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SECTION 1

Ancient India

01 Panaiyur Marine Fossil Bed

Marine fossils dating to 8,000-12,000 years unearthed at Panaiyur, Tamil Nadu [DD News](#)

PRELIMS POINTERS

- **The find:** Marine fossils about **8,000-12,000 years** old at **Panaiyur, Tamil Nadu**, spanning the late Pleistocene to the early Holocene.
- **Holocene Epoch:** The current geological epoch, which began about **11,700 years ago** after the last Ice Age.
- **Significance:** Marine fossils in present-day coastal or inland areas record past **sea levels**, shoreline shifts and **palaeoclimate**, helping reconstruct the region's ancient coastline.

02 Mohenjo-daro

Study finds Mohenjo-daro became more equal as it became more successful [Down To Earth](#)

PRELIMS POINTERS

- **New study:** Suggests Mohenjo-daro became **more socially equal** as it expanded and prospered, unlike the usual rise of inequality in early cities.
- **Location:** Sindh, Pakistan, near the Indus; the name means roughly "**Mound of the Dead**". One of the largest Harappan cities.
- **Urban planning:** Planned streets, covered drains, wells and standardised **baked bricks**. The **Great Bath** was probably used for ritual or communal bathing.
- **Trade:** Links with Mesopotamia, where the Indus region is called **Meluhha**.
- **Indus script:** Found on numerous seals but still **undeciphered**, limiting what we know of Harappan society and polity.
- **UNESCO:** The archaeological ruins at Moenjodaro are a World Heritage Site (**1980**).

03 Dancing Girl Figurine

Harappan Dancing Girl in focus amid NCERT textbook debate [The Indian Express](#)

PRELIMS POINTERS

- A **bronze** figurine from **Mohenjo-daro**, discovered by **Ernest Mackay** in 1926; now in the **National Museum, New Delhi**.
- Cast by the **lost-wax (cire perdue)** technique, showing advanced Harappan metallurgy.
- Known for its standing, hand-on-hip pose and an arm full of **bangles**; a celebrated example of Harappan art.

04 Skeletal Remains at Rakhigarhi

Rakhigarhi's Harappan skeletons studied through DNA and facial reconstruction [The Indian Express](#)

PRELIMS POINTERS

- **Location:** Hisar district, Haryana; one of the largest known Harappan settlements.
- **Excavations** have revealed houses, streets, drains, pottery, ornaments and burials.
- **Skeletal remains** reveal health, diet, demography and burial practices, while **ancient DNA** and facial reconstruction help trace population history and migration.

05 Karivalamvanthanallur Excavation

Stone Age tools to Sangam-era workshops: what a Tamil Nadu excavation has revealed [The Indian Express](#)

PRELIMS POINTERS

- An archaeological site in **Tenkasi district, Tamil Nadu**, with finds spanning the **Stone Age** to the **Sangam period**, including stone tools and workshop remains.
- It helps trace the transition from prehistoric cultures to the early historic Sangam period in southern Tamil Nadu.

06 Barabar Caves

Barabar Caves: the mirror-polished caves of the Mauryan age [The Hindu](#)

PRELIMS POINTERS

- **Location and age:** Jehanabad district, Bihar; among India's oldest rock-cut caves (3rd century BCE), carved in **granite** with a mirror-like **Mauryan polish**.
- **Ajivikas:** Ashoka dedicated the Barabar caves to the Ajivika sect; his grandson **Dasharatha** dedicated caves in the nearby **Nagarjuni Hills**.
- **Main caves:** Sudama, Lomas Rishi, Karna Chaupar and Visvakarma. The **Lomas Rishi** cave's horseshoe-shaped **chaitya-arch façade** influenced later rock-cut architecture; Brahmi inscriptions attest Mauryan patronage.

