



Cultural Heritage Sites and precincts in India

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What is Cultural Heritage

- ❑ The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) defines cultural heritage as “the legacy of physical artifacts and intangible attributes of a group or society that are inherited from past generations, maintained in the present and bestowed for the benefit of future generations.”
- ❑ Cultural heritage is broadly classified as either tangible or intangible.
- ❑ **Tangible cultural heritage** consists of buildings, historic places, monuments, significant artifacts, or other objects that are considered worthy of preservation for the future. These include “objects significant to the archaeology, architecture, science or technology of a specific culture.”
- ❑ **Intangible cultural heritage** includes “traditions or living expressions inherited from our ancestors and passed on to our descendants, such as oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe or the knowledge and skills to produce traditional crafts.




Importance of Cultural Heritage

- ❑ Cultural heritage plays an important role as a reflection of cultural, historical, and social values,
 - ❑ It is often crucial for sustainable development.
 - ❑ Cultural heritage is understood to be valuable to national and community identities, links to the past, and ongoing social cohesion.
 - ❑ But cultural heritage is also important in promoting economic development and can play a key role in growth and poverty reduction
 - ❑ It can also contribute to sustainable development and to the resilience of communities and societies.
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Rationale for protection of Cultural Heritage

- ❑ The rationale for the protection of cultural heritage is primarily linked to protecting lives, livelihoods, and economic activity.
 - ❑ Nepal offers a vivid example of the human and economic toll arising from the impact of disasters on cultural heritage. In 2015 a devastating earthquake killed more than 8,500 people and caused extensive damage to the World Heritage site in the Kathmandu Valley, a major center of Nepal's cultural heritage.
 - ❑ According to the post-disaster needs assessment, “destroyed tourism-related supply of services and decreased tourist spending are likely to lead to a loss of NPR62 billion (approximately US\$600 million) over the next two years”
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Some concepts

“Heritage building means and includes any building of one or more premises or any part thereof and/or structure and/or artefact which requires conservation and/or preservation for historical and/or architectural and / or artisanary and/or aesthetic and/or cultural and/or environmental and/or ecological purpose and includes such portion of land adjoining such building or part thereof as may be required for fencing or covering or in any manner preserving the historical and/or architectural and/or aesthetic and/or cultural value of such building.

Heritage Precincts means and includes any space that requires conservation and/or preservation for historical and/or architectural and/or aesthetic and/or cultural and/or environmental and/or ecological purpose. Walls or other boundaries of a particular area or place or building or may enclose such space by an imaginary line drawn around it.

Early warning system – The set of capacities needed to generate and disseminate timely and meaningful warning information to enable individuals, communities and organisations threatened by a hazard to prepare and to act appropriately and in sufficient time to reduce the possibility of harm or loss.

(Handbook of Conservation of Heritage Buildings prepared by the Central Public works Department in 2013).

Natural Heritage sites

Sr. No.	Natural Heritage Site	State	Year of Notification
1.	Kazi Ranga National Park	Assam	1985
2.	Keoladeo National Park	Rajasthan	1985
3.	Manas Wildlife Sanctuary	Assam	1985
4.	Nanda Devi National park and Valley of flowers	Uttarakhand	1988, 2005
5.	Sundarban National Park	West Bengal	1987

Sr.No.	Natural heritage Site	State	Year of Notification
6.	Western Ghats	Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Tamil Nādu, Kerala	2012
7.	Great Himalayan National park	Himanchal Pradesh	2014



There are 32 Heritage Sites

Cultural World Heritage Site	State	Year of Notification
Dholavira	Gujarat	2021
Kakatiya Rudreshwara (Ramappa) Temple	Telangana	2021
The Architectural Work of Le Corbusier, an Outstanding Contribution to the Modern Movement	Chandigarh	2016
Victorian and Art Deco Ensemble of Mumbai	Maharashtra	2018
Historic City of Ahmedabad	Gujarat	2017
Jaipur City	Rajasthan	2020
Archaeological Site of Nalanda Mahavihara (Nalanda University)	Bihar	2016
Rani-Ki-Van	Gujarat	2014
Hill Forts of Rajasthan	Rajasthan	2013
The Jantar Mantar	Rajasthan	2010



