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Classroom Study Material

CULTURE

JULY 2015 – APRIL 2016

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A. PERSONALITIES AND PEOPLE



A.1. RUKMANI DEVI ARUNDALE

- She was an **theosophist, dancer and choreographer** of **Bharatnatyam**
- She is considered the **most important revivalist** in the Indian classical dance form of **Bharatnatyam** from its **original 'sadhira' style**, prevalent amongst the temple dancers, Devadasis, she also worked for the re-establishment of traditional Indian arts and crafts.
- She was awarded the **Padma Bhushan** in 1956 and **Sangeet Natak Akademi Fellowship** in 1967.
- Also an institution-builder who built a public cultural and educational centre known as **Kalakshetra**.

A.2. SEHJDHARI SIKHS

Who are Sehjdhari Sikhs

- Sehjdharis are those who follow Sikhism but without being Amritdharis, or baptised.
- They do not adopt baptismal vows of the Khalsa panth initiated by Guru Gobind Singh.
- They might be born in Hindu, Sikh or other families but follow the Sri Guru Granth Sahib.
- They perform ceremonies according to Sikh rites.

A.3. PANCHTEERTH: B. R. AMBEDKAR

- Government will develop five places as "Panchteerth" in the honour of B R Ambedkar.
- These include Ambedkar's birthplace in Mhow, the place in London where he stayed while studying, 'Deeksha Bhoomi' in Nagpur, where he took education, 'Mahaparinirvan Sthal' in Delhi, and 'Chaitya Bhoomi' in Mumbai.

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B. ART FORMS

DANCES



B.1. KALAMANDALAM SATHYABHAMA

- She was an Indian classical dancer, teacher and choreographer, known for her performances and scholarship in Mohiniyattam
- She was awarded the Padma Shri, in 2014, for her contributions to the art and culture.
- She was well versed in Bharatanatyam, Mohiniyattam and Kathakali.
- She is credited with purifying the Mohiniyattam form by weeding out external influences. She modified the performance techniques so that the emotive aspect of performance strictly sticks to Lasyam.

Mohiniyattam

- Mohiniyattam is the classical solo dance form of Kerala, performed by women.
- It is interpreted as the dance of 'Mohini', the female form taken by Vishnu to kill Bhasmasura.
- The delicate body movements and subtle facial expressions are more feminine in nature and therefore are ideally suited for performance by women.
- The Travancore Kings structured this dance form into the present day classical format.
- It is characterized by graceful, swaying body movements with no abrupt jerks or sudden leaps.
- Mohiniyattam lays emphasis on acting, where the dancer identifies herself with the character and sentiments existing in compositions and expresses through hand gestures and facial expressions.

FOLK AND TRIBAL DANCES

B.2. GOTIPUA DANCE (ODISHA)

- Gotipua, a traditional dance form of Odissi folk in praise of Lord Jagannath.
- Etymologically, 'Gotipua' in Oriya means 'single boy'. But the dance is performed in groups.
- This dance form is said to have originated around the beginning of the 16th Century.
- When the Mahari (Female dancers in temples) dance form started declining, the male dancers continued the tradition by dressing up as the female dancers.
- In Gotipua, the dancers themselves sing.
- The boys are recruited to learn the dance at a very young age, and undergo training until their adolescence, when their androgynous appearances begin to change.



B.3. PURULIA CHHAU (WEST BENGAL)

- Chhau Dance is one of the most renowned tribal martial dances of India. The dance is performed with a Mask, which gives it the name Chau (Chhaya means mask).
- Masks and elaborate headgear are the ornamental apparels of the Chhau dancers. The dance is an essential part of the Gajan Festival that celebrates Lord Shiva.
- The dance is themed on the stories of Ramayana and Mahabharata.
- The dance is accompanied with loud beats and instruments like drum and marui.

B.4. CHAAM OF SIKKIM MONASTERIES

- Chaam is one of the forms of ritual dance of the Lamas, which features colorful masks and are held at various monasteries during the festivals.
- Costumed Lamas with painted masks, ceremonial swords and sparkling jewels, leap and swing to the rhythm of drums, horns and music.
- There are several types of Chaams like Singhi Chaam dedicated to the Mythical Lion, the Yak chaam dedicated to the Yaks.

B.5. BADHAI DANCE (BUNDELKHAND)

- Badhai is one of the popular folk dance of madhya pradesh, which is very common in bundelkhand region.
- Badhai is performed to thank Goddess Shitala and seek her blessings.
- This particular rhythm is known as Badhai from which this folk dance has acquired its name.
- Animals also take part in Badhai Nritya and in many villages, mares (female horses) are seen at such performances.
- The musical instruments used are Dhapla, Timki, Lota, Rantula & Algoja.

B.6. PANTHI DANCE (CHHATTISGARH)

- This dance form is a ritual of the Satnami community. The dance is very expressive in its depiction and is performed to the accompaniment of melodious songs.
- It is mainly performed by the male dancers. The performance of this dance requires great flexibility and stamina as it involves various challenging steps.
- The performers dance around a Jaik-hamb set up for the occasion, to the songs eulogizing their spiritual head and reflects the Nirvana philosophies like those of Kabir, Dadu etc.
- Traditional folk **instruments** are used which comprise of Mridanga and Jhaanj, drums are used occasionally.



B.7. DOLLU KUNITHA DANCE (KARNATAKA)

- Dollu Kunitha is a popular drum dance of Karnataka.
- The songs used in this dance usually have religious and battle fervour.
- Large drums are adorned with coloured clothes and hang around the necks of men.
- The main emphasis is on quick and light movement of the feet and legs.
- Dollu Kunitha forms a part of the ritualistic dances of the *dodavāsīs* of Karnataka.

B.8. PUNGCHOLOM (MANIPUR)

- It is derived from martial arts and also the traditional Maibi Jagoi dance. It's a tradition practiced since the seventeenth century.
- The traditional costume consists of turbans, dhothis and a necklace made of tulusi seeds.
- It is supposed to represent Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva and is believed to give positive energy to practitioners.
- It is performed in Manipur during weddings, temple functions and even funerals.
- A **pung**, (Manipuri name for Drum), hangs around each dancer's neck. The dancers jump and swirl high in the air once the dance progresses.

B.9. SINGHI CHAM (THE SNOW LION DANCE' OF SIKKIM)

- It is a masked dance of Sikkim, depicting snow lion – the cultural symbol of the state.
- The dancers are attired as snow lions, the guardian deity of the land as decreed by Guru Padamsambhava.
- He is revered as the teacher who first spread the word of Buddha in Bhutan, Sikkim, Tibet etc.
- The dance performed in autumn is also a tribute to mount Khan-Chen Dzongpa, or the Kanchenjunga, worshipped in the land. The mountain is believed to resemble the legendary snow lion.

B.10. CHERAW (BAMBOO DANCE OF MIZORAM)

- It is believed that the dance had existed way back in the 1st Century A.D., while the Mizos were still somewhere in the Yunan Province of China, before their migration into present Mizoram.
- Some tribes living in South East Asia have similar dances in one form or other with different names.
- Men sitting face to face on the ground tap long pairs of horizontal and cross bamboo staves open and close in rhythmic beats.
- Girls in colorful Mizo costumes of 'Puanchei', 'Kawrchei', 'Vakiria' and 'Thihna' dance in and out between the beats of bamboo.
- This dance is now performed in almost all festive occasions. Gongs and drums are used to accompany the dance.



B.11. THAPETTA GULLU (ANDHRA PRADESH)

- This is the dance form of the Srikakulam district of Andhra Pradesh.
- In this dance more than ten persons participate, singing songs in the praise of the local goddess.
- The dancers use drums, which are hung around their necks to produce varied rhythms.
- Tinkling bells around the waist form a distinctive part of the dancers' costumes.
- Only men perform this dance traditionally
- The themes and the subjects are taken from the Ramayana and Mahabharata

B.12. RAUF (J&K)

- It is one of the most popular traditional dances of Kashmir.
- This beautiful dance form graces all the festive occasions, especially Id and Ramzan days.
- The dance is performed by a group of women facing each other lined up in two lines and dressed in beautiful costumes.
- The dance has simple footwork which also called as Chakri in local language.
- The dance is often performed in Spring season to celebrate good weather.

