West Bengal Adopts Poila Baisakh as State Foundation Day

Source: TH

Why in News?

The **West Bengal Legislative Assembly** recently made a significant decision by declaring **'Poila Baisakh**,' the first day of the Bengali calendar, as **'Bangla Dibas'** or **West Bengal Foundation Day.**

- A dispute emerged earlier in 2023 concerning West Bengal's Foundation Day when Raj Bhavan officially declared **June 20 as the State Foundation Day.** The Chief Minister of West Bengal argued that June 20, which carries associations with the **partition**, lacks relevance to the state's establishment.
- Also, the Assembly approved the proposal to make Rabindranath Tagore's **'Banglar Mati Banglar Jol**' the official song of West Bengal.

What is Poila Baisakh?

- Poila Baisakh is an important festival celebrated by Bengali communities across **West Bengal, Tripura, Jharkhand, and Assam.** It is also celebrated in **Bangladesh.**
    - It signifies the Bengali New Year and in 2023 it was celebrated on **April 15th.**

What is the Significance of June 20th For Bengal?

- On 20th **June, 1947**, the Bengal Legislative Assembly gathered to make a significant decision about Bengal's future.
    - They had three choices: **keep Bengal whole within India, split it into East Bengal and West Bengal for Bengali Muslims and Hindus respectively,** or divide it between India and Pakistan.
- After significant rounds of voting, the **decision was made to divide Bengal into West Bengal and East Pakistan (which later became Bangladesh)** and the **Radcliffe Line** was drawn later to mark the boundary.

UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year's Questions (PYQs)

Q. The Radcliffe Committee was appointed to (2014)

(a) solve the problem of minorities in India

(b) give effect to the Independence Bill

(c) delimit the boundaries between India and Pakistan

(d) enquire into the riots in East Bengal

Ans: (c)