Chhath Mahaparva

Prelims: *Current events of national and international importance | Art & Culture*

Why in news?

The Union Ministry of Culture has initiated the process to nominate Chhath Mahaparva, in the UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage list.

- **Chhath Mahaparva** – It is a 4-day festival that comes after Diwali.
- **Dedicated to** –Sun god and goddess Chhati maiya.
- **Areas of celebration** – The festival is primarily observed in Bihar, Jharkhand, eastern Uttar Pradesh, and parts of West Bengal and by diaspora communities across the world.
- **Rituals** – The rituals include fasting, bathing in rivers or ponds, and making offerings to the setting and rising sun on the banks of water bodies.
- The devotees ask the Sun God for health, wealth, and prosperity, and live in discipline, devotion, and purity.
- **Key Difference** – One thing that distinguishes Chhath from other festivals is that instead of idol or image worship, Chhath is about ***worshipping the elements of nature.***
- **Significance** – This festival is among India's oldest living traditions, symbolizing ecological ethos and emphasis on equality, promotes sustainability, inclusivity, and community spirit, transcending caste, creed, and religion.

India is a signatory of the 2003 UNESCO Convention which aims to safeguard traditions and beliefs representative of community practices and knowledge systems mentioned in the Intangible Cultural Heritage list.

Quick Facts

UNESCO’s Representative List	
Currently, India has **15 elements** on UNESCO’s Representative List.	
1. Kutiyattam 2. Tradition of Vedic Chanting 3. Ramlila 4. Ramman 5. Chhau dance 6. Kalbelia dance 7. Mudiyettu 8. Buddhist chanting of Ladakh	9. Traditional brass and copper craft of utensil making 10. Yoga 11. Kumbh Mela 12. Durga Puja 13. Garba 14. Navroz; and 15. Sankirtana, the ritual singing of Manipur.

References

1. The Hindu | Chhath Mahaparva in UNESCO heritage
2. Hindustan Times | UNESCO nomination of Chhath Mahaparva

SHANKAR IAS PARLIAMENT
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