B.13. MAYUR DANCE (U.P.)

- It is a dance popular in the Braj region of Uttar Pradesh.
- The Mayur or peacock dance is created from an episode in the love lore of Radha and Krishna.
- Radha, pining for Krishna after a brief separation, decides to console herself by the sight of peacocks.
- He eventually yields to Radha's entreaties and himself appears in the guise of a peacock to dance with his beloved.

B.14. RATHWA TRIBAL DANCE (GUJARAT)

- The Rathwas, who dwell in Rath-Vistar, the hilly area of the southeastern part of Gujarat state, perform the Rathwa ni Gher dance on the occasion of Holi also known as Kavant festival.
- The Gher (dance with music) performances begin on Dhulendi, which is, literally, 'the day of flying coloured dust'.
- Both men and women perform the Gher together, in groups of 20 to 25.
- Of all Rathwa dances performed on various occasions linked with the cycle of seasons, Rathwa ni Gher stands out as exquisite, colourful and spectacular.

B.15. JAGOR FOLK DANCE

- A dance drama of Goa based on no continuous plot or narrative
- Performed jointly by the **Hindus and Christians**
- To offer prayer to deity to protect the village from the river water. It is faith that it averts natural calamities and quarrels among themselves.
- Literal meaning of Jagor is “jagran”. The strong belief is that the night long performance, awakens the deities once a year and they continue to remain awake throughout the year guarding the village.
- Perni Jagor is the ancient mask dance – drama of Goa, performed by Perni families, using well crafted and painted wooden masks, depicting various animals, birds, super natural power, deities, demons and social characters.
- The performance is accompanied by Goan folk instruments like Nagara/Dobe, Ghumat, Madale etc.



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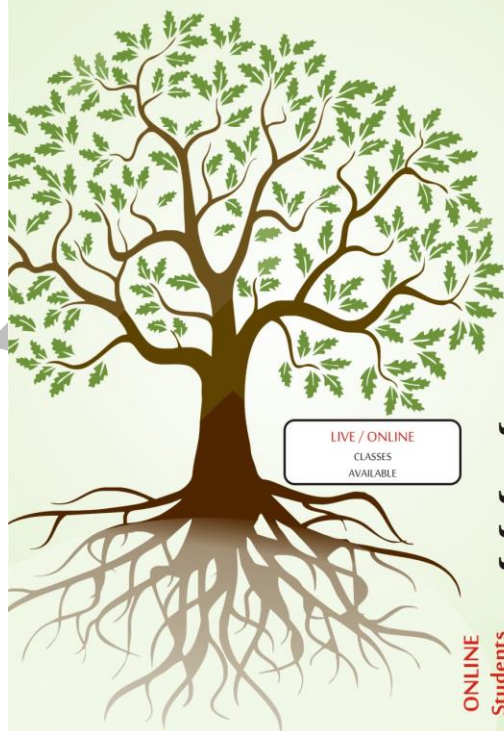
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C. MUSIC

C.1. PANCHAVADYAM

- Panchavadyam literally meaning an orchestra of five instruments, is a temple art form that has evolved in Kerala.
- Of the five instruments, four — *timila*, *maddalam*, *ilathalam* and *idakka* — belong to the percussion category, while the fifth, *kombu*, is a wind instrument.
- Panchavadyam is characterized by a pyramid-like rhythmic structure with a constantly increasing tempo coupled with a proportional decrease in the number of beats in cycles.
- Panchavadyam is not related very closely to any temple ritual and permits a lot of personal improvisation

C.2. BEEN JOGI (HARYANA)

- Jogis are traditional singers of Haryana who reflect many aspects of its folklore and culture.
- They perform rich ballads, devotional songs, stories poems and even healing to some extent.
- Their art is dying out and on the verge of extinction.
- They perform with instrument called Beens which is also used by traditional snake charmers.
- The performers normally wear saffron attires resembling those of saints or yogis.

C.3. MANGANIAR (FOLK SINGERS OF RAJASTHAN)

- Manganiyar is a small tribal community living in rural areas of western Rajasthan, mainly in three districts i.e. Jodhpur, Badmer and Jaisalmer.
- Their songs are passed on from generation to generation as a form of oral history of the desert.
- The special bowed instrument Kamaicha, played by the community is made of local material and looks as if a rudimentary one, but the musical patterns presented on it are very complex.
- Apart from main playing strings, there are a few supporting or drone strings called Jhare or Jhare -ke-taar which rest on the main bridge, and are responsible for creating bigger sound.
- Other instruments used by them are the Dholak and Khartaal.
- Manganiyars present Ragas like Kalyani, Khamaichi etc. which have little or no resemblance with our classical Ragas.

C.4. CHACHRI, RUMAU AND NYOLI IN UTTARAKHAND

- They are folk music of Kumaun region of Uttarakhand in the Almora and Pithoragarh regions.



C.5. PANDAVANI (CHHATTISGARH)

- It is a folk ballad form performed in Chhattisgarh and depicts the story of the Pandavas.
- Traditionally it used to be performed by males but now females also perform it.
- There is a lead artist and some supporting singers and musicians.
- The lead artist narrates one episode after another and enacts the characters in the scenes to produce a more realistic effect. Occasionally, he also breaks out into a dance movement.
- During the performance he sings along the rhythm produced by the ektara held in his hand.
- There are two styles of narration in Pandwani; Vedamati and Kapalik

C.6. KANIYAN KOOTHU

- Kaniyan koothu is a ritual art form practised during temple festivals in Tamil Nadu only by men.
- It gets its name from the community that the artists come from. Kaniyans are a Scheduled Tribe.
- It is at least 300 years old and can be traced back to 17th century.
- **Instrument:** Magudam, or frame drum is the main instrument. It is made by fixing the new hide on the frame with a paste made from tamarind seed.
- The lead singer is called annavi and he leads this troupe.
- It has very deep religious significance and is not just about entertainment.
- The team never performs at weddings, deaths and functions at homes.
- The performers receive no formal training; the singers pick up the songs and stories by listening to their fathers.
- Kaniyan Koothu tells Puranic stories such as Markandeya and Harischandra Puranam and tales from Ramayana and Mahabarata, besides local dieties.

History

- There is a passing reference to the art in Mukkoodarpallu (Tamil poem from the Nayak period)
- But the art form as it is now, similar to a stage performance, is probably 80 years old, and is influenced by Tamil drama.

Kaniyan tribe

- The Kaniyan are a tribal community residing in Tirunelveli district of Tamil Nadu.
- Their population is less than 750 and only around 200 persons are currently performing the art.
- Generally they are uneducated and live in poverty

D. PAINTINGS



D.1. THANGKA PAINTING

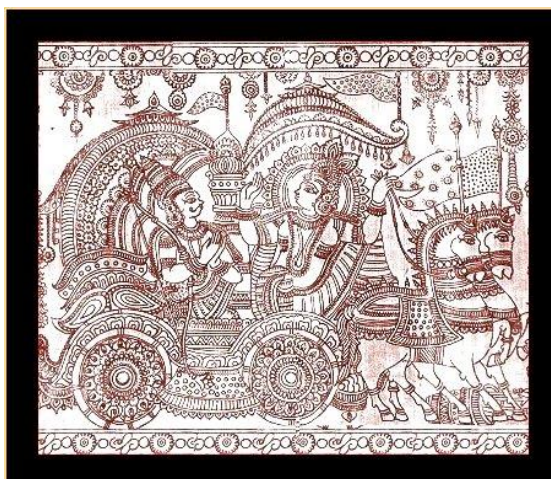
- The thangka is a traditional Tibetan form of religious art originating in India whose subject or subjects may include buddha, bodhisattvas, meditational deities, great teachers, and mandalas.
- Most thangkas are scroll paintings usually framed in colorful silk brocade and have a thin silk veil covering the front surface.
- They are distinctively Tibetan, highly religious, and possess a unique art style of their own.
- Although always religious in nature, Tibetan thangkas cover a wide range of subject matters.
- Most of them are painted on cloth or paper. The white cloth is first mounted on a frame, and water-based colloid chalk is applied to the surface. Surface is polished with talc when dried.
- Apart from this, there are thangkas, which are webs of embroidery, woven silk, silk tapestry, or appliqué. Embroidered thangkas are done with multi-colored silk threads.

