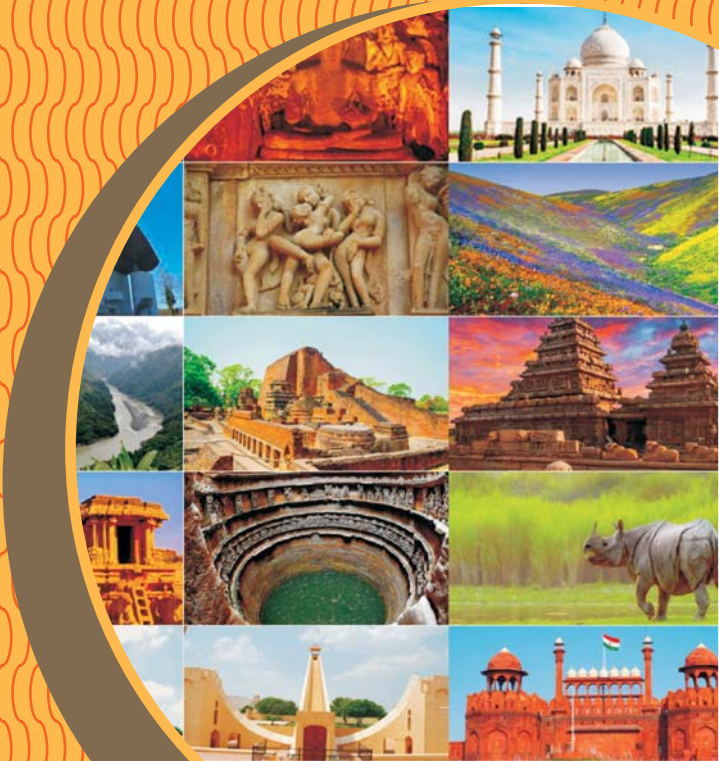


11

**PRELIMS
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History

UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITES



PRELIMS SAMPOORNA

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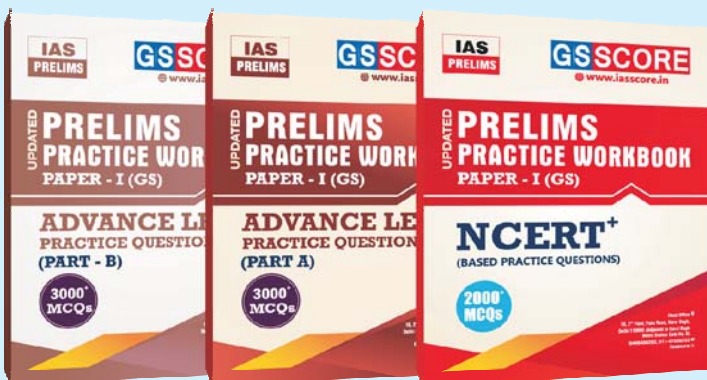
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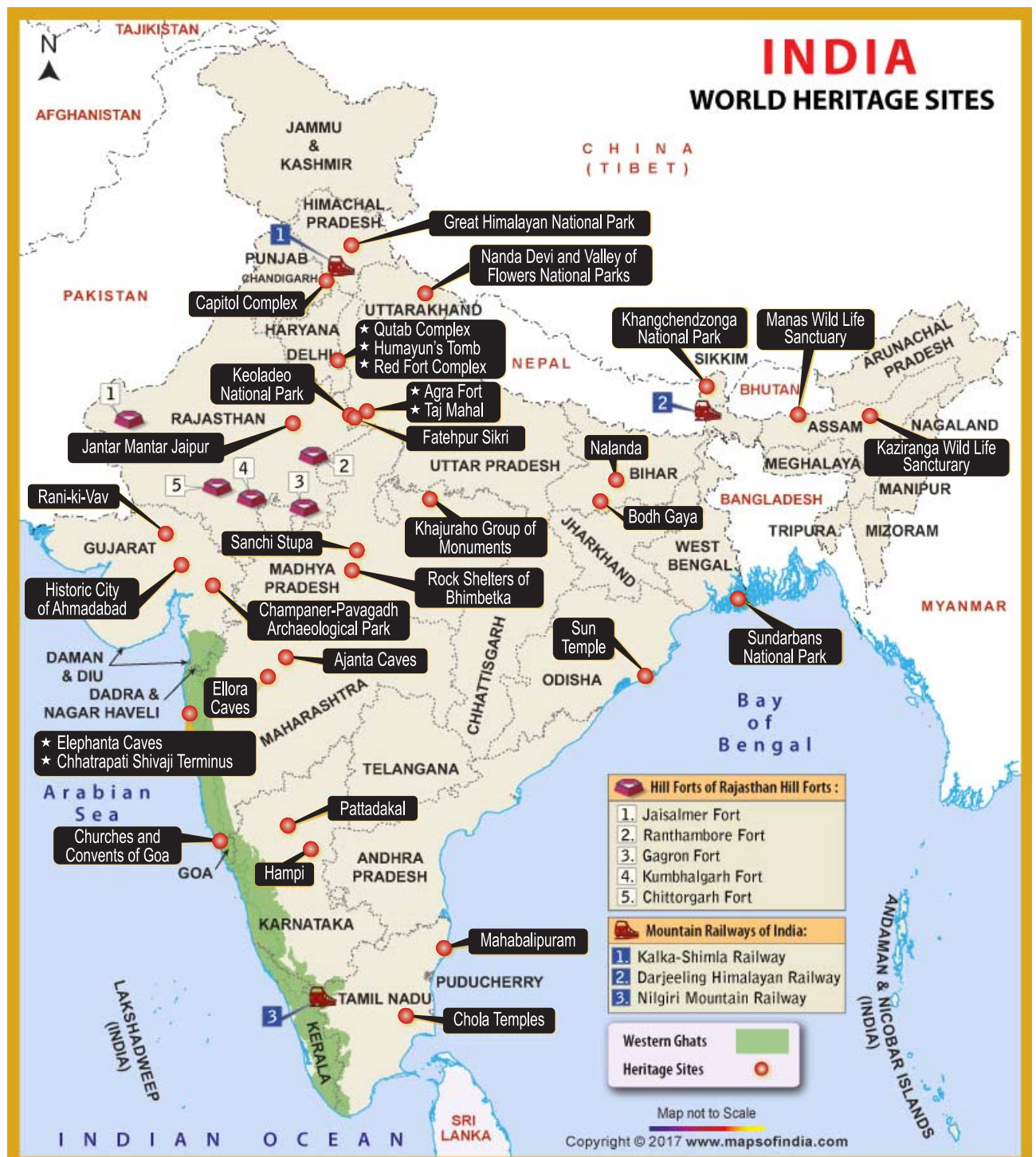
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UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITES

Heritage is our legacy from the past, what we live with today, and what we pass on to future generations. Our cultural and natural heritage are both irreplaceable sources of life and inspiration. The **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization** (UNESCO) seeks to encourage the identification, protection and preservation of cultural and natural heritage around the world considered to be of outstanding value to humanity. This is embodied in an international treaty called the **Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage**, adopted by UNESCO in 1972. There are 40 UNESCO world heritage sites in India. The list is mentioned below:



India has 40 World Heritage Sites at present

CULTURAL SITES: (32)

Sr. No.	Name of Site	State
1.	Agra Fort (1983)	Uttar Pradesh
2.	Ajanta Caves (1983)	Maharashtra
3.	Ellora Caves (1983)	Maharashtra
4.	Taj Mahal (1983)	Uttar Pradesh
5.	Group of Monuments at Mahabalipuram (1984)	Tamil Nadu
6.	Sun Temple, Konarak (1984)	Odisha
7.	Churches and Convents of Goa (1986)	Goa
8.	Fatehpur Sikri (1986)	Uttar Pradesh
9.	Group of Monuments at Hampi (1986)	Karnataka
10.	Khajuraho, Group of Temples (1986)	Madhya Pradesh
11.	Elephanta Caves (1987)	Maharashtra
12.	Great Living Chola Temples at Thanjavur, Gangaikondacholapuram and Darasuram (1987 & 2004)	Tamil Nadu
13.	Group of Monuments at Pattadakal (1987)	Karnataka
14.	Buddhist Monuments at Sanchi (1989)	Madhya Pradesh
15.	Humayun's Tomb, Delhi (1993)	Delhi
16.	Qutb Minar and its Monuments, Delhi (1993)	Delhi
17.	Rock Shelters of Bhimbetka (2003)	Madhya Pradesh
18.	Champaner-Pavagarh Archaeological Park (2004)	Gujarat

