



## **DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 13-11-2024**

### **GS-1**

1. Buddha and His Teachings

### **GS-2**

2. River City Alliance

### **GS-3**

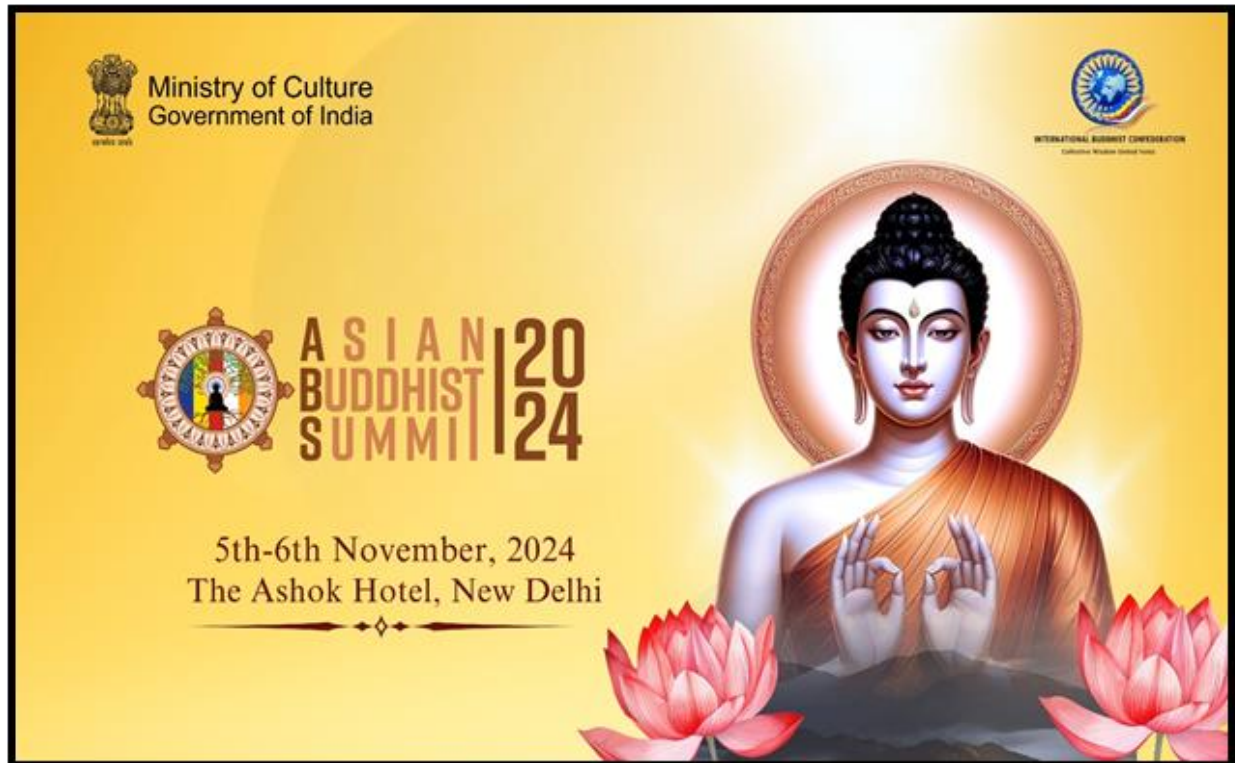
3. Paddy Variety PR-126
4. Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH)
5. Dal Lake

## **Buddha and His Teachings**

**Syllabus: GS-1; Ancient History**

### **Context**

- Buddha's teachings were the binding force not only in philosophical terms but also in practice and they have helped to sustain Asian nations and cultures in times of crisis, Buddhist scholars and experts said at the first Asian Buddhist Summit.