D.2. KANGRA PAINTING

- Kangra paintings belong to the school of Pahari paintings that were patronized by the Rajput rulers between the 17th and 19th centuries.
- Became widely popular with the advent of Jayadev's Gita Govinda, of which many extant manuscripts feature exquisite Kangra illustrations.
- They portrayed incidents and scenes from the life of lord Krishna and other Bhakti themes.
- Apart from female beauty, landscapes, countryside, rivers, trees, birds, cattle, flowers etc. are meticulously portrayed in these paintings.
- The Kangra painters used colors made of vegetable and mineral extracts. They employed cool and fresh colors.

D.3. KALAMKARI ART

- The word is derived from the Persian words kalam (pen) and kari (craftmanship), meaning drawing with a pen.
- **Pedana** town in Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh is known for its Kalamkari.
- These paintings are made on cloth. It is hand painted as well as blocks printing with vegetable dyes applied on cloth.
- The art of painting using organic dyes on cloth was popular in several parts of India, but this style





of Kalamkari flourished at Kalahasti and at Masulipatnam.

- This art is mainly related to decorating temple interiors with painted cloth panels, which was developed in the fifteenth century under the patronage of Vijaynagar rulers.
- They are very durable and flexible in size and made according to theme.
- Subjects are adopted from the Ramayana, the Mahabharata and Hindu religious mythology.

Two distinctive styles

- There are two distinctive styles of Kalamkari design - Srikalahasti style and Masulipatnam style of art.
- The Masulipatnam style is influenced by Persian art. The motifs like trees, flowers and leaf designs are printed using blocks.
- The Srikalahasti style flourished around temples with Hindu patronage thus has an almost religious identity, wherein the kalam is used for freehand drawing of the subject, and filling in the colours is done by hand.

D.4. ROCK PAINTINGS DISCOVERED IN KONDANE CAVES

- 40 rock paintings were recently discovered in the Kondane caves in Raigad district in western region of Maharashtra.
- The images were found in both natural caverns and man-made caves.
- An unfinished Buddhist chaitya and a vihara were found in two man-made caves in the group. A chaitya is Buddhist prayer hall with a stupa at one end. A vihara is a monastery.
- The Buddhist rock-cut architecture found in these caves belongs to the Hinayana phase of Buddhism.
- A striking image found was that of a mythical figure, perhaps a demon. Other paintings reflected everyday life and occupations such as hunting deer.
- The style and articulation of these paintings suggest that they have been drawn during the late historical period of second century B.C. onwards.



E. MISCELLANEOUS ART FORM

E.1. KUTIYATTAM

- Kutiyattam is a form of theatre that originated in an ancient past, dating back to about two millennia. It draws on the plays of the eminent Sanskrit dramatists of India.
- Recently, Kutiyattam has been declared as among the “Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity” by UNESCO.
- Kutiyattam is performed by a community of male actors called Chakyars and female performers called Nangiars, assisted by drummers called Nambiars, in theatre houses called Kuttampalams.
- Kutiyattam represents a synthesis of Sanskrit classicism and reflects the local traditions of Kerala.
- Actors undergo ten to fifteen years of rigorous training to become fully-fledged performers with sophisticated breathing control and subtle muscle shifts of the face and body.
- The performances sometimes take up to 40 days as the actor's art lies in elaborating a situation or episode in all its detail.

E.2. BAZIGAR (ACROBATS OF PUNJAB)

- They are a community among the Scheduled Castes of Punjab, spread in India and Pakistan.
- Originally nomads, they trace their origin to the Rajputs of Rajasthan and started to settle in the North West India in last 3 centuries.
- Their main profession was making Bazis (jumps and somersaults), but now they are also into casual labour.
- The economic conditions are very poor as traditional profession of Bazi is not sustainable.

E.3. KALARIPAYATTU (MARTIAL ARTS FROM KERALA)

- Kalaripayattu is the indigenous martial art of Kerala and is known to be in practice for more than five hundred years.
- It has been preserved for many centuries following the tradition of guru-sisya parampara.
- It is a holistic art that not only knows how to hurt the other but also knows how to heal.
- It has three regional variants that are distinguished by their attacking and defensive patterns.
- Kalaripayattu techniques are a combination of steps (Chuvatu) and postures (Vadivu).
- A kalari in Tamil and Malayalam means the school or training hall where martial arts are taught.



E.4. BAHURUPIYA (MIMICRY ARTISTS FROM RAJASTHAN)

- The term bahurupiya derives from the Sanskrit bahu (many) and rupa (form).
- The practice of performing as a bahurupiya is now associated with Bhands, but formerly members of various castes, including Brahmins, practiced this art in villages as well as courts.
- Central to the art of the bahurupiya is the ability to create convincing impersonations of identifiable types.
- In Rajasthan, a great deal about a person's occupation, social standing, expected behavior, and speech patterns can be predicted by the clothing he/she wears. Great emphasis is placed on a bahurupiya's skill at costuming and makeup.
- A bahurupiya's disguise is known as a vesh (Sanskrit for clothing or dress).

E.5. THANG TA (MARTIAL ART FORM OF MANIPUR)

- The Meitais of Manipur practised a distinct martial technique called thang-ta, in which a Thang (spear) and a Ta (sword) are the primary weapons.
- It is a way of life. The exercises, movements and the fighting methods are meant to instill discipline, boost self-confidence, safeguard women, respect elders or fight for the kingdom.
- There are weapons like 'arambai' (a pointed small spear with traditional poison filled at the tip), 'thang' and 'chungoi' and many others which add power to Thang-ta.

E.6. MALLAKHAMB (MAHARASHTRA)

- Mallakhamb as the name suggests is a pole used by wrestlers for practicing their skills in the game KUSTI.
- But now days the trend has changed and it has got a special identity. Mallakhamb needs concentration, speed and flexibility. It is a good exercise to our body especially for backbone.
- earliest mention of Mallakhamb can be traced back to the 12th Century.
- There are three ways in which mallakhamb may be performed – on a fixed pole, hanging pole or rope. Three decades ago, pole mallakhamb gave way to the rope mallakhamb.
- This is closest to the legendary Indian rope tricks and requires alertness, focus and balance.

E.7. NADA KUSTI

- Nada Kusti has made it to the cover page of an international publication, 'Beyond the Body' that document traditional games that are fading into oblivion.
- It is a **traditional form of wrestling**, deep rooted in the people of **Mysore**.
- A sport that has had royal patronage since early 17th Century, Nada Kusti is very popular among those from the lower middle class and rural areas.
- Today, the sport is no more than a form of rural entertainment confined to the Dasara festivities.



E.8. PHULKARI

- The origin of this art can be traced back to the 15th century AD.
- In it embroidery is done in a simple and sparse design over shawls and dupattas.
- In some cases where the design is worked over very closely, covering the material entirely, it is called bagh (a garden of flowers).
- The threads used were of a silk yarn called pat.

E.9. SAHAPEDIA

- It is an open online portal that seeks to celebrate the unseen or less-noticed cultural expressions across India and South Asia.
- Its name comes from-saha means together and pedia comes from the Greek word paideia, meaning cultural education.
- Modelled on Wikipedia, the free site will encourage contributions from everyone.
- However, unlike Wikipedia, where anyone can contribute, here information will be moderated, checked and then published with attribution.
- Sahapedia has also tied up with various institutions to create specific modules or workshops on subjects, such as Ramleela and Ajrakh printed cloth, among others.

