



World Heritage Day

Why in News?

Every year, 18th April is celebrated as **International Day for Monuments and Sites**, also known as [‘World Heritage Day’](#).

- The theme for World Heritage Day 2022 is "**Heritage and Climate**".

What is World Heritage Day?

- The **International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS)** established the day in 1982 and the [United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization \(UNESCO\)](#) approved it in 1983.
- The aim of the day is to **create awareness about Heritage among communities**.

What are UNESCO’s World Heritage Sites?

- A [World Heritage Site](#) is a place that is listed by UNESCO for its special cultural or physical significance.
- The list of World Heritage Sites is maintained by the international 'World Heritage Programme', **administered by the UNESCO World Heritage Committee**.
- 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**.

What are the World Heritage Sites in India?

- India is home to a total of **3691 monuments and sites**. Of these **40 are designated as UNESCO World Heritage Sites**.
- Including places like the Taj Mahal, [Ajanta Caves and Ellora Caves](#). World Heritage Sites also include natural sites like the [Kaziranga National Park in Assam](#).
 - Harappan city of [Dholavira](#) in Gujarat as India’s **40th world heritage site**.
 - [Ramappa Temple \(Telangana\)](#) was India's 39th World Heritage Site.
 - [Khangchendzonga National Park](#), Sikkim has been inscribed as India's first and the only "Mixed World Heritage Site".
- In 2022, the Union Ministry of Culture **nominated [Sacred Ensembles of the Hoysalas temples](#)** for consideration as a **World Heritage site** for the year **2022-2023**.

What is UNESCO?

- It was founded in 1945 to develop the “intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind” as a means of building lasting peace. It is located in **Paris, France**.
- **Major Initiatives of UNESCO:**
 - [Man and Biosphere Programme](#)
 - [World Heritage Programme](#)

- [Global Geopark Network](#)
- [Network of Creative Cities](#)
- [Atlas of World Languages in Danger](#)

What is ICOMOS?

- It is a **global non-governmental organization** associated with UNESCO. It is located in Paris, France.
- Its mission is to promote the conservation, protection, use and enhancement of monuments, building complexes and sites.
- It is an **Advisory Body of the World Heritage Committee** for the implementation of the **World Heritage Convention of UNESCO**.
 - As such, it reviews the nominations of cultural world heritage and ensures the conservation status of properties.
- Its **creation in 1965** is the logical outcome of initial conversations between architects, historians and international experts that began in the early twentieth century and that materialized in the adoption of the Venice Charter in 1964.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

Q. Recently, which one of the following was included in the UNESCO's World Heritage list? (2009)

- (a) Dilwara Temple
- (b) Kalka-Shimla Railway
- (c) Bhiterkanika Mangrove Area
- (d) Visakhapatnam to Araku valley railway line

Ans: (b)

- **Kalka-Shimla Railway:** It is 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.
- The historic, approximately 111 years old Kalka- Shimla Railway line, became a UNESCO declared World Heritage railway line, in 2008 and is listed under "Mountain Railways of India".

Source: LM

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