19.	Red Fort Complex, Delhi (2007)	Delhi
20.	Hill Forts of Rajasthan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ (Chittaurgarh, Kumbhalgarh, Jaisalmer and Ranthambhore, Amber and Gagron Forts) (2013) ◦ (Amber and Gagron Forts are under protection of Rajasthan State Archaeology and Museums) 	Rajasthan
21.	Rani-ki-Vav (The Queen's Stepwell) at Patan (2014)	Gujarat
22.	Archaeological Site of Nalanda Mahavihara (Nalanda University) at Nalanda (2016)	Bihar
23.	Dholavira: a Harappan City (2021)	Gujarat
24.	Kakatiya Rudreshwara (Ramappa) Temple, (2021)	Telangana
Under Protection of Ministry of Railways (2)		
25.	Mountain Railways of India (Darjeeling,1999), Nilgiri (2005), Kalka-Shimla(2008)	West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Himachal Pradesh
26.	Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus (formerly Victoria Terminus) (2004)	Maharashtra
Under Protection of Bodhgaya Temple Management Committee (1)		
27.	Mahabodhi Temple Complex at Bodh Gaya, (2002)	Bihar
Under Protection of Rajasthan State Archaeology and Museums (1)		
28.	The Jantar Mantar, Jaipur (2010)	Rajasthan
Under Protection of Chandigarh Administration (1)		
29.	The Architectural Work of Le Corbusier, an Outstanding Contribution to the Modern Movement (2016)	Chandigarh
Under Protection of Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (1)		
30.	Historic City of Ahmedabad (2017)	Gujarat

Under Protection of Bombay Municipal Corporation (1)

31.	Victorian and Art Deco Ensemble of Mumbai (2018)	Govt of Maharashtra
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Under Protection of Jaipur Municipal Corporation (1)

32	Jaipur City, Rajasthan (2019)	Govt of Rajasthan
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NATURAL SITES: (7)**Under Protection of Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Changes**

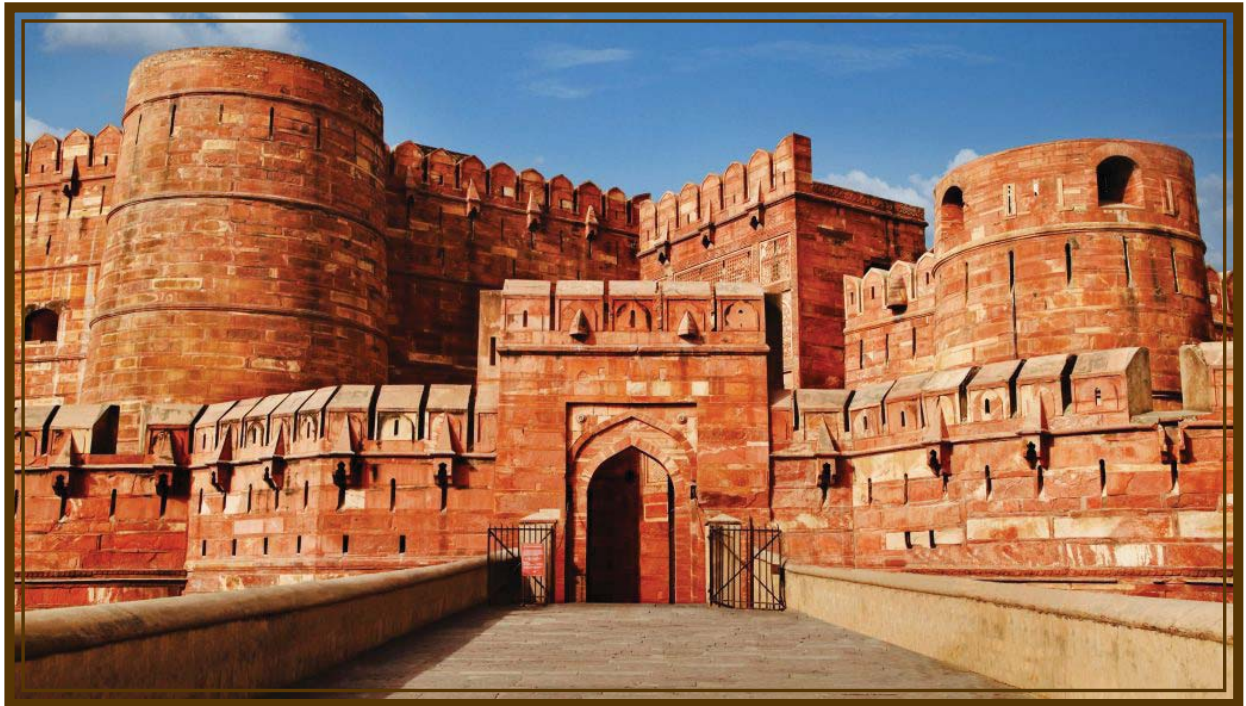
33.	Kaziranga National Park (1985)	Assam
34.	Keoladeo National Park (1985)	Rajasthan
35.	Manas Wildlife Sanctuary (1985)	Assam
36.	Sunderbans National Park (1987)	West Bengal
37.	Nanda Devi and Valley of Flowers National Parks (1988, 2005)	Uttarakhand
38.	Western Ghats (2012)	Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu
39.	Great Himalayan National Park (2014)	Himachal Pradesh

MIXED SITE: (1)**Under Protection of Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Changes**

40.	Khangchendzonga National Park (2016)	Sikkim
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CULTURAL

Agra Fort



- Near the gardens of the Taj Mahal stands the important 16th-century Mughal monument known as the Red Fort of Agra.
- This powerful fortress of red sandstone encompasses, within its 2.5-km-long enclosure walls, the imperial city of the Mughal rulers.
- It comprises many fairy-tale palaces, such as the Jahangir Palace and the Khas Mahal, built by Shah Jahan; audience halls, such as the Diwan-i-Khas; and two very beautiful mosques.

Ajanta Caves



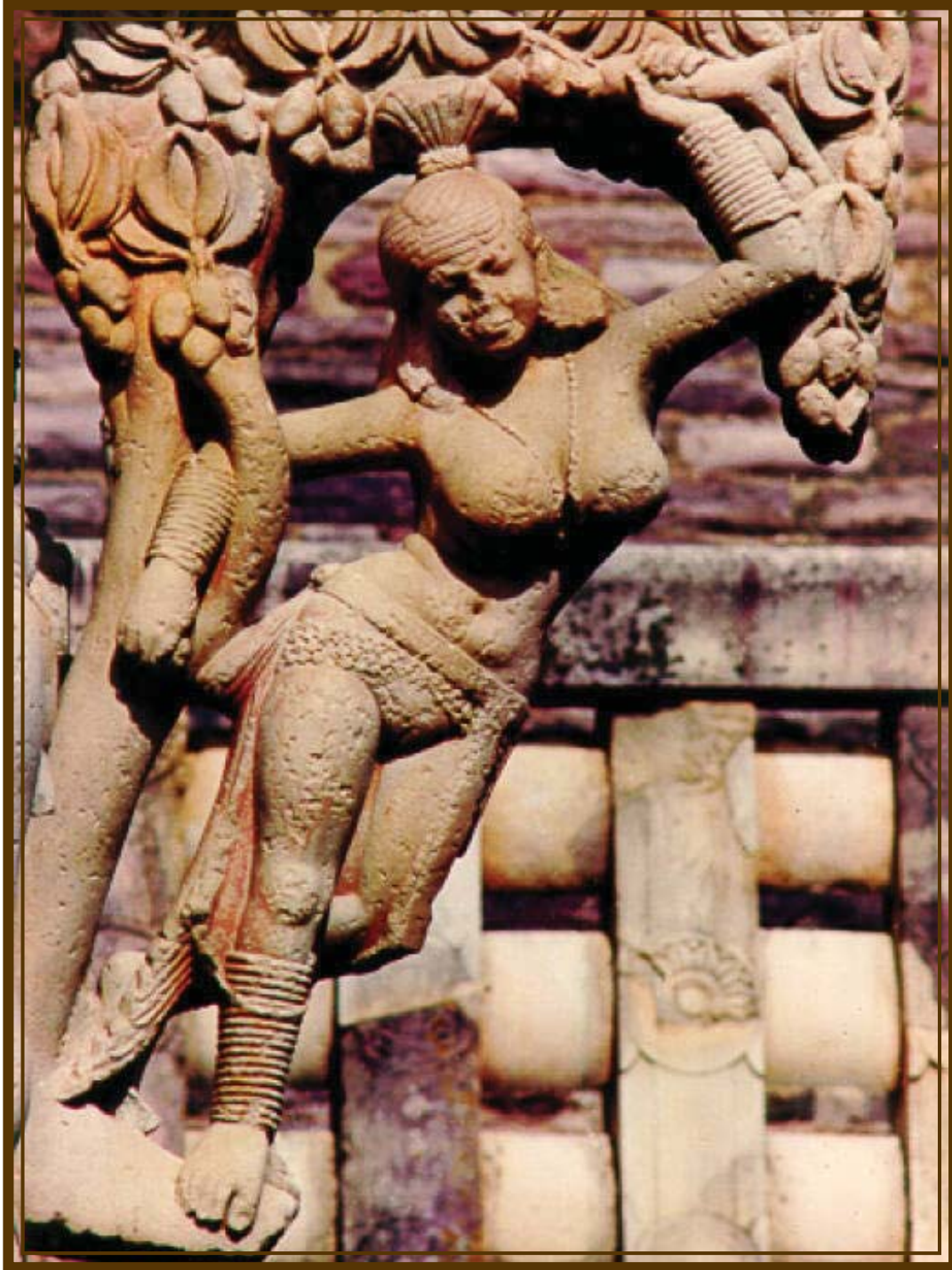
- The first Buddhist cave monuments at Ajanta date from the 2nd and 1st centuries B.C.
- During the Gupta period (5th and 6th centuries A.D.), many more richly decorated caves were added to the original group.
- The paintings and sculptures of Ajanta, considered masterpieces of Buddhist religious art, have had a considerable artistic influence.