07 Sanchi Stupa

Relics of the Buddha's chief disciples from Sanchi airlifted to Mongolia [News On AIR](#)

PRELIMS POINTERS

- **In the news:** Relics of **Sariputta and Mahamoggallana**, the Buddha's two chief disciples, enshrined at Sanchi, were airlifted by the IAF on **30 May 2026** for a 10-day exposition at **Gandan Tegchenling Monastery, Ulaanbaatar**.
- **Origins:** The Great Stupa (Stupa 1), Madhya Pradesh, was commissioned by **Ashoka** (3rd century BCE) and enlarged under the **Shungas** and **Satavahanas**.
- **Structure:** Hemispherical **anda**, harmika, chhatra and circumambulatory paths, with four carved **toranas** showing Jataka tales and the Buddha's life. The Buddha is shown **aniconically** through the Bodhi tree, empty throne, footprints and Dharmachakra.
- **UNESCO** World Heritage Site since **1989**.

08 Maharishi Sushruta

Bronze statue of Maharishi Sushruta, made in Swamimalai, unveiled at Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh
[The Hindu](#)

PRELIMS POINTERS

- An ancient physician-surgeon traditionally linked with **Kashi (Varanasi)** and regarded as a pioneer of Indian surgery; credited with the **Sushruta Samhita**, a classical Ayurvedic text.
- **Surgery:** The text describes **rhinoplasty**, treatment of fractures and dislocations, wound care and removal of foreign bodies, along with many surgical instruments.
- **Training:** Known for a systematic approach using models and natural objects for practice; the text also covers plastic surgery, obstetrics, ophthalmology and toxicology.

SECTION 2

Medieval India

01 Xuanzang

India and China explore joint UNESCO nominations of Xuanzang's work [The Indian Express](#)

PRELIMS POINTERS

- A Chinese Buddhist monk-scholar (**602-664 CE**) who visited India during **Harshavardhana's** reign and studied at **Nalanda**, which he described as a great centre of learning.
- **Si-Yu-Ki** (Da Tang Xiyu Ji, Great Tang Records on the Western Regions), compiled by his disciple **Bianji**, is a key source on 7th-century Indian society, religion and politics.
- He translated many Sanskrit Buddhist texts into Chinese, carrying Indian Buddhist philosophy to China; his work symbolises India-China civilisational exchange.

02 Basava

Protest against bid to appropriate Basava's philosophy [The Hindu](#)

PRELIMS POINTERS

- **Basavanna** (12th century) was a philosopher and social reformer at the court of Kalachuri ruler **Bijjala II**, and the central figure of the **Lingayat/Virashaiva** tradition centred on devotion to Shiva and the **Ishtalinga**.
- **Social ideas:** Opposed caste discrimination; stressed **Kayaka** (dignity of labour) and **Dasoha** (sharing with the community).
- **Anubhava Mantapa:** A forum for spiritual and social debate open to people of all backgrounds.
- **Vachanas:** Short Kannada devotional compositions; associated saints include **Akka Mahadevi**, **Allama Prabhu** and **Channabasavanna**.

03 Vijayanagara Inscriptions near Tirupati

16th-century inscriptions of Vijayanagara kings come to light in the Seshachalam forest [The Hindu](#)

PRELIMS POINTERS

- Found in the **Seshachalam forests** near **Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh**; dated to the reign of **Sadasiva Raya** (16th century).
- Written in **Telugu, Tamil and Kannada**, reflecting the multilingual Vijayanagara empire.
- They record land grants, revenue arrangements, temple rituals and offerings, especially for the **Gudimallam Parasurameswara Temple**, showing the value of epigraphy for studying temple economy and administration.

04 Taj Mahal

Taj Mahal or Tejo Mahalaya: the legal tussle explained [The Hindu](#)

PRELIMS POINTERS

- A Mughal mausoleum in **Agra** built by **Shah Jahan** for **Mumtaz Mahal** (d. 1631). Work began around 1632; the mausoleum was largely complete by about **1643** and the full complex by about **1653**.
- **Architecture:** White **Makrana marble**; blends Persian, Central Asian, Islamic and Indian styles, with a central dome, four minarets, **charbagh** garden, **pishtaq**s and **pietra dura** inlay.
- **Setting:** On the southern bank of the **Yamuna**; the complex includes a mosque, jawab, gateway and gardens.
- **UNESCO** World Heritage Site since **1983**.

