Prelim Bits 27-01-2024 | UPSC Daily Current Affairs

Padma Awards

For the year 2024, the President has approved conferment of 132 Padma Awards including 2 duo cases (counted as one).

- **Instituted in** – ***1954***, announced ***every year*** on the occasion of Republic Day except during 1978 and 1979 and 1993 to 1997.

3 categories of Padma Awards
• **Padma Vibhushan** – For exceptional and distinguished service. • **Padma Bhushan** – For distinguished service of a high order. • **Padma Shri** – For distinguished service.

- **Presented by** – ***President of India***, usually in March/April every year.
- **Eligibility** – All persons without distinction of race, occupation, position or sex but *government servants including PSUs*, except doctors and scientists, are *not eligible* for these Awards.
- **Awards** – A *Sanad* (certificate) signed by the President, *medallion* and a *small replica of the medallion*, awardee names are also published in the Gazette of India on the ceremonial day.
- **Title** – It does ***not amount to a title*** and cannot be used as a suffix or prefix to the awardees' name
- **Number of awards** – In a given year (excluding posthumous and to NRI/foreigners/OCIs), it should ***not be more than 120***.
- **Fields covered** – Art, social work, social service, Public Affairs, science & engineering, trade & industry, medicine, literature & education, civil service, sports and others fields that not covered.

  It is normally not conferred posthumously but in highly deserving cases, the Government could consider giving an award posthumously.

- **A higher category of Padma award** – Only where a period of at least 5 years has elapsed since the earlier Padma award but in highly deserving cases, a relaxation can be made by the Awards Committee.

Padma Awards Committee

- **Constituted by** – Prime Minister of India every year
- **Headed by** – Cabinet Secretary,
- **Members** – It includes Home Secretary, Secretary to the President and 4 to 6 eminent persons.

- **Role** – It considers the nominations and submits its recommendations to the Prime Minister and the President of India for approval.

Padma Vibhushan 2024		
Name	**Field**	**State/ Region**
Ms. Vyjayantimala Bali	Art	Tamil Nadu
Shri Konidela Chiranjeevi	Art	Andhra Pradesh
Shri M Venkaiah Naidu	Public Affairs	Andhra Pradesh
Shri Bindeshwar Pathak **(Posthumous)**	Social Work	Bihar
Ms. Padma Subrahmanyam	Art	Tamil Nadu

2024 list comprises 5 Padma Vibhushan, 17 Padma Bhushan and 110 Padma Shri Awards. It includes 30 women, 8 persons from the category of Foreigners / NRI / PIO / OCI and 9 posthumous awardees.

References

1. PIB| 2024 Padma Awards
2. Padma Awards| History and Relevance of Padma Awards

GI for Arunachal Products

12 distinctive products of Arunachal have obtained the Geographical Indication (GI) tags.

- **12 GI products** – Apatani, Monpa, Adi, Galo, Tai Khamti and Nyishi textiles, Monpa handmade paper, Singpho Phalap (Singpho tea), Adi Apong, Dao (machete), Angnyat millet and Marua Apo (Marua millet beverage).

The total number of indigenous products to have obtained the GI tag from Arunachal rises to 20, the highest among North Eastern states. Adis, Apatanis, Singphos, Monpas, Nyishis, Khamtis are some of the tribes of Arunachal Pradesh.

- **Role of NABARD** – National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development has *actively supported the GI registration process* and have *endorsed all 12 products*.
- **Significance** – A *testament to the dedication of the local communities in preserving* traditional and unique products, reflecting the rich social and cultural heritage of Arunachal Pradesh.

Geographical Indication Tag

- **GI tag** – A *sign for products* that have a specific geographical origin and possess qualities or a reputation that are due to that origin.
- **Regulated by** – Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act of

1999.
- It is covered under the ***Paris Convention*** for the Protection of Industrial Property and under the Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights ***(TRIPS) Agreement***.
- **34 classes of products** – It ranges from chemicals and paint to foodstuffs, handicrafts, musical instruments, and even firearms and locomotives.

Handicrafts has the highest number of GI tags followed by agricultural products.

- **Status** – Every State in India has at least one GI tag.

Tamil Nadu, with 61 GI-tagged products, has the highest number of GI-tags compared to other States.

References

1. Deccan Herald| 12 Arunachal Products receives GI Tag
2. IP India| GI Tag

Sapinda Marriage

Recently, Delhi High Court has reaffirmed the ban on sapinda marriages.