Website is divided into 10 categories

- Knowledge traditions,
- Material and visual arts,
- Performing arts,
- Natural environment,
- Built heritage,
- Cultural institutions,
- Personalities,
- Practices and rituals,
- Literature and languages,

E.10. ZARDOZI

- Zardozi is metal embroidery, which was used for the attire of royals.
- Persian terms Zar meaning gold and Dozi meaning embroidery.
- It involves making elaborate designs, using gold and silver threads. Precious stones, diamonds, emeralds, and pearls are also used.
- Uses: to adorn walls of the royal tents, scabbards, wall hangings and the paraphernalia of regal elephants and horses.
- Zardozi attained its summit in 17th century, under the patronage of Akbar. Under the rule of Aurangzeb, the royal patronage stopped and led to the decline of craft. The lavish embroidery was patronized in the past by the Nawabs of the Awadh.
- Zardozi embroidery work is mainly a specialty of Lucknow, Bhopal, Hyderabad, Delhi, Agra, Kashmir, Mumbai, Ajmer and Chennai.
- In 2013 the Geographical Indication Registry (GIR) accorded the Geographical Indication (GI) registration to the Lucknow Zardozi. The Zardozi products are manufactured in areas in Lucknow and six surrounding districts of Barabanki, Unnao, Sitapur, Rae Bareli, Hardoi and Amethi.

E.11. CHETTINAD COTTON SARIS

- Chettinadu saree was derived from Chettinadu, a small town in Sivaganga district of Tamil Nadu.
- The traditional sari from Chettinad is called Kandanghi and is made of cotton.
- The Chettinadu sarees are designed by incorporating checks of vivid colours - mustard, brick red, oranges, chromes and brown.
- Checks and Temple borders are the traditional patterns of Kandanghi saree.



F. TRIBES

F.1. NYISHIS TRIBE OF ARUNACHAL PRADESH

- They are the most populous tribe of Arunachal Pradesh numbering around 3 lakhs.
- The Nyishi support themselves with a slash-and-burn agriculture and with hunting and fishing.
- The most unique feature of the Nyishis is the cane helmet with the beak of the Great Indian Hornbill worn by the males.
- Rice is their staple food crop supported by fish.
- They worship Aabhu Thanyi as their mythical forefather.
- Traditionally they were hunters, but now with increasing awareness, they have become conservators of forests and wildlife due to their proximity to nature.

F.2. BAUL

- The **Baul** are a group of people from West Bengal and Bangladesh.
- Bauls are usually Vaishnava Hindus and Sufi Muslims.
- They can often be identified by their distinctive clothes and musical instruments.
- Though only a small fraction of the Bengali population, their influence on the culture of Bengal is considerable.
- In 2005, the Baul tradition was included in the list of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO.
- **Baul music**
 - ✓ Its lyrics carry influences of the Hindu bhakti movements and the *suphi*, a form of Sufi song exemplified by the songs of Kabir.
 - ✓ Musical instruments used by them are *ektara*, *dotara*, *khamak*, *duggi*, *dhol* and *khol*.

F.3. TODA TRIBE

- **Spread:** isolated Nilgiri plateau of Southern India.
- Small **pastoral** community with population range 700 to 900 during the last century.
- The Toda have attracted a disproportionate amount of attention because of their unlikeness to their neighbours in appearance, manners, and customs.
- During the last decade both Toda society and culture have also become the focus of an international effort at culturally sensitive environmental restoration.
- The Toda lands are now a part of The Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve, a UNESCO-designated International Biosphere Reserve and is declared UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- Their sole occupation is cattle-herding and dairy-work.
- **Religion:** Centres on the buffalo
- **Threat:** Some Toda pasture land was lost due to agriculture by outsiders or afforestation by the State Government of Tamil Nadu.



F.4. ASUR TRIBE

- The members of the tribe live in Jharkhand, pockets of Bihar, West Bengal and a few other states.
- The 2011 Census put the number of Asurs at 22,459 in Jharkhand and 4,129 in Bihar.
- The Asurs claim to be descendants of Mahishasur, the buffalo-demon whom Goddess Durga kills after a fight lasting nine nights.
- this mythology celebrated as Durga Puja in mainstream Hinduism, but observed as 'Mahishasur Dasain' among the Asurs, who hold a period of mourning during which they largely stay indoors.
- Traditionally, they have been iron-smelters and slash burn cultivators. Thus, they have been nomadic.
- According to one of the theories, the Magadh Empire benefited a lot from the weapons the Asurs made.
- The Unesco has listed the Asur language as "definitely endangered" with only 7,000 speakers left.

F.5. BONDA TRIBE

- The tribe lives in isolated hill regions of the Malkangiri district of southwestern Odisha, near the junction of Odisha, Chhattisgarh, and Andhra Pradesh. Their current population is 12,000.
- They have almost no connection to the outside world. Only 6% are literate.
- In Bonda society, the women enjoy a privileged position.
- Girls largely marry boys who are at least five to ten years younger than them. Thus the girl looks after her husband as he grows up and in turn he cares for his older wife.
- The number of women among the Bonda greatly exceeds the number of men.

F.6. SIDDI TRIBE

- The **Siddi** also known as **Sheedi**, **Habshi** or **Makrani**, are an ethnic group inhabiting India and Pakistan.
- They are descendants of Africans from North-East and East Africa who were brought to India as slaves, soldiers or servants. The Siddi are descended from Bantu peoples from Southeast Africa. Some were merchants, sailors, indentured servants and mercenaries.
- Spread: Karnataka, Gujarat and Hyderabad in India and Makran and Karachi in Pakistan as the main population centres
- Current estimated population: 20,000–55,000 individuals
- **Religion:** Siddis are primarily Sufi Muslims, although some are Hindus and Roman Catholic Christians.
- The Siddis of Gujarat live around Gir Forest National Park and Wildlife Sanctuary.
- Although Gujarati Siddis have adopted the language and many customs of their surrounding populations, some African traditions have been preserved. These include the Goma music and dance form, which is sometimes called Dhamaal.

F.7. JARAWA TRIBE

- The tribes of the Andaman Islands – the Jarawa, Great Andamanese, Onge and Sentinelese – are believed to have lived there for up to 55,000 years.
- Considered one of the most isolated people on earth, the Jarawa are a hunter-gatherer tribe that has lived in the dense forests of Andaman Islands completely cut off from the outside world.
- However, with the increasing flow of outsiders, the Jarawas are facing the threat of extinction. Today, approximately 400 members of the tribe live in groups of 40-50 in chaddhas – as they call their homes.
- They are kept in the category of Scheduled Tribes.
- Contraceptive methods: contraceptive leaves known as Vachahi and Hatho are used.
- There is specific division of labour among the jarawas when moving. Male members pick and carry hunting implements and clean the way, female members carry food and other household belongings.
- The jarawas of both sexes go complete naked. Though some ornaments are worn but these are not in the sense to cover their nudity.
- The marriage generally occurs between the adolescents. A widow/widower can get marry in the Jarawa community. Though the jarwa are strictly monogamous, subsequent marriages are common.



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G. SCULPTURE AND ARCHITECTURE



G.1. VADAKKUNNATHAN TEMPLE

- Sree Vadakkunnathan Temple in Kerala, India has received the Award of Excellence in this year's UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation.
- This Award was given for the remarkable conservation effort undertaken at the sacred site which employed age-old rituals and conservation techniques drawn from vastu shastra, an Indian traditional science focusing on architecture and construction.
- The tangible attributes of the temple are inextricably linked with its intangible heritage which dates back generations, thus ensuring that "spirit of place" resonates throughout the site.
- It is situated in the Thrissur district and is a classic example of the Kerala style of architecture.
- The temple has many decorative murals, including some on the Mahabharata theme and other pieces of art.
- This is the venue of the world famous Pooram Festival celebrated annually in April-May.
- The fireworks at the Pooram are a spectacular sight.