05 Maratha Empire Expansion

NCERT's Maratha empire map challenged in a PIL before the Bombay High Court [The Indian Express](#)

PRELIMS POINTERS

- **Foundation:** **Shivaji** founded the Maratha state in the western Deccan and was crowned **Chhatrapati** at **Raigad** in **1674**.
- **Administration:** The **Ashtapradhan**, a council of eight ministers, including the Peshwa (prime minister), Amatya (finance), Sachiv (secretary), Senapati (commander) and Nyayadhish (justice).
- **Military:** Forts such as Raigad, Pratapgad, Sinhagad and Torna; swift cavalry and guerrilla warfare (**Ganimi Kava**). A navy guarded the Konkan coast, with **Sindhudurg** as a key sea fort.
- **Revenue:** **Chauth** (one-fourth) and **Sardeshmukhi** (an additional 10%) from territories outside direct rule.
- **Peshwas:** The Peshwas of Pune rose to dominance; **Baji Rao I** (1720-1740) extended Maratha power into Malwa, Gujarat and North India.
- **Confederacy:** Scindias (Gwalior), Holkars (Indore), Gaekwads (Baroda) and Bhonsles (Nagpur), with the Peshwa as nominal head.
- **Third Battle of Panipat (1761):** Defeat by **Ahmad Shah Abdali** checked Maratha expansion in North India.

06 Baba Banda Singh Bahadur

Tributes to Baba Banda Singh Bahadur [PIB](#)

PRELIMS POINTERS

- **Early life:** (1670-1716) Born **Lachman Dev**, later **Madho Das Bairagi**; became a disciple of **Guru Gobind Singh**.
- **Campaigns:** Led the Sikh struggle against Mughal rule in Punjab, capturing **Samana** and **Sirhind**.
- **Rule:** Made **Lohgarh** his headquarters, redistributed land to peasants, weakened the zamindars and issued coins and seals in the name of the Sikh Gurus.
- **Legacy:** Captured and executed in **Delhi in 1716**; remembered for making the Sikhs a major political and military force in Punjab.

SECTION 3

Modern India

01 Raja Ram Mohan Roy

Tributes paid to Raja Rammohan Roy on his birth anniversary [News On AIR](#)

PRELIMS POINTERS

- **Reformer:** (1772-1833) A leading figure of the **Bengal Renaissance**; founded the **Atmiya Sabha (1815)** and the **Brahmo Sabha (1828)**, later the Brahmo Samaj, promoting monotheism, rationalism and social reform.
- **Against Sati:** His campaign contributed to the **Bengal Sati Regulation, 1829**, under Lord William Bentinck.
- **Women's rights:** Opposed polygamy and advocated women's education and **property and inheritance rights**.
- **Education and press:** Supported modern Western education in science and mathematics alongside Indian classical learning; championed press freedom through the Persian weekly **Mirat-ul-Akhbar (1822)**.
- **England:** Went to England in 1830 as envoy of Mughal emperor **Akbar II**, who gave him the title "Raja"; died at **Bristol in 1833**.

02 Veera Pasi

Who was Veera Pasi, the 1857 hero invoked in Uttar Pradesh politics [The Indian Express](#)

PRELIMS POINTERS

- A warrior of the **Pasi community** of Awadh, remembered for his role in the **Revolt of 1857**.
- Associated with **Raja Beni Madhav Singh** of Shankarpur (Rae Bareli), a leading rebel of 1857 in Awadh.
- Pasi participation reflected anger at colonial revenue policies and the loss of traditional rights; he symbolises the contribution of marginalised communities to the freedom struggle.

