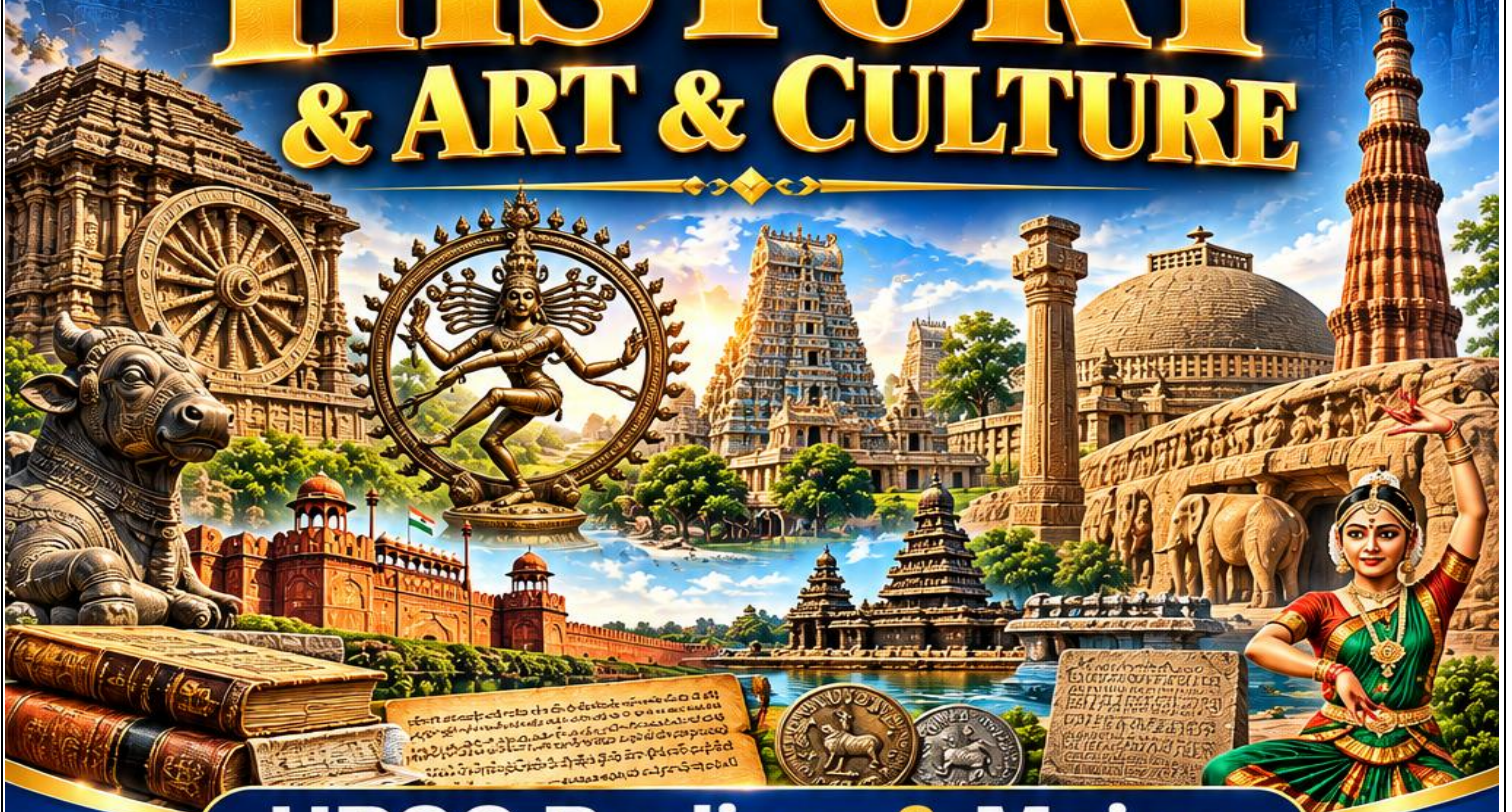




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1. Dhimsa dance

Prelims:

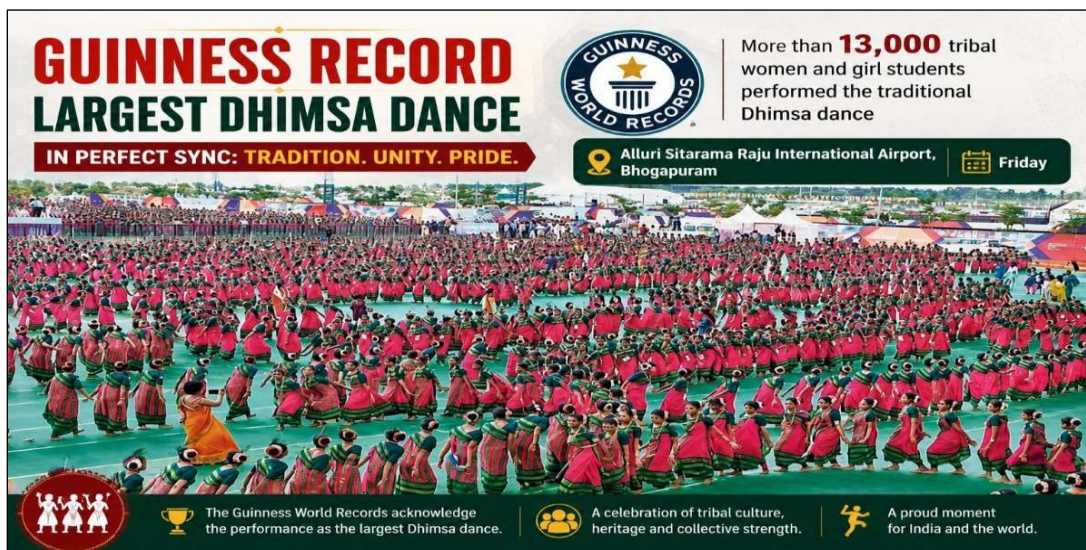
Indian Art & Culture

Mains:

GS Paper I-Indian Culture

Current relevance:

A performance of the traditional **Dhimsa dance** by **more than 13,000 tribal women and girl students** at the Alluri Sitarama Raju International Airport, Bhogapuram has been recognized by **Guinness World Records** as the largest Dhimsa dance.



Highlights:

Guinness World Record Recognition:

1. The traditional Dhimsa dance performed by more than **13,000 tribal women and girl students** was recognised by Guinness World Records as the **largest Dhimsa dance**.
2. The performance was held at the **Alluri Sitarama Raju International Airport, Bhogapuram**.
3. Representatives of **Guinness World Records** witnessed the performance and presented the **official certificate** to Andhra Pradesh Minister for Tribal Welfare.

About Dhimsa Dance:

1. It is a traditional folk dance of the **tribal communities** of **Andhra Pradesh**, primarily performed in the Alluri Sitarama Raju district and the **Araku Valley region**.
2. Performed by **women** in circular or chain formations while holding each other's hands or shoulders, **symbolising unity, cooperation and community harmony**.
3. The dance is performed during **festivals, marriages, harvest celebrations, religious ceremonies** and other important community occasions.
4. It is accompanied by traditional folk songs and indigenous musical instruments such as the **dappu, mori (flute) and tudumu**.
5. It reflects the traditions, **social life, agricultural practices and cultural identity of tribal communities**, making it an important part of their intangible cultural heritage.

Source: THE HINDU - <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/andhra-pradesh/largest-dhimsa-dance-recognised-by-guinness-world-records/article71291286.ece>

2. Hero Stone

Prelims:

Indian History, Art and Culture

Mains:

GS Paper I– Indian Culture

Current affairs:

A **Hoysala-era hero stone (Veeragallu)** bearing a Kannada inscription was discovered at **Neeragunda village in Arsikere taluk, Karnataka**, providing fresh evidence that may help resolve the long-standing uncertainty regarding the date of the death of **Hoysala ruler Vishnuvardhana**.



