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**NATIONAL**

**INTERNATIONAL**

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**ENVIRONMENT**

**SCIENCE &  
TECHNOLOGY**

**WEEKLY  
CURRENT AFFAIR**

WEEK- 23rd AUG - 29th AUG

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# International

## **International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and Its Abolition:**



The day is observed on the 23rd of August every year. The day is observed annually to commemorate the remembrance of the slave trade and its abolition. It is observed in

accordance with the goals of the intercultural project "The Slave Route". The aim of observing this day is to pay tribute to the people who, on 22 to 23 August 1791, revolted against the system of slavery and started the Haitian Revolution.

**History:** The night of 22 to 23 August 1791, in Santo Domingo (today Haiti and the Dominican Republic) saw the beginning of the uprising that would play a crucial role in the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade. This uprising was a turning point in human history.

It is against this background that the International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition is commemorated on 23 August each year.

The UNESCO Executive Board adopted Resolution 29 C/40 to observe the International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and Its Abolition every year on 23 August. It was first celebrated in a number of countries, in particular in Haiti (23 August 1998) and Goree in Senegal (23 August 1999).

Recently, the International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and Its Abolition was observed on 23 August.

## **International Day Commemorating the Victims of Acts of Violence Based on Religion or Belief:**



The day is observed on the 22nd of August every year. The day is observed to strongly condemn continuing violence and acts of terrorism targeting individuals, including persons belonging to religious minorities, on the basis of or in the name of religion or belief.

The day was adopted at the 73rd UN General Assembly on 28 May 2019 as proposed by Poland.

The main purpose of this day is to create awareness among people to attain justice for the survivors of past abuses. It is the duty of every government in the world that must take the right decision to 'never again' tolerate genocide or other atrocities.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights: Freedom of religion or belief, freedom of opinion and expression, the right to peaceful assembly and the right to freedom of association are enshrined in articles 18, 19 and 20 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

### **Africa:**



Africa is the world's second-largest and second-most populous continent, after Asia. The continent is surrounded by the Mediterranean Sea to the north, the Isthmus of Suez and the Red Sea to the northeast, the Indian Ocean to the southeast and the Atlantic Ocean to the west. The continent includes Madagascar and various archipelagos. It contains 54 fully recognized sovereign states (countries), eight territories and two de facto independent states with limited or no recognition. Around 2000 languages are spoken in Africa and it is the source of the world's longest river i.e., River Nile. The Sahara is the largest desert in the world and is bigger than the continental USA. Lake Victoria is the largest lake in Africa and the second-largest freshwater lake in the world.

Recently, World Health Organization (WHO) declared Africa free of polio, a landmark in a decades-long campaign to eradicate the notorious disease around the world.

The WHO commission certified that no cases had occurred on the continent for the past 4 years, the threshold for eradication of poliovirus. Poliovirus now joins smallpox in the list of viruses that have been wiped out in Africa.

**WHO:** It is an acronym for World Health Organization. WHO was created in 1948 by member states of the United Nations (UN) as a specialized agency with a broad mandate for international public health. It is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland. The main objective of WHO is "the attainment by all peoples of the highest possible standard of health." The current Director-general of WHO is Tedros Adhanom.

WHO has played a leading role in several public health achievements, most notably the eradication of smallpox, the near-eradication of polio, and the development of an Ebola vaccine. Its current priorities include communicable diseases, particularly HIV/AIDS, Ebola, malaria and tuberculosis; non-communicable diseases such as heart disease and cancer; healthy diet, nutrition, and food security; occupational health; and substance abuse.

### **ASEAN-India Virtual Business Council Meet:**



The Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Shri Piyush Goyal recently addressed the ASEAN-India Business Council virtual meet. The meeting was held on 27 August 2020.

The business council meeting provided a forum to discuss concerns and best practices, share ideas, and flag the problems, so that together both the partners are able to succeed, secure future, work together, attain prosperity, and achieve a target of \$300 billion trade.

A free trade agreement (FTA) was also inked by both the sides. Both sides agreed to review the ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement that was signed in 2009.

**ASEAN:** It refers to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. ASEAN is a regional intergovernmental organization and it comprises of 10 countries in Southeast Asia. It was created on 8 August 1967 by 5 countries namely Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Philippines and Thailand. The ASEAN Secretariat is located at Jakarta, Indonesia. It was created with an aim to promote intergovernmental cooperation. The organization also facilitates political, economic, military, educational, security, and socio-cultural integration among its members as well as in other countries in Asia. ASEAN has been India's utmost priority under its Act East Policy. The 10 member countries are Indonesia, Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, Philippines, Vietnam, Brunei, Cambodia, Myanmar (Burma), Laos.



## National

### The Textile Ministry:



The Ministry of Textiles is an Indian government national agency. It is responsible for the formulation of policy, planning, development, export promotion and regulation of the textile industry in India. It was founded on 1st April 1999. The current Union Minister of Textile is Smriti Zubin Irani and State Minister of Textile is Ajay Tamta.

Recently, the Union Minister of Textiles and Women & Child Development Smt Smriti Zubin Irani addressed the award giving ceremony for winners of the Textile Grand Challenge 2019.

**Textile Grand Challenge 2019:** The challenge was organized by the Ministry of Textiles with the active support of National Jute Board and the Start up India Team of the Department for Promotion of Industry & Industrial Trade (DPIIT).

The main aim of organizing this event was to bring forward innovative ideas by start-ups/entrepreneurs for development of cost effective and low-weight carry bags using Jute Bio-mass, Jute Plant based bio-polymer and cotton fibre waste to phase out plastic bags.

It is also an initiative towards ‘Atmanirbhar Bharat’ and ‘Make in India’. Under it, innovative solutions were sought for (i) Alternative to single-use Plastic bags and (ii) Alternative to Multi-use Plastic bags, using domestically grown natural fibres viz; Jute and Cotton.

## **UDAN:**



The full form of UDAN is ‘Ude Desh ka Aam Nagarik. UDAN is a regional airport development scheme that was launched in 2017 as a flagship program of the Union Government to start air connectivity operations on the unserved routes in the country. This scheme is a part of the National Civil Aviation Policy (NCAP) and is funded jointly by the GoI and the state governments. The scheme aims at enhancing connectivity to remote and regional areas of the country and making air travel affordable. It is the key component of Centre’s National Civil Aviation Policy led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Recently, under the fourth version of the government’s regional connectivity scheme (RCS) UDAN 4.0, 78 new routes have been approved following the three successful rounds of bidding by the Ministry of Civil Aviation. It seeks to further boost regional connectivity in remote areas of the country.

