

Dhanu Yatra festival

December 30, 2022

In news– The ‘Dhanu Yatra’ festival, the largest open-air theatre festival began recently after a gap of two years, in Bargarh at the Odisha.

About the festival-

- Dhanu Yatra, **the eleven day long annual extravaganza** is an **open-air theatre festival stretching more than 5 square K.M** and comprising a village and a town in between.
- The cast too is lengthy, virtually every villager has a role to play and for the entire eleven days, the people of Bargarh oblige what King Kansa orders and not to the District Administration.
- **Around 3,000 artistes of 130 cultural troupes from across the country participated in the festival.** However, **Kansa is the central attraction of the Dhanu Yatra.**
- Like many traditional festivals of India, following a ceremonial calendar geared to the important events of the agricultural cycle, the **Dhanu Yatra was started after the harvesting season of the year 1947-48**, just after independence of India as a **reflection of joyous atmosphere in the society for the end of British misrule.**
- Since then it is **performed every year at the end of the harvesting of paddy**, the major crop of the locality.
- **It starts from the 5th day of ‘Pousasukla’ to end on ‘Pousapurnima’.**
- During the 11 days the entire area of Bargarh town and the adjacent sub-urban parts of Bargarh Block like Cement Nagar, Padhanpali, Jamurda, Tora etc, render into the **kingdom of KANSA – ‘The Mathura Nagari’.**
- The rule of Kansa, his death and the exploits of Lord

Krishna are enacted in 14 places across the area during the open-air festival.

- **The river Jeera flowing by the side of Bargarh transcribed as river Jamuna and 'Ambapali'** at the other side of the **river becomes 'Gopapura'** as per the mythological nomenclature

Note:

- Kamsa was the tyrant ruler of the Vrishni kingdom, with its capital at Mathura.
- He is variously described in Hindu literature as either a human or an asura; The Puranas describe him as an asura, while the Harivamśa describes him as an asura reborn in the body of a man.
- His royal house was called Bhoja; thus, another of his names was Bhojapati.
- He was the cousin of Devaki, the mother of the deity Krishna; Krishna ultimately fulfilled a prophecy by slaying Kamsa.