03 Birsa Munda

Birsa Munda's legacy of Ulgulan and Adivasi identity [The Indian Express](#)

PRELIMS POINTERS

- (1875-1900) Munda leader of the **Ulgulan** (Great Tumult) of **1899-1900** in the **Chotanagpur** region of present-day Jharkhand.
- **Target:** British rule, zamindars, moneylenders and outsiders (**dikus**) who were taking tribal land.
- **Land and reform:** Defended the **khuntkatti** system of communal landholding; also led a religious and social reform movement among the Mundas.
- **Legacy:** Died in **Ranchi Jail in 1900**; the movement led to the **Chotanagpur Tenancy Act, 1908**.

04 Subramania Siva

Tributes to freedom fighter Subramania Siva [PIB](#)

PRELIMS POINTERS

- (1884-1925) Tamil freedom fighter, writer and orator of the **Swadeshi movement** in Tamil Nadu.
- Worked with **V.O. Chidambaram Pillai** and **Subramania Bharati** to promote Swadeshi and the boycott of foreign goods.
- Repeatedly imprisoned; edited nationalist publications and used Tamil writing and speeches to spread patriotism. He died in 1925 after illness linked to his imprisonment.

05 Veer Gundadhur

Remembering Veer Gundadhur, hero of the Bhumkal rebellion [PIB](#)

PRELIMS POINTERS

- A tribal leader of **Bastar** (present-day Chhattisgarh) from the **Dhurwa** community.
- Led the **Bhumkal Rebellion of 1910**, a major tribal uprising against British authority in Bastar.
- **Causes:** Colonial **forest policies**, curbs on customary rights, land grievances and forced labour. He remains a symbol of tribal resistance and indigenous rights.

06 Batukeshwar Dutt

Tributes to freedom fighter Batukeshwar Dutt on his death anniversary [News On AIR](#)

PRELIMS POINTERS

- (1910-1965) Revolutionary of the **Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA)**.
- **Assembly bombing:** On **8 April 1929**, with **Bhagat Singh**, he threw non-lethal bombs in the **Central Legislative Assembly** to protest the **Public Safety Bill** and **Trade Disputes Bill**, raising the slogan "Inquilab Zindabad".
- They avoided casualties and used the trial to publicise their ideas; Dutt also joined the political prisoners' **hunger strike**.
- He was cremated at **Hussainiwala**, Punjab, near Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev.

SECTION 4

Architecture & Monuments

01 Bara Imambara and Rumi Darwaza

Crumbling of Awadh's heritage amid monument encroachments [The Hindu](#)

PRELIMS POINTERS

- **Bara Imambara (Asfi Imambara):** Built in **Lucknow** from **1784** by Nawab **Asaf-ud-Daula** as a famine-relief employment project.
- Its vast central vaulted hall stands **without supporting beams or pillars**; the complex includes the **Bhul Bhulaiya** labyrinth and the **Shahi Baoli**.
- **Rumi Darwaza (Turkish Gate):** Built around the same time by Asaf-ud-Daula; an ornate Awadhi Indo-Islamic gateway said to be modelled on a gate of Constantinople (Rum).

02 Rang Ghar, Assam

PM Modi's Italy visit: Inside Assam's 275-year-old "Colosseum", rebuilt from ruins [NDTV](#)

PRELIMS POINTERS

- **Rang Ghar** in **Sivasagar, Assam** is a two-storey royal pavilion, often called the "**Colosseum of the East**" and among Asia's oldest surviving amphitheatres.
- Built in the mid-18th century by Ahom king **Swargadeo Pramatta Singha**; Ahom royalty watched games such as buffalo fights here during **Rongali Bihu**.
- Known for its **inverted boat-shaped roof**, a distinctive feature of Ahom architecture.
- **Rome's Colosseum (for comparison):** The Flavian Amphitheatre, begun under **Vespasian** around 72 CE and completed under **Titus** in 80 CE; part of the UNESCO-listed Historic Centre of Rome.

