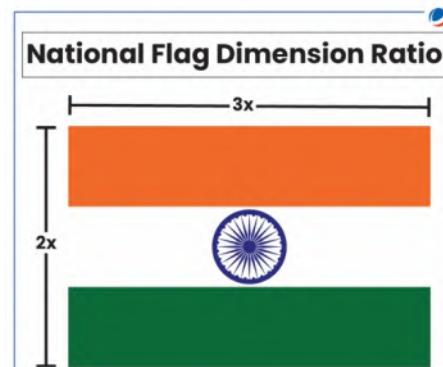
7.8.9. FLAG CODE OF INDIA

Union Minister for Home Affairs urged the countrymen to hoist the Tricolour at their homes under '**Har Ghar Tiranga**' campaign.

- Hoisting/ display of the Indian National Flag are governed by **the Flag Code of India, 2002 [as amended in 2021 & 2022]**.

Salient Provisions of the Flag Code of India, 2002

- **A set of laws and conventions** about the **use, display and hoisting** of the Indian national flag. It was brought **into effect on January 26th, 2002**.
- It governs the display of the National flag **by private, public and government institutions**.
- **National Flag at home:** A member of the **public, a private organization, or an educational institution** may display the national flag **on all days and nights (2022 Amendment) or occasions** in accordance with the dignity and honour of the national flag.
- National Flag shall be made of **hand spun and hand woven/ machine-made (2021 Amendment)**, cotton/**polyester (2021 Amendment)**/ wool/ silk/ Ichadi bunting.
- National Flag shall be **rectangular in shape**. The Flag can be of any size but the **ratio of the length to the height (width) of the Flag shall be 3:2**.



7.8.10. NATIONAL HANDLOOM DAY

10th National Handloom Day is being celebrated on 7th August, 2024.

About National Handloom Day

- It seeks **to honour the handloom weavers** and provide motivation to handloom industry.
- **History:** The day was chosen, **to commemorate the 'Swadeshi Movement'**, which was launched on 7th August 1905.
 - It aimed to boycott British goods in favour of Indian-made products, including handloom textiles.
 - **First National Handloom Day was celebrated in 2015.**
- **Significance:**
 - Handloom is India's **largest cottage industry** and rural region's **second largest employment provider**.
 - **70% of weavers** and allied workers are **women**.

For more information on Weaving Styles in India, refer to the appendix at the end of the document.

7.8.11. ERI SILK

North Eastern Handicrafts and Handlooms Development Corporation successfully obtained **Oeko-Tex certification** for its **Eri Silk**.

- Oeko-Tex certification is standard that **ensures textiles are tested for harmful substances and produced in environment friendly conditions**.

About Eri Silk

- Renowned as **world's only vegan silk** as moth inside the cocoon is not killed. Instead moth **naturally exits** the cocoon.
- It is produced by **silkworm Philosamia ricini** which is **multivoltine** and reared indoors 5-6 times a year.

Note: India produces all the five types of silk: **Mulberry, Eri, Tropical & Temperate Tasar, and Muga.**

7.8.12. DENISOVAN

Scientists have identified bone remains found in a Tibetan Baishiya Karst Cave as belonging to a Denisovan individual.

About Denisovans

- An **extinct species of hominid** and a close relative to modern humans.
- May have ranged **from Siberia to Southeast Asia** during the last Ice Age.
- DNA evidence suggests Denisovans are **related to both Neanderthals and modern humans**, and may have interbred with both.
- **Share a common ancestor - Homo heidelbergensis** (most likely lived in Africa) - with both modern humans and Neanderthals.

7.8.13. BENGAL GAZETTE

On the World Press Freedom Day, many experts recalled **India's First Newspaper 'Bengal Gazette'**.

About Bengal Gazette

- On **January 29, 1780**, Bengal Gazette or Calcutta General Advertiser, was founded.
- Irishman James Augustus Hicky published *India's first printed newspaper* i.e. Bengal Gazette.
- It was a **weekly English-language newspaper published in Kolkata (formerly Calcutta)**, the capital of British India.
- It was **closed down in 1782** after it criticized the then Governor General Warren Hastings.

