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1. Annual Ambubachi Mela Celebrates at Kamakhya Temple in Assam (June 22, 2024)

The Ambubachi Mela, renowned in Assam, commenced today at Kamakhya temple. It will continue until the 26th of this month.

An Overview of the News

- Thousands of devotees have gathered to participate in this significant event.
- The festival honors the annual menstruation of goddess Kamakhya, symbolizing fertility and womanhood.
- During the Ambubachi Mela, the gates of Kamakhya Temple remain closed.
- The temple gates are scheduled to reopen at 9:08 p.m. on the 25th of this month.
- Elaborate arrangements have been made by the Kamrup Metro District administration for the devotees.

Other Festivals of Assam

- Bihu Festival:
 - Significance: Most important festival of Assam celebrated by all Assamese.
 - Types: Bohag Bihu (spring festival), Kaati Bihu (crop festival), Magh Bihu (harvest festival).
- Me-Dum-Me-Phi Festival:
 - Importance: Ahom festival for ancestor worship.
 - Date: Annually on January 31st.
 - Customs: Includes colorful processions and traditional attire.
 - Belief: Essential for social harmony and preventing crises in Assam.
- Baishagu Festival:
 - Celebrated by: Boro Kacharis tribe in Assam.
 - Date: Mid-April, marking the Bodo New Year.
 - Features: Colorful celebrations, traditional musical instruments like Khawbang, Jotha, Gogona.
 - Conclusion: Culminates in community prayer called "Garjasali."

About Assam:

- It is a state located in the northeastern region of India.

- It is bounded by Bhutan to the north, Arunachal Pradesh to the east, Nagaland to the northeast, Manipur to the southeast, Mizoram to the south and West Bengal to the west.
- Wildlife: Contains Kaziranga National Park, Manas National Park and Nameri National Park.
 - Language: Assamese
 - Formation (as a state) - 26 January 1950
 - Capital - Dispur
 - Chief Minister - Himanta Biswa Sarma
 - Governor - Gulab Chand Kataria
 - Rajya Sabha - 7 seats
 - Lok Sabha - 14 seats
 - Official river - Brahmaputra

2. PM Modi Inaugurates 2550th Bhagwan Mahaveer Nirvan Mahotsav (April 23, 2024)

On April 21, 2024, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 2550th Bhagwan Mahaveer Nirvan Mahotsav at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi, Delhi, coinciding with Mahavir Jayanti.

An Overview of the News

- Alongside the inauguration, PM Modi unveiled a commemorative stamp and coin to mark the occasion.
- Union Minister of State (MoS) Arjun Ram Meghwal from the Ministry of Culture, along with other dignitaries and saints from the Jain community, graced the event with their presence.

Significance of the Mahotsav:

- April 21, 2024, marks the Janma Kalyanak (birth anniversary) of Bhagwan Mahavir Swami.
- The Government of India collaborated with the Jain community to celebrate this occasion by organizing a cultural program at Bharat Mandapam.
- The 2550th Bhagwan Mahaveer Nirvan Mahotsav is observed as a year-long "Ahimsa Mahotsav", emphasizing the teachings of Bhagwan Mahaveer, particularly focusing on non-violence and kindness.

Mahotsav Committee:

- To ensure effective coordination and promotion of the festival, the Bhagwan Mahaveer Nirvan Mahotsav Committee was established.

- Its primary objective is to spread the teachings of Bhagwan Mahaveer, with a special emphasis on non-violence and compassion.

Commemorative Coin Details:

- Minting and Type:
 - The coin is the 8th commemorative issue of 2024 and belongs to the Non-Circulating type.
 - It is minted at the India Government Mint, Hyderabad, located in Telangana.
- Denomination and Weight:
 - The coin holds a denomination of Rs 100 and weighs 35 grams.
- Features:
 - The reverse side showcases the Nalanda Pawapuri Jal Mandir, accompanied by the inscription "Bhagwan Mahaveer 2550th Nirvan Kalyanak" in both Devanagari script and English. Additionally, the year 2023 is inscribed at the bottom.

3. Union Minister Narayan Rane inaugurates 'Khadi Mahotsav' in Mumbai (Oct. 2, 2023)

Union Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Department Minister Narayan Rane inaugurated 'Khadi Mahotsav' in Mumbai.