Archaeological Site of Nalanda Mahavihara at Nalanda, Bihar



- The Nalanda Mahavihara site is in the State of Bihar, in north-eastern India.
- It comprises the archaeological remains of a monastic and scholastic institution dating from the 3rd century BCE to the 13th century CE.
- It includes stupas, shrines, viharas (residential and educational buildings) and important art works in stucco, stone and metal.
- Nalanda stands out as the most ancient university of the Indian Subcontinent.
- It engaged in the organized transmission of knowledge over an uninterrupted period of 800 years.
- The historical development of the site testifies to the development of Buddhism into a religion and the flourishing of monastic and educational traditions.

Buddhist Monuments at Sanchi



- On a hill overlooking the plain and about 40 km from Bhopal, the site of Sanchi comprises a group of Buddhist monuments (monolithic pillars, palaces, temples and monasteries) all in different states of conservation most of which date back to the 2nd and 1st centuries B.C.
- It is the oldest Buddhist sanctuary in existence and was a major Buddhist centre in India until the 12th century A.D.

Champaner-Pavagadh Archaeological Park



- A concentration of largely unexcavated archaeological, historic and living cultural heritage properties cradled in an impressive landscape which includes prehistoric (chalcolithic) sites, a hill fortress of an early Hindu capital, and remains of the 16th-century capital of the state of Gujarat.
- The site also includes, among other vestiges, fortifications, palaces, religious buildings, residential precincts, agricultural structures and water installations, from the 8th to 14th centuries.
- The Kalikamata Temple on top of Pavagadh Hill is considered to be an important shrine, attracting large numbers of pilgrims throughout the year.
- The site is the only complete and unchanged Islamic pre-Mughal city.

Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus (formerly Victoria Terminus)



- The Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus, formerly known as Victoria Terminus Station, in Mumbai, is an outstanding example of Victorian Gothic Revival architecture in India, blended with themes deriving from Indian traditional architecture.
- The building, designed by the British architect F. W. Stevens, became the symbol of Bombay as the 'Gothic City' and the major international mercantile port of India.
- The terminal was built over 10 years, starting in 1878, according to a High Victorian Gothic design based on late medieval Italian models.
- Its remarkable stone dome, turrets, pointed arches and eccentric ground plan are close to traditional Indian palace architecture.
- It is an outstanding example of the meeting of two cultures, as British architects worked with Indian craftsmen to include Indian architectural tradition and idioms thus forging a new style unique to Bombay.

Churches and Convents of Goa



- The Churches and Convents of Goa is a serial property located in the former capital of the Portuguese Indies, which is on the west coast of India about 10 km east of the state capital Panjim.
- These seven monuments exerted great influence in the 16th to 18th centuries on the development of architecture, sculpture, and painting by spreading forms of Manueline, Mannerist, and Baroque art and architecture throughout the countries of Asia where Catholic missions were established.
- In doing so they eminently illustrated the work of missionaries in Asia.
- The architectural styles followed those in vogue in Europe during the contemporary period, but were adapted to suit the native conditions through the use of local materials and artefacts.
- The buildings represent the roots of a unique Indo-Portuguese style that developed during Portuguese control of the territory, which lasted for 450 years until 1961.
- This long period deeply influenced the way of life as well as the architectural style of the place, which spread to missions beyond Goa, creating a unique fusion of Western and Eastern traditions.

Elephanta Caves



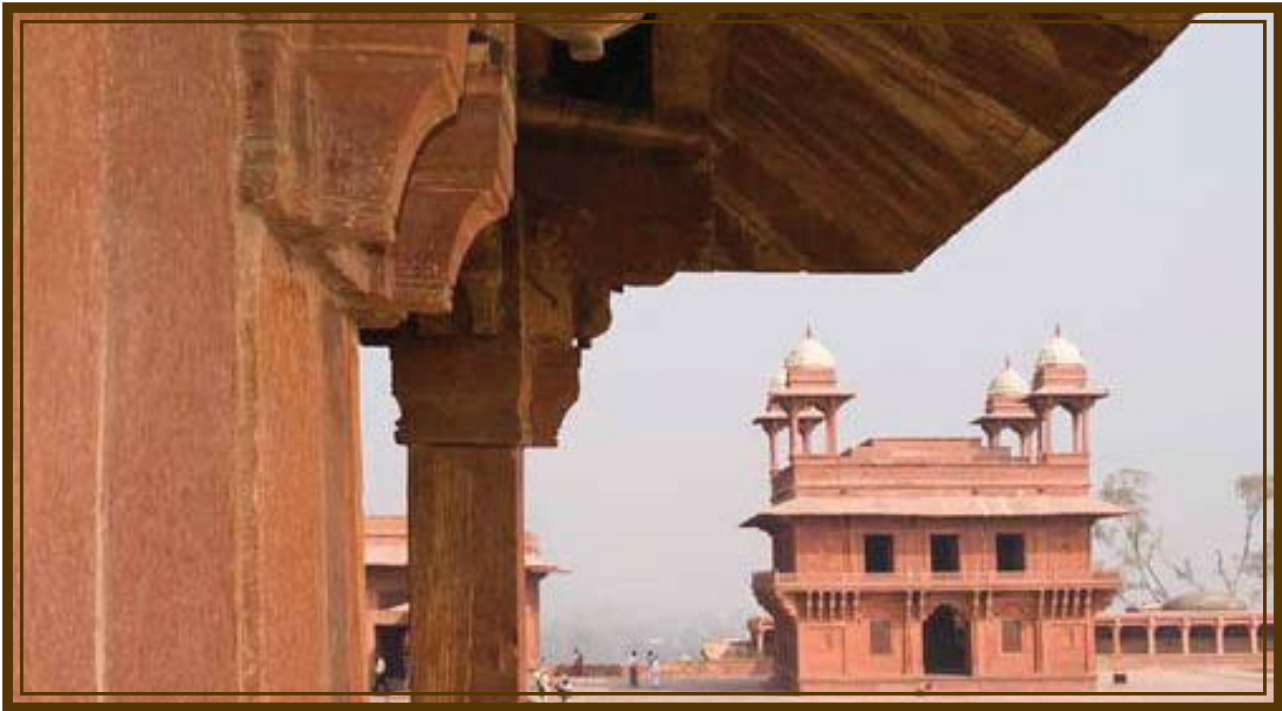
- The 'City of Caves', on an island in the Sea of Oman close to Bombay, contains a collection of rock art linked to the cult of Shiva.
- The Elephanta Caves are located in Western India on Elephanta Island (otherwise known as the Island of Gharapuri), which features two hillocks separated by a narrow valley.
- The small island is dotted with numerous ancient archaeological remains that are the sole testimonies to its rich cultural past.
- These archaeological remains reveal evidence of occupation from as early as the 2nd century BC.
- The rock-cut Elephanta Caves were constructed about the mid-5th to 6th centuries AD.
- The most important among the caves is the great Cave 1, which measures 39 metres from the front entrance to the back.
- In plan, this cave in the western hill closely resembles Dumar Lena cave at Ellora, in India.
- The main body of the cave, excluding the porticos on the three open sides and the back aisle, is 27 metres square and is supported by rows of six columns each.
- The 7-metre-high masterpiece "Sadashiva" dominates the entrance to Cave 1.
- The sculpture represents three aspects of Shiva: the Creator, the Preserver, and the Destroyer, identified, respectively, with Aghora or Bhairava (left half), Taptapurusha or Mahadeva (central full face), and Vamadeva or Uma (right half).
- Representations of Nataraja, Yogishvara, Andhakasuravadha, Ardhanarishwara, Kalyanasundaramurti, Gangadharamurti, and Ravanaanugrahamurti are also noteworthy for their forms, dimensions, themes, representations, content, alignment and execution.

