



PadhAI



Kurukshetra

July 2026

Edition



Welcome to PadhAI

KURUKSHETRA MONTHLY COVERAGE

You are here because you understand a fundamental truth of UPSC preparation: ***it's not about reading everything – it's about reading what truly matters, in the right way, at the right time.***

Magazines like Kurukshetra offer deep insights into rural development, governance, social schemes, and grassroots policy implementation. Yet for many aspirants, the challenge lies in separating exam-relevant content from general narratives.

PadhAI's Kurukshetra coverage is designed to do exactly that - ***filter, structure, and align policy discussions with UPSC requirements.***

Why This Kurukshetra Coverage Matters

At PadhAI, we don't reproduce articles. We ***extract core themes***, map them with the syllabus, and connect them with ***Prelims and Mains PYQs***.

Every topic included here:

- carries relevance for ***GS Papers or Essay***,
- strengthens understanding of ***developmental and governance issues, and***
- builds ***analytical depth*** rather than surface-level knowledge.

Nothing is added for volume.

Everything is added for value.

Part of the PadhAI Preparation Ecosystem

This Kurukshetra coverage forms part of a larger, integrated learning system that includes:

- early and concise ***monthly magazines***,
- ***daily PIB summaries*** with exam-focused clarity,
- ***monthly compliance tracking***,
- complete ***Prelims & Mains PYQs with structured answers***,
- relevant ***news article summaries***, and
- ***personal tutor chat support*** for continuous guidance.

The aim is simple:

one trusted ecosystem instead of multiple scattered sources.

Our Guiding Philosophy

At PadhAI, everything is built around one belief:

- *Learn only what matters.*
- *Learn it the right way.*
- *Learn it at the right time.*

We don't believe in shortcuts.

We believe in clarity, consistency, and cumulative preparation.

A Final Note

UPSC preparation is demanding and often overwhelming.

PadhAI exists to ensure you prepare with ***direction, relevance, and confidence*** — never blindly, never alone.

If this **Kurukshetra** coverage helps you save time, connect policy with practice, and strengthen your answers, then it has served its purpose.

Welcome to PadhAI.

A community built to prepare — not to overwhelm.

Topic 1: Cultural Diversity as a Tool for National Integration



CULTURAL DIVERSITY AS A TOOL FOR NATIONAL INTEGRATION

Unity in Diversity • Identity in Plurality • Strength in Togetherness

“Diversity is not our problem, it is our strength.”



WHY IT MATTERS

- Living traditions create social cohesion and national belonging.
- Transcend barriers of caste, creed, language and region.
- Foundation for India's inclusive development and harmony.

CHALLENGES

- Urbanisation, westernisation and digital homogenisation erode traditions.
- 2011 Language Census: India has lost **250 languages**.
- Many traditional artisans and weavers struggle for livelihood.

PRELIMS FACTS (ONE LINERS)

Chhau Dance:
UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage.

Tribal Population:
705 Scheduled Tribes
(8.6% of total population).

1. SOCIAL HARMONY THROUGH FESTIVALS



MAHA KUMBH 2025

66 crore pilgrims a powerful symbol of spiritual unity and cultural exchange.



PUSHKAR MELA

Brings communities together, promoting peace and cultural understanding.

2. FOLK & TRIBAL PRESERVATION



CHHAU DANCE

UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage



GOND ART

Narrates myths, traditions and close bond with nature.



WARLI PAINTINGS

Reflect simplicity, community life and ecological wisdom.

These traditions are not just art, they are carriers of values, identity and ecological consciousness.

3. LEGISLATIVE & POLICY SUPPORT

FIFTH & SIXTH SCHEDULES
Constitutional safeguards for tribal autonomy and cultural protection.

PESA ACT, 1996
Empowers Gram Sabhas in Scheduled Areas to preserve traditions, resources and local self-governance.

NATIONAL MISSION FOR CULTURAL MAPPING
Documents and protects diverse cultural expressions across India.