An Overview of the News

- 'Khadi Mahotsav' was organized on 2nd October, showcasing the government's support for Khadi and Village Industries (KVIC).
- 'Khadi Mahotsav' is a month-long event, which is scheduled to run till 31 October 2023 in Mumbai.
- It serves as a platform not only to showcase Khadi products but also to promote indigenous goods through 'Vocal for Local' exhibitions.
- Customers can avail 20 to 25 percent discount on Khadi products during the festival.

4. ICCR's 4th Indo-Latin America Cultural Festival begins in New Delhi (Sept. 29, 2023)

Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) launched the fourth edition of the Indo-Latin America Cultural Festival in New Delhi.

An Overview of the News

- The festival brings together artists from Colombia, Ecuador, and Chile to showcase their talents and cultural heritage.

Participation of three Latin American countries:

- A total of 34 artists from Colombia, Ecuador, and Chile are actively participating in this two-day cultural event.
- Each country contributes its own unique cultural elements to the festival, promoting intercultural understanding and appreciation.

Promoting cultural and educational cooperation:

- ICCR President Dr. Vinay Sahasrabuddhe emphasized the festival's goal of showcasing the rich cultural heritage of Latin America.
- The event serves as a platform to bring together key stakeholders to discuss prospects and opportunities, promoting cultural and educational cooperation between India and Latin American countries.

5. Elephant Festival begins in Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve, Madhya Pradesh (Sept. 25, 2023)

Elephant Mahotsav began in Madhya Pradesh's Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve and will continue for seven days.

An Overview of the News

- Elephants play an important role in protecting the tigers in the reserve and keeping out wild elephants.
- The Elephant Festival gives villagers and nearby families a chance to interact with elephants.
- The primary goal of the festival in 2023 is to educate villagers about elephants and remove misconceptions about the wild animals.
- The festivities will end on September 26, after which the elephants will return to their patrolling camps.

Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve:

- Located in the Eastern Satpura hill range of Umaria and Katni districts in Madhya Pradesh.
- Boasts a healthy population of tigers and a diverse range of herbivorous animals.
- It has diverse topography, including hills, valleys, rivers, swamps and grasslands supporting diverse vegetation.

Other tiger reserves in Madhya Pradesh:**1. Sanjay-Dubri Tiger Reserve:**

- Located in the Sidhi district of Madhya Pradesh.

Established in 1975

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- Known for saving the world-famous white tiger "Mohan".
- Forms a wildlife corridor connecting Bandhavgarh and Palamu Tiger Reserve.
- Sometimes wild elephants keep coming from the neighboring Chhattisgarh region.

2. Panna Tiger Reserve:

- Located in the Vindhya hill region of northern Madhya Pradesh.
- Characterized by dry deciduous forests, plateaus, and valleys.
- The Ken River flows through the reserve.
- It is surrounded by teak forests in the north and teak-Kardhai mixed forests in the east.
- The Vindhya hill ranges connect wildlife populations in the east and west.

3. Pench Tiger Reserve:

- Inspiration for Rudyard Kipling's "The Jungle Book".
- Known for natural beauty and historical importance.
- Awarded the "Best Maintained Tourist Friendly National Park" award in 2006-07.

4. Kanha Tiger Reserve:

- Home to the hard ground Barasingha, the state animal of Madhya Pradesh.
- Conservation efforts have led to an increase in the population of this emblematic deer.
- The forests are mainly composed of Sal (*Shorea robusta*) and mixed forest trees.

5. Satpura Tiger Reserve:

- Home to arboreal mammals such as flying squirrels, Indian giant squirrels, and leaf-nosed bats.
- The Eurasian otter and smooth-coated otter are also found here.
- Allows pollution-free activities like cycling, canoeing, and trekking.

6. Nuakhai Festival 2023 (Sept. 21, 2023)

The Nuakhai festival was celebrated on September 20, 2023.

An Overview of the News

- Nuakhai festival is traditionally celebrated on the next day of Ganesh Chaturthi.

- Nuakhai is celebrated throughout the **state of Odisha**.
- This festival holds special significance in western Odisha and neighboring areas like Simdega of Jharkhand.

Origin of the word Nuakhai:

- The word 'Nuakhai' is taken from the **Oriya language**.
- 'Nua' means new, and 'khai' means food.
- This festival marks the celebration of the **new rice harvest, symbolizing the possession of new rice in the granary**.

About Odisha

- Formation - **1 April 1936**
- Capital - **Bhubaneswar**
- Governor - **Ganeshi Lal**
- Chief Minister - **Naveen Patnaik**
- Rajya Sabha - **10 seats**
- Lok Sabha - **21 seats**

7. Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir inaugurates 'Bangus Adventure Festival' (Sept. 11, 2023)

On September 10, Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha inaugurated the 'Bangus Adventure Festival' in North Kashmir's Kupwara district.