Highlights:

Historical Background:

1. The tradition of erecting hero stones was widely practised across South India, particularly during the reign of the **Rashtrakutas, Chalukyas, Hoysalas, Kadambas, and Yadavas**.
2. These memorial stones commemorate acts of valour and serve as important historical records through their inscriptions and sculptural depictions.

Discovery of the Hero Stone:

1. Two **Hoysala-era stone slabs** bearing sculptural work were unearthed during restoration work at the **Lakshmi Narayana Swamy Temple** in **Neeragunda village, Arsikere taluk, Karnataka**.

2. Researchers subsequently identified the stone slabs as **Veeragallus (hero stones)**, one of which bears a significant Kannada inscription.
3. According to researchers, the inscription commemorates a **soldier who sacrificed his life soon after the death of Hoysala ruler Vishnuvardhana at Bankapura.**

About Hero Stone:

1. A **Hero Stone (Veeragallu/Viragal)** is a **memorial stone** erected in **honour of a warrior or individual** who sacrificed his or her **life in an act of bravery**, particularly in battle or while protecting people, cattle, or territory.
2. Hero stones generally contain:
 - i. sculptural depictions of the heroic act or battle
 - ii. Inscriptions describing the event or the hero
 - iii. Upper panels often portraying the hero's **ascension to heaven** or being honoured by celestial beings, symbolising eternal remembrance.
3. Hero stones are valuable **epigraphic and archaeological sources** that provide evidence on political history, warfare and military traditions, social and cultural practices. Language, script, and regional administration of the period.

Source: THE HINDU –

<https://www.pressreader.com/foryou?popupArticleId=281801405774356>

3. RISA: Timeless Tribal – Promoting India's Tribal Textile Heritage

Prelims:

Art and Culture

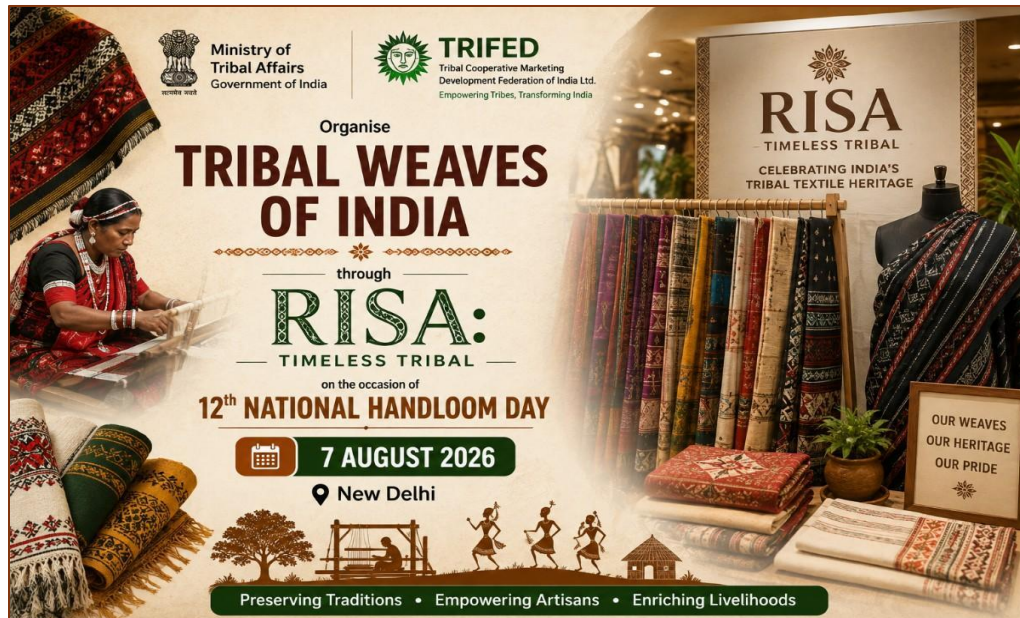
Mains:

GS Paper I-Indian Culture – Art Forms, Literature and Architecture, GS Paper II-

Welfare Schemes for Vulnerable Sections, GS Paper III-Inclusive Growth and Employment

Current affairs:

The **Ministry of Tribal Affairs**, in association with the **Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India Ltd. (TRIFED)**, organised “**Tribal Weaves of India**” through **RISA: Timeless Tribal** in New Delhi on 7 August 2026, marking the **12th National Handloom Day**.



