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UNESCO's Intangible Heritage List

Context: "Garba of Gujarat" has been inscribed in the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) of Humanity by UNESCO.

- Garba of Gujarat becomes the 15th element from India to join the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) list.
- The inscription highlights Garba's significant role in promoting social and gender inclusivity, serving as a unifying force.
- Garba, as a dance form, has strong ties to ritualistic and devotional practices.
- It involves participants from diverse backgrounds, reflecting a vibrant living tradition.
- The dance continues to thrive, fostering community cohesion and bringing people from all walks of life together.

About Garba

- Garba is a traditional Gujarati dance originating from the state of Gujarat, India.
- The name "Garba" is derived from the Sanskrit term "Garbha."
- Many traditional Garbas are performed around a centrally lit lamp or an image of the Hindu goddess Shakti during the nine-day Hindu festival Navratri.
- The dance symbolizes gestation or pregnancy, with participants honoring the feminine form of divinity, Durga.
- Performed in a circle, Garba reflects the Hindu view of time as cyclical, symbolizing the constant presence of the Goddess amid the changing universe.
- The Garbha Deep, a clay lantern with a light inside, symbolizes life and the Divine energy within humans.
- Modern Garba is influenced by Dandiya Raas, traditionally performed by men, creating a high-energy dance.
- Both men and women wear colorful clothing, with women in Chaniya Choli and men in Kediya.
- Traditional Garba clothing is adorned with beads, shells, mirrors, and embroidery, while women accessorize with jewelry like jhumkas and necklaces.
- Garba and Dandiya Raas have gained popularity globally, with competitions held in the United States and large-scale celebrations in cities like Toronto.
- Garba is a key part of Navratri, a nine-night celebration, with songs focusing on the nine goddesses.
- Garba styles vary across different regions of Gujarat, and participants traditionally use wooden dandiya sticks.
- India's additions in Intangible Heritage List
 - **2023:** Garba of Gujarat
 - **2021:** Durga Puja in Kolkata
 - **2017:** Kumbh Mela
 - **2016:** Nawrouz and Yoga
 - **2014:** Traditional brass and copper craft of utensil making among the Thatheras of Jandiala Guru, Punjab
 - **2013:** Sankirtana, ritual singing, drumming and dancing of Manipur
 - **2012:** Buddhist chanting of Ladakh: recitation of sacred Buddhist texts in the trans-Himalayan Ladakh region, Jammu and Kashmir
 - **2010:**
 - √ Chhau dance
 - √ Kalbelia folk songs and dances of Rajasthan
 - √ Mudi yettu, ritual theatre and dance drama of Kerala
 - **2009:** Ramman, religious festival and ritual theatre of the Garhwal Himalayas
 - **2008:**
 - √ Kutiyattam, Sanskrit theatre
 - √ Tradition of Vedic chanting
 - √ Ramlila, the traditional performance of the Ramayana

Auction of Critical Minerals Mines

Context: The bidding process of twenty blocks for commercial mining by the private sector started on November 29.

Mining Rights and Types of Blocks:

- This marks the first time mining rights for lithium ore are auctioned to private parties.
- Four blocks are auctioned for Mining Licenses (ML), allowing immediate mining operations.
- Sixteen blocks are auctioned for Composite Licenses (CL), enabling geological exploration before mining.

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Location of Critical Mineral Blocks:

- The 20 blocks are spread across eight states: Tamil Nadu, Odisha, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, and Jammu & Kashmir.

Rights Auctioned for Specific Minerals:

- Three blocks in Odisha are auctioned for ML, containing nickel, copper, graphite, and manganese deposits.
- One block in Tamil Nadu is auctioned for ML, containing molybdenum deposits.

Clearances and Approvals:

- Seventeen percent of the total concession area, amounting to 1,234 hectares, is forest land.
- Before commencing operations, the licensee needs 15 approvals and clearances, including forest and environmental clearance.

Estimated Reserves in Auctioned Blocks:

- Two blocks in J&K and Chhattisgarh are auctioned for CL, with the J&K block having inferred reserves of 5.9 million tonnes with over 3,400 tonnes of lithium metal content.
- Nickel ore reserves are found in three blocks – Bihar, Gujarat, and Odisha. The Odisha block has an inferred value of 2.05 million tonnes.