Ellora Caves



- The invaluable ensemble of 34 caves at Ellora in the Charanandri hills of western India's Maharashtra State showcases a spirit of co-existence and religious tolerance through the outstanding architectural activities carried out by the followers of three prominent religions: **Buddhism, Brahmanism, and Jainism**.
- The rock-cut activity was carried out in three phases from the 6th century to the 12th century.
- The earliest caves (caves 1–12), excavated between the 5th and 8th centuries, reflect the Mahayana philosophy of Buddhism then prevalent in this region.
- The Brahmanical group of caves (caves 13–29), including the renowned Kailasa temple (cave 16), was excavated between the 7th and 10th centuries.
- The last phase, between the 9th and 12th centuries, saw the excavation of a group of caves (caves 30–34) reflecting Jaina philosophy.

Fatehpur Sikri



- Fatehpur Sikri is located in Agra District in the State of Uttar Pradesh in northern India.
- It was constructed southeast of an artificial lake, on the sloping levels of the outcrops of the Vindhyan hill ranges.
- Known as the "city of victory", it was made capital by the Mughal emperor Akbar (r. 1556-1605 CE) and constructed between 1571 and 1573.
- Fatehpur Sikri was the first planned city of the Mughals to be marked by magnificent administrative, residential, and religious buildings comprised of palaces, public buildings, mosques, and living areas for the court, the army, the servants of the king and an entire city.
- Upon moving the capital to Lahore in 1585, Fatehpur Sikri remained as an area for temporary visits by the Mughal emperors.
- The city, which is bounded on three sides by a wall 6 km long fortified by towers and pierced by nine gates, includes a number of impressive edifices of secular and religious nature that exhibit a fusion of prolific and versatile Indo-Islamic styles.
- The city was originally rectangular in plan, with a grid pattern of roads and by-lanes which cut at right angles, and featured an efficient drainage and water management system.
- The well-defined administrative block, royal palaces, and Jama Masjid are located in the centre of the city.
- The buildings are constructed in red sandstone with little use of marble.

Great Living Chola Temples



- The great Cholas established a powerful monarchy in the 9th CE at Thanjavur and in its surroundings.
- They enjoyed a long, eventful rule lasting for four and a half centuries with great achievements in all fields of royal endeavour such as military conquest, efficient administration, cultural assimilation and promotion of art.
- All three temples, the **Brihadisvara at Thanjavur**, the **Brihadisvara at Gangaikondacholapuram** and **Airavatesvara at Darasuram**, are living temples.
- The tradition of temple worship and rituals established and practised over a thousand years ago, based on still older Agamic texts, continues daily, weekly and annually, as an inseparable part of life of the people.
- These three temple complexes therefore form a unique group, demonstrating a progressive development of high Chola architecture and art at its best and at the same time encapsulating a very distinctive period of Chola history and Tamil culture.

Group of Monuments at Hampi



- The austere and grandiose site of Hampi comprise mainly the remnants of the Capital City of Vijayanagara Empire (14th-16th Cent CE), the last great Hindu Kingdom.
- The property encompasses an area of 4187, 24 hectares, located in the Tungabhadra basin in Central Karnataka, Bellary District.
- Hampi's spectacular setting is dominated by river Tungabhadra, craggy hill ranges and open plains, with widespread physical remains.
- The sophistication of the varied urban, royal and sacred systems is evident from the more than 1600 surviving remains that include forts, riverside features, royal and sacred complexes, temples, shrines, pillared halls, Mandapas, memorial structures, gateways, defence check posts, stables, water structures, etc.
- Among these, the Krishna temple complex, Narasimha, Ganesa, Hemakuta group of temples, Achyutaraya temple complex, Vitthala temple complex, Pattabhirama temple complex, Lotus Mahal complex, can be highlighted.
- Suburban townships (puris) surrounded the large Dravidian temple complexes containing subsidiary shrines, bazaars, residential areas and tanks applying the unique hydraulic technologies and skilfully and harmoniously integrating the town and defence architecture with surrounding landscape.
- The remains unearthed in the site delineate both the extent of the economic prosperity and political status that once existed indicating a highly developed society.
- Dravidian architecture flourished under the Vijayanagara Empire and its ultimate form is characterised by their massive dimensions, cloistered enclosures, and lofty towers over the entrances encased by decorated pillars.
- The Vitthala temple is the most exquisitely ornate structure on the site and represents the culmination of Vijayanagara temple architecture.
- Vijayanagara architecture is also known for its adoption of elements of Indo Islamic Architecture in secular buildings like the Queen's Bath and the Elephant Stables, representing a highly evolved multi-religious and multi-ethnic society.

Group of Monuments at Mahabalipuram



- Mahabalipuram (or Mamallapuram), located along southeastern India's Coromandel Coast, was a celebrated port city of the Pallavas.
- The group of monuments there consists of rock-cut cave temples, monolithic temples, bas-relief sculptures, and structural temples as well as the excavated remains of temples.
- The Pallava dynasty, which ruled this area between 6th and 9th centuries CE, created these majestic edifices.
- The Group of Monuments at Mahabalipuram occupies a distinct position in classical Indian architecture.
- These majestic edifices mark the high quality of craftsmanship in the region during 6th century CE.
- The natural landscape was utilized in carving out these structures, thereby making the ability of the Pallava craftsmen universally known.
- The monuments may be subdivided into five categories: **The mandapas (rock-cut caves), The rathas (monolithic temples), The rock reliefs, The temples and The excavated remains.**

Group of Monuments at Pattadakal



- Pattadakal, in Karnataka, represents the high point of an eclectic art which, in the 7th and 8th centuries under the Chalukya dynasty, achieved a harmonious blend of architectural forms from northern and southern India.
- An impressive series of nine Hindu temples, as well as a Jain sanctuary, can be seen there.
- One masterpiece from the group stands out – the Temple of Virupaksha, built c. 740 by Queen Lokamahadevi to commemorate her husband's victory over the kings from the South.

Hill Forts of Rajasthan



- The serial site, situated in the state of Rajasthan, includes six majestic forts in Chittorgarh; Kumbhalgarh; Sawai Madhopur; Jhalawar; Jaipur, and Jaisalmer.
- The eclectic architecture of the forts, some up to 20 kilometres in circumference, bears testimony to the power of the Rajput princely states that flourished in the region from the 8th to the 18th centuries.
- Enclosed within defensive walls are major urban centres, palaces, trading centres and other buildings including temples that often predate the fortifications within which developed an elaborate courtly culture that supported learning, music and the arts.
- Some of the urban centres enclosed in the fortifications have survived, as have many of the site's temples and other sacred buildings.
- The forts use the natural defenses offered by the landscape: hills, deserts, rivers, and dense forests.
- They also feature extensive water harvesting structures, largely still in use today.