Red Fort Complex	Delhi	2007
Champaner-Pavagadh Archaeological Park	Gujarat	2004
Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus	Maharashtra	2004
Rock Shelters of Bhimbetka	Madhya Pradesh	2003
Mahabodhi Temple Complex at Bodh Gaya	Bihar	2002
Mountain Railways of India	Tamil Nadu	1999
Humayun's Tomb, Delhi	Delhi	1993
Qutb Minar and its Monuments, Delhi	Delhi	1993
Buddhist Monuments at Sanchi	Madhya Pradesh	1989

Elephanta Caves	Maharashtra	1987
Great Living Chola Temples	Tamil Nadu	1987
Group of Monuments at Pattadakal	Karnataka	1987
Churches and Convents of Goa	Goa	1986
Fatehpur Sikri	Uttar Pradesh	1986
Group of Monuments at Hampi	Karnataka	1986
Khajuraho Group of Monuments	Madhya Pradesh	1986
Group of Monuments at Mahabalipuram	Tamil Nadu	1984
Sun Temple, Konarak	Orissa	1984
Agra Fort	Uttar Pradesh	1983
Ajanta Caves	Maharashtra	1983
Ellora Caves	Maharashtra	1983
Taj Mahal	Uttar Pradesh	1983



Complexities of Intangible heritage

- ▶ It is clear that Intangible Cultural Heritage such as the Indian example, is difficult to explain or interpret, because of its complexity.
- ▶ Tangible heritage on the other hand, being more visible is much better understood.
- ▶ The best definition of Intangible Cultural Heritage is contained in the 2003 UNESCO Convention on ICH which defines it in a manner broad enough to include diverse experiences and expressions across the globe such as "the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills as well as the instruments, objects, artifacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognised as part of their cultural heritage".
- ▶ This is an excellent definition of India's great spiritual and cultural intangible heritage.



Intangible cultural heritage sites

- India's intangible cultural heritage flows from her 5000 year old culture and civilization. Dr. A.L. Basham, in "Cultural History of India", has noted that "While there are four main cradles of civilisation which, moving from East to West, are China, India, the Fertile Crescent and the Mediterranean, specially Greece and Italy, India deserves a larger share of credit because she has deeply affected the cultural life of most of Asia. She has also extended her influence, directly and indirectly, to other parts of the World."
- The Intangible Cultural Heritage of India is an indispensable part of Indian culture, heritage and ethos. The cultural manifestation contribute to give a sense of identity to continuity from past, to present and further to the future.

Definition of Intangible heritage site

- **Traditional, contemporary** and living at the same time, since it is a dynamic process;
- **Inclusive** since it contributes to social cohesion, encourages a sense of identity and helps to preserve communities and community life;
- **Representative** since it prospers on oral skills passed on from generation to generation;
- **Community based** since it can be defined as heritage only when it is recognised as such by the communities, groups or individuals that create, maintain and transmit it.

ICH therefore, based on the above definition, is important not as a cultural manifestation as such but rather on the wealth of knowledge and skill that are transmitted through it from one generation to another.

The social and economic value of this transmission of knowledge is as significant for developed countries as for developing countries.

Intangible cultural Heritage

- ▶ **Buddhist chanting**- by buddhist lamas
- ▶ **Kalbelia**- Folk dance of Rajasthan
- ▶ **Chauu Dance** from Eastern India
- ▶ **Koodiyatam** – a sanskritic theatrical performance in kerala located in hindu temples
- ▶ **Kumbh Mela** in Allahabad
- ▶ **Mudiyyet**- a ritual dance drama from kerala based on mythological tale of the battel between Darika and Goddess kali
- ▶ **Nawruz**- a Persian New year celebration
- ▶ **Ramlila** – the performances of the Ramayana
- ▶ **Ramman** in the state of Utrakhand. A festival of tutelary Gods – Bhumya devta, practiced in Saloor Dungra the two villages in Chamoli district
- ▶ **Sankirtana** practiced by the Vashnavites of Manipur.
- ▶ **Vedic Chanting** in rituals
 - ▶ **Yoga**- art of unifying the body, mind and soul.