India's Current Mineral Imports:

- In FY23, India imported 2,145 tonnes of lithium carbonate and lithium oxide at a total cost of Rs 732 crore.
- For nickel, India imported 32,000 tonnes at a cost of Rs 6,549 crore.
- Copper ore imports in 2022-23 amounted to 1.2 million tonnes at a cost of Rs 27,374 crore.
- India is 100% reliant on imports for lithium and nickel and 93% for copper.

Future Plans and Auction Tranches:

- The bidding process follows the government's declaration of 30 minerals as "critical," allowing the mining of lithium, niobium, and REEs.
- A second tranche of critical mineral blocks is expected after the ongoing auction.
- The Geological Survey of India has taken up 125 projects to explore critical mineral reserves.
- A Centre of Excellence for Critical Minerals is recommended to frame policies and incentives for the complete value chain in the country.

Critical Minerals in India:

- Critical minerals play a pivotal role in both economic development and national security.
- The susceptibility to supply chain vulnerabilities and potential disruptions stems from factors such as the limited availability of these minerals or the concentration of extraction and processing activities in specific geographic locations.
- This underscores the importance of diversifying sources and ensuring a resilient supply chain for these essential elements.
- List of critical minerals in India:
- For India these are Antimony, Beryllium, Bismuth, Cobalt, Copper, Gallium, Germanium, Graphite, Hafnium, Indium, Lithium, Molybdenum, Niobium, Nickel, PGE, Phosphorous, Potash, REE, Rhenium, Silicon, Strontium, Tantalum, Tellurium, Tin, Titanium, Tungsten, Vanadium, Zirconium, Selenium and Cadmium.
- The number of critical minerals vary from country to country, as US has 50, EU has 34 and Canada has 31.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar

Context: The President, Vice President, and Prime Minister paid floral tribute to Dr. B.R. Ambedkar on his Mahaparinirvan Diwas.

- Despite being born into the Hindu Mahar caste, considered "untouchable" at the time, Babasaheb overcame societal limitations to pursue a top-notch education.
- He obtained a law degree from Lincoln's Inn and earned doctorates from Columbia University and the London School of Economics, establishing himself as an exceptional scholar in law, economics, and political science.
- Born on 14 April 1891 in Mhow (now Dr. Ambedkar Nagar), he excelled in various roles early in his career, including economist, professor, and lawyer.

Contributions to Society

- In 1924, Babasaheb initiated an Association for the welfare of the depressed classes, and by 1927, he launched the Bahishkrit Bharat newspaper to champion their cause.
- He actively led the Mahad Satyagraha in March 1927 and actively participated in all three Round Table Conferences.
- In 1932, Dr. Ambedkar, in collaboration with Mahatma Gandhi, signed the Poona Pact, abandoning the concept of separate electorates for the depressed classes (Communal Award).
- Establishing the Independent Labour Party in 1936, he aimed to safeguard the interests of the depressed classes.

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- Appointed to the Executive Council of the Governor General of India in 1942 as a Labour member, he was elected to the Constituent Assembly from Bengal in 1946.
- Serving as the Chairman of the Drafting Committee, Dr. Ambedkar is hailed as the Father of the Indian Constitution.
- In 1947, he assumed the role of Minister of Law in independent India's first Cabinet.
- However, he resigned from the cabinet in 1951 due to differences over the Hindu Code Bill.

Drafting Committee

The drafting committee of the Indian Constitution comprised seven members, initially consisting of:

1. Alladi Krishnaswami Ayyar
2. N. Gopaldaswami
3. B.R. Ambedkar (serving as the Chairman of the drafting committee)
4. K.M Munshi
5. Mohammad Saadulla
6. B.L. Mitter
7. D.P. Khaitan

Due to health issues, B.L. Mitter resigned and was succeeded by N Madhav Rau. Following the demise of D.P. Khaitan in 1948, TT Krishnamachari took his place on the committee.