UDAN 4.0 was launched in December 2019 focusing on boosting connectivity in the North East, hilly states and Islands. It is in line with the Act East Policy of the Central Government.

The airports that had already been developed by AAI are given higher priority for the award of VGF (Viability Gap Funding) under the Scheme. Under UDAN 4, the operation of helicopter and seaplanes is also been incorporated. Since its inception, MoCA has operationalised 274 UDAN routes that have connected 45 airports and 3 heliports.

So far, 766 routes have been sanctioned under the UDAN scheme. 29 served, 08 unserved (including 02 heliports and 01 water aerodrome), and 02 underserved airports have been included in the list for approved routes.

The aviation ministry seeks to operationalizing 1000 routes and more than 100 airports within 5 years. Incentives would be provided for the development of short-haul routes only, providing connectivity to nearby airports.



## Women's Equality Day:



The day is observed on 26th August every year. It is observed primarily in the US on August 26, to commemorate American women getting the constitutional right to vote. The 19th Amendment to the US Constitution was adopted in 1920. The law prohibits denying citizens, of the United States, the right to vote on the basis of gender. This day was first marked in 1972. It is proclaimed each year by the President of the United States. Women's Equality Day is now often observed across the world to encourage and spread awareness about women's empowerment.

Some of the other Western states in 1910 began to give women the right to vote. Also, several Eastern and Southern states refused to give women the right to vote. But on 26 August, 1920, the 19th Amendment was passed to the United States Constitution which granted women the right to vote. So, it can be rightly said that on 26 August, 1920, women's right to vote became a part of the US constitution.

Recently, the 100th anniversary of the Women's Equality Day was observed in the United States. In India, Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar greeted entire women community on the occasion of women's equality day.

## NSFE:



It refers to the National Strategy for Financial Education. NCFE is a Section 8 (Not for Profit) Company promoted by Reserve Bank of India (RBI), Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) and Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA).

Recently, the second edition The NSFE: 2020-2025 documents have been released by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). The first one was released in 2013.

This NSFE for the period 2020-2025 has been prepared by the National Centre for Financial Education (NCFE) in consultation with all the Financial Sector Regulators namely RBI, SEBI, IRDAI, PFRDA, and other relevant stakeholders. It has been prepared under the aegis of the Technical Group on Financial

Inclusion and Financial Literacy (TGFIFL) under the Chairmanship of the Deputy Governor of RBI Shri M. K. Jain. The document was approved by the FSDC-SC in its 24th meeting which was held on June 2020.

The NSFE document seeks to support the Vision of the Government of India (GoI) and Financial Sector Regulators by empowering various sections of the population to develop adequate knowledge, skills, attitude and behavior which are needed to manage their money better and plan for their future. It has recommended a '5 C' approach for dissemination of financial education in the country.

The '5 C' approach of the strategy are Content, Capacity, Community, Communication and Collaboration.

Content: Emphasis on development of relevant content in curriculum in schools, colleges and training establishments,

Capacity: Developing capacity among intermediaries involved in providing financial services,

Community and Communication: Leveraging the positive effect of community-led model for financial literacy through appropriate communication strategy.

Collaboration: Enhancing collaboration among various stakeholders.

## Indian policy News

### **NDHM:**



It refers to National Digital Health Mission. The NDHM was announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the occasion of 74th Independence Day. The National Health Authority (NHA), the central agency, has been mandated to design and roll out NDHM in the country. NHA, is also responsible for the implementation of Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana.

Recently, a Draft Health Data Management Policy under the National Digital Health Mission (NDHM) has been released by National Health Authority (NHA). It has been released on the official website of National Digital Health



Mission (NDHM) and will be available for public comments and feedback till 3rd of September 2020.

The Draft Policy is the maiden step in realizing NDHM's guiding principle of "Security and Privacy by Design" for the protection of individuals' data privacy. The data which will be collected across the National Digital Health Ecosystem (NDHE) will be stored in at the central level, the state or Union Territory level and at the health facility level, by adopting the principle of minimality at each point, according to the document.

The main objective for Draft Health Data Management Policy is to encompass various aspects pertaining to health data like data privacy, consent management, data sharing and protection. The draft also proposes to establish institutional mechanism body which will conduct audits of the National Digital Health Ecosystem.

### **NFSA 2013:**



It refers to the National Food Security Act, 2013. A letter has recently been sent by the Department of Food and Public Distribution to State Governments and UTs to include all eligible disabled persons under the National Food Security Act, NFSA 2013.

As per the letter, the Department of Food and Public Distribution has advised all States and UTs to ensure that all disabled persons, who are eligible as per identification criteria of beneficiaries under NFSA, are covered under the National Food Security Act and they get their entitled quota of food grains under NFSA and Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana as per provisions of the Act.

Section 38 of the Act mandates that the Central Government may from time to time give directions to the State Governments for effective implementation if the provisions of the Act. The Section 10 of the National Food Security Act, 2013 provides for coverage of persons under the Antyodaya Anna Yojana.

The Atma Nirbhar Bharat Package of the Government of India is for the persons, who are not covered either under NFSA or any States Scheme PDS Cards. Hence, the disabled persons without ration cards are also eligible for getting benefits under Atma Nirbhar Bharat package.

## NITI Aayog:



It refers to the National Institution for Transforming India Aayog. NITI Aayog is the premier policy 'Think Tank' of the Government of India (GoI). It was established with the aim to achieve sustainable development goals with cooperative federalism by fostering the involvement of State Governments of India in the economic policy-making process using a bottom-up approach. It was founded on 1 January 2015 to replace the Planning Commission instituted in 1950. It is headquartered in New Delhi. The Governing Council of NITI includes the Prime Minister as its Chairman. It comprises of Chief Ministers of all States and Lt. Governors of Union Territories (UTs). The current Vice Chairman of NITI Aayog is Rajiv Kumar the Chief Executive Officer(CEO) is Amitabh Kant.

Recently, NITI Aayog launched an Indian component called as Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC)- Transport Initiative for Asia (TIA). NDC-TIA has been set up as a multi-stakeholder dialogue platform in order to decarbonize transport in India. It is supported by International Climate initiative (IKI), belonging to the ministry of Germany for environment, nature conservation and nuclear safety (BMU). NITI Aayog is the implementing partner for NDC-TIA in India.

