

Key Facts about Rakhigarhi

The NCERT recently introduced certain revisions to the history syllabus of Class 12 students, highlighting that Harappans were based out in Rakhigarhi.



About Rakhigarhi:

- **Location:** It is an archaeological site located in Hisar district, **Haryana**, just 27 km from the **Ghaggar river**, in the Ghaggar-Hakra river plain.
- It is one of the oldest and largest cities of the subcontinent's earliest known Bronze Age urban culture—the **Indus Valley or Harappan Civilization**, going back to about 6500 BCE.
- It is **one of the five known biggest townships of Harappan** civilization on the Indian sub-continent. The other four are Harappa, Mohenjodaro, and Ganveriwala in Pakistan, and Dholavira (Gujrat) in India.
- **Findings:**
 - The exploration around this site has clearly identified **seven archaeological mounds**.
 - Rakhigarhi primarily yields **evidence of occupation during** the Early and Mature Harappan periods, with the site being completely abandoned during the Late Harappan period.
 - The archaeological excavations revealed the mature Harappan phase, represented by a **planned township** with **mud-brick** as well as burnt-brick houses with a proper drainage system.
 - The ceramic industry represented by **red ware**, which included dish-on-stand, vase, jar, bowl, beaker, perforated jar, goblet and handis.
 - **Animal sacrificial pits** lined with mud bricks and triangular and circular fire alters on the mud floor have also been excavated, that signifies the ritual system of the Harappans.

- A **cylindrical seal** with five Harappan characters on one side and a symbol of an alligator on the other is an important find from this site.
 - The excavations have yielded a few **extended burials**, which certainly belong to a very late stage, may be the medieval times.
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How are Symbols Allotted to Political Parties?

Background:

- The Naam Tamilar Katchi (NTK) that secured 3.9% and 6.5% votes in Tamil Nadu in 2019 and 2021 respectively, has been allotted a new common symbol (Mike).
- The Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi (VCK) that secured 1.09% and 0.99% votes in 2019 and 2021 has been denied a common symbol (Pot).
- This has raised questions about the allotment of symbols to ‘registered unrecognized parties.’
- In the largest democracy where a sizeable population is still illiterate, symbols play a crucial role in the voting process.

How are Symbols Allotted?

- A party is recognised as a ‘national’ or ‘state’ party under the provisions of the **Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, by the Election Commission of India (ECI)**.
 - The **criteria for recognition at the State level** consists of:
 - winning one Lok Sabha seat for every 25 seats or 3% of Legislative Assembly seats or
 - winning one Lok Sabha or two Assembly seats along with 6% of votes polled or
 - securing 8% of votes polled in a general election.
 - Symbols are allotted to political parties and contesting candidates as per the provisions of the Symbols Order by ECI.

- A recognized political party has a reserved symbol that is not allotted to any other candidate in any constituency.
- For registered but unrecognized political parties, one of the free symbols is allotted as a common symbol during an election if that party contests in two Lok Sabha constituencies or in 5% of seats to the Assembly of a State as the case may be.

Common free symbol for registered unrecognized party

- Rule 10B of the Symbols Order provides that the concession of a common free symbol shall be available to a ‘registered unrecognized party’ for two general elections.
- Furthermore, a party shall be eligible for a common symbol in any subsequent general election if it had secured at least 1% of votes polled.
- Such an unrecognised party should however apply for a symbol every time in the prescribed format.
- This application can be made any time during the period commencing six months prior to the expiry of the term of the Lok Sabha or State Assembly as the case may be.
- The symbols are thereafter allotted on a ‘first-come-first-served’ basis.

Glacial Lake Outburst Floods

The Uttarakhand government has constituted two teams of experts to evaluate the risk posed by Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs).



About Glacial Lake Outburst Floods:

- These are disaster events caused by the **abrupt discharge of water** from glacial lakes.
- **What are glacial lakes?**
 - They are **large bodies of water** that sit in front of, on top of, or beneath a melting glacier. As a glacier withdraws, it leaves behind a depression that gets filled with meltwater, thereby forming a lake.