 Our folk, tribes, languages, and festivals are the threads that weave India's unity. | **Preserve Culture. Strengthen Nation.** 

Summary: India's vast array of folk traditions, tribal customs, and festivals serve as a critical instrument for national integration and social cohesion. These living traditions transcend barriers of caste and region, reinforcing a collective identity essential for the nation's inclusive development.

Background: While India's constitutional ideal is "Unity in Diversity," modern challenges such as **urbanisation, westernisation, and digital homogenisation** threaten these traditions. For instance, the 2011 Language Census indicates India has lost 250 languages, and many traditional weavers struggle to meet basic needs.

Key Points:

- **Social Harmony through Festivals:** Major gatherings like the **Maha Kumbh** (attracting 66 crore pilgrims in 2025) and the **Pushkar Mela** act as platforms for cultural exchange and spiritual unity.
- **Folk and Tribal Preservation:** Expressions such as **Chhau dance** (a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage), **Gond art**, and **Warli paintings** are not just aesthetic but preserve moral traditions and ecological consciousness.

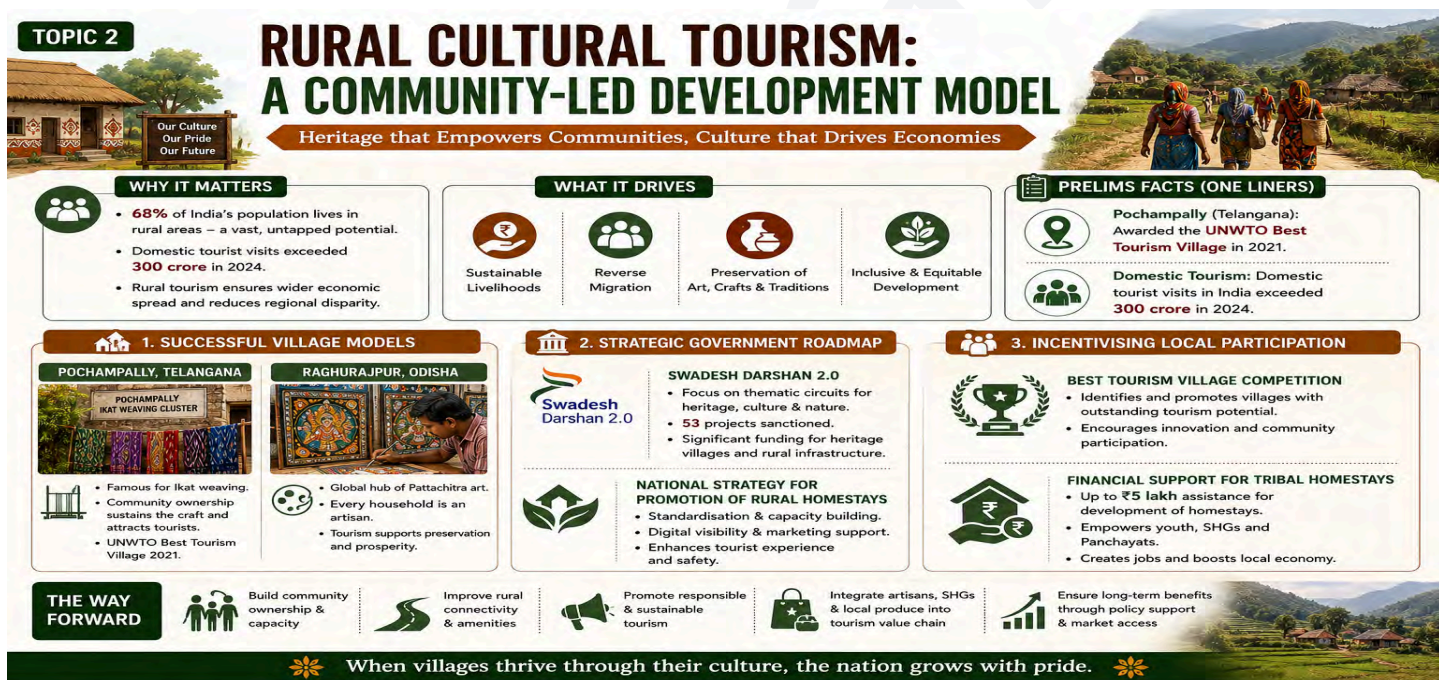
- **Legislative and Policy Support:** The government utilizes frameworks like the **Fifth and Sixth Schedules**, the **PESA Act (1996)**, and the **National Mission for Cultural Mapping** to safeguard endangered cultures and tribal rights.