Historic City of Ahmadabad



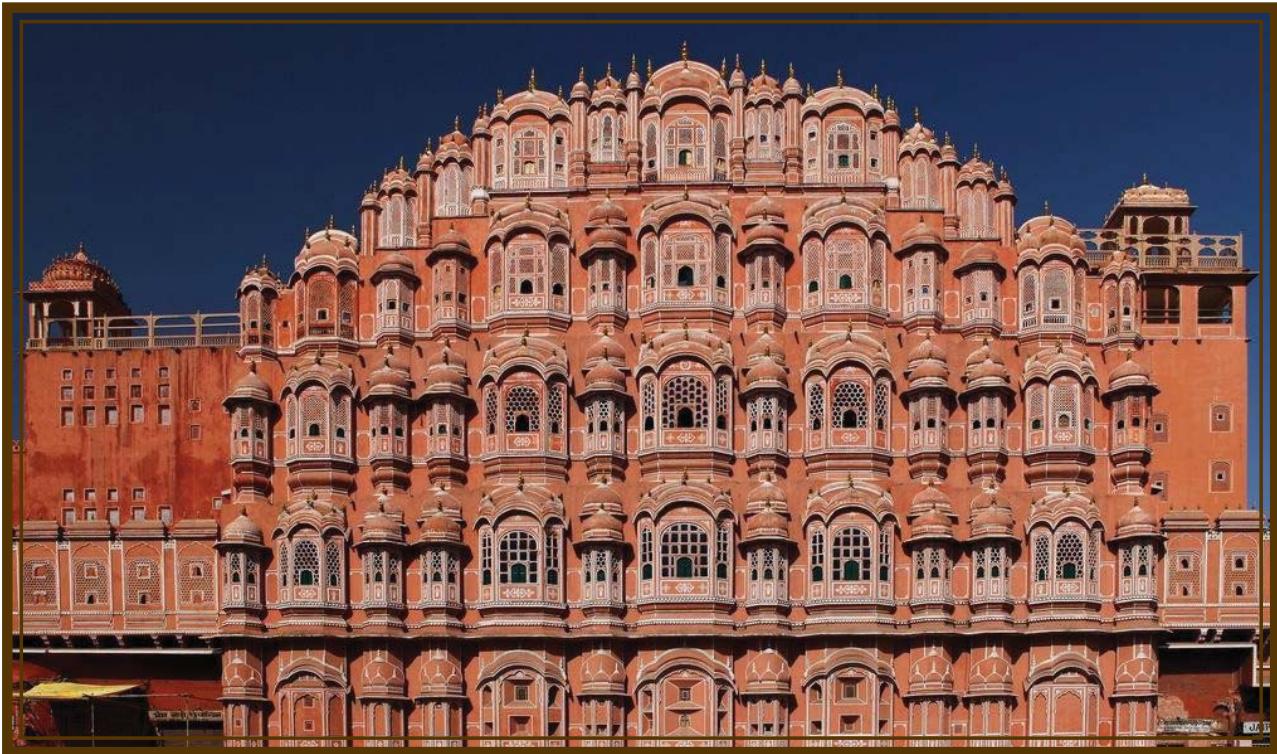
- The walled city of Ahmadabad was founded by Sultan Ahmad Shah in 1411 AD on the eastern bank of the Sabarmati River.
- It continued to flourish as the capital of the State of Gujarat for six centuries.
- The old city is considered as an archaeological entity with its plotting which has largely survived over centuries.
- Its urban archaeology strengthens its historic significance on the basis of remains from the Pre-Sultanate and Sultanate periods.
- The architecture of the Sultanate period monuments exhibits a unique fusion of the multicultural character of the historic city.
- This heritage is associated with the complementary traditions embodied in other religious buildings and the old city's very rich domestic wooden architecture with its distinctive "havelis" (neighbourhoods), "pols" (gated residential main streets), and khadkis (inner entrances to the pols) as the main constituents.
- These latter are presented as an expression of community organizational network, since they also constitute an integral component of the urban heritage of Ahmadabad.
- The timber-based architecture of the historic city is of exceptional significance and is the most unique aspect of its heritage.
- It demonstrates Ahmadabad's significant contribution to cultural traditions, to arts and crafts, to the design of structures and the selection of materials, and to its links with myths and symbolism that emphasized its cultural connections with the occupants.
- The presence of institutions belonging to many religions (Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism, Jainism, Christianity, Zoroastrianism, Judaism) makes the historic urban structure of Ahmadabad an exceptional and unique example of multicultural coexistence.

Humayun's Tomb, Delhi



- Humayun's Tomb, Delhi is the first of the grand dynastic mausoleums that were to become synonyms of Mughal architecture with the architectural style reaching its zenith 80 years later at the later Taj Mahal.
- Humayun's Tomb was built in the 1560's, with the patronage of Humayun's son, the great Emperor Akbar.
- Persian and Indian craftsmen worked together to build the garden-tomb, far grander than any tomb built before in the Islamic world.
- Humayun's garden-tomb is an example of the charbagh (a four quadrant garden with the four rivers of Quranic paradise represented), with pools joined by channels.
- The garden is entered from lofty gateways on the south and from the west with pavilions located in the centre of the eastern and northern walls.
- The interior is a large octagonal chamber with vaulted roof compartments interconnected by galleries or corridors. This octagonal plan is repeated on the second storey.
- The structure is of dressed stone clad in red sandstone with white and black inlaid marble borders.
- Humayun's garden-tomb is also called the '**dormitory of the Mughals**' as in the cells are buried over 150 Mughal family members.
- The tomb stands in an extremely significant archaeological setting, centred at the Shrine of the 14th century Sufi Saint, Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya.
- Since it is considered auspicious to be buried near a saint's grave, seven centuries of tomb building has led to the area becoming the densest ensemble of medieval Islamic buildings in India.

Jaipur City, Rajasthan



- The walled city of Jaipur, in India's north-western state of Rajasthan was founded in 1727 by Sawai Jai Singh II.
- Unlike other cities in the region located in hilly terrain, Jaipur was established on the plain and built according to a grid plan interpreted in the light of Vedic architecture.
- The streets feature continuous colonnaded businesses that intersect in the centre, creating large public squares called chaupars.
- Markets, shops, residences and temples built along the main streets have uniform facades.
- The city's urban planning shows an exchange of ideas from ancient Hindu and early modern Mughal as well as Western cultures.
- The grid plan is a model that prevails in the West, while the organization of the different city sectors (chowkris) refers to traditional Hindu concepts.
- Designed to be a commercial capital, the city has maintained its local commercial, artisanal and cooperative traditions to this day.

Khajuraho Group of Monuments



- The group of temples of Khajuraho testifies to the culmination of northern Indian temple art and architecture of the Chandella dynasty who ruled the region in the 10th and 11th centuries CE.
- Distributed over an area of 6 square km in a picturesque landscape, the 23 temples (including one partly excavated structure) that form the western, eastern, and southern clusters of the Khajuraho Group of Monuments are rare surviving examples that display the originality and high quality of Nagara-style temple architecture.
- The Khajuraho Group of Monuments demonstrates in layout and physical form, the pinnacle of temple architectural development in northern India.
- Built in sandstone, each temple is elevated from its environs by a highly ornate terraced platform, or jagati, on which stands the body, or jangha, whose sanctum is topped by a tower, or shikhara, of a type unique to Nagara, where the verticality of the principal spire atop the sanctum is accentuated by a series of miniature spires flanking it, each symbolizing Mount Kailasa, the abode of the Gods.
- The temples of Khajuraho are known for the harmonious integration of sculptures with their architecture.
- All surfaces are profusely carved with anthropomorphic and non-anthropomorphic motifs depicting sacred and secular themes.
- Sculptures depicting acts of worship, clan and minor deities, and couples in union, all reflect the sacred belief system.
- Other themes mirror social life through depictions of domestic scenes, teachers and disciples, dancers and musicians, and amorous couples.
- The composition and finesse achieved by the master craftsmen give the stone surfaces of the Khajuraho temples a rare vibrancy and sensitivity to the warmth of human emotions.

