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Gamosa

- The Gamosa is an article of significance for the people of Assam.
- It is generally a white rectangular piece of cloth with primarily a red border on three sides and red woven motifs on the fourth.
- Assam has traditionally had two types of gamosas

1. The Ukaor plain kind used to wipe sweat or dry the body after a bath,
2. The Phulam, which is decorated with floral motifs to be gifted as a memento or during festivals such as Bihu.

- Gamosa came to symbolize Assamese nationalism in 1916 when the Asom Chatra Sanmilan, a students' organization was formed, followed by the Assam Sahitya Sabha, a literary body.
- Wearing the phulam gamosa around the neck became a standard for cultural identity.
- The Assamese way of life is woven in the gamosa, whether plain or decorative.
- From a cultural symbol, it became a political symbol before designers explored its potential as dress material such as distinctive shirts.
- The gamosa's graph as a symbol of protest rose during the anti-foreigners Assam Agitation from 1979 to 1985.
- The extremist United Liberation Front of Asom too used the towel with "revolutionary" motifs.
- The gamosa staged a comeback as a political statement with the protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act from mid-December 2019.
- Recently the COVID-19 pandemic has made the ubiquitous gamosa, a decorative cotton towel, evolve from memento to mask.

Bihu Festival

- Bihu is a set of three important Assamese festivals in the Indian state of Assam
- There are three types of Bihu namely

1. **Rongali or Bohag Bihu (**Sowing festival**) -** It is the most important of the three, celebrating spring festival, observed in April.
2. **Kongali or Kati Bihu (**Crop protection festival**) -** It is the somber, thrifty one reflecting a season of short supplies and is an animistic festival, observed in October.
3. **Bhogali or Magh Bihu** - It is a harvest festival, with community feasts, observed in January.

- The Rongali Bihu coincides the Assamese New year and as well as with other regions of Indian subcontinent, East Asia and South-East Asia, which follow the Hindu calendar and Buddhist calendar.
- The other two Bihu festivals every year are unique to Assamese people.
- Like some other Indian festivals, Bihu is associated with agriculture, and rice in particular.
- The term Bihu is also used to imply Bihu dance otherwise called Bihu Naas and Bihu folk songs also called Bihu Geet.

Army Worm Attack

- Fall Armyworm (FAW) is a dangerous transboundary insect with a high potential to spread rapidly due to its natural distribution capacity and opportunities presented by international trade.
- The armyworm caterpillar is the larval stage of several species of moths.
- It has a huge appetite and can feed on more than 80 species of plants according to the entomologists.
- FAW represents a real threat to food security and livelihoods of millions of smallholder farmers by spreading across all of sub-Saharan Africa, the Near East and Asia, FAW cannot be eliminated.
- Farmers need significant support to manage FAW sustainably in their cropping systems through Integrated Pest Management (IPM) activities.
- The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has launched a Global Action for FAW Control as a response to the international threat posed by the armyworms.

- Recently Directorate of Agriculture has reported an armyworm attack on the standing crops in the northeastern Dhemaji district of Assam.
- The pest attack has added to sorrows of the already worried farmers, due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- The weather is a factor because there are no pre-monsoon rains in Assam yet and the temperature is very high now.
- The armyworm can cause more damage in the absence of rain.
- Another major issue is reaching out to farmers, all the roads and gaps

have been blocked due to the fear of contracting coronavirus.

Operation SHIELD

- Recently Delhi administration has announced Operation SHIELD to fight COVID-19
- SHIELD stands for
- **S - Sealing** of the immediate area or surroundings after geographical marking.
- **H - Home quarantine** of all the people living in the area.
- **I - Isolation and tracing** of people who have been first and second contacts.
- **E- Essential supply** of commodities is ensured.
- **L- Local sanitation** of the area by authorities.
- **D – Door to door health checks** of everyone living in the area.
- It will be implemented in 21 localities identified as containment zones in Delhi.

Source: The Hindu

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