- The more the glacier recedes, the bigger and more dangerous the lake becomes. Such lakes are mostly dammed by unstable ice or sediment composed of loose rock and debris.
- In case the boundary around them breaks, huge amounts of water rush down the side of the mountains, which could cause flooding in the downstream areas. This is called as **Glacial Lake Outburst Flood**.
- **Reasons for GLOFs:**
 - It can be triggered by various reasons, including **glacial calving**, where sizable ice chunks detach from the glacier into the lake, inducing sudden water displacement.
 - Incidents such as **avalanches or landslides** can also impact the stability of the boundary around a glacial lake.

Situation in Uttarakhand:

- It has 13 glacial lakes which are prone to GLOF. Five highly sensitive glacial lakes fall into the 'A' category. These include **Vasudhara Tal** in the **Dhauliganga basin** and four lakes in Pithoragarh district — **Maban Lake** in **Lassar Yangti Valley**, **Pyungru Lake** in the **Darma basin**, an unclassified lake in the Darma basin, and another unclassified lake in **Kuthi Yangti Valley**.

Southern Ocean

The Southern Ocean is renowned for having the cleanest air on Earth. But the precise reasons why have remained mysteries until now.



About Southern Ocean:

- It is also known as the **Antarctic Ocean** which is one of the five great ocean basins on Earth. It was formed when Antarctica and South America drifted apart, creating the **Drake Passage**.
- It is made up of the portions of the world ocean south of the **Pacific, Atlantic and Indian oceans** and their tributary seas surrounding Antarctica **below 60° S**. It is

known for its strong winds, intense storms, dramatic seasonal changes and cold temperatures.

- It is dominated by the **Antarctic Circumpolar Current (ACC)** which is the longest, strongest, deepest-reaching current on earth. The ACC **circulates clockwise around the continent**, carrying more water around the globe than any other current.
- **Biodiversity:** The Ocean supports a variety of plants and animals, with most animals relying on the rich phytoplankton from the Antarctic Convergence. Marine life includes whales, penguins, orcas, and seals.

Project Akashteer

The Indian Army has initiated the induction of control and reporting systems under 'Project Akashteer' to bolster its air defense capabilities.



About Project Akashteer:

- It is a cutting-edge initiative designed to automate **air defense control** and reporting processes by **digitizing them**.
- It aims to deliver an unprecedented level of **situational awareness and control** for the force to ensure the safety of friendly aircraft and engage hostile aircraft in contested airspace.
- It will enable monitoring of low level airspace over the battle areas of Indian Army and effectively control the **Ground Based Air Defence Weapon Systems**.

Key facts about Akashteer Command and Control Systems:

- It is developed by **Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL)** as part of the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' initiative. The system's control centers, designed to be **vehicle-based and mobile**, can maintain operational capabilities even in challenging communication environments.
- It will significantly enhance India's air defense capabilities in several ways:
 - **Efficiency and Integration:** By digitizing Air Defence Control and Reporting processes, 'Akashteer' will usher in unprecedented levels of efficiency and



integration. This will enable the Indian Army to respond swiftly to hostile threats while minimizing the risk of friendly fire incidents.

- **Situational Awareness:** It integrates radar and communication systems into a unified network, providing the Indian Army with unprecedented situational awareness. This will enable them to detect and engage hostile targets more effectively.
 - **Automation:** Overall, the deployment of 'Akashteer' signifies a leap towards complete automation of air defense operations.
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[Kumittipathi Rock Paintings](#)

Miscreants have caused damage to the rock art paintings at the cave at Kumittipathi in Tamil Nadu.

