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In Bengal's tribal villages, art fights COVID-19



Chhau dance:

- **Chhau dance is a semi classical Indian dance with martial and folk traditions**, with origins in the Kalinga(Odisha) region from Mayurbhanj, and panned out to its variants in the states of West Bengal and Jharkhand.
- It is found in three styles named after the location where they are performed, i.e. the **Purulia Chau of West Bengal, the Seraikella Chau of Jharkhand and the Mayurbhanj Chau of Odisha.**
- It is a form of **mask dance** that uses vigorous movements.
- Chhau dance enacts episodes from epics including the Mahabharata and Ramayana, local folklore and abstract themes. Chhau dance is intimately connected to regional festivals, notably the spring festival Chaitra Parva.
- **In 2011, UNESCO inscribed Chhau in the representative list of intangible cultural heritage of humanity.**

Paik dance:

- **Paik is a martial folk dance.** The dancers are armed with wooden spears and shields and show off their skills and agility in infantry like formations.

Patachitra:

- Patachitra is a general term for traditional, **cloth-based scroll painting, based in the eastern Indian states of Odisha and West Bengal.**
- The paintings show a mix of classical and folk elements, with a bias towards the latter.

Context:

- A campaign is being organised by the community radio of Jadavpur University with support from UNICEF and being executed by the Kolkata-based Chalchitra Academy, a collective of artists to use the folk arts to spread awareness about COVID-19 and to promote vaccination.

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