Prelims Facts (One Liners):

- **Chhau Dance:** Recognised as a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage.
- **Tribal Population:** India has 705 Scheduled Tribes, accounting for **8.6% of the total population**.

MCQ Practice: Q. Which of the following acts/schedules provides constitutional safeguards specifically for the preservation of tribal culture and local self-governance in India? A) Seventh Schedule B) PESA Act, 1996 C) Right to Education Act D) Information Technology Act **Answer: B** (The PESA Act, along with the Fifth and Sixth Schedules, is specifically designed to promote the preservation of tribal culture and local administrative autonomy.)

Topic 2: Rural Cultural Tourism: A Community-Led Development Model



TOPIC 2

RURAL CULTURAL TOURISM: A COMMUNITY-LED DEVELOPMENT MODEL

Heritage that Empowers Communities, Culture that Drives Economies

WHY IT MATTERS

- **68%** of India's population lives in rural areas – a vast, untapped potential.
- Domestic tourist visits exceeded **300 crore** in 2024.
- Rural tourism ensures wider economic spread and reduces regional disparity.

WHAT IT DRIVES

- Sustainable Livelihoods
- Reverse Migration
- Preservation of Art, Crafts & Traditions
- Inclusive & Equitable Development

PRELIMS FACTS (ONE LINERS)

- Pochampally (Telangana): Awarded the **UNWTO Best Tourism Village** in 2021.
- Domestic Tourism: Domestic tourist visits in India exceeded **300 crore** in 2024.

1. SUCCESSFUL VILLAGE MODELS

POCHAMPALLY, TELANGANA

POCHAMPALLY IKAT WEAVING CLUSTER

- Famous for Ikat weaving.
- Community ownership sustains the craft and attracts tourists.
- UNWTO Best Tourism Village 2021.

RAGHURAJPUR, ODISHA

Pattachitra Art

- Global hub of Pattachitra art.
- Every household is an artisan.
- Tourism supports preservation and prosperity.

2. STRATEGIC GOVERNMENT ROADMAP

SWADESH DARSHAN 2.0

- Focus on thematic circuits for heritage, culture & nature.
- **53** projects sanctioned.
- Significant funding for heritage villages and rural infrastructure.

NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR PROMOTION OF RURAL HOMESTAYS

- Standardisation & capacity building.
- Digital visibility & marketing support.
- Enhances tourist experience and safety.

3. INCENTIVISING LOCAL PARTICIPATION

BEST TOURISM VILLAGE COMPETITION

- Identifies and promotes villages with outstanding tourism potential.
- Encourages innovation and community participation.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR TRIBAL HOMESTAYS

- Up to ₹5 lakh assistance for development of homestays.
- Empowers youth, SHGs and Panchayats.
- Creates jobs and boosts local economy.

THE WAY FORWARD

- Build community ownership & capacity
- Improve rural connectivity & amenities
- Promote responsible & sustainable tourism
- Integrate artisans, SHGs & local produce into tourism value chain
- Ensure long-term benefits through policy support & market access

When villages thrive through their culture, the nation grows with pride.

Summary: Rural cultural tourism transforms villages into living repositories of heritage, creating sustainable economic opportunities and encouraging **reverse migration**. By integrating local artisans and SHGs into the tourism value chain, it ensures a more equitable distribution of income compared to urban-centric tourism.

Background: With **68% of the population** residing in rural areas, there is immense untapped potential for heritage tourism. Despite domestic tourist visits exceeding 300 crore in 2024, benefits have historically remained concentrated around urban sites, necessitating a policy-driven shift toward rural landscapes.