About Kumittipathi Rock Paintings:

- These paintings believed to be around 3,000 years old and are among the important rock arts in the Kongu region.
 - **Theme:** The paintings depict an **elephant, ther** (chariot, some say it is a peacock) and the lives of **early dwellers** of the region.
 - There are small pits and holes in the cave, which are believed to have been used to store water and other belongings.
 - **Material used:** They used an inorganic white pigment, along with **natural gum** to paint the figures.
 - While most of the rock painting sites in Tamil Nadu are found on rock shelters, those at Kumittipathi are **drawn inside a cave**.
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[What is World Anti-Doping Agency \(WADA\)?](#)

India has emerged as the country with the highest percentage of doping offenders, according to the 2022 testing figures released by the WADA.



About World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA):

- It was established in 1999 as an **international independent agency** to lead a collaborative worldwide movement for doping-free sport.
- It's **governance and funding** are based on an equal partnership between the sport movement and governments of the world.
- Its primary role is to develop, harmonize and coordinate anti-doping rules and policies **across all sports and countries**.
- Its key activities include **scientific research**, education, the development of anti-doping capacities and **monitoring of the World Anti-Doping Code (Code)**, the document harmonizing anti-doping policies in all sports and all countries.
- **Formation:**
 - After the events that shook the world of cycling in the summer of **1998**, the **International Olympic Committee (IOC)** decided to convene a World Conference on Doping.
 - The **First World Conference on Doping in Sport** held, in Lausanne, Switzerland, on February 2-4, 1999, produced the **Lausanne Declaration on Doping in Sport**.
 - It provided for the creation of an independent international anti-doping agency to be operational for the Games of the XXVII Olympiad in Sydney in 2000.
 - **Pursuant to** the terms of the **Lausanne Declaration**, the **WADA was established** on November 10, 1999, in Lausanne to promote and coordinate the fight against doping in sport internationally.
- It is a Swiss private law, not-for-profit foundation. Its seat is in Lausanne, Switzerland, and its **headquarters are in Montreal, Canada**.
- **Governance Structure:**
 - A **42-member Foundation Board (Board)**, the agency's highest policy-making body, is jointly composed of representatives of the Olympic Movement (the IOC,

National Olympic Committees, International Sports Federations, and athletes) and representatives of governments from all five continents.

- A **16-member Executive Committee (ExCo)**, to which the Board delegates the management and running of the agency, including the performance of all its activities and the administration of its assets.

What is the Strategic Forces Command (SFC)?

The new generation ballistic missile Agni-Prime was successfully flight-tested by the SFC along with the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) recently.



About Strategic Forces Command (SFC):

- The SFC, sometimes called Strategic Nuclear Command, forms part of India's **Nuclear Command Authority (NCA)**, which is responsible for command-and-control decisions regarding India's nuclear weapons programme.
- It is responsible for the **management and administration** of the country's tactical and strategic **nuclear weapons stockpile**. It was created in 2003.
- **Responsibility of SFC:**
 - It is the responsibility of the SFC to **operationalize the orders of the NCA** under the leadership of a Commander-in-Chief who is a Senior Officer.
 - It has the sole responsibility of initiating the process of **delivering nuclear weapons** and warheads after acquiring clear approval from the NCA.
 - Moreover, the **final target selection** is also **done by the SFC** through a calibrated, cumulative process involving various levels of decision-making, including **formal approval from the NCA**.
 - It **manages and administers all strategic forces** by exercising complete command and control over nuclear assets and **producing all contingency plans** as needed to fulfill the required tasks.

- Since its inception, the SFC's command, control and communication systems have been firmly established and the command has attained a high state of operational readiness.
- It consists of officers and personnel of the **Indian Army, Indian Air Force (IAF),** and **Indian Navy** who are deputed from their respective services.
- The Commander-in-Chief, a 3-star General, is appointed on a rotational basis from the three services.

Key Facts about India's Nuclear Command Authority (NCA):

- It is the authority responsible for **command, control and operational decisions** regarding India's nuclear weapons programme.
 - It comprises a Political Council and an Executive Council.
 - The **Political Council** is **chaired by the Prime Minister**.
 - It is the sole body which can authorize the use of nuclear weapons.
 - The **Executive Council** is **chaired by the National Security Advisor**.
 - It provides input for decision-making by the NCA and executes the directives given to it by the Political Council.
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