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History, Art and Culture

Kalamkari Paintings

Recently, the Prime Minister of India gifted a Kalamkari Mahabharata painting to the French President.



- It is an *Indian art of hand-painting using natural dyes*.
- **Name origin** – Persian words “kalam (pen)” and “kari (craftsmanship)”, literally means "pen-work."
- **Practiced in** – Andhra Pradesh.
- **Features** –
  - Highly intricate patterns.
  - Rich earth tones.
  - Depictions of epic folklore.

Two traditional styles

- **Srikalahasti Style** –
  - *Relies on freehand drawing*.
  - Uses a bamboo pen (kalam) with a cloth wrapped around it to absorb the dye.
  - **Focuses on –** Religious narratives, Hindu deities, scenes from Ramayana and Mahabharata, and Tree of Life motif.
- **Machilipatnam Style –**
  - Relies on *hand-carved wooden blocks to stamp outlines* and primary patterns onto the cloth.
  - **Origin –** Islamic art influences.
  - **Features** – Dense, repeating floral patterns, vines, and *geometric designs.*

Rakhigarhi

AnSI recently received ancient skeletal remains from the site at Rakhigarhi for DNA analysis.

- It is the *largest known archaeological site* of the Indus Valley (Harappan) Civilization.
- **Location** – Hisar district of ***Haryana***.
  - 150 km northwest of Delhi on the banks of the dried-up *Saraswati River.*
- **Archaeological findings** –
  - Burnt-brick houses, drainage systems, and paved streets.
  - Jewellery-making units, copper and gold ornaments.
  - Extensive burial ground.

Anthropological Survey of India (AnSI)

- It is an Apex authority for *mapping India's vast cultural and biological diversity.*
- **Founded in** – 1945, Varanasi.
- **Headquarters –** Indian Museum Complex, Kolkata.
- **Nodal ministry** – Ministry of Culture.
- **Objectives –**
  - To study indigenous communities and Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups.
  - To maintain high-tech facilities for *DNA sequencing, paleoanthropology and biochemistry.*
  - To document disappearing languages, creating ethnographic films, and archiving folk art.

Government Policies & Interventions

National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG)

Recently the International Day of Yoga 2026 Celebrations held across the Ganga Basin by NMCG.

- **Established in –** 2011, under *Societies Registration Act 1860*.
- **Nodal ministry** – Ministry of Jal Shakti.
- **Implementation arm of –** *National Ganga Council.*
- **Management structure** –
  - Governing Council.
  - Executive Committee.
- **Guiding principles –**
  - Nirmal Dhara (unpolluted flow).
  - Aviral Dhara (continuous flow).
- **Objectives** –
  - To ensure abatement of pollution and rejuvenation of river Ganga.
  - To maintain minimum ecological flows in the river Ganga and sustainable development.

National Ganga Council (NGC)

- **Establishment in** – 2009, under *Environment Protection Act, 1986.*
- **Background** – Initially *National Ganga River Basin Authority* dissolved and *replaced by NGC in 2016*.
- **Structure** –
  - **Chairperson** – *Prime Minister*.
  - **Members** – Union Ministers and Chief Ministers of the five Ganga basin states (Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, and West Bengal).
- **Implementation** – *NMCG under Ministry of Jal Shakti.*
- **Responsible for** – Superintendence, pollution prevention, and rejuvenation of the *Ganga River Basin*.

Development of Vehicle Service Facilities

NHAI directs development of vehicle repair and puncture service facilities at wayside amenities along national highways

- **Objectives** –
- To improving the travel experience, reducing vehicle downtime.
- To enhancing road safety and ensuring prompt assistance.
- To avoid inconvenience, delays, and potential safety concerns.
- To develop a network of modern wayside amenities under the Public-Private Partnership.
- **Significance** – Underlines NHAI's commitment to develop safe and *user-centric National Highway corridors*.
  - It helps needs of commuters and logistics operators across the country.

National Highways Authority of India (NHAI)

- **Established** – under the National Highways Authority of India Act, 1988.
- **Headquarters** – New Delhi,
- **Nodal body for** – Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH).
- **Objectives** –
  - To handles over 50,000 km of National Highways across the country.
  - To oversees major highway upgrades and greenfield expressway layouts.
  - To manage highway monetization via Toll-Operate-Transfer (TOT).

Agriculture

NAFED's auction portal 'NAFEX.in

Recently, Union Home Minister is set to launch NAFED's auction portal 'NAFEX.in'.

- A dedicated *digital e-auction platform* for trading of agricultural commodities.
- **Functions** –
  - Seamless procurement and real-time bidding.
  - Directly connecting institutional buyers, traders, and agricultural cooperative societies.
- **Integrated features** –
  - Secure automated financial transactions.
  - Offering *live wallet management* with instant payment settlements via NEFT and RTGS.
- **Relief measures** – NAFED timely waives portal transaction charges for registered bidders.

National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India (NAFED)

- **Apex organization** – For the *cooperative marketing of agricultural produce.*
- **Objectives** –
  - To procure agri-goods directly from farmers *at MSP under the Price Support Scheme*.
  - To *Manage the national buffer stock* of essential commodities.
- **Oversees** – Government-channelized export and import of critical agricultural commodities.
- **Digital infrastructure** –
  - **NAFEX.in platform** – For *transparent e-auctions.*
  - **DRISHTI portal** – For real-time, pan-India warehouse stock tracking.

Security

Central Industrial Security Force (CISF)

Recently union home minister lays foundation stone of new CISF Headquarters building in New Delhi.

- It is the *only Central Armed Police Force featuring its own specialized, industrial Fire Wing*.
- **Nodal ministry** – Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)
- **Features** – It *bills commercial public and private establishments* for its security deployment, and reimburse later.
- **Objectives** –
  - To provide security to airports, space centers, and the Delhi Metro.
  - To safeguard the Parliament House Complex.
  - To strengthen CISF's operational and training capabilities

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