

4. Pushkaralu Festival returns to the Ganga after 12 years

Prelims Syllabus: Art & Culture

Mains Syllabus: GS-I Art & Culture



Why in News?

- The 12-day Pushkaralu festival of Telugu-speaking people began on April 22 in Varanasi.

Pushkaralu Festival

- Pushkaram is an Indian festival dedicated to worshipping of 12 sacred rivers.
- The celebration happens annually, once in 12 years along each river.
- Each river is associated with a zodiac sign, and the river for each year's festival is based on which sign Bruhaspathi (Jupiter) was in at the time.
- It is believed that bathing in the sacred river during Pushkaram cleanses the devotees of their sins.
- This year festival involves worshipping ancestors and the river Ganga and is being organised in Kashi after a gap of 12 years.

Why is it celebrated once in 12 years?

- In India, we have 12 major rivers such as Ganga, Yamuna, Narmada, Saraswathi, Godavari, Krishna, Kaveri, Bhima, Tapati, Tungabhadra, Sindhu, Pranhita for which the Pushkaram festival is celebrated for each river according to the zodiac sign of that river.
- The 12 days after the Jupiter enters that particular zodiac sign will be the Pushkaram/Pushkaralu which is a 12-day festival for that river.
- Hence Pushkaralu comes for every 12 years.

Legend of the Festival

- According to legend, after severe penance, the devotee Pushkara was blessed by Lord Shiva with the ability to live in water and purify holy rivers
- On a request from Bruhaspati (Jupiter), Pushkara decided to enter one of the 12 sacred rivers, including Ganga, Yamuna, Godavari, and Krishna, among others
- The river for each year's festival is decided in accordance with Brihaspati travel from one zodiac sign to another

