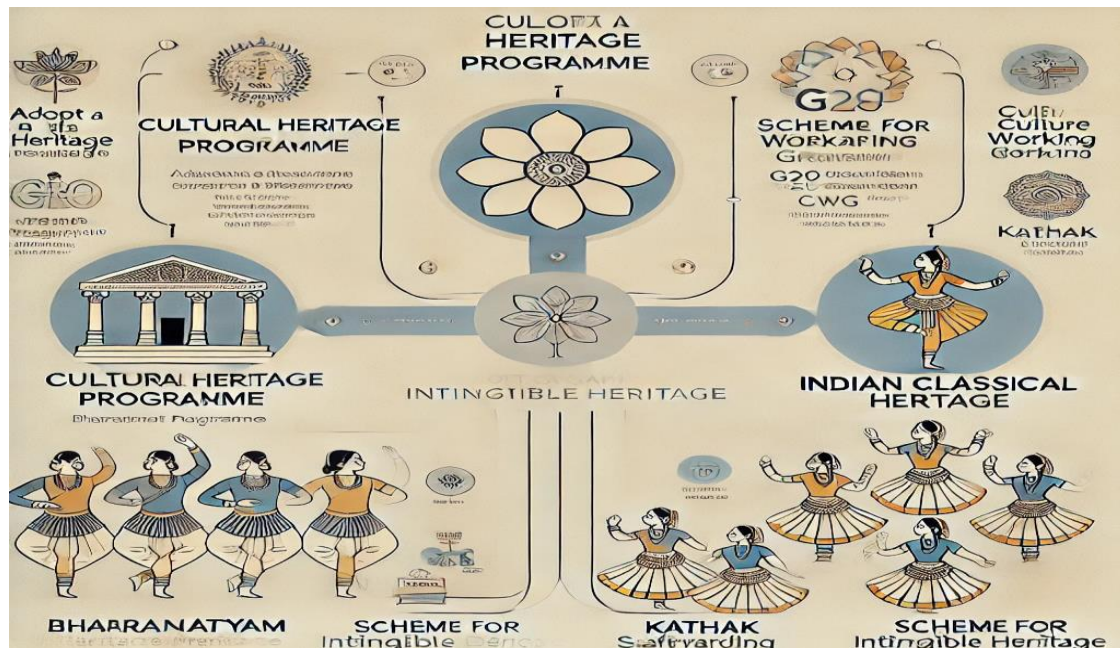


THE INDIAN CULTURE & HERITAGE – PAPER I



The 'Adopt a Heritage' programme, under the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), invites public and private sector entities to partner through CSR funding to enhance amenities at nationally significant monuments. This initiative aims to improve visitor experience by developing infrastructure in hygiene, accessibility, safety, and knowledge domains, thereby promoting India's rich cultural heritage.

The 'Adopt a Heritage' programme is organized by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), which operates under the Ministry of Culture, Government of India. This initiative involves collaboration with public and private sector entities, including companies, trusts, societies, and NGOs, through their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funding.

The monuments associated with the 'Adopt a Heritage' programme include a wide range of culturally significant sites across India. Some notable examples are Qutub Minar, Humayun's Tomb, Agra Fort, Elephanta Caves, Konark Sun Temple, and many others totaling over 3,600 monuments protected by ASI.

Significance: The programme holds significance as it fosters collective responsibility in preserving India's cultural treasures. By engaging external partners, it ensures sustainable maintenance and showcases monuments effectively. It also promotes social awareness and economic development in local communities through employment opportunities, leveraging CSR initiatives for heritage conservation.

Impact of the Programme: Adopt a Heritage significantly enhances visitor engagement and satisfaction at protected monuments. It upgrades facilities like hygiene, accessibility, safety measures, and cultural interpretation, enriching the overall visitor experience. Moreover,

involving diverse stakeholders fosters a deeper appreciation for India's heritage, supports local livelihoods, and strengthens partnerships between government and private sectors for sustained heritage conservation and promotion.

'Adopt a Heritage 2.0' is an upgraded version of the programme, aiming to further enhance the preservation and promotion of India's cultural heritage. It involves signing MoUs with various public and private entities to adopt specific monuments, thereby contributing to their maintenance, improving visitor experience, and ensuring their sustainable management for future generations.

G20 Culture Working Group (CWG) Cultural Projects: A Simple Overview

As Bharat (India) took on the G20 Presidency, the central theme of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam'—which means 'The World is One Family'—guided its global cultural initiatives. The G20 Culture Working Group, led by the Ministry of Culture, used this theme to create a variety of international cultural projects. These projects aimed to showcase the rich diversity of human culture and emphasize how culture can bring people and nations together.