Parvati Nandan Ganapati Temple, Pune, Maharashtra

- It was given a Honourable Mention UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation
- Jijabai, mother of Chhatrapati Shivaji, earlier renovated the temple in the early 17th century
- The temple is dedicated to Lord Ganesha, the main deity of Maharashtra.
- The temple was renovated recently which has been recognized by UNESCO.
- Prior to restoration, it was in urgent need of structural consolidation and internal repairs to counter the corrosive effects of weather, usage, general deterioration over time and insensitive additions and alterations done over the past few years.
- The temple has a 'gabhara' (inner sanctum), 'mandap' (outer pavilion), 'sabhmandap' (assembly pavilion), 'shikhar' (roof) and the main entrance gateway.

- **The UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation programme** recognizes the efforts of private individuals and organizations that have successfully restored and conserved structures and buildings of heritage value in the region. By recognizing private efforts to restore and adapt historic properties the awards aim to encourage other property owners to undertake conservation projects within their communities, either independently or by seeking public-private partnerships.

G.2. MUZIRIS HERITAGE PROJECT

- The Muziris Heritage Project is being implemented by the Government of Kerala, with the support of the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India.
- It was initiated six years ago, is an ambitious project comprising the --
 - ✓ development works of Chennamangalam palaces,
 - ✓ Cheraman Parambu, Synagogue and waterfront at North Paravur;



- ✓ a performance centre at Gothuruthu;
- ✓ a Museum at Pallipuram
- The project envisages conservation of monuments across Thrissur and Ernakulam.
- Muziris was an ancient seaport and urban centre which dates from at least the 1st century BC and located at the mouth of the Periyar River at present on the west coast of south Indian state of Kerala.
- Muziris was the doorway for cultures, religions and races into India. Large ships of ocean traders frequented it from across the world, including Arabs, Egyptians, Greeks, Romans and Chinese.
- Its historic importance has been mentioned in the Sangam literature and a number of classical European historical sources.
- It is believed that a devastating flood that changed the course of the Periyar River or an earthquake in the 14th century led to the decline of Muziris.
- Next phase of the project is the 'Spice Route Initiative', which will explore the international connections and linkages that the Malabar Coast had with many parts of the world.
- This phase is to be implemented with the support of UNESCO and United Nations World Tourism Organization. Kerala Tourism has won 2015 Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) award in the 'Heritage & Culture'.

G.3. CHERAMAN JUMA MASJID

- The Cheraman Juma Masjid situated in Thrissur district (Kerala), is believed to be the first mosque built in India by Arab traders around 629 AD.
- It is symbolic of active trade relations between India and Saudi Arabia since ancient times.
- The mosque was reconstructed many times to accommodate increasing visitors.
- The mosque is believed to be constructed by Malik Bin Dinar, a contemporary of Cheraman Perumal, a Chera King who went to Arabia and embraced Islam after meeting the Holy Prophet at Mecca.

Why in news?

The Prime Minister gifted King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia a gold-plated replica of the Cheraman Juma Masjid.

G.4. APATHY TOWARDS ANTIQUITIES

- Providing sufficient information regarding theft cases has been a struggle. For instance, to a question raised in Parliament in 2010 about the number of antiquities stolen, the government provided a list of 13 thefts that occurred between 2007 and 2010. The number of thefts reported also appears too few to be true.
- At the national level, the Central Bureau of Investigation handles antiquities theft but it has not built the capacity to deal with stolen antiquities.
- In 2007, the Ministry of Culture launched the **National Mission on Monuments and Antiquities** to complete documentation of about 70,00,000 antiquities. Until 2014, it had documented only 8,00,000 artefacts.
- The audit also raised serious concerns about the "discrepancies in the number of antiquities reportedly available in museums" including the National Museum in Delhi.



G.5. SMUGGLING OF ARTEFACTS

- India is one of the biggest targets for smugglers, who ship stolen antiques and other culturally important artifacts abroad to sell to art dealers and museums.
- The seated stone Buddha sculpture, whose roots is traced to Mathura, Nataraja, the dancing Shiva, belonging to the Chola period 11th-12th centuries, Ardhanariswara dating to 10th century was returned by Australia to India.
- German Government returned a 10th century Durga idol that had gone missing from Kashmir.

Ardhanariswara

- It is an androgynous form in which Shiva is on the right half and his consort Parvathi on left half, split down the middle.
- This form of Shiva came into existence after Goddess Parvati got a boon to be merged with Shiva.
- The essence of worshipping this form of Shiva is that if the inner masculine and feminine meet, you can be in a perpetual state of ecstasy.
- The famous statue of Ardhanariswara in Elephanta is an excellent portrayal of this form.

G.6. BODH GAYA – SPIRITUAL CAPITAL

- The Indian Government decided to develop Bodhgaya as the site of spiritual capital to serve as a civilizational bond between India and the Buddhist world.
- Mahabodhi Temple, located in Bodhgaya, was designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2002.
- Bodh Gaya is the most holy place for the Buddhists faith all over the world. Situated by the bank of river Neranjana (now Falgu) the place was then known as Uruwela.
- The main monastery of Bodh Gaya used to be called the Bodhimanda-vihāra (Pali). Now it is called the Mahabodhi Temple.

Bodhgaya

- It was here under a banyan tree, the Bodhi Tree, Gautama attained supreme knowledge to become Buddha, the Enlightened One.
- The temple is an architectural amalgamation of many centuries, cultures and heritages.
- Its architecture has a distinct stamp of the Gupta era, and it has later ages inscriptions describing visits of pilgrims from Sri Lanka, Myanmar and China between 7th and 10th century AD.
- Bodh Gaya has monasteries from almost all prominent Buddhist countries.

G.7. AMRAVATI: NEW CAPITAL OF ANDHRA PRADESH

- Amaravathi has been approved as the upcoming capital city of Andhra Pradesh.
- It was ancient seat of Satavahana ruler's kingdom, located on the banks of river Krishna.
- Andhra Pradesh Cabinet has also approved the first phase of the master plan prepared by Singapore government.



- The city derives its name from Lord Amareswara temple in the village. It is also known as 'Dakshina Kashi' (Kashi of the south). It also has Buddhist significance.
- The Andhra sculpture is generally known as Amaravati schools. The stupas at Amaravati were made of a distinctive white green marble.

G.8.INDIA'S GREATEST ARCHITECT CHARLES CORREA

- Charles Correa, often called "India's greatest architect", died recently.
- He was the chief architect of **Navi Mumbai**, considered among the largest urban spaces in the world housing over two million people.
- He pioneered some unique concepts in **urban development and affordable housing** that, if adopted widely, could change the landscape of the poorest townships of not just India but much of the Third World.
- It was Mr. Correa who founded the **Urban Design Research Institute** in Bombay in 1984.
- In India, Mr. Correa is famous for the **Gandhi Smarak in Ahmedabad, Kala Kendra (Goa), National Crafts Museum (New Delhi), Bharat Bhavan (Bhopal), and Jawahar Kala Kendra (Jaipur)**.
- He is the recipient of **Padmashri (1972) and Padma Vibushan (2006)**.

G.9. TARA BHAGAVATI - BUDDHIST INSCRIPTION

- A 12th century inscription was found in Gadag district, Karnataka.
- The period of this inscription could be assigned to the reign of Hoysala king Veeraballala II (1173–1220 CE).
- It is among handful of inscriptions making specific reference to the Tara Bhagavati cult of the Vajrayana Buddhism which was popular here till 12th century.
- It establishes the existence and popularity of Buddhism in this part of the State.
- The Kodangallur in Kerala is considered to be one of the oldest Bhagavathi shrines.

Tara Bhagavathi

- Tara Bhagavathi is a Buddhist Goddess.
- Tara is Buddhist form of Kali.
- The Bhagavathi cult initiated as a part of the Tantric Vajrayana practice within Buddhism.
- With the downfall of Buddhism in south India and under the dominant matriarchal setting, it was gradually sanctified and absorbed into the mainstream Hindu cult of Shakti and Spirit worship.

