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Daily PIB summary**Literary Legacy of Kalidasa and Classical Sanskrit Literature**

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WHY IN NEWS

- The Ministry of Culture hosted a seminar and book launch at the Indira **Gandhi** National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) highlighting the depiction of women, nature, and consciousness in the works of classical Sanskrit poet Kalidasa.

LITERARY CONTRIBUTIONS OF KALIDASA

- Kalidasa is considered one of the greatest classical Sanskrit poets and dramatists, believed to have flourished during the Gupta period (4th-5th century CE).
- Major Mahakavyas (epic poems) include Raghuvamsha (lineage of Raghu) and Kumarasambhava (birth of Kumara/Kartikeya).
- Famous plays (Nataka) include Abhijnanasakuntalam (recognition of Shakuntala), Malavikagnimitram, and Vikramorvasiyam.
- Lyrical works include Meghaduta (The Cloud Messenger) and Ritusamhara (Medley of Seasons), celebrated for vivid imagery of nature and human emotion.

SIGNIFICANCE IN INDIAN AESTHETICS AND CULTURE

- Kalidasa's dramaturgical and poetic style deeply influenced classical Indian aesthetic theory, particularly the elaboration of Shringara (romantic/erotic) and Karuna (pathetic) Rasas.
- His works are noted for elevating nature into an active character reflecting human internal states, alongside depicting agency, dignity, and consciousness in female leads.

KEY TERMS

- **Mahakavya:** A genre of Indian epic poetry characterized by ornate descriptions and structured thematic narratives.
- **Abhijnanasakuntalam:** Classical Sanskrit play by Kalidasa recounting the tale of Shakuntala and King Dushyanta.

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PRELIMS FACTS

Abhijnanasakuntalam, Meghaduta, and Raghuvamsha were authored by Kalidasa during the Gupta era.

IGNCA functions under the Ministry of Culture as an autonomous art research center.

MAINS DISCUSSION

- Role of classical Sanskrit literature in shaping Indian aesthetics, ethical paradigms, and gender depictions.

KEY DATA

- **Historical Era:** Gupta Period (c. 4th-5th Century CE) - Kalidasa's courtly patrons and literary timeline are frequently asked in Prelims ancient history.
- **Host Institution:** Indira **Gandhi** National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) - Autonomous institute under the Ministry of Culture dedicated to research in arts and humanities.

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