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UNESCO launches List Documenting 50 Iconic Indian Heritage Textiles

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What's in News?

UNESCO released a list of **50 exclusive and iconic heritage textile crafts** of the country

News Highlights:

- **Handmade for the 21st Century: Safeguarding Traditional Indian Textile** lists the histories and legends behind the textiles, describes the complicated and secret processes behind their making, mentions the causes for their dwindling popularity, and provides strategies for their preservation.
- According to UNESCO, one of the **major challenges** to the safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage in the South Asia is **lack of proper inventory and documentation**.
- The publication, which aims to bridge this gap, brings together years of research on the 50 selected textiles.
- No textile practices from India have been included in the list of UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity so far.

Some Handicrafts that are documented:

1. Khes from Panipat,
2. Chamba rumals from Himachal Pradesh,
3. Thigma or wool tie and dye from Ladakh
4. Awadh Jamdani from Varanasi
5. Ilkal and Lambadi or Banjara embroidery from Karnataka
6. Sikalnayakanpet Kalamkari from Thanjavur
7. Toda embroidery and Sungadi from Tamil Nadu
8. Himroo weaves from Hyderabad
9. Bandha tie and dye weaving from Sambalpur in Odisha
10. Kunbi weaves from Goa
11. Mashru weaves and Patola from Gujarat
12. Himroo from Maharashtra
13. Garad-Koirial from West Bengal

Recommendations for safeguarding and revitalizing heritage textile crafts:

1. Formulation of a comprehensive policy for handmade textiles.
2. Creating systematic and scientific databases on handmade textile crafts and their practitioners.
3. Facilitating convergence within the hand skills sector.
4. Protecting practitioners' intellectual property rights and raise consumer awareness about authentic versus copied products.
5. Supporting ancillary artisans and professions.
6. Recognizing women artisans and give them equal opportunities.
7. Providing appropriate infrastructure and technology.

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8. Focusing on educating, training and up-skilling practitioners.
9. Encouraging innovation in design and product development.
10. Enabling access to credit.

UNESCO:

- The **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization** is a **specialised agency of the United Nations (UN)** aimed at promoting world peace and security through international cooperation in education, arts, sciences and culture.
- It has 193 member states and it is **headquartered at the World Heritage Centre in Paris, France.**
- UNESCO was founded in 1945 as the successor to the **League of Nations's International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation.**
- UNESCO state parties are the **United Nations member states (except Liechtenstein, United States and Israel)**, as well as Cook Islands, Niue and Palestine.

UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity:

- In 2003, **UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage** was given.
- **India is a signatory** to the Convention
- India has been elected to the Intergovernmental Committee of UNESCO's 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) for the 2022-2026 cycle in July 2022
- **14 Intangible Cultural Heritage** elements from India have now been inscribed on UNESCO's Representative List.

1. Tradition of Vedic chanting
2. Ramlila, the traditional performance of the Ramayana
3. Kutiyattam, Sanskrit theatre
4. Ramman, religious festival and ritual theatre of the Garhwal Himalayas, India
5. Mudiyetu, ritual theatre and dance drama of Kerala
6. Kalbelia folk songs and dances of Rajasthan
7. Chhau dance
8. Buddhist chanting of Ladakh: recitation of sacred Buddhist texts in the trans-Himalayan Ladakh region, Jammu and Kashmir, India
9. Sankirtana, ritual singing, drumming and dancing of Manipur
10. Traditional brass and copper craft of utensil making among the Thatheras of Jandiala Guru, Punjab, India
11. Yoga
12. Nawrouz, Novruz, Nowrouz, Nowrouz, Nawrouz, Nauryz, Nooruz, Nowruz, Navruz, Nevruz, Nowruz, Navruz
13. Kumbh Mela
14. Durga Puja

Way Forward:

- Textile crafts represent a very significant share of the Indian cultural heritage and have dazzled the world for centuries.
- Despite the pressures of industrial mass production and competition from new countries, it is essential that these iconic heritage crafts are taken stock of and promoted as contemporary treasures.

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