Highlights:

About RISA: Timeless Tribal

1. **RISA: Timeless Tribal** is a **premium brand** launched by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs and operating under TRIFED.
2. It seeks to preserve India's **tribal weaving and craft traditions** while connecting tribal products with consumers in India and international markets.
3. The brand positions tribal textiles and handicrafts as **premium offerings combining authenticity, quality and contemporary design**.
4. Tribal textiles as repositories of **indigenous knowledge, cultural identity** and sustainable practices.
5. It sought to preserve traditional knowledge while creating **contemporary design opportunities and stronger market access** for tribal artisans.

6. It encourages collaboration among **artisans, designers, institutions and industry stakeholders** to sustain tribal weaving traditions in an evolving global marketplace.
7. A diverse range of GI-tagged tribal weaves, including **Kotpad Cotton, Tussar Silk, Eri Silk, Muga Silk, Toda Embroidery and Dongria Embroidery**.
8. Beyond Tribal Textiles, RISA also showcased **specialised handicrafts** from different regions, including:
 - i. Longpi Pottery – Manipur
 - ii. Turtuk Brass Cutlery – Ladakh
 - iii. Warli Art – Maharashtra
 - iv. Dokhra Art – Chhattisgarh

9. **Market Linkages:**

- i. RISA seeks to create **sustainable livelihood opportunities** by improving tribal artisans' access to **national and international markets**.
- ii. Stronger market linkages are intended to help tribal communities establish a distinct presence in the **niche and premium textile segment**.

10. **Artisan-Centred Approach:**

- i. RISA is positioned as an **artisan- and craft-led brand rather than merely a fashion label**.
- ii. Tribal Master Artisans were also felicitated during the event, highlighting the role of artisans in preserving India's traditional knowledge systems.

About National Handloom Day:

1. **National Handloom Day** is observed **every year on 7 August** to honour India's handloom weaving community and recognise the sector's contribution to the country's socio-economic development.
2. **7 August** commemorates the **Swadeshi Movement**, which was formally launched at Calcutta Town Hall on **7 August 1905** to encourage **indigenous products and domestic production, including handlooms**.

3. The **first National Handloom Day** was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Chennai on **7 August 2015**.
4. National Handloom Day aims to **raise awareness about the handloom industry, promote handloom products, improve weavers' incomes**, and strengthen pride in their craftsmanship.
5. The handloom sector plays an important role in **supporting rural and semi-rural livelihoods, empowering women, preserving India's cultural heritage, and promoting eco-friendly production**.

Source: PIB-

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2296175®=48&lang=1>

4. Kalidasa

Prelims:

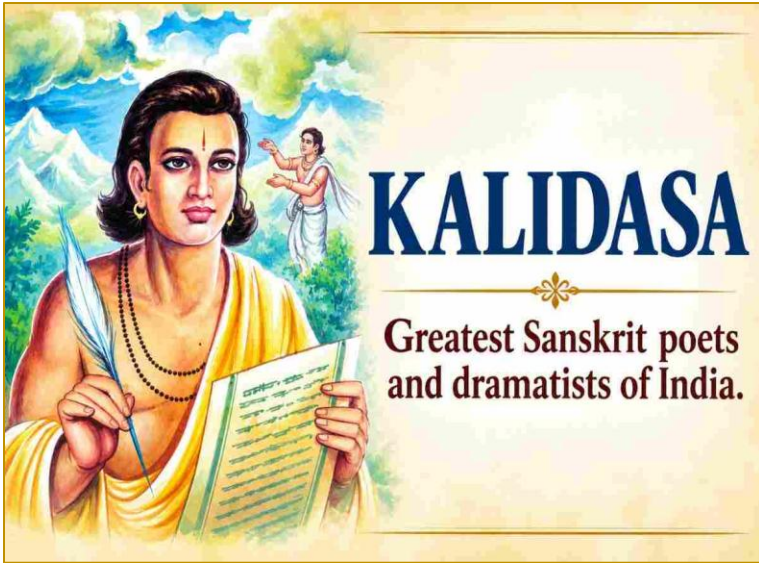
Ancient Indian History & Culture

Mains:

GS Paper I – Indian Culture

Current affairs:

The novel **Kaho Kalidasa!** written by **Yugul Joshi** and published by Manjul Publishing House, was launched at the **Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), New Delhi**.



Highlights:

About Kaho Kalidasa:

1. **Kaho Kalidasa!** is a novel written by **Yugul Joshi** and published by **Manjul Publishing House**.
2. The book explores **Kalidasa's life, literary works and creative sensibilities**, particularly through clues and emotions reflected in his writings.
3. It examines major themes in Kalidasa's literature, including **love, separation, responsibility and nature**, with special emphasis on the **portrayal of female characters**.
4. As reliable biographical information about Kalidasa is limited, the novel uses **literary imagination and his own works to explore the lesser-known dimensions of his life and personality**.
5. The title **Kaho Kalidasa!** represents an **intimate call to Kalidasa, creating a dialogue between the classical poet and the present day**.

About Kalidasa:

1. Kalidasa was one of the greatest **Sanskrit poets and dramatists** of India. IGNCA describes him as **"Kavikulaguru" (Master of the Poet fraternity)** and an outstanding figure of Sanskrit literature.

2. **Kalidasa** is believed to have lived approximately between **A.D. 380 and 415**.
3. His writings combine **poetry, drama, nature, human emotions and Indian cultural values**. His works reflect themes connected with **Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha**.
4. **Multidisciplinary Knowledge:** His writings display familiarity with fields including **philosophy, Vedic learning, polity, economy, ethics, astronomy, agriculture, botany, music, dance, theatre, painting and sculpture**.

Major Works of Kalidasa:

Mahakavyas (Epic Poetry):

1. **Raghuvamsha** narrates the lineage and heroic deeds of the Raghu or Solar dynasty.
2. **Kumarasambhava** describes Parvati's penance, her marriage to Shiva and the birth of Kumara (Kartikeya).

Lyric Poetry:

1. **Meghaduta** tells the story of an exiled Yaksha who sends a message to his beloved through a cloud.
2. **Ritusamhara** provides a poetic portrayal of the six seasons and their relationship with nature.

Dramas:

1. **Abhijnanashakuntalam** narrates the story of Shakuntala, drawing upon earlier Indian literary traditions.
2. **Malavikagnimitram** portrays the love story of Malavika and King Agnimitra.
3. **Vikramorvashiyam** depicts the love story of the celestial nymph Urvashi and King Pururavas.

Source: PIB –

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=2303359®=3&lang=1>

5. Sanskrit Subhashitam

Prelims:

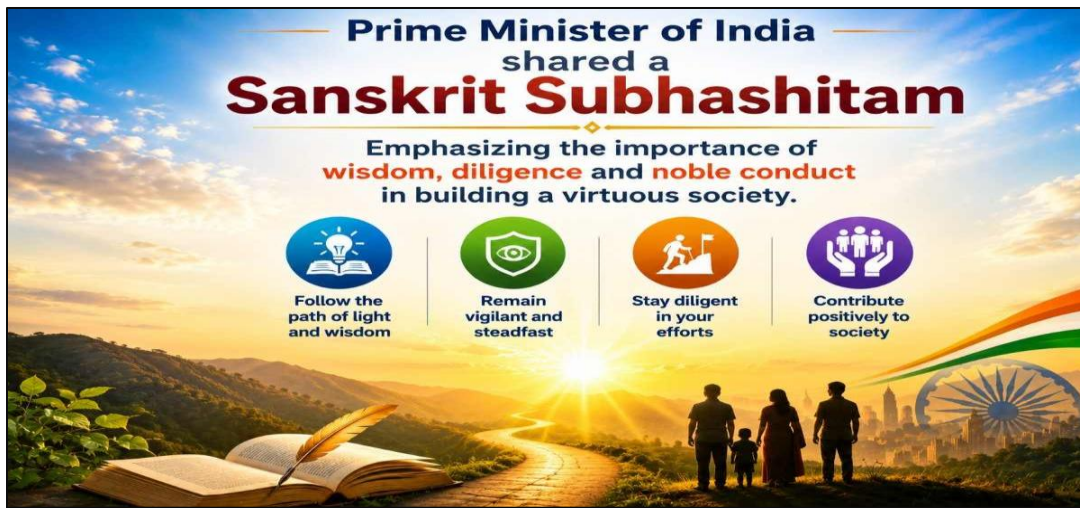
Indian culture

Mains:

GS Paper I: Indian culture, GS Paper IV (Ethics): Human values, attitude, ethics in public and private relationships

Current relevance:

The Prime Minister of India shared a **Sanskrit Subhashitam** highlighting the importance of **wisdom, diligence and noble conduct** in building a **virtuous society**.



Highlights:

About Subhashitam:

1. The **Sanskrit Subhashitam** emphasises that a virtuous society is built when individuals combine **wisdom with persistent effort, vigilance and noble conduct**.
2. It calls upon individuals to follow the **path of light and wisdom**, remain steadfast in their efforts and direct their actions towards the larger good of society.

Core Values:

1. **Wisdom:** Encourages individuals to use **knowledge and sound judgement** to choose the right course of action. It states that wisdom guides a person towards the right path and knowledge strengthens understanding.

2. **Diligence:** Stresses **sustained and purposeful effort** rather than passive knowledge; Subhashitam links knowledge with constant practice and wisdom with action.
3. **Steadfastness:** Calls for remaining **vigilant and persistent in one's efforts**. This complements the ethical ideal that wise and resolute individuals should not lose enthusiasm even during adversity.
4. **Noble Conduct:** Places **character and ethical behaviour** at the centre of individual and social life. Subhashitam shared by the Prime Minister associates noble character with **integrity, humility, disciplined conduct, trust and effective leadership**.
5. **Collective Welfare:** Virtue is not confined to personal development; individual conduct should ultimately contribute to a **noble and virtuous society**.

Ethical Significance:

1. **Knowledge to Action:** Wisdom acquires practical value when translated into **diligent and responsible action**.
2. **Character to Trust:** Integrity and disciplined conduct enable individuals to earn **social respect, responsibility and enduring trust**.
3. **Individual to Society:** Ethical behaviour at the individual level contributes to the creation of a **virtuous social order**, linking personal morality with collective well-being.
4. **Resilience in Adversity:** Steadfastness and enthusiasm even during difficult circumstances represent an important dimension of **ethical courage and perseverance**.
5. **Selflessness:** It emphasises **working for the welfare of others without expectation of return**, reinforcing the principle of public-spirited conduct.

Application to Public Life:

1. These values can be connected to **ethical leadership and public service**: a public functionary should exercise **wisdom in decision-making, diligence in duty, steadfastness during challenges and integrity in conduct**, while keeping collective welfare at the centre.

2. This also resonates with **Article 51A(j)** of the Constitution, which places a Fundamental Duty on citizens to strive towards **excellence in individual and collective activity** so that the nation advances to higher levels of endeavour and achievement.