The NDC-TIA seeks to offer a platform to provide inputs by various entities related to challenges faced in India's transport system in order to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emission. It will also offer technical support on GHG emission reduction measures. In addition, the programme having duration of 4 years, not only aims to focus on electric mobility by interconnecting the transport and energy sector but also to decarbonize transport sector in India, Vietnam and China. The inputs are expected to come from ministry experts, think tanks, international development agencies and public and private organizations.

# Science and Technology

## **Omega Centauri:**



A team of scientists from the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA), an autonomous institute under the Department of Science & Technology (DST), Government of India (GoI) studied numerous stars of this cluster and discovered He-enhanced cool bright stars among the metal-rich sample of Omega Centauri. This is the first-ever spectroscopic determination of He-abundance in Omega Centauri. This work has been published in 'The Astrophysical Journal'.

Globular clusters are the stellar systems with millions of stars formed from the same gaseous cloud. Hence, usually, the stars formed will be homogeneous in their chemical composition of elemental abundances. However, there are clusters which deviate from this norm. One is being Omega Centauri, the brightest and the largest globular cluster in our Galaxy, the Milky Way.

The different stars of Omega Centauri do not show the same metal content, a parameter that indicates its age, but a large range in it.

Though there are estimations of He-enhancement in the H-core burning main-sequence stars (like Sun) of Omega Cen, this is the first-ever spectroscopic determination of He-abundance in Omega Centauri.

## **AUDFs01:**



AUDFs01 is one of the earliest galaxies that has been discovered recently by a global team of Scientists from the Inter University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics (IUCAA) using AstroSat. The team comprises scientists from India, Switzerland, France, USA, Japan and Netherlands. The discovery was led by Dr Kanak Saha associate professor at Iucaa and the paper has been published by Nature Astronomy.

The team discovered one of the earliest galaxies in extreme ultraviolet light. The galaxy is located in the Hubble Extreme Deep field, 9.3 billion light-years away from Earth.

**AstraSat:** AstroSat is India's first multi-wavelength satellite that has five unique X-ray and ultraviolet telescopes working in tandem, has detected extreme UV light from a galaxy called AUDFs01, 9.3 billion light-years away from Earth.

It was launched by the Indian launch vehicle PSLV from Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota on September 28, 2015 by ISRO. The scientific payload contains six instruments which are the Ultra Violet Imaging Telescope (UVIT), the Soft X-ray imaging Telescope (SXT), the LAXPC Instrument, the Cadmium Zinc Telluride Imager (CZTI), the Scanning Sky Monitor (SSM), and the Charged Particle Monitor (CPM). The Ground Command and Control Centre for ASTROSAT is located at ISRO Telemetry, Tracking and Command Network (ISTRAC), Bangalore, India.

### **DGNCC Mobile Training App:**



The Defence Minister Rajnath Singh recently launched the Directorate General National Cadet Corps (DGNCC) Mobile Training App. The App will assist in conducting countrywide online training of NCC cadets.

The DGNCC Mobile Training App aims at providing NCC cadets entire training material on one platform.

The App has a query option. By using this option, a cadet can post his question related to the training syllabus and the same will be answered by a panel of qualified instructors.

## **Sports News**

### **Sophia Popov:**



She is World number 304 golfer from Germany. She has recently become the first female golfer from Germany to capture a major title after winning the Women's British Open by two strokes at Royal Troon in Scotland.

Popov, who went into the final round with a three-shot lead, bounced back from bogeying the first hole by making five birdies in her 3-under 68. Thailand's Jasmine Suwannapura was the runner-up after shooting 67. It completed one of the most unlikely wins in the tournament's history.

**Golf:** It is a club-and-ball sport in which players use various clubs to hit balls into a series of holes on a course in as few strokes as possible.

### **UEFA Champions League:**



The UEFA Champions League (abbreviated as UCL, also known as the European Cup) is an annual club football competition organised by the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) and contested by top-division European clubs, deciding the competition winners through a group and knockout format. It is one of the most prestigious football tournaments in the world and the most prestigious club competition in European football, played by the national league champions. It was introduced in 1955 as the European Champion Clubs' Cup. It took its current name in 1992.

Recently, German giants Bayern Munich have won the European Champions League for the sixth time. They beat the French side Paris Saint-Germain 1-0 at the final in Portugal's capital, Lisbon.

A goal by French winger Kingsley Coman at the 59th minute was enough for the Munich side to dash the Parisians' dream of winning for the first time the UEFA Champions League. The competition started in June 2019.

### **National Sports Day:**



National Sports Day is observed in India on the 29th of August every year to commemorate the birth anniversary of Indian Hockey Legend Major Dhyan Chand Singh. The first National Sports Day was celebrated on 29th August 2012.

The day is celebrated to create awareness among the general public on the importance of sports and to attract attention towards sports in India.

The celebration of this day is organized at the Rashtrapati Bhavan where the sports related awards like Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna, Arjuna Award and Dronacharya Award are distributed.

This year, the Sports Authority of India hosted the first virtual National Sports Award ceremony of National Sports Day 2020 due to the pandemic crisis.

Sixty out of seventy four awardees attended the virtual ceremony conducted across the 11 Sports Authority of India(SAI) centres in different centres and received the honours from President Ram Nath Kovind.

The National Sports Day is also called with the name Rashtriya Khel Divas in some part of India. In 1979, the Indian Postal Department paid tribute to Major Dhyan Chand after his death and renamed the National Stadium of Delhi as Major Dhyan Chand Stadium, Delhi.

**Major Dhyan Chand:** Major Dhyan Chand also known as the wizard of a hockey player as during his period was born on 29th August 1905, in Allahabad. He had an extraordinary talent for scoring goals, due to which India won hockey gold medals in the Olympic Games of 1928, 1932, and 1936. His era is called the "golden period" of Indian hockey.

He was so passionate about hockey, which he used to practice for the game at night in the moonlight that his fellow players started addressing him with the nickname "Chand".

After India's first match at the Berlin Olympics of 1936, crowds of people started to gather at the hockey ground to watch Dhyan Chand's magical hockey. He was popularly known as "The Wizard" for his magical touch, superb control, creativity and extraordinary goal-scoring feats. Hockey magician Dhyan Chand's autobiography is titled "Goal", published in 1952.