Key Highlights: 'Culture Unites All' Campaign:

Theme: India's G20 theme, 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam,' highlights the interconnectedness of all life forms and our shared responsibility towards the environment. It also introduces the concept of LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment), which promotes sustainable living.

Campaign Focus: The 'Culture Unites All' campaign was launched to showcase how culture can bridge gaps between different people and communities. It emphasizes the role of culture in fostering peace, mutual respect, and global cooperation.

CWG Initiatives:

The G20 Culture Working Group organized a diverse range of activities including exhibitions, performances, seminars, workshops, and publications. These initiatives were designed to delve deeply into cultural themes and promote global engagement.

Objectives: The projects aimed to demonstrate the power of culture to unite people, enhance understanding, and promote a collaborative approach to addressing global challenges like climate change, health, and economic development.

Cultural Significance:

Philosophy: The campaign draws on the ancient Sanskrit concept of Namaste, which embodies mutual respect and acknowledgment of the divine in others. This reflects the idea that culture can create meaningful connections and promote inclusivity.

Vision: By celebrating diverse cultural expressions, the CWG projects aimed to highlight commonalities among different cultures and work towards a shared, sustainable future.

In summary, the G20 Culture Working Group's cultural projects under India's presidency were designed to use culture as a bridge to connect people globally, address contemporary challenges, and work towards a unified and sustainable future.

Scheme for “Safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage and Diverse Cultural Traditions of India”

Scheme for Safeguarding the Intangible Heritage and Diverse Cultural Traditions of India

India boasts a vast array of living and diverse cultural traditions, including intangible cultural heritage (ICH) such as oral traditions, performing arts, rituals, and traditional craftsmanship. To address the critical need for preserving and promoting these cultural forms, the Ministry of Culture has introduced the “Scheme for Safeguarding the Intangible Heritage and Diverse Cultural Traditions of India.”

Key Objectives:

1.Institutional Support: The scheme aims to provide institutional support and encouragement to a range of stakeholders, including institutions, groups, individuals, NGOs, researchers, and scholars. It seeks to enhance awareness, interest, and professional engagement in safeguarding and promoting India's intangible cultural heritage.

2.Centralized Efforts: By consolidating efforts that were previously scattered, the scheme will ensure a more organized and systematic approach to preserving and propagating cultural traditions.

3.Scope of Coverage: The scheme will address various domains of intangible cultural heritage, including:

Oral Traditions and Expressions: Languages and storytelling methods.

Performing Arts: Traditional dance, music, and theatre.

8 Most Popular Festivals in India

1. Holi

Description: Known as the "Festival of Colors," Holi celebrates the burning of the demoness Holika and the playful spirit of Lord Krishna. Participants throw colored powders and water at each other and often enjoy bhang, a traditional cannabis paste.

2. Ganesh Chaturthi

Description: This 11-day festival honors Lord Ganesha, the elephant-headed god. The festival features elaborate Ganesh statues, public processions, and culminates with the immersion of the statues in water. Mumbai is renowned for its grand celebrations.

3. Navaratri, Durga Puja, and Dussehra

Description: Navaratri celebrates Goddess Durga over nine nights, while Dussehra marks her victory over the buffalo demon Mahishasura and the defeat of Ravan by Lord Ram. Durga Puja, especially grand in Kolkata, involves large statues of Durga and immersive cultural activities.

4. Diwali

Description: Known as the "Festival of Lights," Diwali commemorates Lord Ram's return to Ayodhya. The festival is marked by lighting lamps, fireworks, and feasts. It is one of the most anticipated and widely celebrated festivals in India.

5. Onam

Description: The biggest festival in Kerala, Onam celebrates the mythical King Mahabali's return. It features flower decorations, traditional feasts served on banana leaves, folk dances, and boat races.

6. Krishna Janmashtami (Govinda)

Description: This festival celebrates Lord Krishna's birthday. A highlight is the dahi handi event, where teams form human pyramids to break pots of curd hung high above. The festivities are especially lively in Mumbai.

7. Pushkar Camel Fair

Description: Held in the desert town of Pushkar, this fair is famous for camel trading, beauty contests, and races. Camels are adorned and showcased, attracting visitors from all over.

8. Temple Festivals in Kerala

Description: Kerala's temple festivals are known for their grand elephant processions, colorful floats, and vibrant music. Each temple festival honors its local deity with unique legends and festivities.

