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National and International News

### Temple Discoveries in Telangana: Unveiling the Chalukya Kingdom's Reach



#### Context:

- Despite the nearly 500 km distance between Mudimanikyam in Telangana and Badami in Karnataka, recent archaeological findings reveal that **Mudimanikyam, a Village in Nalgonda District, was once under the rule of the Badami Chalukyas.**

#### Key points:

- Archaeologists unearthed **two temples on the river bank and five within the village.**
- Additionally, they found an **inscription** dating back to the reign of the Badami Chalukyas, who ruled from **543 AD to 750 AD.**
- Temples reflect the **cosmopolitan nature of the Deccan region**, where multiple religions coexisted.
- Alongside the Brahmanical religion, there was room for **Buddhism and Jainism**, demonstrating the religious diversity of the time.
- Even after the fall of the kingdom, which once governed present-day **Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh**, the region maintained a vibrant community of devotees worshipping **Hindu deities Vishnu and Shiva.**
- The farthest known boundaries of the Chalukya Badami kingdom were previously identified as the **Jogulamba temples at Alampur and the submerged Yeleswaram sites.**
- These new discoveries extend the historical reach of the kingdom.

#### Chalukyas:

##### Period

- The Chalukya dynasty was a Hindu dynasty that ruled large parts of southern and central India between the **6th and the 12th centuries.**

#### They ruled as three related yet individual dynasties:

**Badami Chalukyas:** Ruled from Vatapi (modern Badami) in Karnataka, from the middle of the 6th century.

**Eastern Chalukyas:** Became an independent kingdom in the eastern Deccan after the death of Pulakeshin II. They ruled from Vengi until about the 11th century.



**Western Chalukya Empire:** Descendants of the Badami Chalukyas, they emerged in the late 10th century and ruled from Kalyani (modern-day Basavakalyan) until the end of the 12th century.

**Architecture:**

**Vesara Style:** The Chalukyas invented the Vesara style while constructing structural temples. This style is a hybrid of **Nagara and Dravida styles**.

**Distinctive Features:**

- Chalukya architecture has both **cave temple design and structured temple design**.
- Chalukya architects used the stellate plan or northern stepped diamond plan for architectural design.

### Surrogacy rules

#### Surrogacy (Regulation) Act 2021

- The Act aims to **regulate surrogacy in India, ensure ethical practices**, prevent exploitation, and safeguard the rights of intending parents, surrogate mothers, and born children.
- It permits altruistic surrogacy only and outlines specific criteria for surrogate mothers and intending parents.
- The Act also mandates registration for all surrogacy clinics, informed consent from the surrogate mother, and prohibits certain practices.
- It establishes **National and State Surrogacy Boards to oversee and regulate surrogacy practices**.
- Violations of the Act can lead to imprisonment of up to 10 years and a fine of up to Rs. 10 lakhs.

**Context:**

- The Union government modified the **Surrogacy (Regulation) Rules, 2022**, on February 21, **allowing married couples to use donor eggs or sperm for surrogacy, a relief for those with medical issues**.

**Key points:**

- **Surrogacy, a process where a woman (the surrogate mother) carries and delivers a baby for a couple** (the intended parents), is a complex and evolving field.
- It involves two main types: **traditional surrogacy**, where the surrogate mother is also the biological mother of the baby, and **gestational surrogacy**, where an **embryo created through in vitro fertilization (IVF)** is implanted in the surrogate mother's uterus, making her not genetically related to the baby.
- In India, surrogacy has seen significant changes, with the **Surrogacy (Regulation) Act, 2021**, coming into effect. This Act prohibits commercial surrogacy and allows altruistic surrogacy, where a woman can voluntarily act as a surrogate for intended parents without any monetary compensation except for medical expenses and insurance.



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### First Lunar Landing by a PRIVATE FIRM

#### Context:

- On 24th February, 2024, a significant milestone in the field of Science and Technology was achieved when the **Odysseus lander, built by Intuitive Machines, successfully landed on the moon.**

#### Key points:

- This achievement marks the return of the United States to the lunar surface for the first time since the closure of **NASA's Apollo program in 1972.**
- The successful landing by Intuitive Machines marks a significant milestone in space exploration, demonstrating the growing capabilities of the private sector in lunar missions.
- With more planned missions in the future, the moon continues to be a focal point for exploration and scientific discovery.

### CE-20 engine



#### Context:

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) achieved a notable accomplishment on February 21 by declaring the successful human-rating of the **CE-20 rocket engine.**
- This homegrown cryogenic engine, designed to propel the GSLV Mk III (**currently known as LVM-3**) launch vehicle, signifies a crucial progression in India's space exploration efforts, especially with regard to the **forthcoming Gaganyaan mission.**

#### Key points:

- ISRO has developed three cryogenic engines: KVD-1, CE-7.5, and CE-20.
- The CE-20 engine, using the gas-generator cycle, is easier to build and test compared to the CE-7.5 engine, which uses the **staged-combustion cycle.**
- Despite the CE-7.5 engine's higher fuel-use efficiency, the **CE-20 engine achieves a higher maximum thrust, making it ideal for the LVM-3 launch vehicle and the Gaganyaan mission.**

Read more about Cryogenic Engines.

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