### **Background and Life of Buddha**

- **Birth:** Siddhartha Gautama, later known as Buddha, was born around 563 BCE in Lumbini (present-day Nepal) in a royal Kshatriya family.
- **Renunciation:** At the age of 29, Siddhartha left his royal life in search of the truth behind human suffering.
- **Enlightenment:** After years of ascetic practices, he attained enlightenment under the Bodhi tree in Bodh Gaya, Bihar.
- **Teachings and Nirvana:** He began sharing his insights, forming the basis of Buddhism. At the age of 80, he attained Parinirvana in Kushinagar, Uttar Pradesh.

## Key Teachings of Buddha

- **Four Noble Truths:** Buddha's core teaching focuses on understanding and overcoming suffering.
  - **Dukkha** (Suffering): Life is full of suffering and dissatisfaction.
  - **Samudaya** (Cause of Suffering): Desire (Tanha) and attachment are the root causes of suffering.
  - **Nirodha** (Cessation of Suffering): Ending desire leads to the cessation of suffering.
  - **Magga** (Path to End Suffering): The Eightfold Path is the way to end suffering.
- **Eightfold Path:** This is a practical guide to ethical and mental development to achieve Nirvana.
  - **Right Understanding:** Grasping the reality of the Four Noble Truths.
  - **Right Thought:** Developing thoughts of selflessness and compassion.
  - **Right Speech:** Speaking truthfully, avoiding lies and harmful speech.
  - **Right Action:** Conducting oneself morally and ethically.
  - **Right Livelihood:** Choosing a livelihood that does not harm others.
  - **Right Effort:** Cultivating positive thoughts and behaviors.
  - **Right Mindfulness:** Developing awareness of body, feelings, and thoughts.
  - **Right Concentration:** Practicing meditation to achieve mental focus.
- **Concepts of Karma and Rebirth:** Buddha taught that actions (Karma) affect future lives, creating a cycle of rebirth (Samsara) that can only be broken by attaining Nirvana.

## Major Buddhist Philosophies

- **Middle Path (Madhyamaka):** A balanced approach that avoids the extremes of indulgence and asceticism.
- **Dependent Origination (Pratityasamutpada):** Everything exists in relation to other factors, and nothing has an independent essence.

## Spread of Buddhism

- **King Ashoka:** Promoted Buddhism in India and beyond after the Kalinga War, supporting the construction of stupas and monasteries.
- **Silk Road:** Buddhism spread through Central Asia, reaching China, Japan, Southeast Asia, and Tibet.

## Major Schools of Buddhism

- **Theravada (The School of the Elders):** Emphasizes individual enlightenment and follows Buddha's original teachings closely.
- **Mahayana (The Great Vehicle):** Focuses on compassion and the ideal of the Bodhisattva, helping others achieve enlightenment.
- **Vajrayana (The Diamond Vehicle):** Known for its esoteric practices and is widely practiced in Tibet.

## Buddhist Architecture and Important Sites

### 1. Stupas:

- **Stupa:** A dome-shaped structure symbolizing the Buddha's final resting place and enlightenment.
- **Famous Stupas:**
  - **Sanchi Stupa** (Madhya Pradesh): Built by Emperor Ashoka, it features intricate carvings and gateways (toranas) that depict scenes from Buddha's life.
  - **Dhamek Stupa** (Sarnath, Uttar Pradesh): Marks the site where Buddha gave his first sermon.
  - **Great Stupa at Amaravati** (Andhra Pradesh): Known for its detailed sculptures depicting Buddhist stories.

### 2. Chaityas and Viharas:

- **Chaitya:** Prayer halls with a stupa at one end, often carved into rock.
  - **Example:** Karla Caves (Maharashtra) - Known for rock-cut architecture and impressive chaitya halls.
- **Vihara:** Monastic living quarters for monks, often attached to chaityas.
  - **Example:** Ajanta Caves (Maharashtra) - Renowned for murals depicting the Jataka tales and Buddha's life.