Mahabodhi Temple Complex at Bodh Gaya



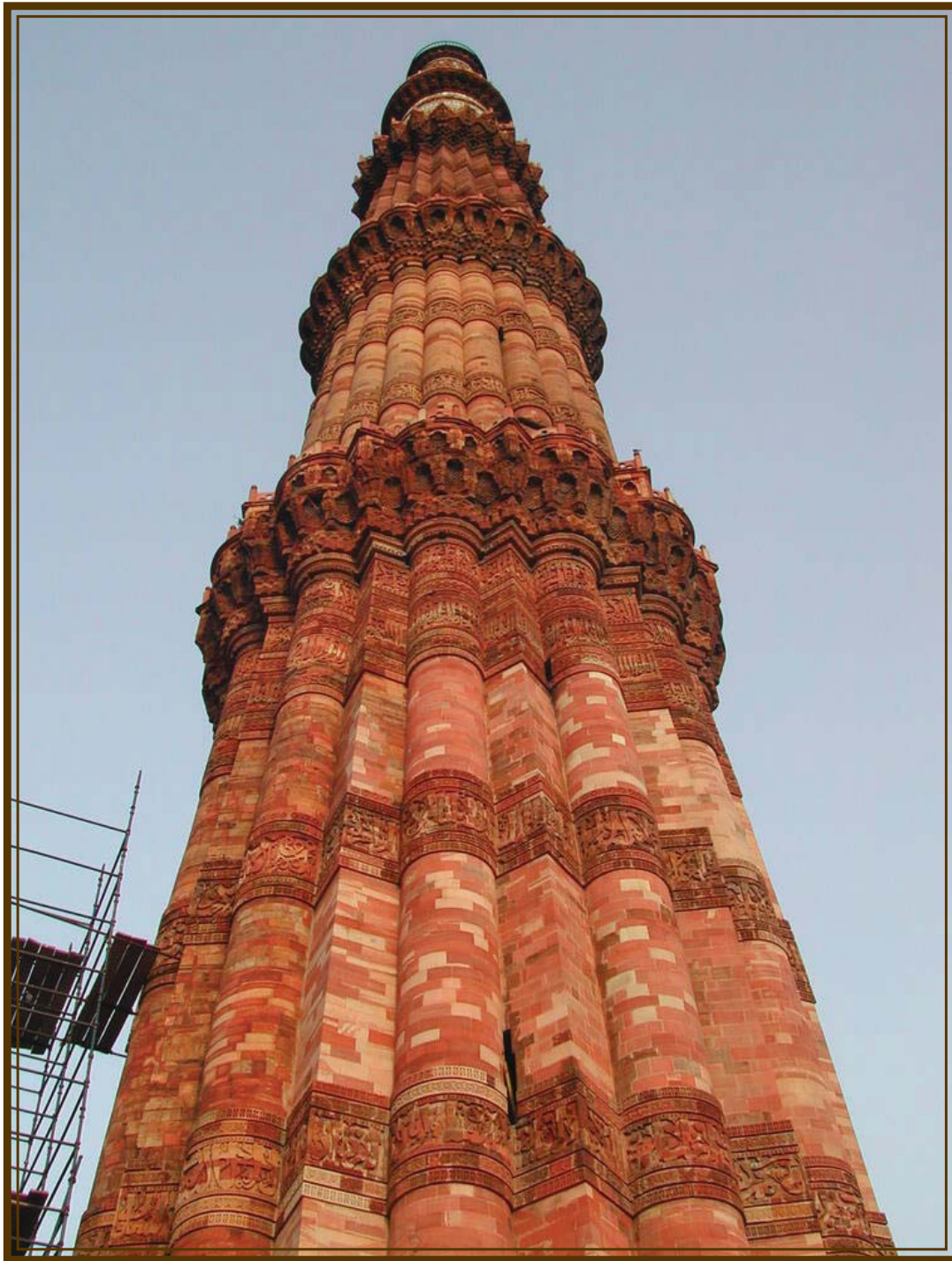
- The Mahabodhi Temple Complex is one of the four holy sites related to the life of the Lord Buddha, and particularly to the attainment of Enlightenment.
- The first temple was built by Emperor Asoka in the 3rd century B.C., and the present temple dates from the 5th or 6th centuries.
- It is one of the earliest Buddhist temples built entirely in brick, still standing in India, from the late Gupta period.
- The present Mahabodhi Temple Complex at Bodh Gaya comprises the 50 m high grand Temple, the Vajrasana, sacred Bodhi Tree and other six sacred sites of Buddha's enlightenment, surrounded by numerous ancient Votive stupas, well maintained and protected by inner, middle and outer circular boundaries.
- A seventh sacred place, the Lotus Pond, is located outside the enclosure to the south.
- Both the temple area and the Lotus Pond are surrounded by circulating passages at two or three levels and the area of the ensemble is 5 m below the level of the surrounding land.

Mountain Railways of India



- This site includes three railways. The **Darjeeling Himalayan Railway** was the first, and is still the most outstanding, example of a hill passenger railway. Opened in 1881, its design applies bold and ingenious engineering solutions to the problem of establishing an effective rail link across a mountainous terrain of great beauty.
- The construction of the **Nilgiri Mountain Railway**, a 46-km long metre-gauge single-track railway in Tamil Nadu State was first proposed in 1854, but due to the difficulty of the mountainous location the work only started in 1891 and was completed in 1908. This railway, scaling an elevation of 326 m to 2,203 m, represented the latest technology of the time.
- The **Kalka Shimla Railway**, a 96-km long, single track working rail link built in the mid-19th century to provide a service to the highland town of Shimla is emblematic of the technical and material efforts to disenclave mountain populations through the railway.
- All three railways are still fully operational.

Qutb Minar and its Monuments, Delhi



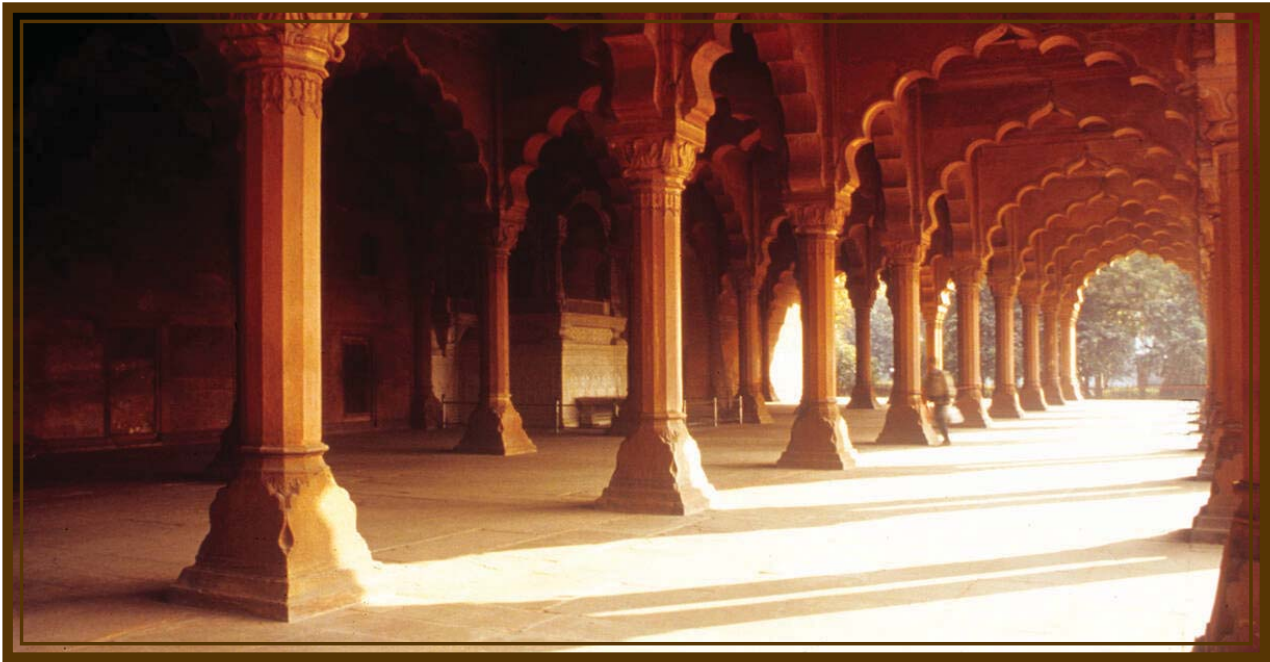
- Built in the early 13th century a few kilometres south of Delhi, the red sandstone tower of Qutb Minar is 72.5 m high, tapering from 2.75 m in diameter at its peak to 14.32 m at its base, and alternating angular and rounded flutings.
- The surrounding archaeological area contains funerary buildings, notably the magnificent Alai-Darwaza Gate, the masterpiece of Indo-Muslim art (built in 1311), and two mosques, including the Quwwatu'l-Islam, the oldest in northern India, built of materials reused from some 20 Brahman temples.

Rani-ki-Vav (the Queen's Stepwell) at Patan, Gujarat



- Rani-ki-Vav, on the banks of the Saraswati River, was initially built as a memorial to a king in the 11th century AD.
- Stepwells are a distinctive form of subterranean water resource and storage systems on the Indian subcontinent, and have been constructed since the 3rd millennium BC.
- They evolved over time from what was basically a pit in sandy soil towards elaborate multi-storey works of art and architecture.
- Rani-ki-Vav was built at the height of craftsmens' ability in stepwell construction and the Maru-Gurjara architectural style, reflecting mastery of this complex technique and great beauty of detail and proportions.
- Designed as an inverted temple highlighting the sanctity of water, it is divided into seven levels of stairs with sculptural panels of high artistic quality; more than 500 principle sculptures and over a thousand minor ones combine religious, mythological and secular imagery, often referencing literary works.
- The fourth level is the deepest and leads into a rectangular tank 9.5 m by 9.4 m, at a depth of 23 m.
- The well is located at the westernmost end of the property and consists of a shaft 10 m in diameter and 30 m deep.

Red Fort Complex



- The Red Fort Complex was built as the palace fort of Shahjahanabad – the new capital of the fifth Mughal Emperor of India, Shah Jahan.
- Named for its massive enclosing walls of red sandstone, it is adjacent to an older fort, the Salimgarh, built by Islam Shah Suri in 1546, with which it forms the Red Fort Complex.
- The private apartments consist of a row of pavilions connected by a continuous water channel, known as the Nahr-i-Behisht (Stream of Paradise).
- The Red Fort is considered to represent the zenith of Mughal creativity which, under the Shah Jahan, was brought to a new level of refinement.
- The planning of the palace is based on Islamic prototypes, but each pavilion reveals architectural elements typical of Mughal building, reflecting a fusion of Persian, Timurid and Hindu traditions
- The Red Fort's innovative planning and architectural style, including the garden design, strongly influenced later buildings and gardens in Rajasthan, Delhi, Agra and further afield.