- **Sapindas** – According to Section 3 of the *Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 (HMA)*,
  - 2 persons are said to be sapindas of each other if *1 is a lineal ascendant* of the other or if they have a *common lineal ascendant*.
- **Legality** – ***HMA prohibits marriage*** between 2 Hindus if they are "sapindas" of each other unless the custom or usage governing each of them permits of a marriage between the 2.
- **On the mother's side** – An individual cannot marry their sibling, their parents, their grandparents, or an individual who shares this ancestry ***within 3 generations***.
- **On the father's side** – The above (mother side) prohibition would extend up to their grandparents' grandparent, and anyone who shares this ancestry ***within 5 generations***.
- **Violation** – Such marriages will be ***declared void*** and will be treated as though it never took place.
- **Exceptions** - It allows such practices ***if the customs of each individual permits*** sapinda marriages.

*The word **'custom'**, according to Section 3(a) of HMA means 'a practice that has to be continuously and uniformly observed for a long time, and should have gained enough legitimacy among Hindus in a local area, tribe, group, or family, such that it has obtained the force of law'.*

- **Issues** – Petitioner argued that Section 5(v) which prohibits sapinda marriages unless there is an established custom violates the right to equality under Article 14 of the Constitution.

Status of Incest relationship around the world
• **European countries** – In several countries, the laws on relationships that are considered incestuous are *less stringent than in India*. - In France, incest remains *legal*. - Portuguese law also does *not criminalise incest*. • **United States** – They are *banned in all 50 states*, but such relationships between *consenting adults are allowed* in New Jersey and Rhode Island.

Reference

The Indian Express| Legality of Incestuous Sapinda Marriage

Scheme for promotion of Coal/Lignite Gasification Projects

Recently, Union Cabinet approved the Scheme for promotion coal/ lignite gasification projects.

- **Coal gasification** – Coal is *partially oxidised* by air, oxygen, steam, or carbon dioxide *under controlled conditions* to produce a ***liquid fuel known as syngas***.
- **Syngas** – It is a *synthesis gas* which can be used for power generation and to make methanol as well.

The government is targeting to gasify 100 million tonnes (MT) of coal by 2030.

- **Coverage** – It can be undertaken by ***both government PSU and private sectors***.
- **Finance** – ***Rs. 8500 crore***.
- **Significance** – It could help *reduce the imports of natural gas, methanol, ammonia and other product*s.

Finance under 3 Categories
• **Category 1** – *Rs. 4050 provisioned for PSUs* in which upto 3 projects will be supported by providing lump-sum grant of Rs. 1350 crore or 15% of CAPEX whichever is lower. • **Category 2** – *Rs.3, 850 crore provisioned for private sector as well as Government PSUs* in which lump-sum grant of Rs.1, 000 crore or 15% of capex, whichever is lower. • At least 1 project will be bid out on tariff-based bidding process and its criteria will be designed in consultation with NITI Aayog. • **Category 3** - *Rs.600 crore provisioned for demonstration Projects* (indigenous technology) and/or small-scale product-based Gasification Plants under which lump-sum grant of Rs.100 crore or 15% of capex, whichever is lower.

References

1. The Hindu| A new Scheme for Coal Gasification Project

2. PIB| Financial outlay of Coal Gasification Project

Republic Day

French President Emmanuel Macron was India's chief guest for the 75th Republic Day, celebrated on January 26, 2024.

- It marks the ***adoption of India's constitution*** and the country's ***transition to a republic*** on ***January 26, 1950***.

  According to Constitution of India, it was adopted officially by the Constituent Assembly on November 26, 1949.

- **Celebrations** – It features *military and cultural pageantry*.
- **Ceremonious parades** – It is *inaugurated from Raisina Hill* along the *Kartavya Path*, past India Gate, and onto the historic Red Fort in New Delhi.

	Republic Day	Independence Day
Day	January 26	August 15
Ceremonial head	President	Prime Minister
Presentation of National Flag	Unfurled	Hoisted

- **Historical Roots of January 26 -** The day is deeply symbolic as it serves as a bridge connecting India's past, present and future.
- On ***January 26, 1930, "Poorna Swaraj" declaration*** was officially promulgated in *Lahore session of INC* which marked the beginning of the final phase of India's freedom struggle.
- **Significance** – It is a reflection of India's commitment to democratic values.
- It is a tribute to India, its unity in diversity, and its rich cultural heritage by the states of India by building beautiful tableaus.
- **Global impact** – It resonates globally emphasizing India's *commitment to democratic governance*.
- **Educational relevance** – It serves as an educational platform, fostering a deeper understanding of the constitution and democratic principles.
- It also nurture a sense of *civic responsibility and pride* in the democratic heritage.

  The theme for the tableaux at the Republic Day Parade 2024 has been decided as 'Bharat - The Mother of Democracy'.

