

## SHORT NEWS

### 1. Nuakhai Festival

**What it is** - An agricultural harvest festival in Western Odisha and parts of Chhattisgarh & Jharkhand.

**Meaning** - "Nua" means new and "Khahi" means food. It's about eating the first grains of the newly harvested paddy.

**When it's celebrated** - A day after Ganesh Chaturthi (usually August–September).

**Significance** - It's a festival to show gratitude for a good harvest. Farmers offer the first produce to their deities, especially Maa Samaleswari. It promotes community bonding and unity.

**Celebrations** - Includes folk songs, Sambalpuri dances, and wearing traditional attire.

### 2. India-Bhutan Sign MoU on Agriculture

**What happened** - India and Bhutan signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to cooperate in agriculture and related sectors.

**Goal of the MoU** - To work together on agricultural research, livestock health, post-harvest management, and sharing knowledge and skills.

**Key Focus** - To ensure food security, promote sustainable farming, and improve rural prosperity in both nations.

**Immediate Action** - A Joint Technical Working Group (JTWG) was formed to identify priority areas like seeds, food processing, and agricultural marketing for immediate collaboration.

### 3. India-Saudi Arabia Defence Meeting

**What happened** - The 7th meeting of the India-Saudi Arabia Joint Committee on Defence Cooperation (JCDC) was held in New Delhi.

**Main Agenda** - To review and strengthen bilateral defence ties.

**Areas of Discussion** -

1. Cooperation in joint military training and exercises.
2. Collaboration in maritime security.
3. Partnerships in the defence industry.

**India's Offer** -

1. Provided training assistance for Saudi Armed Forces.
2. Offered cooperation in cybersecurity, IT, and disaster management.
3. Proposed joint production of defence equipment.

**Outcome** - Both countries agreed to hold regular meetings to continue strengthening their defence partnership.

### 4. Mahatma Ayyankali (1863-1941)

**Who he was** - A major social reformer from Venganoor, Kerala, who fought against extreme caste oppression. He belonged to the Pulayar community, which was considered one of the most oppressed Dalit castes.

**Fight for Education** - In 1904, he started the "Vilaykal Samaram" (struggle for education) to get Dalit children admitted into government schools. He believed, like Dr. Ambedkar, that education was the key to liberation.

**Labour Movement** - In 1907, he organized the first-ever agricultural labour strike in Indian history. The strike demanded better wages and dignity for Dalit farm workers.

**Fight for Public Rights** - He led struggles for the right of Dalits to walk on public roads and access public spaces, which was forbidden at the time. His efforts inspired later movements like the Vaikom Satyagraha.

**Organization** - In 1907, he founded the Sadhu Jana Paripalana Sangham (SJPS) to uplift Dalits, promote education, and fight caste-based discrimination.

**Political Role** – In 1912, he was nominated to the Sree Moolam Praja Sabha (the legislative council of Travancore), where he advocated for land reforms and equal rights.

**Legacy & Recognition** – He is known as “Mahatma” Ayyankali for his tireless fight for social justice. Often called the “Ambedkar of Kerala” for his role in Dalit emancipation. He is recognized by both the Central and Kerala governments as a symbol of equality and empowerment

#### 4. Burmese Pythons

**In the News** – Florida officials are using robotic rabbits to lure and capture invasive Burmese pythons.

**About** – They are among the world's longest snakes and live in forests, grasslands, and wetlands.

**Native Range** – Found across Southeast Asia, including parts of Northeast India, Nepal, and China.

**Invasive Species** – An established population in Florida, USA, is severely harming native wildlife.

**Protection Status** – Listed as Vulnerable on the IUCN Red List.

#### 5. Prithu Rae of the Khen Dynasty

**Context** – A new flyover in Guwahati, Assam, will be named after Prithu, a 13th-century ruler of the Kamrup kingdom.

**Who was Prithu?** He was a king of the Khen Dynasty who ruled Kamrupa (the first historical kingdom of Assam) in the early 13th century.

**Major Achievement** – He is widely credited by historians for defeating the invading Turko-Afghan army led by Bakhtiyar Khilji around 1206 CE.

**After Prithu** – Following his reign, the Kamarupa kingdom fragmented, which eventually led to the rise of the Ahom kingdom in eastern Assam.

