

17 September 2019: UPSC Exam PIB Summary & Analysis

Bronze Idol of Buddha seated in the Bhumisparsha Mudra

Context:

Finance Minister Ms. Nirmala Sitharaman handed over an antique bronze idol of Buddha to the Minister of State for Culture & Tourism Mr. Prahlad Singh Patel on 17th September at New Delhi.

Details:

- The idol had been stolen from the Nalanda Museum of ASI (Archaeological Survey of India) in 1961 and had resurfaced at an auction in Maastricht in The Netherlands (organized by a London-based dealer) in 2018.
- On receiving this information, the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) officer in London contacted the Art & Antique Unit of the Metropolitan Police (UK).
- The ASI also certified that the statue was stolen from the Archaeological Museum in Nalanda.
- The International Council of Museums also inspected the image and confirmed that it is the same as the one stolen from Nalanda in 1961.
- The India Pride Project, an online volunteer group of art enthusiasts, played an active role in the identification of the idol.
- British authorities handed over the idol to the Indian High Commissioner (UK) on India's Independence Day in 2018.
- The stolen Buddha statue is documented as “**Seated Buddha in Bhumisparsha Mudra**” (height 6.5 inches, circa 12th century CE).

About the Bhumisparsha Mudra:



- This is a common pose found in idols of the Buddha in many countries.
- This means: ‘Touching the Earth’.
- In this posture, the right hand points downwards towards the earth, hanging over the knee and palm facing inwards. The left hand rests on the lap with the palm upright.
- **Significance of the pose:** This pose represents the moment when the Buddha attained enlightenment. It stands for ‘Calling the Earth to Witness the Truth’.

Vishwakarma Rashtriya Puraskar and National Safety Awards for the Performance Year 2017

Context:

The Labour Minister gave away the Vishwakarma Rashtriya Puraskar and the National Safety Awards for the performance year 2017.

Details:

- This award scheme is operated by the Directorate General Factory Advice Service & Labour Institutes (DGFASLI) in Mumbai. This is an attached office of the Ministry of Labour and Employment.

About the Vishwakarma Rashtriya Puraskar:

- This award was previously known as ShramVir National Awards.
- It was initiated in 1965 by the Labour Ministry.
- It is awarded in recognition of outstanding suggestions given by a worker or a group of workers and implemented by the management during the previous calendar year, resulting in improvement in quality, productivity, savings to the unit including savings in foreign currency and working conditions such as safety, health and environmental conservation in the industrial undertakings where “Suggestion Schemes” are in operation.
- A cash prize and a merit certificate are given in three categories.

About the National Safety Awards:

- This award was also initiated in 1965.
- This award is given in recognition of outstanding safety performance of industrial establishments, construction sites, ports and installations under the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB).
- The objective behind the award is to stimulate and maintain the interests of both the management and the workers in accident prevention programs.
- The awardees get a shield and a merit certificate.
- These awards are given in 12 schemes (10 for factories/installations/construction sites and 2 for ports).

‘San-Sadhan’ Hackathon

Context:

Design for Divyangjan-accessible toilets showcased in ‘San-Sadhan’ Hackathon.

Details:

- Participants of the ‘San-Sadhan’ Hackathon came up with thought-provoking ideas for accessible toilets for the physically challenged (Divyangjans).

About the ‘San-Sadhan’ Hackathon:

- It was organized jointly by the Ministry of Jal Shakti and the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, in collaboration with Atal Innovation Mission and NITI Aayog. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and 91springboard were also part of this initiative.
- This was an initiative under the Swachh Bharat Mission.
- Applications were invited for designs that make toilets smarter, more accessible, and easier to use.
- The government said that it was looking for smart, scalable and innovative solutions for economical toilets for individual and community use in rural and urban contexts.
- Three innovators were selected winners from the shortlisted 21 applications.