Rock Shelters of Bhimbetka



- The Rock Shelters of Bhimbetka are in the foothills of the Vindhyan Mountains on the southern edge of the central Indian plateau.
- Within massive sandstone outcrops, above comparatively dense forest, are five clusters of natural rock shelters, displaying paintings that appear to date from the Mesolithic Period right through to the historical period.
- The cultural traditions of the inhabitants of the twenty-one villages adjacent to the site bear a strong resemblance to those represented in the rock paintings.

Sun Temple, Konarak



- The Sun Temple at Konarak, located on the eastern shores of the Indian subcontinent, is one of the outstanding examples of temple architecture and art as revealed in its conception, scale and proportion, and in the sublime narrative strength of its sculptural embellishment.
- It is an outstanding testimony to the 13th-century kingdom of Orissa and a monumental example of the personification of divinity, thus forming an invaluable link in the history of the diffusion of the cult of Surya, the Sun God.
- In this sense, it is directly and materially linked to Brahmanism and tantric belief systems.
- The Sun Temple is the culmination of Kalingan temple architecture, with all its defining elements in complete and perfect form.
- A masterpiece of creative genius in both conception and realisation, the temple represents a chariot of the Sun God, with twelve pairs of wheels drawn by seven horses evoking its movement across the heavens.
- It is embellished with sophisticated and refined iconographical depictions of contemporary life and activities.
- On the north and south sides are 24 carved wheels, each about 3 m in diameter, as well as symbolic motifs referring to the cycle of the seasons and the months.
- These complete the illusionary structure of the temple-chariot.

Taj Mahal



- An immense mausoleum of white marble, built in Agra between 1631 and 1648 by order of the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan in memory of his favourite wife, the Taj Mahal is the jewel of Muslim art in India and one of the universally admired masterpieces of the world's heritage.
- The Taj Mahal is a perfect symmetrical planned building, with an emphasis of bilateral symmetry along a central axis on which the main features are placed.
- The building material used is brick-in-lime mortar veneered with red sandstone and marble and inlay work of precious/semi precious stones.
- The mosque and the guest house in the Taj Mahal complex are built of red sandstone in contrast to the marble tomb in the centre.
- Both the buildings have a large platform over the terrace at their front. Both the mosque and the guest house are the identical structures.
- They have an oblong massive prayer hall consist of three vaulted bays arranged in a row with central dominant portal.
- The frame of the portal arches and the spandrels are veneered in white marble.
- The spandrels are filled with flowery arabesques of stone intarsia and the arches bordered with rope molding.
- The four free-standing minarets at the corners of the platform added a hitherto unknown dimension to the Mughal architecture.
- The four minarets provide not only a kind of spatial reference to the monument but also give a three dimensional effect to the edifice

The Architectural Work of Le Corbusier, an Outstanding Contribution to the Modern Movement



- Chosen from the work of Le Corbusier, the 17 sites comprising this transnational serial property are spread over seven countries (Argentina, Belgium, France, Germany, India, Japan, and Switzerland) and are a testimonial to the invention of a new architectural language that made a break with the past.
- They were built over a period of a half-century, in the course of what Le Corbusier described as “patient research”.
- The **Complexe du Capitole in Chandigarh** (India), the **National Museum of Western Art**, Tokyo (Japan), the **House of Dr Curutchet in La Plata** (Argentina) and the **Unité d’habitation** in Marseille (France) reflect the solutions that the Modern Movement sought to apply during the 20th century to the challenges of inventing new architectural techniques to respond to the needs of society.
- These masterpieces of creative genius also attest to the internationalization of architectural practice across the planet.

The Jantar Mantar, Jaipur



- The Jantar Mantar, in Jaipur, is an astronomical observation site built in the early 18th century.
- It includes a set of some 20 main fixed instruments.
- They are monumental examples in masonry of known instruments but which in many cases have specific characteristics of their own.
- Designed for the observation of astronomical positions with the naked eye, they embody several architectural and instrumental innovations.
- This is the most significant, most comprehensive, and the best preserved of India's historic observatories.
- It is an expression of the astronomical skills and cosmological concepts of the court of a scholarly prince at the end of the Mughal period.

Victorian Gothic and Art Deco Ensembles of Mumbai



- Having become a global trading centre, the city of Mumbai implemented an ambitious urban planning project in the second half of the 19th century.
- It led to the construction of ensembles of public buildings bordering the Oval Maidan open space, first in the Victorian Neo-Gothic style and then, in the early 20th century, in the Art Deco idiom.
- The Victorian ensemble includes Indian elements suited to the climate, including balconies and verandas.
- The Art Deco edifices, with their cinemas and residential buildings, blend Indian design with Art Deco imagery, creating a unique style that has been described as Indo-Deco.
- These two ensembles bear testimony to the phases of modernization that Mumbai has undergone in the course of the 19th and 20th centuries.

Dholavira: a Harappan City



- The ancient city of Dholavira, the southern centre of the Harappan Civilization, is sited on the arid island of Khadir in the State of Gujarat.
- Occupied between ca. 3000-1500 BCE, the archaeological site, one of the best preserved urban settlements from the period in Southeast Asia, comprises a fortified city and a cemetery.
- Two seasonal streams provided water, a scarce resource in the region, to the walled city which comprises a heavily fortified castle and ceremonial ground as well as streets and houses of different proportion quality which testify to a stratified social order.
- A sophisticated water management system demonstrates the ingenuity of the Dholavira people in their struggle to survive and thrive in a harsh environment.
- The site includes a large cemetery with cenotaphs of six types testifying to the Harappan's unique view of death.
- Bead processing workshops and artefacts of various kinds such as copper, shell, stone, jewellery of semi-precious stones, terracotta, gold, ivory and other materials have been found during archaeological excavations of the site, exhibiting the culture's artistic and technological achievements.
- Evidence for inter-regional trade with other Harappan cities, as well as with cities in the Mesopotamia region and the Oman peninsula have also been discovered.

Kakatiya Rudreshwara (Ramappa) Temple, Telangana



- Rudreshwara, popularly known as Ramappa Temple, is located in the village of Palampet approximately 200km north-east of Hyderabad, in the State of Telangana.
- It is the main Shiva temple in a walled complex built during the Kakatiyan period (1123–1323 CE) under rulers Rudradeva and Recherla Rudra.
- Construction of the sandstone temple began in 1213 CE and is believed to have continued over some 40 years.
- The building features decorated beams and pillars of carved granite and dolerite with a distinctive and pyramidal Vimana (horizontally stepped tower) made of lightweight porous bricks, so-called 'floating bricks', which reduced the weight of the roof structures.
- The temple's sculptures of high artistic quality illustrate regional dance customs and Kakatiyan culture.
- Located at the foothills of a forested area and amidst agricultural fields, close to the shores of the Ramappa Cheruvu, a Kakatiya-built water reservoir, the choice of setting for the edifice followed the ideology and practice sanctioned in dharmic texts that temples are to be constructed to form an integral part of a natural setting, including hills, forests, springs, streams, lakes, catchment areas, and agricultural lands.

NATURAL

Great Himalayan National Park Conservation Area



- This National Park in the western part of the Himalayan Mountains in the northern Indian state of Himachal Pradesh is characterized by high alpine peaks, alpine meadows and riverine forests.
- The 90,540 ha property includes the Upper Mountain glacial and snow melt water sources of several rivers, and the catchments of water supplies that are vital to millions of downstream users.
- The GHNPCA protects the monsoon-affected forests and alpine meadows of the Himalayan front ranges.
- It is part of the Himalaya biodiversity hotspot and includes twenty-five forest types along with a rich assemblage of fauna species, several of which are threatened.
- This gives the site outstanding significance for biodiversity conservation.

Kaziranga National Park



- Kaziranga National Park represents one of the last unmodified natural areas in the north-eastern region of India.
- Covering 42,996 ha, and located in the State of Assam it is the single largest undisturbed and representative area in the Brahmaputra Valley floodplain.
- The fluctuations of the Brahmaputra River result in spectacular examples of riverine and fluvial processes in this vast area of wet alluvial tall grassland interspersed with numerous broad shallow pools fringed with reeds and patches of deciduous to semi-evergreen woodlands.
- Kaziranga is regarded as one of the finest wildlife refuges in the world.
- The park's contribution in saving the Indian one-horned rhinoceros from the brink of extinction at the turn of the 20th century to harbouring the single largest population of this species is a spectacular conservation achievement.
- The property also harbours significant populations of other threatened species including tigers, elephants, wild water buffalo and bears as well as aquatic species including the Ganges River dolphin.
- It is an important area for migratory birds.

