

Aranmula Boat Race

August 27, 2021

In news— Aranmula Uthrattathi Vallamkali (boat race) was held in **Pampa river, Kerala** recently.

Key highlights of the event-

- As many as 120 persons on board three **palliyodam (snake boats)** took part in this year's boat race.
- **Palliyoda Seva Sangam (PSS)** organises the event.
- The races were held along with the rendition of the traditional **vanchipattu (boat songs)** in praise of the presiding deity at the Aranmula temple.

History of Aranmula boat race-

- Aranmula Boat Race is the **most ancient and revered boat race of Kerala.**
- **Held on the day of the Uthrittathi asterism in the Malayalam month of Chingam** (corresponding to 15 **August and 20 September**), it is well known for its grandeur and unique history.
- Aranmula (meaning Six Bamboos) is a heritage village lies on the **banks of the river Pampa** in the Pathanamthitta district of Kerala.
- Legend says that a devout Brahmin promised to provide all the requirements for the Thiruvona Sadya (feast held on the Thiruvonam asterism).
- These were to be delivered to **Aranmula Sree Parthasarathy Temple in a boat called the Thiruvona Thoni.**
- The boat was attacked by enemy factions during its voyage.
- However, snake boats from the surrounding area came to its rescue and it is from here that the grand tradition of the special snake boat race in the area was born.

- The snake boat race in itself is **an offering to Lord Krishna of Sree Parthasarathy Temple.**
- The **snake boats used for this race are called Palliyodams.**
- The **credit for the design is given to Lord Krishna himself,** the chief deity at the Aranmula Sree Parthasarathy Temple.

Pampa(Pamba) river-

- It is one of the longest rivers in the Indian state of Kerala after Periyar and Bharathapuzha, and the longest river in the erstwhile former princely state of Travancore.
- The Pamba **originates at Pulachimalai hill in the Peerumedu plateau in the Western Ghats** at an altitude of 1,650 metres (5,410 ft).
- Sabarimala temple dedicated to Lord Ayyappa is located on the banks of the river Pamba.
- The river is **also known as 'Dakshina Bhageerathi'.**
- During ancient times it **was called 'River Baris'.**
- It enriches the lands of Pathanamthitta District and the Kuttanad area of Alappuzha District and few areas of Kottayam.