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## NIA to Probe Human-Trafficking Syndicate | Uttar Pradesh | 30 Nov 2024

### Why in News?

Recently, the [National Investigation Agency \(NIA\)](#) carried out searches across 22 locations in six states as part of an investigation into a [human-trafficking syndicate](#) that entices youth to work in call centers involved in [cyber fraud](#).

### Key Points

- The searches were conducted in Bihar, **Uttar Pradesh**, Delhi, and other regions.
  - It originates from a police report filed in Gopalganj, Bihar which involves an **organized syndicate that lures and traffics Indian youth to foreign countries** under the pretense of providing jobs.
- Trafficked individuals were **coerced into working in fake call centers**. These call centers were involved in conducting cyber fraud operations.
- **Human Trafficking:**
  - It refers to the **illegal trade and exploitation of people**, typically for the purposes of forced labour, sexual exploitation, or involuntary servitude.
  - It involves the **recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring, or receipt of individuals** through **threat, force, coercion, abduction, fraud, or deception** for the purpose of exploiting them.

### National Investigation Agency (NIA)

- **About:**
    - The **NIA** is the **Central Counter-Terrorism Law Enforcement Agency of India** mandated to investigate all the **offences affecting the sovereignty, security and integrity of India**. It includes:
      - Friendly relations with foreign states.
      - Against atomic and nuclear facilities.
      - **Smuggling of arms, drugs and fake Indian currency** and infiltration from across the borders.
      - The offences under the **statutory laws enacted to implement international treaties, agreements, conventions and resolutions of the [United Nations](#)**, its agencies and other international organisations.
    - It was **constituted under [the National Investigation Agency \(NIA\) Act, 2008](#)**.
    - The agency is empowered to deal with the investigation of terror related crimes across states **without special permission from the states** under **written proclamation from the Ministry of Home Affairs**.
  - **Headquarters:** New Delhi
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## Shiva Temple in Ajmer Dargah | Rajasthan | 30 Nov 2024

### Why in News?

Recently, a **local court in Ajmer ordered notices** to be issued to three parties in connection with a civil suit claiming the **presence of a Shiva temple** within the **dargah of [Sufi saint Moinuddin Chishti](#)**.

### Key Points

- The suit, filed in September 2024, claims the **existence of a Shiva temple within the dargah** and seeks directions to **resume worship** at the temple.
- Notices have been issued to the **Ajmer Dargah Committee**, the **Ministry of Minority Affairs**, and the **[Archaeological Survey of India \(ASI\)](#)** in New Delhi, requesting their responses.
- **Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti:**
  - Moinuddin Hasan Chishti was **born in Sijistan (modern-day Sistan) in Iran** in 1141-42 CE.
  - After Muizuddin Muhammad bin Sam of Ghor had already defeated Prithviraj Chauhan in the Second Battle of Tarain (1192) and established his rule in Delhi, **Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti started living and preaching in Ajmer**.
  - His instructive discourses, full of spiritual insights, soon drew the local populace as well as kings and nobles and peasants and the poor from far and wide.
  - **His shrine in Ajmer** has been visited by rulers like **[Muhammad bin Tughlaq](#)**, **Sher Shah Suri**, **[Akbar](#)**, **[Jahangir](#)**, **[Shah Jahan](#)**, **[Dara Shukoh](#)** and **[Aurangzeb](#)**.

### Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)

- ASI, under the **Ministry of Culture**, is the premier organisation for the archaeological research and protection of the **[cultural heritage](#)** of the nation.
  - **[Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains \(AMASR\) Act, 1958](#)** governs the functioning of ASI.
- It administers more than 3650 ancient monuments, archaeological sites and remains of national importance.
- Its activities include carrying out surveys of antiquarian remains, exploration and excavation of archaeological sites, conservation and maintenance of protected monuments etc.
- It was founded in **1861 by Alexander Cunningham- the first Director-General of ASI**. Alexander Cunningham is also known as the "Father of Indian Archaeology".

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## Cultural Links Between Kashmir and Central Asia | Jammu & Kashmir | 30 Nov 2024

### Why in News?

Recently, **Kashmiri artisans reunited with Central Asian master craftspeople** after 500 years at Srinagar's Sher-i-Kashmir International Convention Centre, celebrating the city's '**[World Craft City](#)**' recognition.

### Key Points

- **Historical Background:**
  - In the 15<sup>th</sup> century, Zain-ul-Abidin, the Sultan of Kashmir, introduced Central Asian wood-carving techniques, fostering significant craft exchanges with Samarkand, Bukhara, and Persia.
    - However, these interactions diminished after his death, nearly ceasing by 1947 due to political border changes.
- **Reviving Lost Crafts:**
  - 17 artisans from Iran, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Russia visited Srinagar to revive lost crafts and cultural links. The exchange concluded on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2024.
  - Srinagar was awarded the 'World Craft City' title by the [World Crafts Council \(WCC\)](#) in June 2024, highlighting the city's deep-rooted craft heritage.
- **Cultural Exchange Between Kashmir and Central Asia:**
  - Kashmiri artisans and their Central Asian counterparts explored shared roots in handicrafts. Central Asian artisans admired the traditional processes preserved by Kashmiri craftspeople.
  - Iranian woodcarvers noted the differences in wood carving techniques. Kashmir uses a chisel and hammer, while Iran employs just one chisel for detailed patterns.
    - It is emphasized that art, not craft, is central to Iranian art forms, highlighting cultural exchanges between the regions.
  - Uzbekistani delegate Aziz Murtazaev acknowledged the craft similarities between Uzbekistan and Kashmir, emphasizing the preservation of traditional techniques.
  - Kashmiri and Central Asian artisans found common ground in their intricate designs and techniques, particularly in suzani and sozni work, which share similar aesthetics.
  - The rich history of Kashmiri carpets, named after Iranian cities, highlights the region's historical ties to Iran's carpet-making tradition.

## Srinagar's Craft

- According to an [Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage-Kashmir \(INTACH-Kashmir\)](#) report of 2024, Srinagar is one of the ancient cities of South Asia with a continuously recorded history of about 1,500 years.
  - The INTACH was founded in 1984 in New Delhi with the vision to spearhead heritage awareness and conservation in India. Today, INTACH is recognized as one of the world's largest heritage organisations.
- The city is known globally for the 'Cashmere' brand and paisley motif.
- Crafts such as Zanzan and Filigree were introduced by Iranian artisans five centuries ago.
- Srinagar's carpet tradition began in the late 14<sup>th</sup> century with Sufi Saint Sayyid Ali Hamdani.
- In 2021, it was recognized as a [UNESCO Creative City](#) for crafts and folk arts.