No	Events in the Buddha life	Symbols
01	Birth	Elephant Bull Lotus Foot Print (Newly born child)
02	Great Renunciation	Horse Begging bowl Gandha Kuti Empty Throne
03	Enlightenment	Bodhi Tree Vajra Asana
04	Teachings (Sermon)	Dhammachakra Lion- The Buddha's teachings are referred as the " The Great roar of the Lion" Deer-First sermon at deer park Foot Print -it symbolise that many a places were purified as the Buddha went there by walk
05	Parinirvana	Stupa

NEWS IN BETWEEN THE LINES

International Civil Aviation Day



About International Civil Aviation Day:

- International Civil Aviation Day is celebrated on **December 7th every year**.
- The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) is a **specialized agency of the United Nations**.
- The day also recognises the special contribution of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) in maintaining the **efficiency, safety** and cooperation of international aviation.
- It was established in **1994** as part of the International Civil Aviation Organization's (ICAO) **50th anniversary**.
- The United Nations General Assembly officially recognized the day in **1996**.
- The United Nations and other international organizations celebrate this day to recognize the importance of aviation to the world's social and economic development.
- The theme for International Civil Aviation Day **2023** is "**Advancing Innovation for Global Aviation Development**."

Gram Manchitra



Recently, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj has launched Geographic Information System application "Gram Manchitra" to encourage the Spatial Planning by the Gram Panchayat

About Gram Manchitra:

- Gram Manchitra is a **spatial planning app** for India.
- It is based on the **National Informatics Centre's (NIC)** Geographic Information System (GIS) platform of Bharat Maps.
- The application's goal is to **promote digitalization and e-governance** at the grassroots level.
- It helps Gram Panchayats to visualize and plan for projects effectively.
- Gram Manchitra provides a **unified geospatial platform** that offers a comprehensive view of developmental works across various sectors.

Environment Impact Assessment



Recently, the Union government told to the Parliament that the Char Dham project in Uttarakhand, under which the Silkyara tunnel is being developed, did not require an Environment Impact Assessment (EIA).

Environment Impact Assessment:

- Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is a tool used to evaluate the **positive and negative environmental, economic** and social impacts of a project.
- It is **used to predict the environmental impacts** of a project in the pre-planning stage so that decisions can be taken to reduce the adverse impacts.
- The concept of EIA emerged in the **1960s and 1970s** as a response to growing concerns about the environmental impacts of large-scale development projects.
- **On 27 January 1994**, the **Union Ministry of Environment and Forests**, Government of India issued the first EIA notification.

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Lakadong Turmeric



Recently, Lakadong Turmeric of Meghalaya has been awarded with the Geographical Indication (GI) tag.

About Lakadong Turmeric:

- Lakadong turmeric is a **variety of turmeric** that originated in **Jaintia Hills**, Meghalaya.
- Lakadong turmeric is considered to be one of the **world's best varieties of turmeric** with a curcumin content of around **6.8 to 7.5** per cent.
- Curcumin is the compound that gives turmeric its bright yellow color and has **anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties**.
- **Garo Dakmanda** (traditional dress), **Larnai pottery** and **Garo Chubitchi** (alcoholic beverage) have also been awarded with the Geographical Indication (GI) tag.

Place in News

Sweden

The U.S. and Sweden have recently signed a first-ever defence cooperation agreement that will strengthen military ties and permit bilateral exercises.

Sweden (Capital: Stockholm)

Location: Sweden is located in Northern Europe on the Scandinavian Peninsula.

Boundaries: Sweden shares its boundaries with **Norway** to the west and north, **Finland** to the east and the **Baltic Sea** and **Gulf of Bothnia** to the south and east.

Physical Features:

- The lowest elevation in Sweden is in the bay of **Lake Hammarsjon**, near Kristianstad.
- **Kebnekaise** is the highest point in Sweden.
- **Oland** is the second-largest Swedish island and the smallest of the traditional provinces of Sweden.



POINTS TO PONDER

- ❖ What are the names of the dams being constructed recently on the Painganga River? - **Upper Painganga and Lower Painganga**
- ❖ What was the last cultural item from India added to the UNESCO list before 'Garba'? - **Kolkata's Durga Puja**
- ❖ Which lake is famous for its phums and a floating national park and serves as a sanctuary for the endangered sangai. - **Loktak Lake, Manipur**
- ❖ During whose tenure was the Indian Post Office Act of 1898 enacted? - **Viceroy Lord Elgin-II (1894-1899)**
- ❖ Which organization did Mahatma Jyotiba Phule and Savitribai Phule establish in 1873? - **Satyashodhak Samaj**

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