Indian Classical Dances

India's classical dance forms have a rich history, combining spirituality, mythology, and artistry. Here are the main classical dance styles:

1. Bharatnatyam

Origin: Tamil Nadu and Karnataka

Description: Dating back nearly 2,000 years, Bharatnatyam is one of the oldest classical dances. It was revealed by Lord Brahma to Sage Bharata, who codified it in the Natya Shastra. This dance is known for its intricate footwork, expressive gestures (mudras), and dramatic storytelling.

2. Kathak

Origin: North India

Description: Derived from "katha" meaning "story," Kathak involves storytelling through dance. Traditionally performed by Kathakars (bards), it includes spins, rhythmic footwork, and expressive gestures. It evolved into a courtly art form, often performed in royal courts.

3. Kathakali

Origin: Kerala

Description: Kathakali, meaning "Story-Play," is known for its elaborate costumes and makeup. It dramatizes themes from Hindu epics like the Ramayana and Mahabharata. Kathakali is celebrated for its intricate movements, vivid costumes, and expressive facial performances.

4. Kuchipudi

Origin: Andhra Pradesh

Description: Named after the Kuchipudi village, this dance combines dance, drama, and music. Originating in the 17th century, Kuchipudi often portrays scenes from Hindu epics and legends, and is known for its graceful movements and expressive storytelling.

5. Manipuri

Origin: Manipur

Description: Manipuri is characterized by its delicate and graceful movements. It integrates ritualistic elements and local traditions, reflecting the cultural essence of Manipur. The dance form includes elaborate costumes and poetic themes.

6. Mohiniattam

Origin: Kerala

Description: Named after the mythical enchantress Mohini, Mohiniattam features a flowing, graceful style. Traditionally performed by women, it combines subtle body movements with expressive gestures, depicting feminine beauty and emotion.

7. Odissi

Origin: Odisha

Description: Odissi is known for its lyrical and expressive style, emphasizing torso movements and intricate footwork. It has ancient roots in the Devadasi tradition and is celebrated for its devotion to themes of love and spirituality.

These classical dance forms not only showcase India's diverse cultural heritage but also serve as a means of preserving and narrating its rich mythological and historical traditions.

MAIN PRACTICE QUESTIONS

- 1. Discuss the significance of the 'Adopt a Heritage' programme in preserving India's cultural monuments.**
- 2. Explain how the G20 Culture Working Group's 'Culture Unites All' campaign reflects India's G20 theme of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam.'**
- 3. What are the objectives of the Scheme for Safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage and Diverse Cultural Traditions of India?**
- 4. Describe the main characteristics of Bharatnatyam and its historical origins.**
- 5. What distinguishes Kathakali from other classical Indian dance forms, and what are its main themes?**

Answers

- 1. Discuss the significance of the 'Adopt a Heritage' programme in preserving India's cultural monuments.**

Answer: The 'Adopt a Heritage' programme, led by the Archaeological Survey of India, engages public and private entities to enhance amenities at significant monuments. Through CSR funding, it improves infrastructure such as hygiene, accessibility, and safety. This initiative fosters collective responsibility, promotes sustainable heritage management, and boosts local economic development by creating employment opportunities.

2. **Explain how the G20 Culture Working Group's 'Culture Unites All' campaign reflects India's G20 theme of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam.'**

Answer: The 'Culture Unites All' campaign, aligned with India's G20 theme 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' (The World is One Family), showcases how culture can bridge divides and foster global unity. By emphasizing shared cultural values and promoting sustainable living through the LiFE concept, the campaign highlights the interconnectedness of all people and encourages collaborative solutions to global challenges.

3. **What are the objectives of the Scheme for Safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage and Diverse Cultural Traditions of India?**

Answer: The scheme aims to support institutional efforts in preserving India's intangible cultural heritage, including oral traditions, performing arts, and rituals. It provides support to institutions, NGOs, and individuals, consolidates scattered preservation efforts, and enhances awareness and professional engagement in safeguarding these diverse cultural traditions for future generations.

4. **Describe the main characteristics of Bharatnatyam and its historical origins.**

Answer: Bharatnatyam, originating from Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, is one of the oldest classical dance forms in India. It dates back nearly 2,000 years and was codified by Sage Bharata in the Natya Shastra. Known for its intricate footwork, expressive gestures (mudras), and dramatic storytelling, Bharatnatyam reflects ancient Hindu religious and cultural themes.

5. **What distinguishes Kathakali from other classical Indian dance forms, and what are its main themes?**

Answer: Kathakali, a classical dance form from Kerala, is distinguished by its elaborate costumes and makeup. Known as "Story-Play," it dramatizes themes from Hindu epics such as the Ramayana and Mahabharata. Its performances feature intricate movements, vivid facial expressions, and colorful, theatrical elements, making it a unique and visually captivating dance form.