### 3. Other Important Sites:

- **Lumbini (Nepal):** Birthplace of Buddha, with the Maya Devi Temple and sacred Bodhi tree.
- **Bodh Gaya (Bihar):** Site of Buddha's enlightenment under the Bodhi Tree, with the iconic Mahabodhi Temple.
- **Sarnath (Uttar Pradesh):** Where Buddha gave his first sermon; includes Dhamek Stupa and the Ashokan Pillar.

- **Kushinagar (Uttar Pradesh):** Buddha's Mahaparinirvana (passing away), marked by the Parinirvana Stupa.

### **Influence and Legacy**

- Buddha's teachings influenced Indian and global philosophical thought, promoting concepts of non-violence, compassion, and tolerance.
- His teachings are highly relevant in the context of personal ethics, social harmony, and spiritual development.

## **River City Alliance**

**Syllabus: GS-2; Government policies and Interventions, GS-3; Environmental Conservation**

### **Context**

- The celebration of Ganga Utsav 2024 will be organised by the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) at Chandi Ghat.

### **About**

- The **River Cities Alliance (RCA)** is a collaborative platform established in India, bringing together cities located along major rivers with a shared goal of sustainable river management and urban planning.
- Launched by the **Ministry of Jal Shakti and Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs**, the alliance aims to facilitate a network of riverine cities that share knowledge, address common challenges, and work toward the ecological preservation of rivers.

### **Objectives of the River Cities Alliance**

- **Strengthen Inter-city Collaboration:** Create a platform for cities to share best practices, experiences, and solutions regarding river management and urban development.
- **Promote Sustainable Urban Riverfront Development:** Encourage sustainable practices in urban planning to enhance the ecological health of river ecosystems and prevent pollution.

- **Capacity Building and Training:** Equip city administrations with skills and knowledge through training programs, workshops, and technical support on river management and water-sensitive urban design.
- **Enhance River-City Relationships:** Improve the relationship between cities and their rivers by involving communities, promoting awareness, and creating a river-centric identity for these urban areas.
- **Encourage Multi-Stakeholder Engagement:** Foster collaboration among government agencies, local communities, civil society, academia, and the private sector for effective river governance.

### Significance of the River Cities Alliance

- **Protecting Water Resources:** The RCA helps cities implement effective measures to reduce pollution and manage water resources, crucial for urban areas dependent on river water for drinking and industrial use.
- **Urban Planning and Environmental Sustainability:** RCA's guidance on sustainable urban development aligns with India's efforts to mitigate climate change impacts by promoting green infrastructure, reducing urban flooding, and enhancing climate resilience.
- **Boosting Local Economies:** Riverfront projects under RCA not only beautify cities but can also become centers for tourism, creating economic opportunities while preserving ecological balance.
- **Strengthening Disaster Resilience:** With many riverine cities facing risks from flooding and water pollution, RCA's initiatives help improve disaster preparedness and reduce vulnerability to climate-induced events.
- **Supporting the National Mission for Clean Ganga:** RCA supports initiatives under the Clean Ganga mission by facilitating local-level engagement and coordinated actions along riverbanks.

## **Paddy Variety PR-126**

### Syllabus: GS-3; Agriculture

#### Context

- The Punjab Agricultural University's short-duration paddy variety is at the centre of controversy in the state for its allegedly low milling out-turn.

## About

- PR-126 is a high-yielding, early-maturing variety of paddy (rice) developed for cultivation in India.
- It was released by the Punjab Agricultural University (PAU), Ludhiana, and is widely grown in states like Punjab, Haryana, and Uttar Pradesh.

## Key Characteristics

- **Maturity Period:**
  - Early maturing, with a growth duration of approximately 125-130 days.
  - Suitable for both irrigated and rainfed conditions.
- **Grain Quality:**
  - The rice produced is of medium to long-grain quality.
  - It is known for good cooking quality and taste, making it popular among consumers.
- **Yield Potential:**
  - High yielding, with the potential to produce 50-55 quintals per hectare under optimal conditions.
  - Suitable for intensive farming systems.
- **Resilience:**
  - PR-126 is resistant to several common pests and diseases, including rice blast, bacterial blight, and sheath blight.
  - The variety performs well in various agro-climatic zones.
- **Agronomic Characteristics:**
  - The plant is tall with a good number of tillers.
  - It has a strong root system, contributing to better nutrient uptake and drought tolerance.