7.8.14. INTERNATIONAL MATHEMATICAL OLYMPIAD

A **six-member student team from India** have secured **4 Gold medals, 1 silver medal, and 1 honourable mention** in the **International Mathematical Olympiad (IMO) 2024**.

- This is the best performance by an Indian in IMO since the country's **debut in 1989**.

About IMO

- It is the **World Championship Mathematics Competition for High School students** and is **held annually** in a different country.
- **First IMO** was held in **1959** in **Romania**.
- **Gold, Silver and Bronze medals** are awarded, as well as **Honourable Mentions** for good effort.

7.8.15. WORLD'S OLDEST CALENDAR DISCOVERED

Archaeologists have discovered the **world's oldest calendar** at **Göbekli Tepe (oldest temple in the world)**, an ancient site in southern Turkey.

About the Calendar

- **Type:** Solar-lunar calendar
- **Purpose:** Likely used to track time and significant celestial events.
- **Carvings:**
 - **V-shaped Symbols:** Each represents a day, **totaling to 365 days**, suggesting a solar year.
 - **Other Symbols:** Include **animals and abstract designs**, potentially marking significant events or periods.
- **Historical Significance:** The calendar is believed to **commemorate a comet strike around 10,850 BCE**, which might have led to a mini-ice age and influenced early human society.

APPENDIX 1: WEAVING STYLES OF INDIA

Weaving Styles of India

Kulluvi Pattu (Himachal Pradesh)

- Motifs inspired by Mughal art.
- Use of metallic threads.
- GI tagged

Kashida (Jammu & Kashmir)

- Lightweight cotton and silk fabrics.
- Dates back to Vedic period.
- GI tagged

Phulkari (Punjab)

Chanderi Saree (Madhya Pradesh) -

- Lightweight cotton and silk fabrics.
- Dates back to Vedic period.
- GI tagged

Kota/Laheeria (Rajasthan)

Patola Craft (Gujarat)

- Double ikat weaving technique.
- Geometric patterns and motifs.
- GI tagged

Paithani Weaving (Maharashtra)

- Traditional tapestry technique for making brocade sarees by hand.
- GI tagged

Mysore Silk (Karnataka)

Ikkal Weave (Karnataka)

- Sarees of pure silk or silk blended with cotton.
- GI Tagged

Kasavu (Kerala)

Banarasi Silk weaving (UP)

- Motifs inspired by Mughal art.
- Use of metallic threads.
- GI tagged

Muga (Assam) Gadu or Mirijim weave (Assam)

- Handwoven blanket, made of cotton

Bhagalpur Silk (Bihar)

Moirang Phee (Manipur)

Puan weave (Mizoram)

- Traditional clothing worn by both men and women

Tant (West Bengal)

Bomkai (Odisha)

Sambalpuri Bandha Saree (Odisha)

- Produced using Ikkat or bandh kala technique..
- GI Tagged

Kosa (Chhattisgarh)

Pochampalli (Telangana)

Kanchipuram Silk Weaving (Tamil Nadu)

- GI tagged Saree, Woven using traditional pit looms.

Kandangi Weave (Tamil Nadu)