An Overview of the News

- The 'Bangus Adventure Festival' aims to promote tribal culture and act as a platform for local artisans to display their traditional arts and crafts.
- Bangus is famous for its captivating natural beauty and has immense potential for eco-tourism.
- The main valley is known as Boud-Bangus, while a smaller valley is known as Lakut-Bangus.

About Jammu and Kashmir

- Jammu and Kashmir was a state of India until August 2019, when it was bifurcated as two union territories named Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh on 31 August 2019.
- Capital- **Srinagar (May-October), Jammu (November-April)**
- Lieutenant Governor - **Manoj Sinha**

- Legislative Council - **36 seats**
- Legislative Assembly - **89 seats**

8. Thiruoanam on the last day unites Keralites around the world in Onam celebrations (Aug. 29, 2023)

Keralites around the world are celebrating "Thiruoanam", the 10th and most important day of the grand Onam cultural festival.

An Overview of the News

- Onam is the **harvest festival of Kerala**, symbolizing themes of **prosperity, inclusiveness, and unity.**
- Regardless of religious affiliation, people in Kerala come together to honor the memory of Mahabali, the godly and mythical king, marking Onam as a time of unity.
- The festival is marked by various rituals, which include a **grand Onasadya feast, vibrant Pookkalam flower decorations, wearing a new dress called Onakodi, and engaging in cultural activities such as the Ujyalattam dance and Pulikalli procession.**
- Additionally, the vibrant Vallamkalli boat race and the heartwarming tradition of reuniting families contribute to the charm of the festival.

About Kerala

- Capital - **Thiruvananthapuram**
- Governor- **Arif Mohammad Khan**
- Chief Minister - **Pinarayi Vijayan**

Origin of rivers in Kerala

- Periyar River
- Bharathapuzha River
- Pamba River
- Chaliyar River
- Chalakudy River

9. Divya Kala Mela will be organised at Jaipur (June 28, 2023)

Divya-Kala-Mela-will-be-organised-at-Jaipur

The **Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities** (Divyangjan) is

organizing a special event called '**Divya Kala Mela**' from **June 29, 2023, to July 5, 2023**, at **Jawahar Kala Kendra in Jaipur, Rajasthan**.

An overview of the news

- This event aims to showcase the **products and craftsmanship of entrepreneurs and artisans** with disabilities from across the country.
- The 'Divya Kala Mela' will offer visitors an exciting and vibrant experience with a **wide range of products** from different parts of the country.
- These products will include **handicrafts, handlooms, embroidery works, packaged food**, and more.
- The event provides a unique platform for marketing and showcasing the **skills and products of individuals with disabilities**.
- This initiative by the **Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities** is part of their efforts towards the **economic empowerment** of people with disabilities.
- The 'Divya Kala Mela' in Jaipur, Rajasthan, is the **sixth event** in a series that started in 2022, with previous editions held in **Delhi, Mumbai, Bhopal, Guwahati, and Indore**.
- Around **100 artisans, artists, and entrepreneurs** with disabilities from approximately **20 states and Union Territories** will participate in the event, presenting their products and skills.
- The products will fall under various categories such as **home decor and lifestyle, clothing, stationery and eco-friendly products, packaged food and organic products, toys and gifts, and personal accessories** like jewelry and clutch bags.

10. Hemis Monastery Festival (June 28, 2023)

In **Ladakh**, two -day long **annual Hemis Monastery Festival**, known as **Hemis Tseschu** is being celebrated with **great religious fervor and gaiety**.

About Hemis Monastery Festival

- It is a significant **annual event** celebrated in Ladakh, India.
- The festival spans over two days and is observed with immense **religious fervor and joyous celebrations**.
- The festival commemorates the birth anniversary of **Guru Padma Sambhava**, a revered figure in **Tibetan Buddhism**.
- **Grand prayers, sacred mask dances** and thanks for mural paintings are performed on the occasion.
- It holds great cultural and spiritual significance, attracting a **large number of foreign tourists to Ladakh**. Visitors from around the world come to witness the mesmerizing

performances, immerse themselves in the vibrant atmosphere, and experience the rich traditions of the region.

- With its centuries-old history, the festival has become **one of the major highlights of Ladakh**, captivating the attention and interest of both locals and tourists alike.