## Advantages

- **Early Harvesting:** Since it matures early, farmers can plant it for a second crop, which can help increase overall farm productivity.
- **Improved Profitability:** Its high yield and good grain quality result in better returns for farmers.
- **Adaptability:** PR-126 adapts well to different soil types, making it a versatile choice for farmers across different regions.

### Limitations

- **Water Requirements:** Like most paddy varieties, PR-126 requires a good amount of water, and its growth may be affected under water scarcity conditions.
- **Sensitivity to Climate:** In extreme weather conditions, its yield may be slightly impacted.

## Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH)

Syllabus: GS-3; Agriculture, GS-2; Government policies

### Context

- The Union Government has reportedly decided to include four new components – Hydroponics, Aquaponics, Vertical Farming, and Precision Agriculture – under the Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) – a Central Sponsored Scheme (CSS) that promotes the cultivation of fruits, vegetables, root and tuber crops, mushrooms, spices, flowers, aromatic plants, coconut, cashew, cocoa and bamboo.

### About

- The **Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH)** is a comprehensive scheme launched by the Government of India in 2014 under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare.
- It aims to promote holistic growth and development of the horticulture sector in India, focusing on increasing productivity, enhancing production quality, and improving post-harvest infrastructure.

### Objectives of MIDH

- **Increase Area under Horticulture:** Expand the area under horticultural crops through improved technology, innovation, and practices.
- **Enhance Productivity:** Focus on improving yields through the use of quality planting materials, better water management, and integrated pest management.
- **Promote Post-Harvest Management:** Enhance infrastructure and technology for post-harvest management such as cold storage, packaging, and processing.



- **Create Income Opportunities:** Provide income-generating opportunities for farmers through value addition and export potential of horticultural products.
- **Sustainable Farming:** Emphasize sustainable agricultural practices in the horticulture sector.

### Components of MIDH

The MIDH scheme has been structured into two sub-schemes, which cater to the needs of different horticultural crops:

- 1. National Horticulture Mission (NHM):**
  - Focuses on the overall development of horticultural crops.
  - Covers fruits, vegetables, spices, flowers, medicinal and aromatic plants.
  - Financial assistance is provided to farmers for planting material, water management, and organic farming practices.
- 2. Horticulture Mission for North East and Himalayan States (HMNEH):**
  - Aimed at enhancing the horticultural development in the North Eastern region, Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, and Uttarakhand.
  - Emphasizes crops suitable to these specific regions, including temperate fruits and flowers.
- 3. National Mission on Organic Farming (NMOF):**
  - Encourages organic farming practices in the horticulture sector.
  - Aims to reduce dependence on chemical fertilizers and promote environmentally sustainable farming.
- 4. National Beekeeping and Honey Mission (NBHM):**
  - Promotes beekeeping as an allied activity.
  - Aims at increasing honey production, improving quality, and creating better market access for honey.
- 5. Plantation Development Scheme:**
  - Focuses on improving plantation crops like tea, coffee, rubber, etc.
  - Provides financial support for the plantation sector, including quality planting material and post-harvest infrastructure.
- 6. Mission for Development of Post-Harvest Infrastructure:**
  - Includes setting up of cold storages, ripening chambers, warehouses, and processing units.
  - Aims to reduce post-harvest losses and increase shelf life.

### Funding Pattern

- The scheme is funded by the central government with states contributing a certain percentage.
- For **normal states**, the funding pattern is generally **60:40** (Central: State).
- For **special category states** like the North East region, Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, and Uttarakhand, the funding pattern is **90:10** (Central: State).