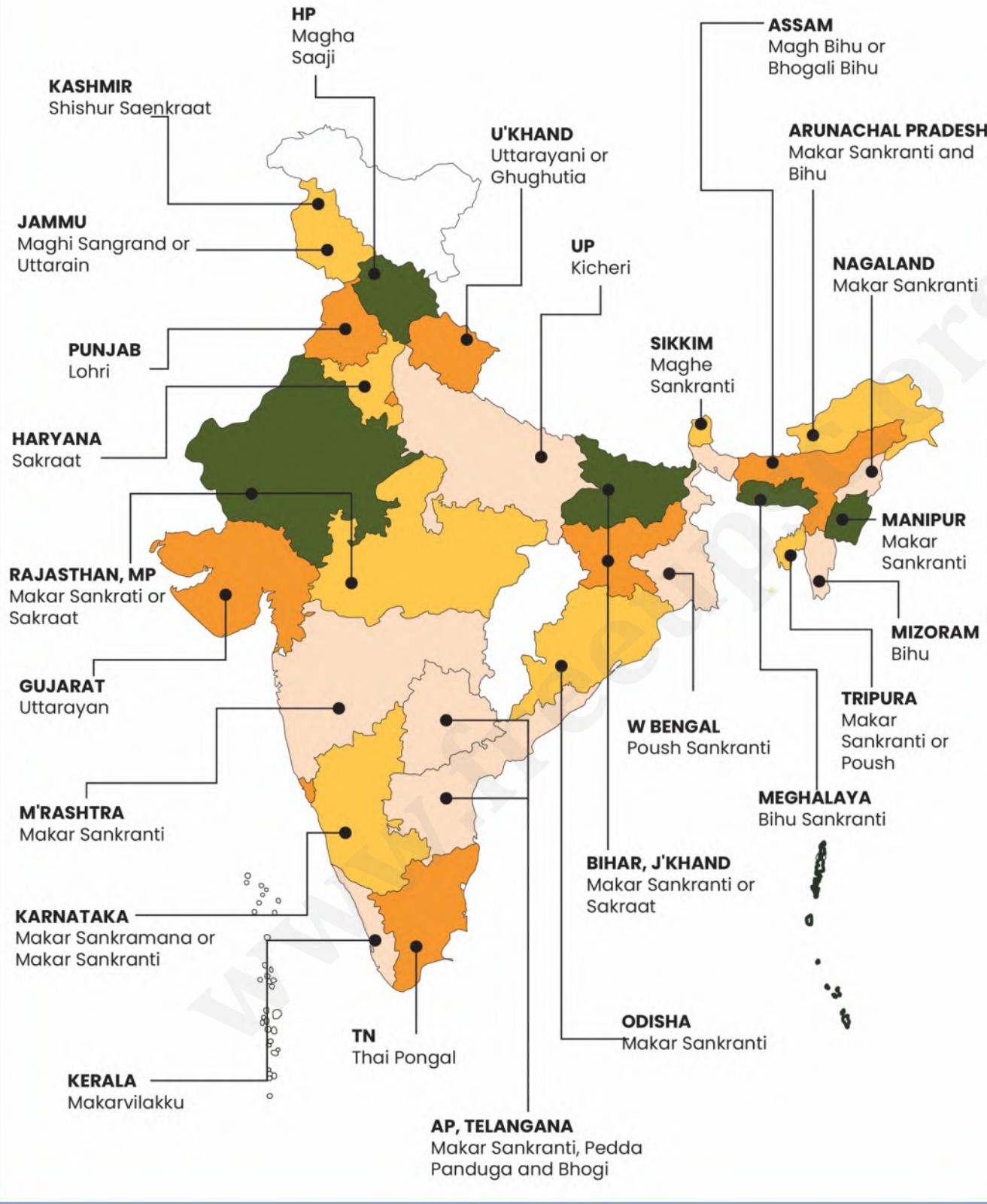
- Use of wet yarn
- GI tagged

Uppada Jamdani Sarees (Andhra Pradesh)

- Hand woven fabric that is also known as muslin.
- GI tagged.