Keoladeo National Park



- Keoladeo National Park, located in the State of Rajasthan, is an important wintering ground of Palaearctic migratory waterfowl and is renowned for its large congregation of non-migratory resident breeding birds.
- A green wildlife oasis situated within a populated human-dominated landscape, some 375 bird species and a diverse array of other life forms have been recorded in this mosaic of grasslands, woodlands, woodland swamps and wetlands of just 2,873 ha.
- This 'Bird Paradise' was developed in a natural depression wetland that was managed as a duck shooting reserve at the end of the 19th century.
- While hunting has ceased and the area declared a national park in 1982, its continued existence is dependent on a regulated water supply from a reservoir outside the park boundary.
- The park's well-designed system of dykes and sluices provides areas of varying water depths which are used by various avifaunal species.
- Due to its strategic location in the middle of Central Asian migratory flyway and presence of water, large congregations of ducks, geese, coots, pelicans and waders arrive in the winter.
- The park was the only known wintering site of the central population of the critically endangered Siberian Crane, and also serves as a wintering area for other globally threatened species such as the Greater Spotted Eagle and Imperial Eagle.
- During the breeding season the most spectacular heronry in the region is formed by 15 species of herons, ibis, cormorants, spoonbills and storks, where in a well-flooded year over 20,000 birds nest.

Manas Wildlife Sanctuary



- Manas Wildlife Sanctuary is located in the State of Assam in North-East India, a biodiversity hotspot.
- Covering an area of 39,100 hectares, it spans the Manas River and is bounded to the north by the forests of Bhutan.
- The Manas Wildlife Sanctuary is part of the core zone of the 283,700 hectares Manas Tiger Reserve, and lies alongside the shifting river channels of the Manas River.
- The site's scenic beauty includes a range of forested hills, alluvial grasslands and tropical evergreen forests.
- The site provides critical and viable habitats for rare and endangered species, including tiger, greater one-horned rhino, swamp deer, pygmy hog and Bengal florican.
- Manas has exceptional importance within the Indian sub-continent's protected areas, as one of the most significant remaining natural areas in the region, where sizeable populations of a large number of threatened species continue to survive.

Nanda Devi and Valley of Flowers National Parks



- The Nanda Devi and Valley of Flowers National Parks are exceptionally beautiful high-altitude West Himalayan landscapes with outstanding biodiversity.
- One of the most spectacular wilderness areas in the Himalayas, Nanda Devi National Park is dominated by the peak of Nanda Devi, India's second highest mountain which is approached through the Rishi Ganga gorge, one of the deepest in the world.
- The Valley of Flowers National Park, with its gentler landscape, breath-taking beautiful meadows of alpine flowers and ease of access, complements the rugged, inaccessible, high mountain wilderness of Nanda Devi.
- Apart from some community-based ecotourism to small portions of these parks, there has been no anthropogenic pressure in this area since 1983.
- This property therefore acts as a control site for the maintenance of natural processes, and is of high significance for long-term ecological monitoring in the Himalayas.
- Both parks contain high diversity and density of flora and fauna of the west Himalayan biogeographic zone, with significant populations of globally threatened species including the snow leopard, Himalayan musk deer and numerous plant species.
- This entire area, located within the Western Himalayas Endemic Bird Area (EBA), supports significant populations of mountain ungulates and galliformes that are prey to carnivores such as the snow leopard.

Sundarbans National Park



- The Sundarbans contain the world's largest mangrove forests and one of the most biologically productive of all natural ecosystems.
- Located at the mouth of the Ganges and Brahmaputra Rivers between India and Bangladesh, its forest and waterways support a wide range of fauna including a number of species threatened with extinction.
- The mangrove habitat supports the single largest population of tigers in the world which have adapted to an almost amphibious life, being capable of swimming for long distances and feeding on fish, crab and water monitor lizards.
- They are also renowned for being "man-eaters", most probably due to their relatively high frequency of encounters with local people.
- The islands are also of great economic importance as a storm barrier, shore stabiliser, nutrient and sediment trap, a source of timber and natural resources, and support a wide variety of aquatic, benthic and terrestrial organisms.
- They are an excellent example of the ecological processes of monsoon rain flooding, delta formation, tidal influence and plant colonisation.
- Covering 133,010 ha, the area is estimated to comprise about 55% forest land and 45% wetlands in the form of tidal rivers, creeks, canals and vast estuarine mouths of the river.
- About 66% of the entire mangrove forest area is estimated to occur in Bangladesh, with the remaining 34% in India.

Western Ghats



- Older than the Himalaya mountains, the mountain chain of the Western Ghats represents geomorphic features of immense importance with unique biophysical and ecological processes.
- The site's high montane forest ecosystems influence the Indian monsoon weather pattern. Moderating the tropical climate of the region, the site presents one of the best examples of the monsoon system on the planet.
- It also has an exceptionally high level of biological diversity and endemism and is recognized as one of the world's eight 'hottest hotspots' of biological diversity.
- The forests of the site include some of the best representatives of non-equatorial tropical evergreen forests anywhere and are home to at least 325 globally threatened flora, fauna, bird, amphibian, reptile and fish species.

MIXED

Khangchendzonga National Park



- Located at the heart of the Himalayan range in northern India (State of Sikkim), the Khangchendzonga National Park includes a unique diversity of plains, valleys, lakes, glaciers and spectacular, snow-capped mountains covered with ancient forests, including the world's third highest peak, Mount Khangchendzonga.
- Mythological stories are associated with this mountain and with a great number of natural elements (caves, rivers, lakes, etc.) that are the object of worship by the indigenous people of Sikkim.
- The sacred meanings of these stories and practices have been integrated with Buddhist beliefs and constitute the basis for Sikkimese identity.

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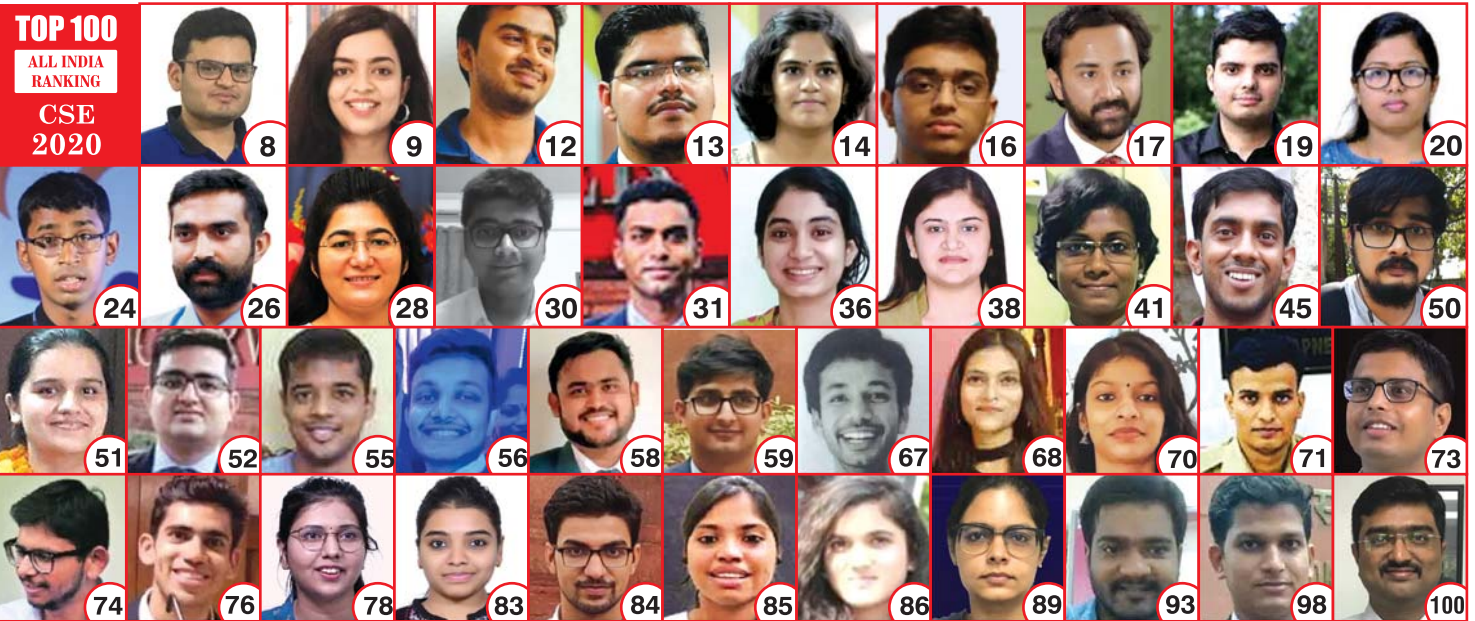
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