



History (Optional) By **MANIKANT SINGH**

National Emblem (Ashokan Pillar) unveiled at the new Parliament building

Why in News?

- Recently, National Emblem has been installed on atop the new Parliament building. This building, part of the Vista Project, has been unveiled by the Prime Minister. The Vista Project is being built by Tata Projects.
- This national emblem is 6.5 meters high and is made of bronze metal and weighs 9,500 kg. Also a structure of steel weighing about 6,500 kg has been constructed to support the emblem. It has gone through eight different stages, from blueprint to bronze casting and polishing.

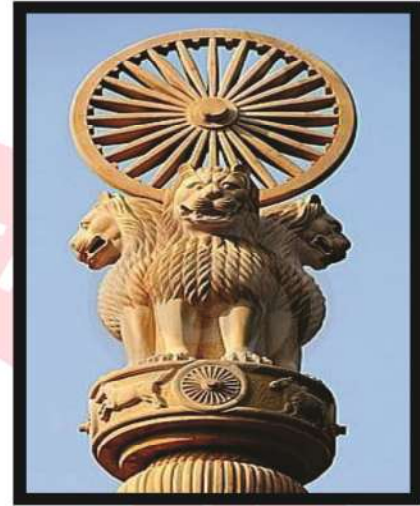


About National Emblem:

- The National Emblem of India is a replica of the Lion Pillar of Ashoka at Sarnath. This is kept in the Sarnath museum. It was adopted as the 'National Emblem' of India on 26 January 1950. "Satyameva Jayate", taken from Mundaka Upanishad, is inscribed on it in Devanagari script. 'Satyameva Jayate' means 'Truth alone triumphs'.
- It was chosen by Government of India to present its commitment to world peace and harmony which is the part of our value system since the ancient period.

Historical background

- Lion pillar of Ashoka located at Sarnath near Varanasi is the best example of Mauryan pillar art and sculpture. The circular abacus of this pillar has four lions seated back to back and representing the four directions.
- 'Dharmachakra' is placed on this pillar, made of monolith. The faces of these lions are open, symbolizing Lord Buddha spreading the Dhamma in all four directions and preaching the Four Noble Truths to the world.
- Four animals, namely a horse, a bull, an elephant and a lion, have been engraved on the capital. There are wheels in between them.
- These animals represent four stages of Buddha's life. i.e. Elephant symbolizes Lord Buddha's entry in her mother Maya's womb; Bull is the symbol of his birth; Horse represents Great Departure (leaving home); and Lion is the symbol of Lord Buddha's attainment of enlightenment.
- This pillar of Sarnath was built in memory of the first sermon given by Lord Buddha. It is also known as 'Dharmachakrapravartan'.



Relevance of Ashoka Pillar as a National Emblem

Its relevance as a national symbol can also be understood in this way that the four lions depicted in it represent strength and power and these lions are sitting in a calm posture, which shows tolerance. This principle of balance between power and tolerance is the fundamentals of India's foreign policy, which can be understood through 'No first use' policy.