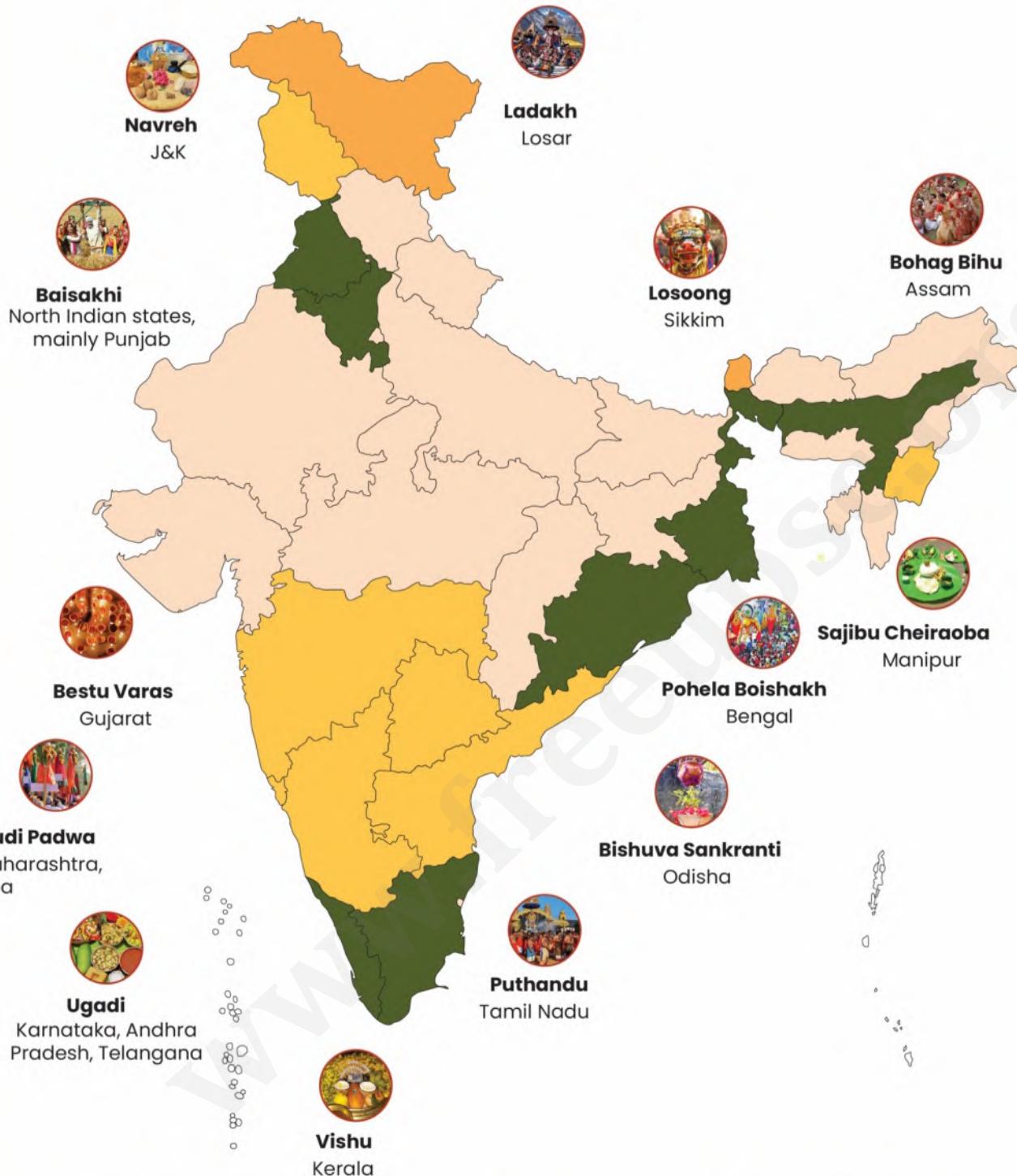
APPENDIX 2: HARVEST FESTIVALS OF INDIA

Harvest Festivals of India



APPENDIX 3: REGIONAL NEW YEARS OF INDIA

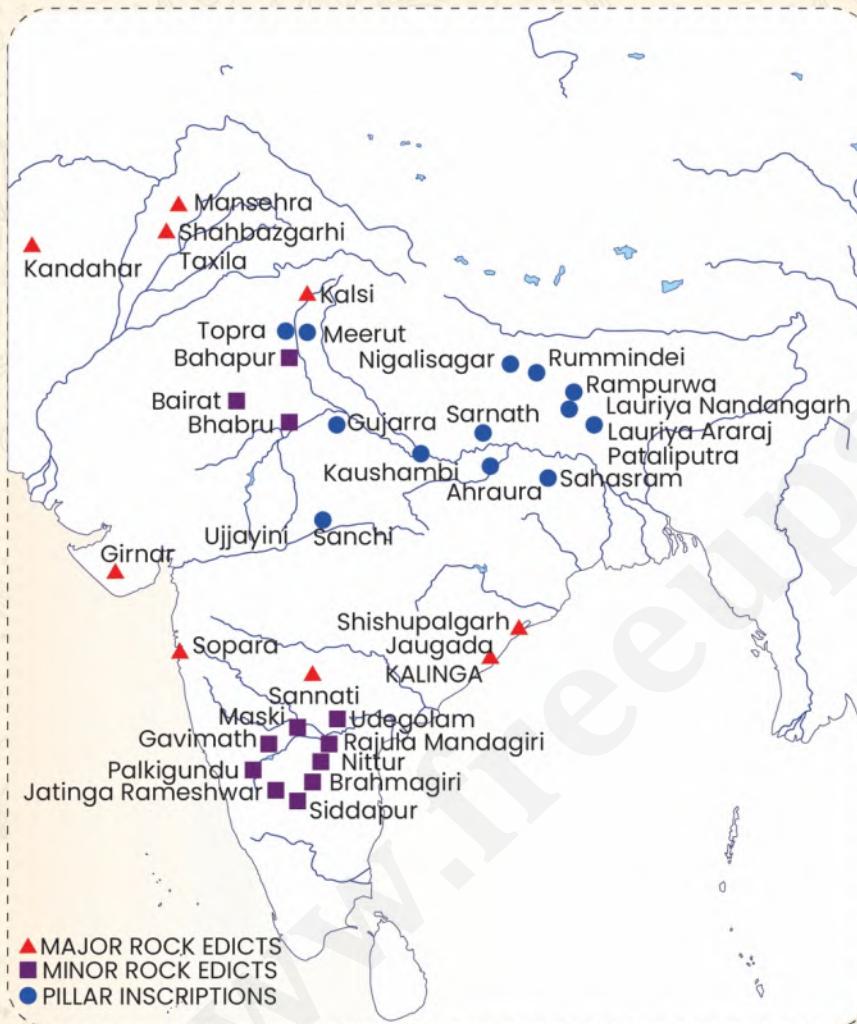
Regional Names of Indian New Year



APPENDIX 4: ASHOKAN INSCRIPTIONS AND EDICTS

Ashokan Inscriptions

- ④ James Prinsep was the first person to decipher the edicts of Emperor Ashoka in 1837.
- ④ **Scripts and Languages:** Primarily in Brahmi script, with variations like **Magadhi in the east** and **Sanskrit-like in the west**. Also, there is **one bilingual edict in Aramaic and Greek**.
- ④ **Content:** Focused on moral reforms, personal and state morality **influenced by Buddhist ethics**.



14 Major Rock Edicts

Themes

Edict I	Prohibition on animal killings
Edict II	Provision for social welfare such as medical treatment for humans and animals
Edict III	Inspection tours by officials to instruct population in Dhamma
Edict IV	Decree concerning non-violence. Importance of right behaviour and Dhamma
Edict V	Instructions to do good to all; compassion for convicts and their families

14 Major Rock Edicts**Themes**

Edict VI	Effective administration and necessity of reports from populace
Edict VII	Religious tolerance and importance of self control and purity of heart
Edict VIII	Dhamma yatras propagating dhamma and gifting Brahmanas, old aged people
Edict IX	Decree on proper and improper ceremonies
Edict X	Achievement of glory only through propagation of Dhamma
Edict XI	Explanation of Dhamma through values such as generosity, compassion, non-violence
Edict XII	Decree concerning religious tolerance and mutual respect among adherents of different faiths
Edict XIII	Decree concerning the Kalinga War and its impact on Ashoka- acceptance of Dhamma
Edict XIV	Describes engravings in different parts of the country