Source: PIB –

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=2303633®=6&lang=1>

6. Sree Narayana Guru

Prelims:

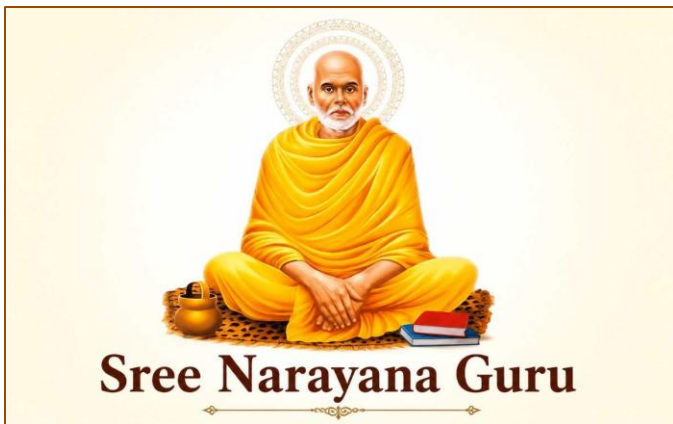
Modern Indian History

Mains:

GS Paper I – Modern Indian History & Indian Society

Current relevance:

The Prime Minister of India paid tributes to **Sree Narayana Guru on his birth anniversary** on 28 August 2026.



Highlights:

About Sree Narayana Guru:

1. **Sree Narayana Guru (1856–1928)** was a distinguished **spiritual leader, philosopher and social reformer** who played an important role in Kerala's social renaissance.

2. He was born at **Vayalvaram Veedu in Chempazhanthy, near Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala.**
3. He emerged as a prominent figure of the 19th-century Indian social awakening, challenging **ignorance, superstition, caste discrimination and social divisions.**
4. His philosophy was founded on the principles of **equality, unity, compassion, knowledge, spiritual freedom and universal love.**
5. He spent his final years at **Sivagiri in Varkala**, where he eventually **attained samadhi.**

Major Contributions and Achievements:

1. **Social Equality:** Sree Narayana Guru strongly opposed **caste-based discrimination** and advocated a society founded on **equality and human dignity.**
2. **Universal Brotherhood:** His message, **"One Caste, One Religion, One God for Mankind,"** emphasised the unity of humanity beyond distinctions of caste and creed.
3. **Rejection of Caste:** Through his **Namukku Jaathi Illa ("We Have No Caste") declaration,** he asserted his opposition to caste divisions and social discrimination.
4. **Education and Social Upliftment:** He promoted **education and learning** as instruments of social progress and established **temples, schools and social institutions** as centres of education and moral development.
5. **Religious Reform:** Through **inclusive temple consecrations and educational initiatives,** he challenged exclusionary practices and sought to promote a more inclusive social order.
6. **Inter-faith Harmony:** He advocated respect and underlying unity among different religions and, in **1924, convened a religious parliament at the Aluva Advaita Ashram,** bringing together representatives of different faiths.

Philosophy and Teachings:

1. **Oneness of Existence:** Guru upheld the **unity of all existence,** recognising the divine presence in every living being.

2. **Knowledge and Compassion:** He regarded knowledge and compassion, rather than blind faith, as essential paths towards genuine liberation.
3. **Moral and Spiritual Values:** His teachings emphasised **self-purification, simplicity and universal love** as foundations of individual and social life.
4. **Individual to Social Transformation:** His philosophy placed human beings at the centre of social progress, viewing **individual self-improvement** as a means to achieve wider social transformation.

Literary Works:

1. **Literary Thinker:** Sree Narayana Guru was an important **literary and philosophical writer**, whose writings engaged with **spiritual, philosophical and social themes**.
2. **Collected Works:** The **Kerala State Central Library** catalogues collections of his writings as **Sree Narayana Guru Sampoorana Krithikal** and **Sree Narayana Gurudeva Krithikal**.
3. **Philosophical Orientation:** His literary contributions broadly reflect his ideas concerning **spirituality, social transformation and philosophical thought**.
4. **Important Works:** **Atmopadesa Satakam** and **Daiva Dasakam** are associated with Sree Narayana Guru; these individual titles should be used after verification from authoritative government or official cultural sources.

