UPSC Daily Current Affairs| Prelim Bits 24-02-2025

Jhumur dance

Why in News?

Prime Minister will witness the world's biggest jhumur dance in history in Guwahati's Sarusajai Stadium at the Jhumoir Binandini 2025 to mark the 200th anniversary of Assam's tea industry.

- Jhumur is the dance of Assam's traditional 'tea-tribes'.
- **Tea Tribes -** The term "tea tribe" refers to a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic community of tea garden workers and their descendants.
- These people came from ***Central India*** mostly from present-day Jharkhand, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, and West Bengal and settled in *Assam in the 19th century* to work in the tea gardens.
- These tea gardens were setup by British.
- They currently have ***Other Backward Classes (OBC) status*** in the state, although they have long been fighting for Scheduled Tribe (ST) status.
- Tribes such as the Munda or the Santhal, a part of the larger tea garden community in Assam, have ***ST status*** in the states where they originally came from.
- Socio-economically, however, remain marginalised, and among the poorest in the state.
- **Jhumur dance -** The tea garden community brought a motley collection of cultural practices from their homelands to Assam including the jhumur tradition.
- Jhumur is the folk dance of the ***Sadan ethnolinguistic group***, who trace their origins to the Chotanagpur region.
- Today it occupies a central place as "tea garden festivals" or festivals celebrated by tea garden workers in Assam.
- The most important ones are the ***Tushu Puja and Karam Puja***, which celebrate the oncoming harvest.
    - Women are the main dancers and singers, while
    - Men play traditional instruments such as madal, dhol, or dhak (drums), cymbals, flutes, and shehnai.
- The attire worn varies from community to community, although red and white sarees are particularly popular among women.
- Dancers stand shoulder-to-shoulder and move in coordinated patterns with precise footwork while singing couplets in their native languages Nagpuri, Khortha and Kurmali, borrow from Assamese.



- These songs tells the history of migration and the exploitative labour relations mar their lives.
- It aided them in not only retaining aspects of their culture and identity but also in making sense of the world their ancestors found themselves in.

Reference

The Indian Express | Jhumur event

Bay of Bengal Inter-Governmental Organisation (BOBP-IGO)

Why in News?

India Assumes Chairmanship of Bay of Bengal Inter-Governmental Organisation at the 13th Governing Council Meeting in Male, Maldives.

- **Event Hosted by -** Ministry of Fisheries & Ocean Resources of the Maldives government, in collaboration with the Bay of Bengal Programme Inter-Governmental Organisation (BOBP-IGO).

Bay of Bengal Programme Inter-Governmental Organisation (BOBP-IGO)

- It is a *unique regional fisheries body*, set up in 2003.
- The decision to establish the Inter-Governmental Organisation (IGO) was taken at the 24th Meeting of the Advisory Committee, held in Phuket, Thailand from 13 -16 October 1999.
- **Aim -** To assist the member countries in increasing the livelihood opportunities and improving the quality of life of the ***small-scale/ artisanal fisher folk*** in the Bay of Bengal region.
- **Members -** Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Sri Lanka.
- **Cooperating parties -** Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar and Thailand.
- **Observers-** FAO and all the relevant regional fisheries and environmental bodies and International Non-Governmental Organisations active in the Bay of Bengal region.

- **Objectives**
  - To increase awareness and knowledge of the needs, benefits and practices of marine fisheries management.
  - Enhance skills through training and education.
  - Transfer appropriate technologies and techniques for development of the small-scale fisheries.
  - Establish regional information networking.
  - Promote women's participation in marine fisheries value chain.
- **Area of competence -** Exclusive Economic Zones under the jurisdiction of the Member States (Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Sri Lanka) and contiguous areas beyond national jurisdiction.
- **Structure - Governing Council -** Serves as the ***apex body*** of the intergovernmental organization (IGO) and meets once a year.
- **Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)** - Considers the technical aspects of the activities proposed to be undertaken and implemented. It meets once a year.
- **Ad-hoc committees** –These are constituted for specific purposes from time to time.
- **Secretariat-** It is the ***implementing organ of the IGO*** and implements the decisions taken by the Governing Council.
- **Evolution -** The Organization evolved from the erstwhile Bay of Bengal Programme of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations (UN) founded in 1979.
- It has worked closely with the whole-range of the stakeholders including the R&D Institutions to develop pathways to capacity enhancement for a sustainable future of the region.
- It has set international benchmarks in execution of programs and activities in the field of small-scale fisheries that has translated into measurable benefits for the member countries.

References

1. Business Standard | Bay of Bengal Inter-Governmental Organisation
2. BOBP | About

Ajit Singh & Pagri Sambhal Jatta movement

Why in News?

Farmers protesting at the Punjab and Haryana borders are observing February 23 as Pagri Sambhal Diwas, in honour of Ajit Singh, paternal uncle of freedom fighter Bhagat Singh.

