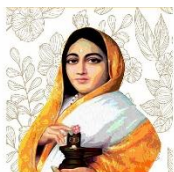


WHO WAS AHILYABAI HOLKAR?



- Maharani Ahilyabai Holkar (31 May 1725 – 13 August 1795) was a ruler of the Malwa territory, a part of the Maratha Confederacy, from 1767 to 1795.
- She served first as regent and then as ruler of the Holkar dynasty with its seats at Maheshwar and Indore in central India, in a period considered the zenith of the Holkar dynasty.
- Under her rule Malwa enjoyed relative peace, prosperity, and stability, and her capital, Maheshwar, was turned into an oasis of literary, musical, artistic, and industrial pursuits.
- She passed away on August 13, 1795, at the age of seventy.
- Upon her death, Ahilyabai was succeeded by Tukoji Rao Holkar, who abdicated in his son Jaswant Rao's favor two years later.
- Jaswant Rao was the last Holkar ruler to remain independent until his 1804 defeat by and subsequent peace with the British.
- Titles:
 - She is known as **Punyashlok** ("One as Pure as the Sacred Chants").
 - John Keay, the British historian, gave the queen the title of 'The Philosopher Queen'.
- Military Contribution:
 - She was military-trained under her father-in-law, Malhar Rao Holkar, and personally led armies into battle.
 - Ahilyabai appointed Malhar Rao's adopted son, Tukoji Rao Holkar, the commander of the Holkar army.
 - She engaged the Frenchman Chevelier Dudrenec in 1792 to help modernize her army by raising four battalions.

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- Administration:
 - She earned a reputation for **administering justice fairly** during her rule, **without partiality** or partisanship. Ex: She **sentenced her only son**, found guilty of a capital offense, **to death** by being crushed by an elephant.
 - She **established courts** for justice **and arbitration** in citizens' disputes.
 - She was known for being **accessible to all her subjects** and **held daily audiences** where people could approach her.
- Cultural Contribution:
 - She welcomed stalwarts such as **Marathi poet Moropant, Shahir Ananta Gandhi**, and **Sanskrit scholar Khushali Ram** into her capital.
 - She made **Maheshwar** (literally, "abode of Lord Shiva") **her capital** and offered employment to several craftsmen, artists, and sculptors.
 - She was a great pioneer and **builder of Hindu temples**.
 - She **built hundreds of temples and Dharmashalas** throughout India.
 - Her most **notable contribution** was the renovation and **repair of the famous Kashi Vishwanath Temple** in 1780.

KEY FACTS ABOUT MAYA CIVILIZATION



- The term "Maya" refers to both a modern-day group of people who live across the globe and their ancestors who built an ancient civilization that stretched across much of Central America.
- The Maya are probably the **best-known of the classical civilizations of Mesoamerica**.
- Before the Spanish conquest of Mexico and Central America, the Maya possessed one of the greatest civilizations of the Western Hemisphere.
- **Originating in the Yucatán peninsula around 2600 B.C.**, they rose to prominence around A.D. 250 in present-day southern Mexico, Guatemala, northern Belize, and western Honduras.

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- Building on the inherited inventions and ideas of earlier civilizations, the Maya developed astronomy, calendrical systems, and hieroglyphic writing (a system that employs characters in the form of pictures).
 - The Mayans developed a precise and sophisticated calendar that followed the movement of the sun, moon, and stars. The Mayan calendar is so precise that it even includes a leap day adjustment to keep the calendar synchronized with the solar year.
 - The Mayans created a system of hieroglyphic writing that includes more than 800 different glyphs. This writing was used to record the history, astronomy, mathematics, and religion of the Maya culture.
- The Maya were noted as well for elaborate and highly decorated ceremonial architecture, including temple-pyramids, palaces, and observatories, all built without metal tools.
- They were also skilled farmers, clearing large sections of tropical rain forest and, where groundwater was scarce, building sizable underground reservoirs for the storage of rainwater.
- The Maya were equally skilled as weavers and potters, and cleared routes through jungles and swamps to foster extensive trade networks with distant peoples.
- The Maya made paper from the inner bark of wild fig trees and wrote their hieroglyphs on books made from this paper. Those books are called codices.
- The Maya also developed an elaborate and beautiful tradition of sculpture and relief carving.
- At its height, Mayan civilization consisted of more than 40 cities, each with a population between 5,000 and 50,000.
- The peak Mayan population may have reached two million people, most of whom were settled in the lowlands of what is now Guatemala.
- After 900 CE, however, the Classic Maya civilization declined precipitously, leaving the great cities and ceremonial centres vacant and overgrown with jungle vegetation.