References

1. The Indian Express| Historical Relevance of Republic Day
2. Times of India| Significance of Republic Day

Other Important Topics

Project Veer Gatha

• The Ministry of Defence (MoD) in collaboration with the Ministry of Education (MoE) has now decided to launch **Project Veer Gatha 3.0** in the current year 2023-24.
• It is a project instituted under ***Gallantry Awards Portal (GAP)*** in 2021 to commemorate the 75th year of India's Independence.
• The aim to disseminate the details of acts of bravery of the ***Gallantry Awardees*** and the life stories of these brave hearts among the students.
• The ***order of precedence*** for Gallantry awards - Param Vir Chakra, Ashoka Chakra, Mahavir Chakra, Kirti Chakra, Vir Chakra, Shaurya Chakra.

SARATHI app

• Ministry of Rural Development in partnership with The/Nudge Institute recently launched DAY-NRLM's "SARATHI" app.
• **Aim -** To address the needs of the most vulnerable, ensuring efficient implementation of developmental programs for rural development.
• The app will be used in 6 states to support special projects for vulnerable households.

PM Young Achievers' Scholarship Award Scheme (PM YASASVI)

• PM YASASVI is a *scholarship program* designed for students belonging to *Other Backward Class (OBC), Economically Backward Class (EBC), and Denotified Nomadic Tribes (DNT).*
• It aimed at empowering students from marginalized communities, ensuring equitable access to education and fostering a brighter future for the youth of India.
• It offers pre-matric scholarships for students in ***grades 9 and 10***, as well as post-matric scholarships for higher education.
• Students who excel in their studies also get an opportunity of Scholarship to study in ***Top Class Schools and Colleges***.

'Pahal'

• Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA), under the administrative control of Ministry of New and Renewable Energy has unveiled released 'Pahal', ***a vigilance journal***.

Pench Tiger Reserve

• The Pench Tiger Reserve (PTR) in Maharashtra has become India's first ***Dark Sky Park*** and is the ***5th in Asia.***
• The park earned the title for ***protecting the night sky*** and preventing light pollution, making the facility ideal for astronomy enthusiasts.
• Pench Tiger Reserve is one of India's top reserves housing the population of the ***Bengal Tigers***.
• The reserve is located covering the 2 states of ***Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh*** and is managed jointly by them.

Maasir-i-Alamgiri

• Maasir-i-Alamgiri is a ***Persian-language book*** written by ***Saqi Musta'd Khan*** that details the reign of ***Emperor Aurangzeb (1620-1707).***
• The book was written after the emperor's death, at the request of ***Inayetullah Khan Kashmiri***, the emperor's last secretary.
• ***Sir Jadunath Sarkar*** translated the book into English and labeled it a ***"Gazetteer of Mughal State".***
• Maasir-i-Alamgiri cited that a temple that stood adjacent to the existing Kashi Vishwanath temple have been razed on the orders of the Aurangzeb, and the Gyanvapi mosque erected on its ruins.

FITUR

• The Ministry of Tourism, India is participating in FITUR, one of the important global travel exhibitions being held recently at Madrid, Spain.
• FITUR is growing as a ***leading international event in the tourism*** sector attracting over 150,000 visitors annually (from travel agents to tour operators and embassies).
• The *Incredible India Pavilion* aims to showcase varied tourism products and destinations and serve as a platform for the private tour operator industry to connect with their global counterparts.

Vaishvik Bhartiya Vaigyanik (VAIBHAV) Fellowship

• The Department of Science and Technology (DST) announced the 1st batch of 'Vaibhav' fellows recently.
• It is implemented by the ***Department of Science and Technology (DST).***
• It is a scheme meant to attract ***Indian-origin scientists*** based abroad for short-term collaboration.
• Selected fellows will work in collaboration with *Indian Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs),* universities, and public-funded scientific institutions up to 2 months per year for max of 3 years.

Grantham

• A team from Archaeological and Historical Research Centre has discovered 2 stone inscriptions of 'Grantham' and Tamil dating 11th and 16th centuries respectively at Kangayam.
• Grantha is an important historical script that was once used ***to write Sanskrit*** throughout South East Asia and greater Tamil Nadu.
• The recently discovered stone inscription Grantha's front side depicts 2 standing lamps, 'trishul', conch and moon symbols.
• All the 4 sides depict repetition of words of 'hrim', 'hushta', 'hushra', 'sham' and 'lam' besides other graffiti marks.

Nizamuddin Dargah

• French President Emmanuel Macron visited the Dargah Nizamuddin Aulia in New Delhi recently.
• The Hazrat Nizamuddin Dargah is a revered Sufi shrine dedicated to the ***13th -century mystic Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya***.
• It is the mausoleum of the ***Nizamuddin Auliya and his disciple Amir Khusrau.***

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