Key Points:

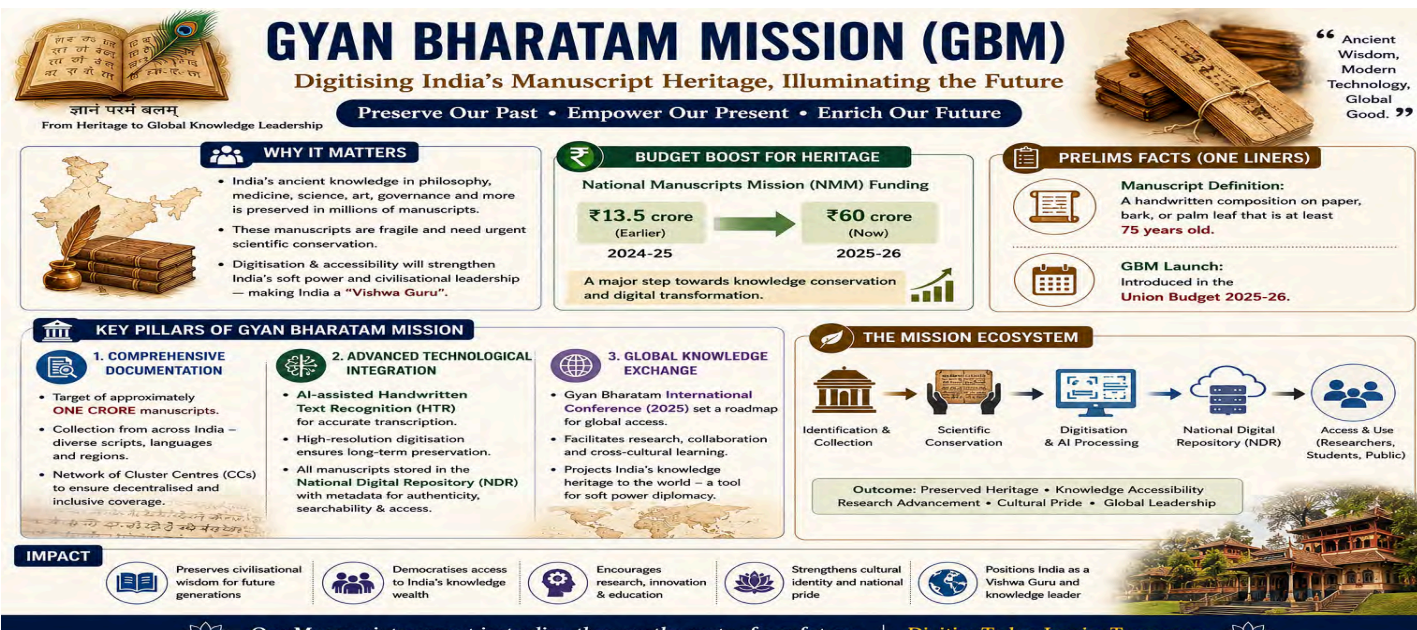
- **Successful Village Models:** Villages like **Pochampally** (Telangana) for Ikat weaving and **Raghurajpur** (Odisha) for Pattachitra demonstrate how community ownership can sustain traditional crafts.
- **Strategic Government Roadmap:** The **National Strategy for Promotion of Rural Homestays** and **Swadesh Darshan 2.0** (with 53 sanctioned projects) provide the financial and structural framework for rural development.
- **Incentivising Local Participation:** The “Best Tourism Village Competition” and schemes providing up to **₹5 lakh assistance** for tribal homestays empower local youth and Panchayats.

Prelims Facts (One Liners):

- **Pochampally:** Awarded the **UNWTO Best Tourism Village** in 2021.
- **Domestic Tourism:** Domestic tourist visits in India exceeded **300 crore in 2024**.

MCQ Practice: Q. The “Swadesh Darshan 2.0” scheme primarily aims to: A) Promote outbound tourism for Indian citizens. B) Develop themed tourist circuits for rich, heritage-based experiences. C) Provide free air travel to religious sites. D) Build only five-star hotels in urban centres. **Answer: B** (Swadesh Darshan 2.0 creates themed circuits to enhance cultural and heritage experiences, with significant funding earmarked for heritage villages.)