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SWACHH SURVEKSHAN GRAMEEN, 2025 (SSG 2025)



• It is a nationwide rural sanitation survey by the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation (DDWS), Ministry of Jal Shakti.

- It will measure the impact of India's flagship cleanliness program, Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM).
- The survey will rigorously assess the current state of rural sanitation, focusing on sustaining the outcomes achieved under the Open Defecation Free (ODF) Plus Model, as established by the Swachh Bharat Mission-Gramin (SBM-G).
- The assessment will include sampling village evaluations, surveying households and public places to gauge their status based on various cleanliness parameters.
- This includes the functionality of Plastic Waste Management Units (PWMU), Faecal Sludge Management (FSM) plants, GOBARDhan plants, citizen feedback, and Swachhata Green Leaf Rating (SGLR) sites.
- The main objective of the survey is to provide a national ranking for all States, Union Territories, and Districts of India based on the quantitative and qualitative sanitation parameters outlined under the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM-II).
- The survey will verify the status of ODF Plus Model villages, schools, public buildings, Common Service Centers (CSCs), and institutions.
- The Department of Drinking Water Supply has engaged an independent agency to conduct the survey.
- A structured approach shall be followed to evaluate the status of States/UTs and Districts on key performance outcomes of SBM Phase-II and they will be ranked across four key components:

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- **Service-Level Progress (SLP)**, based on data from district self-assessment reports and desktop verification of ODF Plus Model Verified villages.
- **Direct Observation of Sanitation Status of Villages**, through field-based observation in sampled villages, households, and public places, including schools, CSCs, etc.
- **Direct Observation of Functionality of Sanitation Infrastructure**, such as Plastic Waste Management Units, GOBARDhan plants, and Faecal Sludge Management systems.
- **SSG 2025 Citizen Feedback**, gathered via a mobile application and one-on-one interactions during the field survey.
- These elements shall be grouped into sub-components to derive a composite score, ensuring a transparent, technology-driven, and community-led assessment process.
- **To uphold the data integrity, a geo-fencing feature** has been introduced in the Survey and further, **to promote public engagement, a dedicated mobile app** has been created to gather citizen feedback.

WHAT IS THE ADVANCE AUTHORISATION SCHEME (AAS)?



- Advance Authorisation is issued to allow **duty-free import of input, which is physically incorporated in the export product** (making normal allowance for wastage).
- The inputs imported are exempt from duties like Basic Customs Duty, Additional Customs Duty, Education Cess, Anti-dumping duty, Safeguard Duty and Transition Product-Specific Safeguard duty, Integrated tax, and Compensation Cess, wherever applicable, subject to certain conditions.
- **An export obligation** is usually **set as a condition** for issuing Advance Authorization.
- **In addition to any inputs, packaging material, fuel, oil and catalysts** which are consumed/**utilized** in the process of **production of export products, are also allowed.**

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- The **quantity of inputs** allowed for a given product is **based on specific norms defined for that export product**, which considers the waste generated in the manufacturing process.
- The Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) provides a sector-wise list of **Standard Input-Output Norms (SION)** under which the exporters may choose to apply.
- Alternatively, exporters may apply for their own ad-hoc norms in cases where the SION does not suit the exporter.
- It is available to either a manufacturer exporter directly or a merchant exporter tied with a supporting manufacturer.
- The authorization is available for the following:
 - **Physical exports**
 - **Intermediate supply**
 - Supplies made to specified categories of deemed exports
 - **Supply of 'stores' on board of a foreign-going vessel/aircraft**, provided that there are specific Standard Input Output Norms (SION) in respect of items supplied.
- Advance Authorization is **valid for 12 months** from the date of issue of such Authorization.
- **Export Obligation:**
 - **Minimum value addition of 15%**
 - **Period for fulfilment of export obligation: 18 months** from the date of issue of authorisation or as notified by DGFT.
- **Recent Changes:**
 - **Even if goods have already been shipped or have arrived in India**, they can still be cleared under an Advance Authorisation granted later by the DGFT, provided the importer files the Bill of Entry after the licence date.