03 Thousand Pillar Temple

Stone by stone, Hanamkonda's Kakatiya-era dance pavilion rises again [The Hindu](#)

PRELIMS POINTERS

- At **Hanamkonda, Telangana**; built in the **12th century** under Kakatiya king **Rudradeva**.
- A **trikutalaya** dedicated to **Shiva, Vishnu and Surya**, reflecting a syncretic tradition.
- Known for richly carved pillars, a **star-shaped plan** and fine stonework; its **dance pavilion** is being reassembled stone by stone.

SECTION 5

Crafts, Painting & Performing Arts

01 Anaimangalam Copper Plates

Netherlands returns Chola copper plates to India [WION](#)

PRELIMS POINTERS

- Also called the **Leiden Plates**: 11th-century Chola copper plates associated with **Rajaraja Chola I** and **Rajendra Chola I**, returned by the **Netherlands** in May 2026.
- **The grant**: Rajaraja I's grant of Anaimangalam village revenues to the **Chudamani Vihara**, a Buddhist monastery at **Nagapattinam** built by the Srivijaya (Sailendra) ruler; evidence of Chola-Southeast Asian ties.
- **The set**: The larger set has **21 plates** in **Tamil and Sanskrit** (Sanskrit for the genealogy, Tamil for the grant), bound with the **Chola royal seal**.

02 Kasab Zari

Reviving Kasab Zari, the Mughal-era metallic embroidery [The Hindu](#)

PRELIMS POINTERS

- A metallic-thread embroidery of **Persian** origin that flourished under **Mughal** patronage, using fine gold, silver or copper-wrapped threads worked with a hooked **aari** needle.
- Revival efforts aim to preserve its intricate floral and paisley work as part of India's textile heritage.

03 Patna Kalam

Reviving Patna Kalam, Bihar's forgotten art [The Hindu](#)

PRELIMS POINTERS

- A miniature painting style of **Patna, Bihar** (18th-19th centuries), developed by artists who moved from Delhi and Murshidabad as Mughal patronage declined.
- Part of the **Company painting** tradition, produced largely for British patrons, often on paper and **mica**.
- Depicts ordinary people, occupations, festivals and markets rather than court life, with fine brushwork, natural colours and usually no elaborate backgrounds.

04 Sufiyana Music of Kashmir

Why Kashmir's Sufiyana music bids for UNESCO's intangible cultural heritage list [The Hindu](#)

PRELIMS POINTERS

- A classical music tradition of **Kashmir** shaped by Persian, Central Asian and local influences; it grew with the spread of **Sufism** and is proposed for UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage list.
- **Sufiyana Kalam** sets Persian, Kashmiri and Urdu mystical poetry on divine love and devotion.
- **Instruments**: **Santoor**, **saaz-e-Kashmir**, **setar**, rabab and tabla; the santoor later gained wide fame in Indian classical music.
- Performed in Sufi gatherings and **khanqahs** with royal patronage; a symbol of Kashmir's syncretic culture.

05 Bhawaiya Folk Music

PIB release on Bhawaiya folk music [PIB](#)

PRELIMS POINTERS

- A folk music genre of **North Bengal** and adjoining Assam and Bangladesh (Cooch Behar, Jalpaiguri, Alipurduar), closely tied to the **Rajbanshi** community.
- Melodious and often melancholic songs of love, separation, nature and rural life, performed with the **dotara**, flute and harmonium.

06 Sangeet Natak Akademi Ratna

President confers Sangeet Natak Akademi Fellowships and Awards [PIB](#)

PRELIMS POINTERS

- The **Akademi Ratna** (Fellowship) is the highest honour of the **Sangeet Natak Akademi**, India's national academy of music, dance and drama; limited to **40 Fellows** at a time.
- **2026 Fellows** (for 2024 and 2025): Ramlal Bareth, A.V. Anand, Rita Ganguly, Puru Dadheech, Chittaranjan Jyotishi, Pasumarthi Rattaiah Sarma and Sudharani Raghupathy.
- Conferred by the President on **13 August 2026** at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi; the Ratna carries **₹3 lakh**, a tamrapatra and an angavastram. The Akademi was set up in **1952**.