Ajit Singh

- Ajit Singh was a prominent freedom fighter, revolutionary, and nationalist leader.
- **Born on -** February 23, 1881 at Khatkar Kalan village in ***Punjab.***
- He played a significant role in inspiring his nephew Bhagat Singh.
- Ajit was the elder brother of Kishan Singh, Bhagat Singh’s father.

- Singh attended the DAV College in Lahore after graduating from the Anglo-Sanskrit High School in Jalandhar in 1894.
- He later enrolled at Bareilly College to study law, but he dropped out.
- In 1905, Ajit Singh and his brother Kishan Singh worked among the people in famine-stricken areas like Barar (Madhya Pradesh) and Ahmedabad, as well as flood and earthquake-affected areas like Srinagar and Kangra.

Pagri Sambhal Jatta movement

- Ajit Singh started the Pagri Sambhal Jatta movement in 1907 in protest against 3 agricultural laws imposed by the British.
- 'Pagri Sambhal Jatta' literally translates to ***'take care of your turban, o farmer',*** and invokes self-respect and honour.
- **The 3 laws**
    - The Punjab Land Alienation Act, 1900
    - The Punjab Land Colonisation Act, 1906
    - The Doab Bari Act, 1907.

The Punjab Land Alienation Act	• It restricted the rights of farmers to sell or mortgage their land freely. • It favored moneylenders and landlords, making it difficult for peasants to escape debt.
Punjab Land Colonization Act	• It gave the British control over land ownership in the newly developed Chenab Colony (now in Pakistan). • Farmers had to transfer their land to the British government upon death instead of passing it to their heirs.
Doab Bari Act, 1907	• It took away farmers' ownership rights over their lands, effectively reducing them to contract workers.

- Along with this, the British raised taxes on agricultural land and water for irrigation, increasing the financial burden on farmers.
- Many small farmers and peasants were forced into debt and land loss.
- Soon, farmers started protests against these laws, demanding their repeal.
- Ajit Singh and Kishan Singh (Bhagat Singh's father) formed the ***Bharat Mata Society,*** a revolutionary group for farmers.
- *Lala Lajpat Rai* and other leaders also supported the movement.
- The slogan "Pagri Sambhal Jatta" was coined by ***Banke Dayal***, a nationalist poet, and became a symbol of resistance.
- The movement inspired future protests, including the *Ghadar Movement and Bhagat Singh's revolutionary activities*.
- Both Ajit Singh and Lala Lajpat Rai were arrested in May 1907 and exiled to Burma (now Myanmar), but due to public pressure, were released in November 1907.
- Ajit Singh, however, escaped to Persia, then Turkey, Brazil, Germany, and later settled in Italy.
- He worked closely with revolutionaries in Europe and was associated with Lala Hardayal and Madame Cama.
- He came to India in March 1947 but died in Dalhousie due to ill health on August 15,

1947, the day ***India got independence.***
- From 2021 onwards, ***February 23*** has been observed as Pagri Sambhal Diwas.
- In 2021, farmers were protesting at the Delhi borders seeking repeal of the now-scrapped 3 farm laws, and hence had observed Ajit Singh's birth anniversary as Pagri Sambhal Diwas.

References

1. The Indian Express | Ajit Singh
2. Ministry of culture | Ajit Singh

Asperger's Syndrome

Why in News?

International Asperger Syndrome Day Celebrated recently.

- **International Asperger Syndrome Day** – It is celebrated in ***February 18***, is a date dedicated to raising awareness about this condition that is part of the autism spectrum.
- Established in honor of the birth of Hans Asperger, an Austrian doctor who first described the set of characteristics.
- This date seeks to broaden social understanding and promote the inclusion of people with Asperger's in all contexts of life.
- **Asperger's Syndrome** –It is a neurodevelopmental condition that falls under the umbrella of ***Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).***
- **Symptoms -** Individuals with Asperger's often exhibit specific characteristics, such as
    - **Intense and specific interests -** A deep focus on areas of particular interest.
    - **Preserved cognitive abilities -** Unlike other diagnoses on the spectrum, there is no significant impairment of language or intellectual development.
    - **Social difficulties -** They may find it challenging to interpret facial expressions, body language, or implicit rules in social interactions.
- No two people have the same symptoms.
- **Causes -** The causes of Asperger's Syndrome are unknown. Genetics and brain differences may be involved.
- **Affecting age -** Most diagnoses happen between ages 5 and 9, although some people are adults before they get their diagnosis.
- Although the term "Asperger Syndrome" has been widely used for years, it was integrated into the ASD classification in the DSM-5 (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders) in 2013.
- However, many people still prefer the term because they identify with it.
- People with Asperger's syndrome have average or above average intelligence and usually started talking before age two.
- **Treatment -** Currently there is no cure for ASD.
- Social skills training, Speech-language therapy, Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), Applied behavior analysis, Medicine, Parent education and training help managing the

condition.