G.10. DECODING OF TEXT ON AN ANCIENT COPPER PLATE

Researchers from the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute (BORI), which houses South Asia's largest collection of manuscripts and rare texts, have decoded a copper plate.

Conclusions from the copper plate

- The date of Harshavardhan's defeat to the Chalukya King Pulakeshin II is fixed at 618 AD.
- It was believed that the battle occurred sometime between 612 AD and 634 AD.

- The plate also fixed the details of the coronation of Pulakeshi II in 610-611 AD.



The Battle of Harshvardhan and Pulakeshin II

- The battle was fought on the banks of the Narmada.
- Pulakeshin, ruling from the Chalukyan capital Badami, challenged Harsha's conquests.
- Unwilling to tolerate the existence of a powerful rival in the south, Harsha had marched from Kanauj with a huge force.
- Such was Pulakeshin's efficiency in guarding the passes of the Narmada that Harsha was compelled to accept the river as the demarcation and retire from the battlefield after losing most of his elephant force.

G.11. CHOLA SCULPTURE OF CHANDESVARAR

A sculpture of Chandesvarar, believed to belong to 10th century AD, has been found near Trichy, Tamil Nadu.

Description of the sculpture

- The headgear is arranged as 'jatabhara', a hairstyle worn particularly by Shiva, usually characterised by a large number of penitential plaits worn in a bunch on the side.
- The apparel at the hip is short and wavy and is kept in place by a well draped cloth around the waist called 'idaikkattu'
- The sculpture is found seated in 'suhasana' with one leg folded and kept on the seat, his other leg rests on a pedestal.



About Chandesvarar

- Chandesvarar is one of the 63 Nayanars of the Saivite sect and was the first among them to find a place in temples.
- He is housed in a separate shrine on the northern side of all the Saivite temples, facing the presiding deity.
- Rajaraja I built the most distinguished shrine of Chandesvarar at Thanjavur.

Nayanars

- The 7th to 9th centuries saw the emergence of new religious movements in south India, led by the Nayanars (saints devoted to Shiva) and Alvars (saints devoted to Vishnu) who came from all castes including those considered "untouchable".
- They were critical of the Buddhists and Jains and preached love of Shiva or Vishnu as the path to salvation.
- They drew upon the ideals of love and heroism as found in the Sangam literature and blended them with the values of bhakti.
- There were 63 Nayanars, who belonged to different caste backgrounds such as potters, "untouchable" workers, peasants, hunters, soldiers, Brahmanas and chiefs.
- The best known among them were Appar, Sambandar, Sundarar and Manikkavasagar.
- There are two sets of compilations of their songs – Tevaram and Tiruvacakam.



H. EVENTS AND FESTIVALS

H.1. JALLIKATTU

Why in news?

- The Indian Supreme Court has put on hold a recent government order lifting a ban on Jallikattu, a form of bullfighting, which has been popular for centuries in the state of Tamil Nadu.

What is Jallikattu?

- It is a bull-vaulting event practised in Tamil Nadu as a part of Pongal celebrations on Mattu Pongal day.
- Participants tackle the bull in an arena by its hump and try to hang on till they cross the finishing line.
- It is popular in the districts of Madurai, Tiruchirappalli, Theni, Pudukkottai and Dindigul — a region also known as the Jallikattu belt.
- It is an ancient sport. Sangam literature (2nd BCE – 2nd CE), has many detailed references to Eru Thazhuvuthal (hugging the bull).

H.2. ONAM FESTIVAL

- The festival falls during the Malayalam month of Chingam (August-September). It is reminiscent of Kerala's agrarian past and is considered to be a harvest festival. It is also the state festival of Kerala.
- Celebration Traditions-- the festival marks the commemoration of Vamana avatara of Lord Vishnu and the subsequent homecoming of the mythical King Bali and his prosperous rule.
- The celebrations start with Onam Pookkalam, in which the floral carpets are laid on the floors early in the morning.
- Poojas are performed at temples across the state including at the hill shrine of Sabari Mala, Guruvayur and Thrikkakara, believed to be the capital of King Maha Bali.
- Traditional feast known as Onam Sadya is served on plantain (banana) leaves with rice and variety of curries along with sweet called payasam.
- Vallam Kali is a traditional boat race in Kerala, India. It is a form of canoe racing, and uses paddled war canoes. It is mainly conducted during Onam

H.3. WANGALA FESTIVAL MEGHALAYA

- It is a post harvest festival of Garos, held in November, marking the end of the agricultural year.
- It is also known as Hundred Drums Festival.
- It is an act of thanksgiving to the sun god of fertility, known as Misi-A-Gilpa-Saljong-Galapa.
- A nagara (a special drum) is beaten to start celebrations.
- The men and women dance with the drums, the buffalo horn trumpets and bamboo flutes.
- The men wear dhotis, half-jackets and turbans with feathers. The women wear colourful dresses made of silk, blouses and a head-wrap with feathers.



H.4. BATHUKAMMA FESTIVAL

- Bathukamma is celebrated for nine days during Navratri. It starts on the day of Mahalaya Amavasya and culminates on "Saddula Bathukamma" festival on Durgashtami, which is two days before Dussehra.
- Bathukamma is a beautiful flower stack, arranged with different unique seasonal flowers most of them with medicinal values, in seven concentric layers in the shape of temple gopuram.
- In the Telugu language, Bathuku means life and Amma means mother, 'Bathukamma' means 'Mother Goddess come Alive'
- Goddess Maha Gauri-'Life Giver' is worshipped in the form of Bathukamma
- For the nine days, in the evening, women, especially young girls, gather with their Bathukammas in open areas of their locality. They form a circle around the Bathukamma and start singing folk songs by clapping their hands and revolving around it.

H.5. NEW YEAR FESTIVALS

- Ugadi is celebrated as New Year's Day in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. The name Ugadi is derived from the name "Yuga Adi", which means 'the beginning of a new age'. It is celebrated on the first day of the Hindu month Chaitra, which marks the onset of spring.
- Gudi Padwa is celebrated as New Year's Day in Maharashtra. It is celebrated on the same day as Ugadi i.e., the first day of the month Chaitra. Lord Brahma is worshipped on this day and the gudi, Brahma's flag (also called Brahmadvaj), is hoisted in every house as a symbolic representation of Rama's victory over Ravana.
- Vishu is celebrated as New Year's Day in Kerala. It is celebrated on the first day of the Malayalam month of Medam (mid-April on the Gregorian calendar).

H.6. LOSAR FESTIVAL LADAKH

- The Losar festival marks the beginning of the New year in Ladakh/Tibet and is considered to be the most important festival of the region.
- It falls in December and Ladakhi Buddhists make religious offering before their deities in the domestic shrines or in the Gompas.
- A medley of cultural events, ancient rituals and also traditional performances are performed during this festival.
- There is blaring music accompanied with dancing, and celebration dinner with relatives.

H.7. SAJIBU CHEIROBA FESTIVAL MANIPUR

- It is the New Year of the Manipuris and is celebrated on the first day of the Manipuri month, Sajibu, which falls in the month of March or April.
- The people of Manipur clean and decorate their homes and other premises to start celebrations.
- The occasion is marked by praying to Meitei Gods by offering flowers, fruits and dishes, traditional family feasting after which they climb nearby hillocks in the afternoon.
- Married women give gifts to their parents and brothers on the occasion.



H.8. CHAPCHAR KUT OF THE MIZOS

- Chapchar Kut literally means - a festival held during the period when the bamboos and trees that have been cut down are being awaited to dry to be burnt for jhumming.
- It marked the end of the Jhum clearing, readying the field for sowing and the festive spirit lasts from three to seven days in March.
- The Chapchar Kut festival evolved sometime between 1450 -1600 A.D.
- The traditional costume parades, showcasing dances like cheraw, chai, chheihlam, sarlamkai and musical performances by groups, among others, are part of the celebrations.