07 Grammy Award for the Dalai Lama

Dalai Lama receives Grammy award for audiobook "Meditations" at McLeodganj [The New Indian Express](#)

PRELIMS POINTERS

- The **Grammy Awards** are presented annually by the **Recording Academy, USA**; the trophy is a gold-plated gramophone.
- At the **68th Grammys (2026)**, the **14th Dalai Lama** won his first Grammy, for **Best Audio Book, Narration & Storytelling Recording**, for "Meditations: The Reflections of His Holiness the Dalai Lama".
- The award links Tibetan Buddhist teachings with contemporary audio culture. He received the **Nobel Peace Prize in 1989** and lives in exile at **McLeodganj, Dharamshala**.

SECTION 6

Festivals & Personalities

01 Buddha Purnima

President and PM extend Buddha Purnima greetings [DD News](#)

PRELIMS POINTERS

- Also called **Vesak**, it marks the birth, enlightenment and **Mahaparinirvana** of Gautama Buddha, on the full moon of **Vaishakha**.
- **Key places:** **Lumbini** (birth), **Bodh Gaya** (enlightenment), **Sarnath** (first sermon) and **Kushinagar** (Mahaparinirvana).

02 Jagannath Rath Yatra

World-famous Lord Jagannath Rath Yatra begins in Puri [News On AIR](#)

PRELIMS POINTERS

- An annual chariot festival at **Puri, Odisha**, in which **Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra** travel from the Jagannath Temple to the **Gundicha Temple**; held in **July 2026**.
- **Chariots:** **Nandighosa** (Jagannath), **Taladhwaja** (Balabhadra) and **Darpadalana** (Subhadra).
- **Chhera Pahara:** The Gajapati King of Puri ceremonially sweeps the chariots, symbolising humility and equality before the deity.

03 Bonalu Festival

Golconda Bonalu 2026 begins as thousands converge on the hill fort [The Hindu](#)

PRELIMS POINTERS

- A festival of **Telangana**, especially Hyderabad and Secunderabad, honouring Goddess **Mahankali** in **Ashada** month (July-August); celebrations begin at **Golconda Fort**.
- **Bonam** (meal) refers to offerings of rice, milk and jaggery carried by women in decorated pots; key temples are **Ujjaini Mahankali** (Secunderabad) and **Lal Darwaza Mahankali** (Hyderabad).
- **Potharaju**, a male ritual performer, dances as the goddess's guardian.

04 Lavender Festival 2026

4th Lavender Festival held at Bhaderwah under the theme "Lavender Goes Global" [PIB](#)

PRELIMS POINTERS

- **Bhaderwah** (Doda district, J&K) is known as the "**Lavender Capital of India**". The 4th Lavender Festival (6-7 June 2026) was organised by **CSIR-IIIM, Jammu**, on the theme "Lavender Goes Global".
- It showcases the **CSIR Aroma Mission** and the "**Purple Revolution**", promoting lavender cultivation, value-added products and rural livelihoods, now spreading to Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and the Northeast.

05 Girish Bharadwaj

"Bridge Man of India" Girish Bharadwaj dies at 76 [The Indian Express](#)

PRELIMS POINTERS

- A civil engineer from **Karnataka**, known as the "**Bridge Man of India**", who pioneered **low-cost suspension bridges** for rural and hilly areas; he died in 2026, aged 76.
- He built numerous pedestrian bridges in remote areas using local materials and community participation, improving rural connectivity, and received the **Padma Shri (2017)**.



GALLANT IAS ACADEMY

TRIVANDRUM