Topic 3: Gyan Bharatam Mission (GBM)



GYAN BHARATAM MISSION (GBM)

Digitising India's Manuscript Heritage, Illuminating the Future

Preserve Our Past • Empower Our Present • Enrich Our Future

ज्ञानं परमं बलम्
From Heritage to Global Knowledge Leadership

“Ancient Wisdom, Modern Technology, Global Good.”

WHY IT MATTERS

- India's ancient knowledge in philosophy, medicine, science, art, governance and more is preserved in millions of manuscripts.
- These manuscripts are fragile and need urgent scientific conservation.
- Digitisation & accessibility will strengthen India's soft power and civilisational leadership — making India a “Vishwa Guru”.

BUDGET BOOST FOR HERITAGE

National Manuscripts Mission (NMM) Funding

₹13.5 crore (Earlier)	→	₹60 crore (Now)
2024-25		2025-26

A major step towards knowledge conservation and digital transformation.

PRELIMS FACTS (ONE LINERS)

Manuscript Definition: A handwritten composition on paper, bark, or palm leaf that is at least 75 years old.

GBM Launch: Introduced in the Union Budget 2025-26.

KEY PILLARS OF GYAN BHARATAM MISSION

- 1. COMPREHENSIVE DOCUMENTATION**
 - Target of approximately **ONE CRORE** manuscripts.
 - Collection from across India – diverse scripts, languages and regions.
 - Network of Cluster Centres (CCs) to ensure decentralised and inclusive coverage.
- 2. ADVANCED TECHNOLOGICAL INTEGRATION**
 - AI-assisted Handwritten Text Recognition (HTR) for accurate transcription.
 - High-resolution digitisation ensures long-term preservation.
 - All manuscripts stored in the National Digital Repository (NDR) with metadata for authenticity, searchability & access.
- 3. GLOBAL KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE**
 - Gyan Bharatam International Conference (2025) set a roadmap for global access.
 - Facilitates research, collaboration and cross-cultural learning.
 - Projects India's knowledge heritage to the world – a tool for soft power diplomacy.

THE MISSION ECOSYSTEM



Outcome: Preserved Heritage • Knowledge Accessibility
Research Advancement • Cultural Pride • Global Leadership

IMPACT

- Preserves civilisational wisdom for future generations
- Democratises access to India's knowledge wealth
- Encourages research, innovation & education
- Strengthens cultural identity and national pride
- Positions India as a Vishwa Guru and knowledge leader

Our Manuscripts are not just relics; they are the roots of our future. | Digitise Today, Inspire Tomorrow.

Summary: The Gyan Bharatam Mission is a national initiative designed to **digitise and democratise** India's vast manuscript heritage. By integrating ancient knowledge with modern AI and cloud technology, the mission aims to position India as a “Vishwa Guru”.

Background: Ancient knowledge in philosophy, medicine, and governance is preserved in millions of manuscripts that require urgent scientific conservation. The **Union Budget 2025-26** significantly boosted the National Manuscripts Mission (NMM) funding from **₹13.5 crore to ₹60 crore** to support this cause.

Key Points:

- **Comprehensive Documentation:** The mission targets approximately **one crore manuscripts** across various scripts and regions through a network of Cluster Centres (CCs).
- **Advanced Technological Integration:** GBM utilizes **AI-assisted Handwritten Text Recognition (HTR)** and high-resolution digitisation to ensure long-term preservation in a National Digital Repository (NDR).
- **Global Knowledge Exchange:** The first Gyan Bharatam International Conference in 2025 formulated a roadmap to make this ancient knowledge globally accessible for research and soft power diplomacy.

Prelims Facts (One Liners):

[Click here to access
Monthly Magazine](#)

[Click here to access
Yojana Magazine](#)

[Click here to access
Current Affairs](#)

[Click here to access
PIB Summaries](#)

- **Manuscript Definition:** A handwritten composition on paper, bark, or palm leaf that is **at least 75 years old**.
- **GBM Launch:** Introduced in the Union Budget 2025-26.