7 Pillar Edicts**Themes**

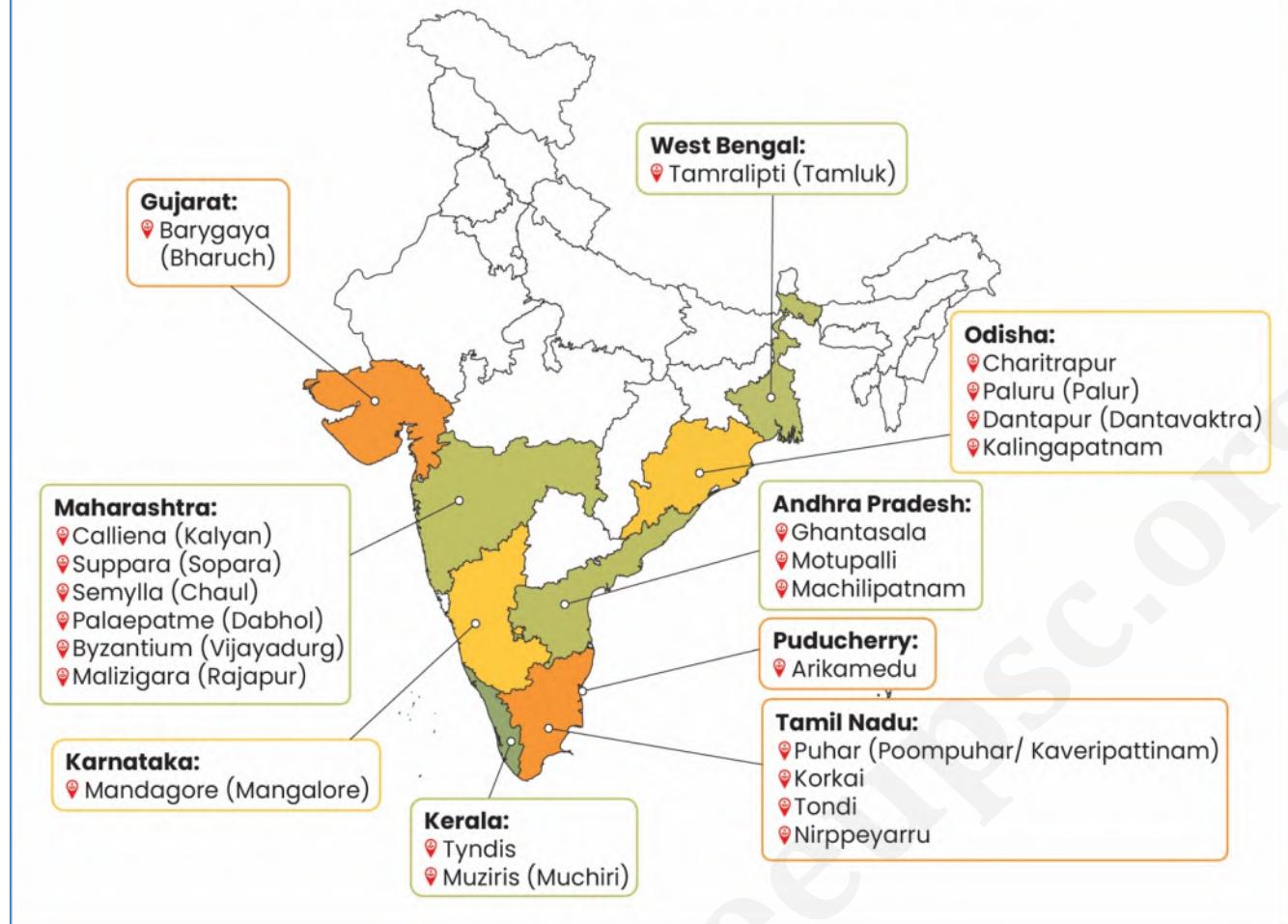
Edict I	Emphasizes the difficulty of achieving happiness without love for Dhamma, self-examination, respect, fear of evil, and enthusiasm.
Edict II	Defines Dhamma as encompassing minimal evil, much good, kindness, generosity, truthfulness, and purity.
Edict III	Encourages introspection where individuals recognize both their good and bad actions.
Edict IV	Details the role of Rajukas in judicial and administrative functions, focusing on justice, welfare, and happiness.
Edict V	Lists numerous animals given protection, bans on animal cruelty, and specific days when certain actions against animals are prohibited.
Edict VI	Reflects on his motivation to enact Dhamma edicts for public welfare and happiness.
Edict VII	Reflects on past kings' failures to promote Dhamma effectively and Asoka's new methods like proclamations and detailed instructions.

3 Minor Rock Edicts**Themes**

Edict I	Ashoka's Personal Journey from being a lay-disciple (upasaka) to becoming more zealous after associating with the Buddhist Sangha
Edict II	Advocates respect for parents and elders, kindness to living beings, and honesty.
Edict III	Ashoka expresses his deep faith in the Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha.

APPENDIX 5: HISTORICAL PORTS OF INDIA

Ancient and Early Medieval Ports in India



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APPENDIX 6: WORLD HERITAGE SITES IN INDIA

UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITES IN INDIA