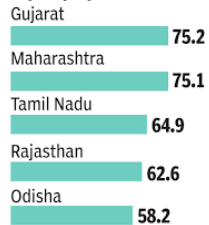
He announced his retirement from hockey in the year 1948. He had scored more than 400 goals in his entire international career. He was awarded the Padma Bhushan, the third-highest civilian honor, in the year 1956 by the Government of India.



## Export Preparedness Index (EPI) 2020:

### LEADING THE PACK

Export preparedness score



Source: NITI Aayog

The Export Preparedness Index 2020 was recently released by the NITI Aayog in partnership with the Institute of Competitiveness. The Report was released by Dr. Rajiv Kumar, Vice Chairman, Niti Aayog; Shri. Amitabh Kant, CEO, Niti Aayog and Ishtiyaque Ahmed, Adviser, Niti Aayog.

This edition of the EPI has shown that most Indian states performed well on average across the sub-pillars of Exports Diversification, Transport Connectivity, and Infrastructure. The average score of Indian states in these three sub-pillars was above 50%.

According to the report released, 6 coastal states which are Gujarat, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Odisha, Karnataka and Kerala are featured in the top ten rankings, indicating the presence of strong enabling and facilitating factors to promote exports.

In the coastal states, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu occupy the top three ranks, respectively.

In the landlocked states, Rajasthan has performed the best, followed by Telangana and Haryana.

Among the Himalayan states, Uttarakhand is the highest, followed by Tripura and Himachal Pradesh.

As for the Union Territories, Delhi has performed the best, followed by Goa and Chandigarh.

**EPI:** It refers to the Export Preparedness Index. EPI is a data-driven effort to identify the core areas crucial for export promotion at the sub-national level. The main focus of EPI is to identify challenges and opportunities, enhance the effectiveness of government policies and encourage a facilitative regulatory framework.

The four pillar structures of EPI are Policy, Business Ecosystem, Export Ecosystem and Export Performance.

It has 11 sub-pillars which are Export Promotion Policy, Institutional Framework, Business Environment, Infrastructure, Transport Connectivity,

Access to Finance, Export Infrastructure, Trade Support, R&D Infrastructure, Export Diversification, and Growth Orientation.

### **NABARD:**



It refers to the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development. NABARD is an apex development finance institution in India. It was founded on 12 July 1982. The bank has been entrusted with "matters concerning policy, planning, and operations in the field of credit for agriculture and other economic activities in rural areas in India". It is headquartered in Mumbai, Maharashtra. The current Chairman is Govinda Rajulu Chintala.

Recently, NABARD has introduced 'Structured Finance and Partial Guarantee Programme to NBFC-MFIs' for Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC) and Microfinance Institutions (MFIs).

It is a dedicated debt and credit guarantee product which seeks to ensure the unhindered flow of credit in rural areas hit by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Under this programme, NABARD will provide partial guarantee on pooled loans extended to small and mid-sized microfinance institutions (MFIs). It will help facilitate ₹2,500 crore funding in the initial phase and is expected to be scaled up going forward. The programme is expected to cover over 1 million households across 28 states and 650 districts.

NABARD has recently signed agreements with Vivriti Capital and Ujjivan Small Finance Bank to roll out the initiative. This will enhance access to sustainable finance for micro enterprises and low-income households.

### **Chhavni COVID: Yodha Sanrakshan Yojana:**



The Minister of Defence Rajnath Singh recently launched the 'Chhavni COVID: Yodha Sanrakshan Yojana.' The scheme which is a group life insurance scheme through the Life Insurance Corporation (LIC), was launched by him during a webinar attended by presidents, vice-presidents and chief executive officers of all 62 cantonment boards.

The webinar was organized by the Ministry of Defence and Directorate General of Defence Estates (DGDE) to improve implementation of Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) in 62 cantonments around the country.

This scheme will cover more than 10,000 employees in all 62 Cantonment Boards in event of any unfortunate fatal calamity with an insurance cover of Rs five lakhs each. It aims to benefit permanent and contractual employees including doctors, paramedics and sanitation staff.

## Places in News

### **Uttar Pradesh (UP):**



Uttar Pradesh is a state in northern India. It was created on 1 April 1937 as the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh during British rule, and was renamed Uttar Pradesh in 1950. Its Capital city is Lucknow. The Chief Minister and the Governor of Uttar Pradesh are Yogi Adityanath and Anandiben Patel respectively.

Recently, an ambitious NRI unified portal was launched by UP's Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. It has been launched by the Uttar Pradesh government to provide assistance to overseas Indians and NRIs of the state during any emergency.

This portal would not only help in investment in the state, but also provide an opportunity for those who want to go abroad.

The website which can be accessed at [nri.up.gov.in](http://nri.up.gov.in) will provide a platform for NRIs keen to know about their roots or those seeking help from the UP Government related to their homes or families in the state.

### **Andaman & Nicobar Islands:**



The Andaman and Nicobar Islands is a Union territory of India comprising 572 islands of which 37 are inhabited, are a group of islands at the juncture of the Bay of Bengal and the Andaman Sea. The Andaman Sea lies to the east and the Bay of Bengal to the west. The territory's capital is the city of Port Blair. The territory is divided into three districts: Nicobar

District with Car Nicobar as capital, South Andaman district with Port Blair as capital and North and Middle Andaman district with Mayabunder as capital. The islands host the Andaman and Nicobar Command, the only tri-service geographical command of the Indian Armed Forces. The current Lieutenant Governor of Andaman and Nicobar Island is Admiral D K Joshi.

Recently, five members of the Great Andamanese tribe, a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal group (PVTG) that reside in the Andamans archipelago have tested positive for COVID-19.

This is one of the first cases of COVID-19 infection among the endangered PVTGs of the region.

**The Great Andamanese Tribe:** The Great Andamanese are an indigenous people of the Great Andaman archipelago in the Andaman Islands. The Great Andamanese, who number just 74, speak Jeru among themselves. The five PVTGS residing in Andamans are Great Andamanese, Shompens, Jarawas, Onges, and North Sentinelese.

### **Assam:**



Assam is a state in northeastern India known for its wildlife, archeological sites and tea plantations. It is situated south of the eastern Himalayas along the Brahmaputra and Barak River valleys. Assam is known for Assam tea and Assam silk. The state was the first site for oil drilling in Asia. Its capital is Dispur. The current Governor and the Chief Minister of Assam are Professor Jagdish Mukhi and Sarbananda Sonowal respectively.