MCQ Practice: Q. Under the Gyan Bharatam Mission, what is the primary purpose of the National Digital Repository (NDR)? A) To store physical copies of old newspapers. B) To maintain the authenticity and accessibility of digitised manuscripts with proper metadata. C) To track the migration patterns of rural artisans. D) To provide a portal for booking rural homestays. **Answer: B** (The NDR stores digitised manuscripts with metadata to enable easy access for researchers and maintain authenticity.)

Topic 4: Mera Gaon Meri Dharohar (MGMD)

TOPIC 4

MAHA GAON MAHA DHAROHAR (MGMD)

Every Village, Every Heritage, Every Identity

Documenting Our Roots • Preserving Our Heritage • Empowering Our Future



WHAT IS MGMD?

- A flagship initiative under the National Mission on Cultural Mapping (NMCM).
- Creates digital cultural profiles of every Indian village.
- Recognises villages as living repositories of indigenous knowledge, architecture, festivals and traditions.

BACKGROUND

- Launched as part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav.
- Addresses the need for a comprehensive digital archive of grassroots cultural diversity.
- National Mission on Cultural Mapping (NMCM) started in 2017 with an approved outlay of ₹469 crore.

PRELIMS FACTS (ONE LINERS)

Village Mapping Target: The mission aims to map between **6.38 to 6.5 lakh villages**.

Modhera: Highlighted as India's first solar-powered village within MGMD.

KEY PILLARS OF MGMD

1 MASSIVE SCALE OF MAPPING

As of 2026, approximately **6.23 lakh villages** have been culturally mapped.

One of the world's largest documentation exercises of its kind.

2 THEMATIC CATEGORISATION

Villages are classified into specific categories to highlight unique cultural strengths.

- Arts & Crafts Villages** e.g., Pochampally (Ikat Weaving), Raghurajpur (Pattachitra)
- Ecologically Oriented Villages** e.g., Bishnoi villages known for conservation traditions
- Epic Villages** e.g., Villages linked to Mahabharata traditions

3 INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

- Implemented by Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA)
- In collaboration with Common Services Centres (CSCs)
- Active participation of Gram Sabhas and local communities

THE MGMD PROCESS

Community Engagement (Gram Sabha participation, local knowledge collectors) → Data Collection (Surveys, interviews, documentation of tangible & intangible heritage) → Digital Documentation (Text, audio, video, photographs, geotagging) → Data Integration (Verified & uploaded to National Database (NMCM portal)) → Public Access (Cultural profiles available for research, education & tourism)

IMPACT

- Preserves intangible heritage for future generations
- Promotes rural development and local economies
- Strengthens cultural identity and national integration
- Positions India as a global leader in cultural mapping

Summary: MGMD is a flagship initiative under the **National Mission on Cultural Mapping (NMCM)** that aims to create digital cultural profiles for every Indian village. It recognises villages as living repositories of indigenous knowledge, architecture, and festivals.

Background: Launched as part of **Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav**, the programme addresses the need for a comprehensive digital archive of grassroots cultural diversity. The NMCM, started in 2017, received an approved outlay of **₹469 crore**.

Key Points:

- **Massive Scale of Mapping:** As of 2026, approximately **6.23 lakh villages** have been culturally mapped, making it one of the world's largest documentation exercises.
- **Thematic Categorisation:** Villages are classified into specific categories such as **Arts & Crafts Villages**, **Ecologically Oriented Villages** (e.g., Bishnoi villages), and **Epic Villages** (e.g., those linked to Mahabharata traditions).
- **Institutional Framework:** The initiative is implemented by the **Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA)** in collaboration with Common Services Centres (CSCs) and Gram Sabhas.

Prelims Facts (One Liners):

- **Village Mapping Target:** The mission aims to map between **6.38 to 6.5 lakh villages**.
- **Modhera:** Highlighted as India's **first solar-powered village** within the MGMD framework.

MCQ Practice: Q. Which institution is responsible for implementing the National Mission on Cultural Mapping (NMCM) since 2021? A) NITI Aayog B) Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) C) Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) D) Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR)

Answer: B (The IGNCA has been implementing the NMCM and its flagship MGMD programme since 2021.)