Source: PIB –

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=2304121®=3&lang=1>

7. Aranmula Uthrittathi Vallamkali

Prelims:

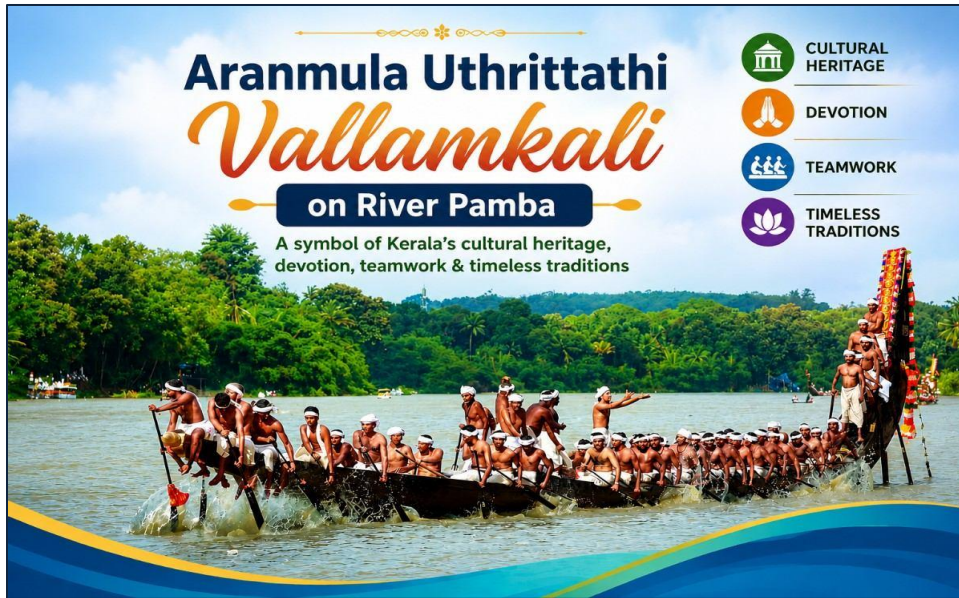
Art & Culture

Mains:

GS Paper I – Indian Culture

Current relevance:

The Vice President of India, C. P. Radhakrishnan, inaugurated the **Aranmula Uthrittathi Vallamkali** on the **River Pamba**, highlighting the festival as a symbol of Kerala's **cultural heritage, devotion, teamwork and timeless traditions**.



Highlights:

Aranmula Uthrittathi Vallamkali:

1. **Traditional Festival:** Aranmula Vallamkali is associated with Onam and is held on the **River Pamba**.
2. **Sacred Association:** It is closely linked with the traditional **Vallasadya**.
3. **Palliyodams:** The festival features beautifully decorated Palliyodams, with **more than a hundred oarsmen** rowing together in rhythm.
4. **Community Values:** The coordinated participation reflects teamwork, discipline, sportsmanship and collective action.
5. **Living Heritage:** It represents the continuity and transmission of Kerala's traditional practices across generations.

Cultural & Spiritual Heritage of Aranmula:

1. **Sree Parthasarathy Temple:** The ancient temple forms an important part of Aranmula's cultural heritage.

2. **Aranmula Kannadi:** The renowned traditional craft has received a **Geographical Indication (GI) tag**, highlighting the significance of protecting local craftsmanship.
3. **River Pamba:** It has considerable spiritual significance and forms an integral part of the **Sabarimala pilgrimage**.
4. **Spiritual Symbolism:** The River Pamba represents faith, purification and spiritual surrender.
5. **Culture–Religion Linkage:** The association of **Onam, Vallasadya, River Pamba and Sree Parthasarathy Temple** demonstrate the close relationship between Kerala's cultural and sacred traditions.

Significance of the Tradition:

1. **Cultural Identity:** Aranmula Vallamkali helps communities remain connected with their cultural roots, including people returning from abroad to participate.
2. **Heritage Conservation:** It underlines the importance of preserving traditional arts, crafts and knowledge systems for future generations.
3. **Social Cohesion:** Collective participation strengthens community bonds and a spirit of togetherness.
4. **Unity in Diversity:** Such festivals demonstrate how India's diverse traditions can reinforce broader cultural unity.
5. **Tradition & Modernity:** The idea of “**Vikas Bhi, Virasat Bhi**” highlights that development and heritage conservation can progress together.

Source: PIB –

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=2304691®=48&lang=1>