Recently, a 1.8-km ropeway across the Brahmaputra river, and described it as India's longest river ropeway was inaugurated by the Assam State Minister of Finance, Himanta Biswa Sarma and Guwahati Development Department(GDD) Minister, Siddhartha Bhattacharya.

The Guwahati Passenger Ropeway Project connects Kachari Ghat (Guwahati) to Dol Govinda Temple on the northern bank. The ropeway passes the famous Umananda temple on a small island.

The ropeway uses a “twin-track, single-haul, bi-cable double reversible jig back” system. The ropeway comprises two cabins — each with a capacity of 30 passengers plus one operator.

The ropeway service will cover the distance in seven-eight minutes reducing the travel time between Guwahati & North Guwahati by almost one hour.

Apart from substantially reducing travel time, the ropeway will provide a breathtaking view of the mighty Brahmaputra, give the passengers a glimpse of the Umananda Temple on Peacock Island and the Kamakhya shrine in the Neelachal hills which in turn will promote tourism in the State greatly reduce the traffic congestion.

## **Kerala:**



It is a state on the southwestern Malabar Coast of India. It was formed on 1 November 1956, following the passage of the States Reorganisation Act, by combining Malayalam-speaking regions of the erstwhile states of Travancore-Cochin and Madras. It is bordered by Karnataka to the north and northeast, Tamil Nadu to the east and south, and the Lakshadweep Sea to the west. Its capital is Thiruvananthapuram. The current Governor and Chief Minister of Kerala are Arif Mohammad Khan and Pinarayi Vijayan respectively.

Recently, the Chief Minister of Kerala, Pinarayi Vijayan commissioned the first-ever marine ambulance named 'PRATHEEKSHA' at Vizhinjam village of Thiruvananthapuram district in Kerala. Pratheeksha is first in the series of 3 fully equipped marine ambulance boat. The other marine ambulances that are to be deployed are Pratyasha and Karunya.

The marine ambulance is built by the Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL) at a cost of ₹6.08 crore. It was designed by the Central Institute of Fisheries Technology as per the specifications of Indian Registry of Shipping. It would help in saving the lives of fishermen during accidents at sea.

According to the fisheries department, around 30 fishermen lose life due to various accidents in sea annually and this marine ambulance would help in saving the lives of fishermen during accidents at sea. .

The boat is fitted with medical equipment that can provide critical care to five persons at a time and bed for 10 others. It contains paramedical staff, trained sea rescue squad, portable mortuary and medicines. The vessel is of 23 metres in

length, 5.5 metres in width and 3 metres in dept. It uses two 700 HP Scania engines and can achieve a maximum speed of 14 nautical miles per hour.

## Person in News

### **Noor Inayat Khan (1914 - 1944):**



Noor-un-Nissa Inayat Khan, GC, also known as Nora Inayat-Khan and Nora Baker, was a British spy in World War II who served in the Special Operations Executive (SOE). As an SOE agent she became the first female wireless operator to be sent from the UK into occupied France to aid the French Resistance during World War II. She was a direct descendant of Tipu Sultan, the 18th century Muslim ruler of Mysore. Khan's father was a musician and Sufi teacher. He moved his family first to London and then to Paris, where Khan was educated and later worked writing childrens' stories.

As an SOE agent she became the first female wireless operator to be sent from the UK into occupied France to aid the French Resistance during World War II. She was captured and executed at Dachau concentration camp. She was posthumously awarded the George Cross for her service in the SOE, the highest civilian decoration in the United Kingdom.

Recently, she has become the first woman of Indian origin to be honoured by the distinct blue London plaque. Blue London plaque is an emblem of English heritage pride, the plaque has been placed on the house at Taviton street, Bloomsbury, London, where Khan once lived.

It has been erected on houses and venues associated with several Indian men including Mahatma Gandhi, Raja Ram Mohon Roy, and B R Ambedkar.

The idea of placing commemorative plaques on historically significant buildings was first mooted in 1863. The main objective was to honour important people and organizations who have lived or worked in London buildings. Currently, the blue plaque scheme is being run by the charity organization, English Heritage which takes care of historic sites and buildings in England.



### **Shinzo Abe:**



He is the longest serving Prime Minister of Japan. The 65-year-old had held record 7 years and eight months as leader of the world's third-biggest economy. He had been serving as the PM of Japan since 26 December 2012.

Prior to this, he had also served as the PM for a short period between July 2006 to September 2007, becoming the youngest PM of the country, elected at the age of 52.

Recently, Japan's longest-serving Prime Minister Shinzo Abe resigned. He is resigning because of poor health.

### **G Satheesh Reddy:**



He is a renowned Indian scientist. He was recently given a two-year extension as the chairman of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO). He was appointed to the post in August 2018 for two years.

The extension of his tenure as the DRDO chairman and as the Secretary of the Department of Defence Research & Development (DoDRD) for a period of two years beyond August 26 was approved by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet.

**DRDO:** It is an acronym for the Defence Research and Development Organisation. DRDO is India's largest research organisation. It was founded in 1958. It is headquartered in New Delhi, India. It is an agency under the Ministry of Defence, Government of India. It is charged with the military's research and development. It has a network of laboratories engaged in developing defence technologies covering various fields, like aeronautics, armaments, electronics, land combat engineering, life sciences, materials, missiles, and naval systems. The Minister currently responsible for DRDO is Rajnath Singh, Minister of Defence. The present Chairman of DRDO is Dr. G. Satheesh Reddy.

### **Ashwani Bhatia:**



He has recently been appointed as the managing director (MD) of the State Bank of India (SBI) by the Government of India (GoI). He has been appointed as the managing director up to the date of his superannuation that is May 31, 2022.

Ashwani Bhatia is currently working as the managing director and chief executive officer at SBI Mutual Fund. He will be appointed in place of PK Gupta who superannuated on March 31.

**SBI:** It is an acronym for the State Bank Of India. SBI is an Indian multinational, public sector banking and financial services statutory body. It is a government corporation statutory body headquartered in Mumbai, Maharashtra. It was founded on 1 July 1955. SBI is ranked as 236th in the Fortune Global 500 list of the world's biggest corporations of 2019. The current Chairman of SBI is Rajnish Kumar.

### **Dinesh Kumar Khara:**



He has recently been recommended for the post of chairman of the State Bank of India (SBI) by the Banks Board Bureau. The current SBI chairman incumbent Rajnish Kumar will demit office on October 7. Kumar was appointed for a period of three years from October 2017.