### Benefits

- **Increased Production and Productivity:** Encourages the use of modern techniques to boost crop yield.
- **Diversification:** Farmers can diversify into high-value horticultural crops, improving profitability.
- **Income Generation:** Farmers benefit from value-added products and increased market access.
- **Export Growth:** The scheme enhances the export potential of Indian horticultural products, contributing to foreign exchange earnings.
- **Rural Employment:** The scheme generates employment in rural areas, especially in post-harvest activities such as processing and packaging.

### Challenges

- **Inadequate Extension Services:** Limited reach of extension services and training to farmers.
- **Post-Harvest Losses:** Despite initiatives, post-harvest losses still remain high due to poor infrastructure.
- **Climate Risks:** The horticulture sector is highly susceptible to climate variability, affecting the success of the mission.

## Dal Lake

### Syllabus: GS-3; Environmental Concern

#### Context

- The High Court has expressed serious concern over the deteriorating position of water quality of Dal lake and directed the **Lakes & Conservation Management**

**Authority (LCMA)** to apprise the court without any fail about the test conducted to the water of the lake on next date of hearing.



### Geography and Location

- **Location:** Dal Lake is situated in the Kashmir Valley, in the city of Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir.
- **Area:** It spans an area of about 22 square kilometers.
- **Elevation:** The lake is located at an elevation of approximately 1,583 meters (5,194 feet) above sea level.
- **Surroundings:** It is surrounded by the snow-capped mountains of the Pir Panjal Range and is often referred to as the 'Jewel in the crown of Kashmir.'

### Water and Hydrology

- **Source:** The lake is fed by the freshwater streams originating from the surrounding mountains, including the Jhelum River, and is primarily surface water-fed.
- **Depth:** The lake has a varying depth, with the central portion being the deepest, reaching up to 5 meters.
- **Water Quality:** The lake faces pollution due to urbanization, waste disposal, and encroachment, which affects its ecosystem.

### Historical and Cultural Significance

- **Historical Importance:** Dal Lake has been an integral part of Kashmir's cultural heritage and history for centuries. It has been associated with Mughal emperors, who constructed gardens around the lake.
- **Shikara Boats:** The iconic shikaras (traditional wooden boats) are a major symbol of Dal Lake. These boats are used for tourism and as a means of transport for locals.
- **Floating Gardens:** Dal Lake is home to floating gardens, known as 'Raad', where vegetables and flowers are grown.
- **Houseboats:** The lake is famous for its houseboats, which are used for tourism and have become a part of Kashmir's identity.

### Ecological and Environmental Importance

- **Biodiversity:** Dal Lake supports a wide variety of flora and fauna, including aquatic plants like water lilies and lotus, as well as various bird species such as ducks, geese, and kingfishers.
- **Wetland Ecosystem:** It is a significant wetland, contributing to biodiversity conservation and acting as a habitat for migratory birds, particularly during winter.
- **Threats:** Dal Lake faces multiple environmental challenges, including pollution from domestic and industrial waste, invasive species like the water hyacinth, and urban encroachment. These factors threaten its ecosystem and water quality.

### Tourism and Economy

- **Tourism:** Dal Lake is a major tourist attraction in Jammu and Kashmir, drawing both domestic and international visitors. It offers houseboats for stay, shikara rides, and views of Mughal Gardens like Nishat Bagh and Shalimar Bagh.
- **Economic Impact:** Tourism linked to Dal Lake significantly contributes to the local economy, providing livelihoods for boatmen, houseboat owners, craftsmen, and others involved in the tourism sector.

### Recent Developments and Challenges

- **Urbanization:** Increasing urbanization around the lake, with a rise in the construction of buildings, roads, and hotels, has put pressure on the environment.
- **Climate Change:** Changing weather patterns and reduced snowfall in the region are also affecting the water levels and ecosystem of Dal Lake.
- **Pollution Control:** Efforts to control water pollution, such as the installation of sewerage treatment plants and cleaning of floating debris, are critical for the lake's survival.

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