H.9. NABAKALEBAR FESTIVAL

- This festival is symbolic recreation of wooden forms of the four deities at Jagannath Temple, Puri.
- Nabakalebar is an occasional festival observed in the Shri Jagannath Temple at Puri. Naba means new and the Kalebar is body.
- In Jagannath cult this is a periodical renewal of the wooden forms of Jagannath, Balabhadra, Subhadra and Sudarshana.
- The soul or the Brahma is transferred from the old idols to their new bodies in a highly technical prescribed and secret method.
- The Nabakalebar festival is observed in a gap of 12 to 19 years.
- During this festival the annual Rathayatra becomes the Nabakalebar Ratha Yatra.

H.10. RAMMAN

- Festival of Ramman based on the story of 'Ramayana' in Uttarakhand having Narshingh Devta 'God' at the front of the tableau.
- The festival has been declared World Heritage in 2009 by UNESCO.
- Artists play the folk musical instrument of Uttarakhand "Bhankor" at the middle part of tableau and temple of Bhumyal God and The Himalaya at the back part are presented.
- Dance is performed wearing the mask at Temple complex of Bhumyal God in night. There are masks of various epical, historical and imaginative characters. The masks are of two types. "Dhyo Pattar" and "Khyalari Pattar".

H.11. OTHER FESTIVALS IN NEWS

- Saga Dawa is celebration of Buddha Jayanti in Sikkim, which is popularly called Saga Dawa.
- Nuakhai is a festival that marked offering of first harvest of rice to deity, in Odisha. It is celebrated a day after Ganesh Chaturthi.
- Novruz is the first day of Farvardin, the first month of the Iranian solar calendar. In the Fasli/Bastani variant of the Zoroastrian calendar, Navroz is always the day of the vernal equinox (nominally falling on March 21).

- Sammakka Sarakka Jathara or Medaram Jathara is the largest tribal religious congregation in the country. The biannual Jathara festival of honouring the goddesses is celebrated in the state of Telengana.



H.12. SIMHASTHA KUMBH IN UJJAIN

- The Ujjain Kumbh is celebrated when Jupiter ascends into sun sign Leo's quarter or the Simha constellation of zodiac, which is why it is called 'Simhastha'.
- The ritual of bathing in the holy waters of Kshipra begins on the full moon day of the Hindu month of Chaitra (March-April) and continues on various dates until the full moon shows up in the following month of Vaishakha.
- The most popular legend regarding the origin of Kumbh Melas is the Samudra Manthan or 'churning of the ocean'. Gods and demons competed fiercely in the churning in search of the divine nectar of immortality
- During this epic battle to capture the Urn (Kumbh) containing the nectar, drops of the precious liquid fell on four places – Haridwar, Prayag (Allahabad), Nashik and Ujjain.
- Kumbh Mela, is held once every twelve years at these four places and attracts millions of devotees

H.13. SECOND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RAMLILA

- It was a seven-day long festival organised by Indira Gandhi National Center for Arts under Ministry of Culture at Delhi.
- The First International Conference on Ramlila was held in Trinidad & Tobago in 2013.
- Ramlila tradition of India has been inscribed in “Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity” by the UNESCO in 2005.

H.14. WORLD INDOLOGY CONFERENCE

- The Rashtrapati Bhavan hosted for the first time a World Indology Conference in collaboration with Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR)
- Indologists from across the world deliberated on various topics related to Indian culture and philosophy.
- Inclusiveness and universality that are found in the Vedanta and the Upanishads are the prime features of Indology.

What is Indology?

It is the academic study of the history and cultures, languages, and literature of the Indian subcontinent.

H.15. GANGA SANSKRITI YATRA

- **Ganga Sanskriti Yatra** is a festival is being organized from Gangotri to Gangasagar in February-March
- The **objective** is to showcase and discover the cultural diversity and heritage of Ganga river basin.
- It is also pursuing idea of **cultural exchange**. In view of this, the yatra is divided into part, the central point being Varanasi. The art forms from confluence to Varanasi will be presented in the lower part.

- The main concentration of the festival is to present art forms of Ganga basin which are deeply associated with the river, including Folk songs, Folk dances, Folk Theatre, Dance Drama, documentary/ Films Shows, Street Plays, kavi sammelan, photography exhibitions, film shows, etc.



H.16. KOMAGATA MARU INCIDENT

- On May 23, 1914, a cargo steamship named Komagata Maru sailed into Burrard Inlet in British Columbia, Canada, on which Vancouver harbour is located.
- A Singapore-based businessman named Gurdit Singh chartered the vessel.
- On it were 376 passengers from Punjab who had come aboard in batches at the ship's departure at Hong Kong.
- The ship was forced to return to Calcutta, 19 of the passengers were killed by the British and many placed under arrest.
- Under a "continuous journey regulation", immigrants who had not arrived in Canada by a continuous, non-stop journey from their native countries were denied entry.
- While the laws never explicitly restricted the entry of Indians, they made it virtually impossible for Indians to emigrate, because there was no direct route from India to far-off Canada then. (The Komagata Maru had arrived from Hong Kong.)

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I. GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES

I.1. VEER SAVARKAR'S PLAQUE AT ANDAMAN JAIL

- The Government has decided to reinstall a plaque commemorating the stay of Vinayak Damodar Savarkar at the freedom fighters' memorial at Andaman and Nicobar Island's famous Cellular Jail, where he was imprisoned by the British.
- Savarkar is credited with coining the term Hindutva
- He was a freedom fighter, social reformer, writer, orator and a patriot, was called Swatantryaveer
- He was an Indian nationalist and leading figure in the Hindu Mahasabha, a Hindu nationalist organization and political party.
- He was also associated with the Indian Revolutionaries in London.
- Savarkar had started his secret revolutionary society called the Abhinav Bharat (similar to Young Italy of Mazzini) in India in 1905.
- He was the author of the famous book **"The Indian War of Independence – 1857"**.

I.2. CULTURE UNIVERSITIES IN THE COUNTRY

There are 4 teaching institutions declared as deemed to be Universities under Ministry of Culture.

- Nava Nalanda Mahavihara (NNM), Nalanda
- Central Institute of Buddhist Studies (CIBS), Leh, Ladakh, J&K
- National Museum Institute, New Delhi
- Central University of Tibetan Studies (CUTS), Sarnath, Varanasi, U.P.

I.3. BIRTH CENTENARY OF RANI GAIDINLIU

- The Government of India in 2015 released coins in the denominations of Rupee 100 and Rupee 5 to commemorate the 100 birth anniversary of Rani Gaidinliu
- Rani Gaidinliu was the first female freedom fighter of India from Manipur.
- She was a political and spiritual leader of the Heraka faith.
- The Heraka movement was long aware of the civil disobedience movement in British India.
- Through armed resistance, she quickly transformed a religious-indigenous rebellion into a revolutionary movement for independence.
- Her political struggle was based on Gandhian principles of Satyagraha, non-violence, self-reliance.
- She also had played an important role in India's wider freedom movement by spreading the message of Gandhiji in Manipur region.
- In 1932 at the age of 16, she was arrested and was sentenced to life imprisonment by the then British India Government.
- Rani title: In 1937, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had met her at Shillong Jail and promised to pursue her release. During this time, Nehru gave her title of Rani (Queen) and since then she gained local popularity as Rani Gaidinliu.
- After India's independence in 1947, she was released from the jail and continued to work for the upliftment of people till her death.



I.4. BIRTH CENTENARY OF PANDIT DEEN DAYAL UPADHYAY

- The government allocated Rs 100 crore for the celebrations of the birth centenary of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay, a leader of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh, the forerunner of BJP.
- He is best known for his 'Ekam Manav-vad Darshan' (the philosophy of integral humanism).
- He started a monthly magazine "Rashtra Dharma", a weekly 'Panchajanya', and a daily 'Swadesh'.
- His philosophy of Integral humanism is a synthesis of the material and the spiritual, the individual and the collective.
- He visualized for India a decentralized polity and self-reliant economy with the village as the base
- He believed in Antyodaya, i.e. serving the very last person in the society.

