



## Rapid Fire Current Affairs

### Metropolitan Museum of Art Returns Trafficked Indian Sculptures

The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York has announced that it will return 15 Indian sculptures that were trafficked and sold. The works date from the **1<sup>st</sup> century BCE to the 11th century CE** and include **terracotta, copper, and stone artifacts such as a Celestial Dancer (Apsara)** valued at over \$1 million and **a stone bust of Kamadeva, the God of Love** from the 8<sup>th</sup> century CE and a **Svetambara enthroned Jina**, from the 8<sup>th</sup> century CE. The **museum has also removed three Turkish pieces from its Greek and Roman galleries.**

The Metropolitan Museum of Art has **pledged to adhere to responsible purchase of antiquities and has implemented strict standards for new acquisitions and its existing collection.** Before Independence, the **Antiquities (Export Control) Act was passed in 1947 to ensure that no antiquity could be exported without a license.** Antiquities in India are governed by the **Antiquities and Art Treasures Act, 1972** which falls within the purview of the **Archaeological Survey of India** (ASI), Union Ministry of Culture.

**Read more:** [Menace of Missing Antiquities in India.](#)

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### Indian Partition Refugee Assistance Scheme

The **Central government scheme to provide financial assistance to over 5,000 Hindu and Sikh families who migrated to India from Pakistan's West Punjab after the 1947 partition** has faced several challenges. Out of 5,764 eligible families, only 903 families have received the grant so far, with several claims being unable to process due to the **lack of original documents such as refugee cards.** The scheme has also been **affected by corruption allegations and demands for bribes from revenue officials.** Additionally, the division of the grant amount among several members of the family has resulted in a low payout for some families.

The J&K administration conducted special camps to help families apply for the grant, but many have not been able to produce the required documents. **The Ministry of Home Affairs reimburses the funds to the J&K administration based on the verification of records done by them,** and the scheme has been extended till March 31, 2024, with ₹25 crore allotted for the scheme in the 2023-24 budget.

**Read more:** [India and Refugee Policy](#)

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### Hue and Cry

Recently, the Punjab government has issued a **"hue and cry notice"** against the fugitive pro-Khalistan preacher Amritpal Singh. **The phrase 'hue and cry' may be commonly associated with public outrage,** but its **origins lie in England's 13<sup>th</sup> and 14th-century policing system.** The **'Statute of Winchester' signed by King Edward I in 1285** mandated that anyone **who witnessed a crime not only had to report it but take up a cry to alert the police.**

The 'hue and cry' rule simply meant that **if a suspect or a criminal was running down the street in front of some bystanders, then each of them had to yell to help the police identify and catch them.** This community policing approach was successful in small-knit communities, and the practice has

continued in some parts of the world, including India, where 'hue and cry notices' are still used to seek public assistance in cases such as locating missing persons or identifying suspects. These notices are governed by specific rules and procedures and are used sparingly to stress the seriousness of the matter and create panic among the public. While the term '**hue and cry**' may have diminished in usage in contemporary times, it remains a legal procedure that must be followed to alert other states about fugitives.

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## Hush Money

Recently, Former US President Donald Trump is scheduled to appear in court to face charges related to a hush-money payment. **Hush money refers to the use of money to silence or buy off individuals or institutions who may have damaging information or allegations against the user.**

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