**Banks Board Bureau:** It was constituted in 2016. It makes recommendations for the appointment of whole-time directors as well as non-executive chairpersons of public sector banks (PSBs).

### **Usha Padhee:**



Usha Padhee is the joint secretary in the Ministry of Civil Aviation. She has recently been given additional charge as director general of the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security, thereby, making her the 1st woman DG of Bureau of Civil Aviation Security. She is the first woman and third IAS officer to have been appointed to the post. The aviation security body has usually been headed by an IPS officer. Earlier, IPS officer Rakesh Asthana was given charge of the BCAS. He has now been moved to the Border Security Force as DG.

# Indian Polity

## Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment:



The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is a ministry of Government of India (GoI). It is responsible for welfare, social justice and empowerment of disadvantaged and marginalised sections of society, including scheduled castes, Other Backward Classes, the disabled, the elderly, and the victims of drug abuse. The Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment holds cabinet rank as a member of the Council of Ministers. The Ministry of Welfare adopted the name Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment in May 1998. In October 1999, the Tribal Development Division left the ministry to become its own ministry, the Ministry of Tribal Affairs. The current Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment is Thawar Chand Gehlot, who is assisted by a Minister of State, Rattan Lal Kataria, Krishan Pal Gujjar and Ramdas Athavale.

Recently, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment constituted the National Council for Transgender Persons. The council is formed under Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019.

National Council for Transgender Persons will consists of the Social Justice Minister as it's chairperson and its members would include officials from some other Ministries. Five nominated members from the community who are also part of the Council are Laxmi Narayan Tripathi, Gopi Shankar Madurai, Meera Parida, Zainab Javid Patel and Kak Chingtabam Shyamcand Sharma .

The main functions of the council are:

1. Advising the central government on the formulation of policies, programmes, legislation and projects with respect to transgender persons;
2. Monitoring and evaluating the impact of policies and programmes designed for achieving equality and full participation of transgender persons;
3. Reviewing and coordinating the activities of all the departments;
4. Redressing grievances of transgender persons; and
5. Performing such other functions as prescribed by the Centre.

## Supreme Court:



The Supreme Court of India is the highest judicial forum and final court of appeal under the Constitution of India, the highest constitutional court, with the power of constitutional review. It consists of the Chief Justice of India and a maximum of 34 judges, it has extensive powers in the form of original, appellate and advisory jurisdictions. It is regarded as the most powerful public institution in India. It was established on 26 January 1950. Its headquarters are in New Delhi. The current CJI of the Supreme Court is Sharad Arvind Bobde.

Recently, a five-judge Bench of the Supreme Court held that States can sub-classify Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the Central List to provide preferential treatment to the “weakest out of the weak”. The judgement said that the citizens cannot be treated to be socially and educationally backward till perpetuity; those who have come up must be excluded like the creamy layer.

The Constitution Bench led by Justice Arun Mishra, in his 78-page judgment said the reservation has created inequalities within the reserved castes itself. There is a “caste struggle” within the reserved class as the benefits of reservation are being usurped by a few.

It is clear that caste, occupation, and poverty are interwoven. The State cannot be deprived of the power to take care of the qualitative and quantitative difference between different classes and to take ameliorative measures.

With this, the Bench took a contrary view to a 2004 judgment delivered by another Coordinate Bench of five judges in the V. Chinniah case.

The Chinniah judgment had held that allowing the States to unilaterally “make a class within a class of members of the Scheduled Castes” would amount to tinkering with the Presidential list.

Now with two numerically equal Benches of judges holding contrary viewpoints, the issue has been referred to a seven-judge Bench of the court.

**Constitutional Provisions:** The Central List of Scheduled Castes and Tribes is notified by the President under Articles 341 and 342 of the Constitution. The consent of the Parliament is required to exclude or include castes in the List. It means that the States cannot unilaterally add or pull out castes from the List.

## **Labour Bureau:**



Labour Bureau under the Ministry of Labour and Employment was set up on 1 October 1946. It was launched by Minister for Labour. It is entrusted with the work of compilation, collection, analysis and dissemination of statistics on different aspects of labour. The Labour Bureau has two main wings which are stationed in Shimla and Chandigarh.

The main functions and activities of Labour Bureau can be classified under the following major heads:

1. Compilation and maintenance of Consumer Price Index Numbers for Industrial Workers
2. Agricultural/Rural Labourers
3. Retail Price Index of Selected Essential Commodities in Urban Areas etc.

Labour Bureau also conducts quick Employment Survey and Employment-Unemployment survey.

Recently, the Labour Bureau got a logo that encapsulates the essence of three core areas - rural, agriculture and industrial workers. The logo represents three goals that Labour Bureau aims to achieve in producing quality data -- accuracy, validity and reliability

**Labour Bureau Logo:** The blue cog wheel represents work. The choice of blue colour signifies that the organization deals with blue collar workers in rural and agriculture sectors. The line graph shows ups and downs in the employment sector as it captures ground realities. There's a tricolour graph, matching the colors of the national flag, along with wheat ears which signifies the fruit of rural agricultural labour in the logo.

## **Arunachal Pradesh assembly:**



The Arunachal Pradesh Assembly recently passed a resolution to bring the state under the ambit of Sixth Schedule of the Constitution besides amending Article 371(H) bringing provisions to safeguard tribes of the state.

The resolution was moved by Legislative Affairs Minister Bamang Felix on behalf of the State Government. It was passed by voice vote following a marathon discussion in the house. The Assembly Session was held for only one day in view of the pandemic situation.

Chief Minister Pema Khandu, at the session, said that it was a historic resolution moved by the State Government. Stating that it is a long-time exercise, the Chief Minister appealed to everyone for their cooperation as and when required. He also answered the question on the Assam-Arunachal boundary issue saying that Arunachal Pradesh Government would soon initiate talks to resolve the boundary dispute with the neighbouring state.

## Environment

### **Mahseer:**



It is the name of a rare fish (scientific name Tor). It was sighted and fished out from the upper part of Sileru River, by a team of researchers from the Department of Zoology, Andhra University

It is rare species of fish is listed under the endangered category by IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature).

Mahseer is normally found in the Himalayan region in the rivers where the temperature around year does not exceed 20° Celsius like Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Nepal and Bhutan. But it is rare to find it in this part of the country.