I.5. 200TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF TANTYA TOPE

- Government released a Rs.200 commemorative coin and a Rs.10 circulation coin on the occasion of the Martyrdom day of Tanya Tope, one of the outstanding leaders of the 1857 revolt.
- He fought along with Jhansi ki Rani and Nana Sahib. They were successful in capturing Gwalior, however this victory was short lived and was defeated by General Napier.
- In 1851, when Lord Dalhousie deprived Nana Sahib of his father's pension, Tanya Tope also became a sworn enemy of the British.
- In May 1857, when the political storm was gaining momentum, he won over the Indian troops of East India Company, stationed at Kanpur, established Nana Sahib's authority and became the Commander-in-Chief of his forces.
- After the reoccupation of Kanpur and separation from Nana Sahib, Tanya Tope shifted his headquarters to Kalpi to join hands with the Rani Lakshmi Bai and led a revolt in Bundelkhand.
- After facing defeats in Bundelkhand, he reached Gwalior and declared Nana Sahib as Peshwa but soon lost hold.
- Thereafter, he launched a successful guerrilla campaign in the Sagar and Narmada regions and in Khandesh and Rajasthan.
- The British forces failed to subdue him for over a year. He was betrayed into the hands of the British by his trusted friend Man Singh, Chief of Narwar. He was captured and taken to Shivpuri where he was tried and executed.

I.6. ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE IN KAUSHAMBI

- Kaushambi was the capital of 'Vatsa Janpad' ruled by King Udyana, during the time of Buddha. The ruins of an ancient fort stand testimony to its ancient past.
- In Kaushambi, Uttar Pradesh, the following monuments have been declared protected and are preserved by the Archaeological Survey of India.
- Fort attributed to Jay Chandra, Karra Tehsil- Sirathu, District Kaushambi.
- The ancient fortress, Kosam, Tehsil Manjhampur, District Kaushambi.
- Artificial cave in the fane of the hill of Pabhosa, District Kaushambi.
- Traces of a large brick building on the summit of Pabhosa hill, Pabhosa, Tehsil-Manjhampur, District Kaushambi.



I.7. INDIA- LAOS CULTURAL LINKAGES

- India-Laos cross-cultural linkages resulted into the establishment of Singhalese Buddhism having strains of the Indian customs, traditions, religious practices, beliefs.
- The Ramayana and the Mahabharata, many literary works in Pali, Prakrit and Sanskrit languages became the part of common heritage.
- Besides Buddhism, Jainism also flourished side by side with Hinduism. Moreover, scholars have not studied from the point of Jainism in Laos.
- Since trade was the most important factor for the spread of Indian culture, traders' community, who were mostly Jain, must have introduced Jainism and worshipped Tirthankars. There are hardly any distinctive features seen on the Buddhist and Jain art and architecture.

I.8. SAFEGUARDING THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE AND DIVERSE CULTURAL TRADITIONS OF INDIA

- The Ministry of Culture has formulated a Scheme titled "Scheme for Safeguarding the Intangible Heritage and Diverse Cultural Traditions of India", with the objective of reinvigorating and revitalizing various institutions, groups, individuals, so that they may engage in activities/projects for strengthening, protecting, preserving and promoting the rich intangible cultural heritage of India.
- The Scheme will cover all recognized domains of ICH such as oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage, Performing arts, Social practices, rituals and festive events, Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe, traditional craftsmanship etc.

Advantage With A Heritage City Tag

- The tag of a UNESCO World Heritage City will be a **powerful addition to a city's tourist branding**. Rome, Paris, Cairo and Edinburgh are good examples.
- A tourism boost is generally associated with **growth of employment in allied industries**.
- According to the UNESCO website, "a country may also **receive financial assistance and expert advice** from the World Heritage Committee to support activities for the preservation of its sites".

I.9. HERITAGE TAG

- In 2012, the Culture Ministry has filed the nomination for a Heritage tag for Delhi with UNESCO which was withdrawn later.
- Reason: Once the city comes into that heritage list, it will become difficult to make some construction in the city plans and land use plans.
- India is home to 32 of UNESCO's 1,000-odd World Heritage Sites, three of which are in Delhi: Red Fort, Qutub Minar and Humayun's Tomb.
- But, none of the world's 220 World Heritage Cities is in India.
- The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) is the nodal agency for forwarding any request for World Heritage status to any Indian site whether cultural or natural. Based on the proposals received from the Central or State Government agencies

as well as management Trusts, etc., and after their due scrutiny, the Government forwards the nomination dossiers to the World Heritage Center.

- A World Heritage Site is a place (such as a building, city, complex, desert, forest, island, lake, monument, or mountain) that is listed by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as being of special cultural or physical significance. The list is maintained by the international World Heritage Programme administered by the UNESCO World Heritage Committee, composed of 21 UNESCO member states which are elected by the General Assembly.



I.10. SAHITYA ACADEMY

- It is India's National Akademi of Letters, dedicated to promotion of literature. Though set up by the Government, the Akademi functions as an autonomous organisation
- Besides the 22 languages enumerated in Schedule VIII of the Constitution of India, the Sahitya Akademi has recognised English and Rajasthani as languages in which its programme may be implemented.
- Sahitya Academy presents Sahitya Academy Award for literature.

I.11. UNESCO'S CREATIVE CITY NETWORK

- Launched in 2004 and now comprising 116 Member Cities, the UNESCO Creative Cities Network aims to foster international cooperation with and between cities committed to investing in creativity as a driver for sustainable urban development, social inclusion and cultural vibrancy.
- The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted by it in 2015 highlights culture and creativity as key levers for sustainable urban development.
- The UNESCO Creative Cities Network includes cities within its seven creative fields (Crafts and Folk Art, Design, Film, Gastronomy, Literature, Media Arts and Music)
- Jaipur and Varanasi were recently added to the Creative Cities Network as cities of Crafts & Folk Art and Music respectively.

I.12. NOBEL PRIZE IN LITERATURE 2015

- The Nobel Prize 2015 in Literature was awarded to Belarusian author Svetlana Alexievic "for her polyphonic writings, a monument to suffering and courage in our time".
- Ms. Alexievich is the 14th women Literature Laureate.
- Ms. Alexievich, a journalist writer, used the skills of a journalist to create literature chronicling the great tragedies of the Soviet Union and its collapse- World War II, the Soviet war in Afghanistan, the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear disaster and the suicides that ensued from the death of Communism.
- Last year's literature award went to French writer Patrick Modiano.

I.13. POLICY TO ADOPT WORLD HERITAGE SITES



- UNESCO, with the help of 21 member World Heritage Committee and advisory bodies such as International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) and International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), within the framework of its Operational Guidelines, decides about the cultural and natural sites to be included on the World Heritage list.
- Such cultural and natural sites must display the necessary Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), fulfill one or more out of 10 prescribed criteria, maintain the condition of authenticity and integrity and should be in a good state of conservation.
- There are 32 sites from India declared as World Heritage sites - 25 are cultural sites and 7 are natural sites.
- Western Ghats, Kaziranga Wildlife sanctuary and Humayun's tomb have been recognised as World heritage sites, however remains at Nalanda and Golden temple are part of the tentative list submitted by India to UNESCO for acceptance
- The Criteria for the assessment of OUV as per UNESCO's Operational Guidelines are
 - ✓ to represent a masterpiece of human creative genius;
 - ✓ to exhibit an important interchange of human values,
 - ✓ to bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization
 - ✓ to be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological
 - ✓ to be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction
 - ✓ to be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance.
 - ✓ to contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance
 - ✓ to be outstanding examples representing major stages of earth's history,
 - ✓ to be outstanding examples representing significant on-going ecological and biological processes.
 - ✓ to contain the most important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity.

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