



CURRENT AFFAIRS

≡ 16 DECEMBER, 2021 ≡

1. Durga Puja added to ICH Why in news?

Intergovernmental Committee of UNESCO's 2003 Convention on Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) has inscribed '**Durga Puja in Kolkata**' on the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity during its 16th session being held at Paris, France.

About :

The auspicious festival of Durga Puja is an annual five-day celebration originating in the Indian subcontinent which pays homage to the goddess Maa Durga. It celebrates the victory of good over evil as goddess Durga killed demon king Mahishasur. According to Hindu mythology, it is believed that the goddess visits her earthly abode during this time to bless her devotees.

It is celebrated not only in Bengal but also in other states like Odisha, Assam, Tripura, Bihar and Jharkhand. Durga Puja not only is a celebration of

the feminine divinity but is a consummate expression of dance, music, crafts, rituals, practices culinary and cultural aspects.

The festival transcends the boundaries of caste, creed and economic classes and joins the people together in its celebration.

Significance:

Durga Puja highlights the best of Indian traditions and ethos and Kolkata's Durga Puja is an experience everyone must have.

This is a recognition of the confluence of India's rich heritage, culture, rituals and practices and a celebration of the feminine divinity and the spirit of womanhood.

Cultural Heritage:

According to unesco.org, "cultural heritage does not end at monuments and collections of objects.

It also includes traditions or living expressions inherited from our ancestors and passed on to our descendants, such as oral traditions,

performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe or the knowledge and skills to produce traditional crafts”.

The Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity has 492 elements currently. India now has 14 intangible cultural heritage elements on the Unesco list. Other Indian entries that were previously inscribed include Nowrouz (2016), Ramlila (2008), Yoga (2016) and Kumbh Mela (2017).

2. Programme for Semiconductors and Display Manufacturing Ecosystem

Why in news?

Union Cabinet has approved programme for Development of Semiconductors and Display Manufacturing Ecosystem in the country.

76 thousand crore rupees will be spent on this project in the next six years. This will strengthen India's journey towards Aatma Nirbhar Bharat.

In the last seven years, the country has reached 75 billion US dollars in the electronic manufacturing sector. In the next six years it will reach up to 300 billion US dollars.

Significance :

The decision will have multiplier effects across different sectors and this will contribute significantly to achieve one trillion US dollar digital economy and five trillion US dollar GDP by 2025.

3. Vijay Varsh

Why in news?

PM lit victory flame to mark the beginning of Swarnim Vijay Varsh celebrations.

About:

Indian Armed Forces secured a decisive victory over Pakistan which resulted in the Liberation of Bangladesh in 1971. It was the largest military surrender after the Second World War. The Indian Armed Forces along with Mukti Bahini liberated Bangladesh in a span of just 13 days.

To commemorate the glorious victory of 1971, year 2021 was marked as 'Swarnim Vijay Varsh'. Prime Minister had lit the Victory Flame to mark the beginning of Swarnim Vijay Varsh celebrations.

Various events were organized by the Indian Army at many locations in West Bengal and all North-East states throughout the year. A

'Swarnim Vijay Gatha' is being organized at Victoria Memorial in Kolkata tomorrow which would also mark the culmination of celebrations of Swarnim Vijay Varsh.

4. ASEEM

Why in news?

Around 56 thousand candidates have been placed through ASEEM portal across the country and 1.3 crore candidates have been registered on ASEEM portal so far according to the Minister of State for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.

About:

Aatamanirbhar Skilled Employee Employer Mapping (ASEEM)' portal was launched to act as a directory of skilled workforce.

By Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) in collaboration with Bengaluru-based company 'Betterplace'.

It will fill the gorge between the employer and employee, providing opportunities to the skilled workforce of India.

5. Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters between India and Poland.

About:

Cabinet has approved the Treaty on

Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters between India and Poland.

The Treaty will enhance capability and effectiveness of both countries in investigation and prosecution of crimes, including crimes related to terrorism through mutual legal assistance.

It aims to enhance effectiveness of both the countries in investigation and prosecution of crime, through cooperation and mutual legal assistance in criminal matters.

In the context of transnational crime and its linkages to terrorism, the proposed Treaty will provide a broad legal framework for bilateral cooperation with Poland in investigation and prosecution of crime as well as in tracing, restraining, and confiscation of proceeds and instruments of crime.

6. Price Stabilization Fund

Why in news?

The Centre has set up the Price Stabilization Fund to tackle price volatility of agro commodities such as onion, potato, and pulses to protect the interests of consumers.

About:

Buffer stocks of pulses and onion are maintained under price stabilization

fund to moderate the prices, hence curb food inflation. These efforts deter speculative and hoarding activities.

The Government has issued advisory to States and Union Territories to set up the State-level Price Stabilisation Fund corpus.

A buffer stock of more than two lakh metric tonnes of onion has been maintained in this fiscal year.

7. Incentive scheme for RuPay Debit Cards and BHIM-UPI

About:

Cabinet has approved an incentive scheme for promotion of RuPay Debit Cards and low-value BHIM-UPI transactions.

Banks will be incentivized for low-value BHIM-UPI transactions by way of paying a percentage of value of transactions.

This initiative will facilitate acquiring Banks in building robust digital payment ecosystem.

It will promote RuPay debit cards and Bhim UPI digital transactions. The scheme will deepen digital payments in the country and make accessible digital modes of payments to unbanked and marginalized populations.

8. Atal Tinkering Labs

Why in news?

Over 112 crore rupees have been released for 9356 schools for Atal Tinkering Labs in the country under Atal Innovation Mission, according to the Minister of State for Planning.

About:

With a vision to 'Cultivate one Million children in India as Neoteric Innovators', Atal Innovation Mission established Atal Tinkering Laboratories (ATLs) in schools across India.

It will foster curiosity, creativity, and imagination in young minds; and inculcate skills such as design mindset, computational thinking, adaptive learning, physical computing etc.

The aim of these labs is to cultivate 10 lakh children in the country as Neoteric Innovators.

Its objectives are:

- To create workspaces that is suitable for young minds to learn innovation skills, develop ideas via hands-on activities, work and learn in a flexible environment.
- To empower youth with the 21st-century skills of creativity, innovation, critical thinking, design thinking, social and cross-cultural collaboration, ethical leadership etc.

- To help build innovative solutions for India's unique problems, thereby supporting the nation's efforts to grow as a knowledge economy.

9. India's first Green Hydrogen Microgrid Projects

About:

India's first Green Hydrogen Microgrid Projects to be set up at Simhadri near Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh.

National Thermal Power Corporation Limited, NTPC said, the projects will be a precursor to large-scale hydrogen energy storage projects and would be useful for studying and deploying multiple microgrids in various off-grid and strategic locations of the country.

The hydrogen produced during sunshine hours will be stored at high pressure and electrified using a 50 Kilo Watt Solid Oxide Fuel Cell.

The system will work in standalone

mode from 5 PM in the evening to 7 AM in the morning. This unique project for India, will open doors for decarbonising the far-off regions of the country like Ladakh and Jammu and Kashmir.

10. Indian Ocean Dialogue

Why in news?

The eighth Indian Ocean Dialogue was held.

About:

It was jointly hosted by External Affairs Ministry and the Indian Council of World Affairs. The theme for this year's edition was Leveraging Digital Technologies for Health, Education, Development, and Trade in Indian Ocean Rim Association Member States.

The Indian Ocean Dialogue (IOD) is a flagship initiative of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), with its origins in the 13th Council of Ministers meeting, held in November