It is a large fresh water fish. They mostly inhabit the fast-moving waters such as hill streams with rocky and stony substrates. There are 47 species of Mahseer in the world. Out of these, 15 are found in India.

**Sileru River:** It is a tributary of Sabari river. It flows through Odisha before merging with Sabari. After collecting waters from Sileru, the Sabari river merges with Godavari river in Andhra Pradesh.

Sileru River has huge potential of hydro electricity and is being substantially harnessed. The hydro electric power projects across Sileru are Machund (120 MW), Balimela (510 MW), Upper Sileru (240 MW), Donkarayi (25 MW) and Lower Sileru hydro (460 MW). Chitrakonda (60 MW) hydro project located at



the toe of Balimela earth dam is planned to utilise the head available across the earth dam.

### **Mojave Desert:**



It is an arid rain-shadow desert and the driest desert in North America. It lies in the Southwestern United States, primarily within southeastern California and southern Nevada. Its boundaries are generally noted by the presence of Joshua trees, which are native only to the Mojave Desert. It is also called the Death Valley because of its extreme high temperature.

Recently, one of the hottest air temperatures recorded anywhere on the planet in at least a century, and possibly ever, was reached on 16th august 2020 afternoon at Death Valley in California's Mojave Desert where it soared to 130 Fahrenheit (54.4 Celsius).

An automated observation system run by the U.S. National Weather Service in the valley's sparsely populated Furnace Creek reported the record at 3:41 p.m. at the crest.

The record comes as climate scientists warn of the dangers of a warming planet. Last month was the world's third-hottest July on record, and three of the hottest ever Julys all occurred within the past five years.

According to the World Meteorological Organization, a temperature of 134F (56.7C) was recorded in Death Valley in July 1913, and Kebili, Tunisia, is said to have hit 131F in July 1931.

However, as per the recent research by Christopher Burt, an extreme weather expert, has led some meteorologists to view these older records as the results of observer error.

# Defence

## **International Day of Remembrance and Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism:**



The day is observed on 21st of August every year. The day is observed to pay tribute to the individuals across the globe that have been attacked, injured, traumatized or lost their lives because of terrorist attacks.

The General Assembly, in its resolution 72/165 (2017), established 21 August as the International Day of Remembrance of and Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism.

The objective of this day is to raise awareness of the indiscriminate threat that affects people and countries across the world.

Note: The Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, adopted unanimously in its resolution 60/288, on 8 September 2006, notes that the dehumanization of victims counts among the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism.

## **BPR&D:**



It refers to the Bureau of Police Research and Development. The BPR&D was raised on 28th August, 1970, through a resolution of Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India (GoI) with the main objective of modernization of police force. The Bureau was initially started with two Divisions, i.e., Research, Publication & Statistics Division and Development Division.

The Bureau was mandated to promote excellence in policing, promote speedy and systematic study of police problems, and apply science and technology in the method and techniques by the Police.

The Training Division was added in 1973 on the recommendation of the Gore Committee on Police training and the Correctional Division was started in 1995, to study the issues of Prisons and Prison Reforms. Then in 2008, the National Police Mission was added and Development Division was restructured as Modernization Division.

The current Director General of BPR&D is Mr. V.S.K.Kaumudi, Indian Police Service (IPS) Andhra Pradesh 1986 batch.

Recently, the BPR&D is celebrated it's Golden Jubilee Anniversary on 28th August, 2020.

A function organized in virtual mode was attended by the Union Minister of State for Home Affairs G Kishan Reddy as the Chief Guest. On the occasion, Mr Reddy inaugurated Central Detective Training Institute, CDTI, Jaipur and launched website of Student Police Cadets. A postal stamp, souvenir and compendium were also released on Golden Jubilee of BPR&D.

### **DRDO:**



It is an acronym for the Defence Research and Development Organization. DRDO is India's largest research organization. It was founded in 1958. It is headquartered in New Delhi, India. It is an agency under the Ministry of Defence, Government of India.

It is charged with the military's research and development. It has a network of laboratories engaged in developing defence technologies covering various fields, like aeronautics, armaments, electronics, land combat engineering, life sciences, materials, missiles, and naval systems. The Minister currently responsible for DRDO is Rajnath Singh, Minister of Defence. The present Chairman of DRDO is Dr. G. Satheesh Reddy.

Recently, a five member expert committee has been constituted with a focus on indigenous development of futuristic defence technologies.

The committee was constituted by the Chairman of DRDO Dr. G. Satheesh Reddy. The committee is headed by Professor V. Ramagopal Rao, Director, Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi. Other members of the panel are S. Somnath, Director, Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre, Air Marshal Sandeep Singh, Deputy Chief of Air Staff, Dr. Samir V. Kamat, Director General-Naval Systems & Materials (NS & M) and Benjamin Lionel, Director, Instruments Research & Development Establishment of DRDO.

The committee has been constituted with an objective to study and review the charter of duties of all 52 laboratories of DRDO and to redefine the same for both current and futuristic defence and battlefield scenarios, to redefine the charter of duties of the labs on the current and futuristic defence and battlefield scenario, to reduce Indian military's dependence on imports, in line with Prime

minister Narendra Modi's vision of "Aatmanirbhar Bharat" in the defence sector and to minimise the overlap of technologies amongst the labs.

The committee has to submit its report within 45 days.

Note: India is the second-largest arms importer in the world after Saudi Arabia.

## Art and Culture

### Nuakhai Juhar:



It is an agricultural festival which is observed to welcome the new rice of the season. It is an important social festival of Western Odisha and adjoining areas of Simdega in Jharkhand. It is also called Nuakhai Parab or Nuakahi Bhetghat. The word nua means new and khai means food. It is observed on the fifth day of the lunar fortnight of the month of Bhadrapada or Bhaadra (August–September), the day after the Ganesh Chaturthi festival.

It is a major ritual of the festival. Nine sets of rituals are followed as a prelude to the actual day of celebration as Nuakhai is understood to have nine colours. People offer the newly harvested crop called Nabanha to their respective presiding deities. After offering the Nabanha, people relish different types of delicacies prepared from the newly harvested crop. It is an exchange of greetings with friend relative and well-wishers.

### Nyokum Festival:



Nyokum is the festival celebrated by the Nyoshi tribe. It is the festival of inviting all the gods and goddesses in the universe at a particular time and to a particular place. This festival is celebrated by the Nyishi tribe.