- **Outlook -** Asperger's syndrome is lifelong, but symptoms tend to improve over time. Adults with Asperger's syndrome can learn to understand their own strengths and weaknesses.

References

1. Omaringa | Asperger-Syndrome-Day
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History, Art and Culture

India's UNESCO Nomination for Maratha Military Landscapes

• **Nominated**- 12 sites demonstrating the military strength of the Maratha empire.
• **Proposal submitted to UNESCO is titled** - 'Maratha Military Landscape of India. '
• **Maratha Military Landscapes** - Consist of a network of forts from the 17th-19th centuries.
• The 12 sites include Salher Fort, Shivneri Fort, Lohgad, Khanderi Fort, Raigad, Rajgad, Pratapgad, Suvarnadurg, Panhala Fort, Vijay durg, Sindhudurg in Maharashtra, and Gingee Fort in Tamil Nadu.

Ibn Batuta 14th century Traveller

• **Origin** - From Tangier, modern Morocco
• **Visited -** India during reign of Muhammad bin Tughlaq.
• **Author of -** Safarnama Rihala', a significant historical reference.
• **Soil Fertility -** Described Indian soil as fertile, producing two crops yearly
• **Token Currency** - Noted effect of the token currency failure in Delhi, 1333 CE.

Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR)

• **BTR-** Government in Assam has recently recognized Bathouism as an official religion choice in multiple application forms.
• **Bathouism** – It is the traditional religion of the Bodos, Assam's largest plains tribe, who live along the Brahmaputra River.
• **Belief** - Faith revolves around the worship of Bathoubwrai, the supreme god of the Bodos.
• **The term Bathou -** Translates to 5 deep philosophical thoughts'.
• These thoughts are represented by 5 elements – Air, Sun, Earth, Fire, and Sky.
• This concept is akin to the Panchatatva in Hinduism, emphasising the connection between nature and spirituality.

Geography

Iraq's Sinking North

• **Northern Iraq** - Near the Zagros Mountains, is slowly sinking.
• **Tectonic Pull** - A subducting oceanic slab is pulling the region down, a result of long-term tectonic activity.
• **Plate Interactions** - This is driven by the Arabian and Eurasian plates colliding, a core concept of plate tectonics.
• **Plate movement** - Causes earthquakes, volcanoes, and mountain building, also impacting Iraq's geology.

Polity & Governance

Information Technology Act, 2000

• **Modeled** - After the United Nations Model Law on Electronic Commerce 1996.
• **Addresses-** Cybercrime and E-Commerce in India.
• **Objective**- To facilitate secure electronic transactions and reduce cybercrimes.

Provision Section 69 of the IT Act

• Allows government content blocking orders to online intermediaries.
• Applies to ISPs, telecom providers, web hosting services, search engines & online marketplaces.
• Content must be considered a threat to India's national security, sovereignty, or public order.
• Government can block content if deemed “necessary” and “expedient” for these reasons.

International Relations and Issues

Women in Peacekeeping Conference

• **Titled** - Women in Peacekeeping: A Global South Perspective.
• **Venue-** New Delhi.
• **Nodal Agency**- Ministry of External Affairs, in collaboration with the Ministry of Defence and the Centre for UN Peacekeeping.
• **Objective** – To discuss role of women in peacekeeping efforts.
• **Assembly of** - Women peacekeepers from 35 troop-contributing countries in the Global South.

Environment

Haryana Witness Protection Scheme 2025

• **Objective –** It aims to ensure better security for witnesses in Haryana.
• **Witnesses are categorized by threat level.**
  - **Category A** - Life-threatening situations.
  - **Category B** - Threats to safety, reputation, or property.
  - **Category C** - Moderate threats like harassment.
• **Protective Measures**
  - Ensure witnesses do not encounter the accused
  - Monitoring of communications
  - Close protection services

Science

Acute Myeloid Leukaemia (AML) Health Challenges

• **Vulnerable -** Countries in low and middle income countries for e.g. India.
• **AML** – It is the most common type of leukaemia in adults.
• **Characterized by** - Rapid growth of abnormal blood cells, known as blasts.
• **Affects** - Blood and bone marrow, causing severe complications if untreated.

Nayanamritham 2.0 AI-Powered Vision

• **Launched by –** Kerala.
• **The world’s 1st** - Government-led AI eye screening program, building on Nayanamritham 1.0.
• **Nayanamritham 1.0** - focused on diabetic retinopathy (DR) screening at Family Health Centers.
• **Human Expertise** - Initial screenings relied on ophthalmologist interpretation at specialized centers.
• **AI-Enhanced Detection** - Nayanamritham 2.0 introduces AI for chronic eye disease screening.
• **Improved Accessibility** - It aims to make quality eye care more accessible across Kerala.
• **Early Intervention** - Enhanced detection capabilities will lead to earlier treatment and better outcomes.



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