BIOSTIMULANT



Recently, the central government notified 34 biostimulants to spur manufacturing.

- These are **substances or microorganisms** applied to plants or soil to **stimulate natural processes** and also work by enhancing the plant's own physiological abilities.
- Biostimulants are products that **reduce the need for fertilizers** and increase plant growth, resistance to water and abiotic stresses.
- They improve overall plant health and productivity by targeting processes such as root development, **nutrient efficiency**, **stress tolerance** (drought, salinity, extreme temperatures), soil microbial activity.
- In addition, biostimulants applied to plants enhance nutrition efficiency, abiotic stress tolerance and/or plant quality traits, regardless of its nutrient contents.
- **Common types of biostimulants include:** Humic and fulvic acids, seaweed extracts, beneficial fungi and bacteria (e.g., mycorrhizae, rhizobacteria).
- In India Biostimulants are incorporated under **the Fertilizer (Control) Order, 1985**.

Advantages of Biostimulants

- **Improving plant tolerance to abiotic stress** on plants, including drought, extreme temperatures (cold, frost, and heat), and salinity
- **Enhancing uptake** and efficient use of nutrients, both applied and existing
- **Improving soil health** by enhancing beneficial soil microorganisms
- Enhancing crop quality through plant health and vigor
- Increasing harvestable yields.

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AYUSH SURAKSHA PORTAL



- This portal represents a significant advancement in pharmacovigilance and regulatory convergence within the Ayush ecosystem.

- It is developed with the technical support of the Central Council for Research in Siddha (CCRS).
- It is aligned with the National Pharmacovigilance Program, allows consumers, healthcare professionals, and regulatory authorities to report and monitor misleading advertisements and adverse drug reactions through a seamless digital process.
- The system integrates multiple authorities, including the Ayush vertical under CDSCO, MoI&B, CCPA, NCISM, NCH, PCI, FSSAI, and State Licensing Authorities, ensuring coordinated response and enforcement.

Significance:

- The Ministry of Ayush now has a **centralised and accessible** dashboard of reported cases, enabling **real-time tracking, swift regulatory action**, and detailed data analysis.
- The system also ensures that **citizens have a direct channel to voice their concerns**, with transparent visibility into the action taken on their reports.
- By integrating data from State Licensing Authorities, national pharmacovigilance centres, and key regulatory stakeholders, the portal facilitates real-time monitoring, systematic analysis, and coordinated action on misleading advertisements and adverse drug reactions.
- It reflects the Ministry's unwavering commitment to **responsible governance, evidence-based practices**, and the safety of millions of citizens who trust and rely on India's traditional systems of medicine.

NATIONAL FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE AWARD



Recently, the President of India presented the National Florence Nightingale Awards for the year 2025 to the nurses at a function held at Rashtrapati Bhavan.

- It was instituted by the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare**, Government of India in the year 1973.
- It is a prestigious award given to **outstanding nursing personnel** employed in **Central, State/UTs and Voluntary Organizations**.
- It was awarded as a mark of recognition for the **meritorious services** rendered by the nurses and nursing professionals to the society.
- The nurse in her/his regular job in the hospital or community settings, educational or administrative setting is eligible for the national award.
- It consists of a Certificate of Merit, **Cash Award of Rs.1,00,000/- and a medal**.

Who is Florence Nightingale?

- Florence Nightingale was an **English social reformer**, statistician and the founder of modern nursing.
- Nightingale came to prominence while serving as a manager and trainer of nurses **during the Crimean War**, in which she organised care for wounded soldiers at Constantinople.
- Her efforts to formalize nursing education led her to establish the first scientifically based nursing school—the Nightingale School of Nursing, at St. Thomas' Hospital in London.