The Nyishi tribe is a scheduled tribe. They are also called Bangni. They are the single largest tribe of Arunachal Pradesh. They speak Tibeto-Burman language. They practice slash and burn agriculture.

### **Mopin Festival:**



Galos Tribes.

Mopin is their major festival. It is celebrated for the prosperity of the villages. However, this year due to COVID-19, the rituals were performed for the safety of humans. The dance of the tribes is called Popir dance. It is celebrated by the

Galos Tribes are one of the major tribes of Arunachal Pradesh that dominate West Siang district. They are recognized as Scheduled tribe.

### **Solungg and Aran:**



Solungg and Aran are the major festivals of Adi tribe. Solungg is a harvesting festival where animal sacrifice rituals are performed. On the other hand, Aran is a hunting festival where the male members of the family go for hunting. Solungg and Aran are celebrated by the Adi Tribe.

Adi Tribes are believed to have come from southern China. They are living in East Siang and Lower Dibang valleys of Arunachal Pradesh. The Adi community performs rituals called motor or pator system. The Adi community tribals are experts in making bamboo and cane products.

### **World Urdu COonference:**



The Union Education Minister recently addressed the inaugural session of the two days World Urdu Conference. The event was organized by National Council for Promotion of Urdu Language ( NCPUL ) in New Delhi.

The Education Minister at the event also announced that Urdu writers and literators will be honoured with awards and honours in the name of important personalities of Urdu like Amir Khusrow, Mirza Ghalib, Agha Hashar, Ram Babu Saxena and Daya Shankar Naseem to encourage Urdu writers for literary and creative services by the Urdu Council from next year.

NCPUL: It refers to the National Council for Promotion of Urdu Language. NCPUL is an autonomous body under the Ministry of Human Resource Development (HRD), Department of Secondary and Higher Education,

Government of India (GoI). It was setup in 1996 as the National Nodal Agency for the promotion of the Urdu language.

### **Pulikkali:**



Pulikkali is a recreational folk art from the state of Kerala and is mainly practiced in Thrissur district of Kerala. Trained artists perform this folk art to entertain people on the occasion of Onam, an annual harvest festival, celebrated mainly in Kerala.

On the fourth day of Onam celebrations (Nalaam Onam), performers painted like tigers and hunters in bright yellow, red, and black dance to the beats of instruments like Udukku and Thakil.

Literal meaning of Pulikkali is the 'play of the tigers' hence the performance revolve around the theme of tiger hunting. Pulikkali was introduced in Thrissur by Shakthan Tampuran two centuries ago. It is a colourful part of Onam celebrations in Thrissur.

This year, it will be an online-only affair this year due to COVID-19.

### **Ministry of Culture:**



The Ministry of Culture is the Indian government ministry. It charged with preservation and promotion of art and culture of India. It is typically responsible for cultural policy, which often includes arts policy (direct and indirect support to artists and arts organizations) and measures to protect the national heritage of a country and cultural expression of a country or subnational region. The current Minister of Culture is Prahlaad Singh Patel. The government has recently established the National Mission on Libraries India under this ministry.

Recently, the Ministry of Culture announced seven new circles of Archaeological Survey of India for the preservation of historical monuments. The step has been taken in accordance with PM Modi's call to facilitate and strengthen the process of registration and preservation of the archaeological monuments. Earlier, there were 29 ASI circles across India.

The New circles have been created in Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat and West bengal. Jabalpur (Madhya Pradesh), Trichy



(Tamil Nadu), Jhansi and Meerut (Uttar Pradesh), Hampi (Karnataka), Raiganj (West Bengal) and Rajkot (Gujarat) have been created as new circles. In Archaeology, the Hampi city in Karnataka is a place of international importance therefore Hampi Mini Circle has been converted into a full-fledged circle.

**ASI Circles:** The entire country has been divided into 36 circles for the maintenance of ancient monuments and archaeological sites and remains of national importance. ASI Circles carry out archaeological fieldwork, research activities and implement the various provisions of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (AMASR) Act, 1958 and Antiquities and Art Treasures Act 1972.

**ASI:** It is the abbreviation for Archaeological Survey of India. The ASI is an Indian government agency attached to the Ministry of Culture that is responsible for archaeological research and the conservation and preservation of cultural monuments in the country. ASI was founded in 1861 by Alexander Cunningham- the first Director-General of ASI. Alexander Cunningham is also known as the “Father of Indian Archaeology”. It administers more than 3650 ancient monuments, archaeological sites and remains of national importance. Its activities include carrying out surveys of antiquarian remains, exploration and excavation of archaeological sites, conservation and maintenance of protected monuments etc.

### **Telugu Language Day:**



Telugu Language Day, also known as Telugu Bhasha Dinotsavam. The day is observed on 29 August each year in the State of Andhra Pradesh. This date was chosen to coincide with the birthday of the Telugu poet Gidugu Venkata Ramamurthy (1863-1940). Telugu is referred to as "The Italian of the East" as the language ends with vowels just like the Italian language.

The Government of Andhra Pradesh provides funds and presents awards with the objective of the betterment of the Telugu language. The Department of Culture is responsible for organising the day on behalf of the Government of Andhra Pradesh.

The first written materials in Telegu dates from 575 ce. The Telugu script is derived from that of the 6th-century Calukya dynasty and is related to that of the

Kannada language. Telugu literature begins in the 11th century with a version of the Hindu epic Mahabharata by the writer Nannaya Bhatta.

Sri Krishnadevaraya, the great emperor of the Vijayanagar empire in 15th century is known as the father of Telegu language. He was known as 'Andhra Bhoja' and his reign is regarded as the golden period of Telugu literature. He proclaimed "Desa bhashalandu Telugu Lessa," meaning, among the nation's languages, Telugu is the best.

Gidugu Venkata Ramamurthy: Gidugu Venkata Ramamurthy was a Telugu writer and one of the earliest modern Telugu linguists and social visionaries during the British rule. He was born on 29 August 1863 in Mukhalingam. His contribution to the Telugu language specifically Vyavaharika Bhasha or Vaaduka Bhasha (Colloquial language) is immense. He simplified the Granthika Bhasha into Vyavaharika Bhasha for textbooks and literature and made it available to the people. He played a vital role in bringing to the forefront of the beauty of the colloquial language.

A webinar on 'Our Language, Our Society and Our Culture' was organized by the South Africa Telugu Community (SATC) on the occasion of Telugu Language Day.

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