



Notre-Dame Cathedral

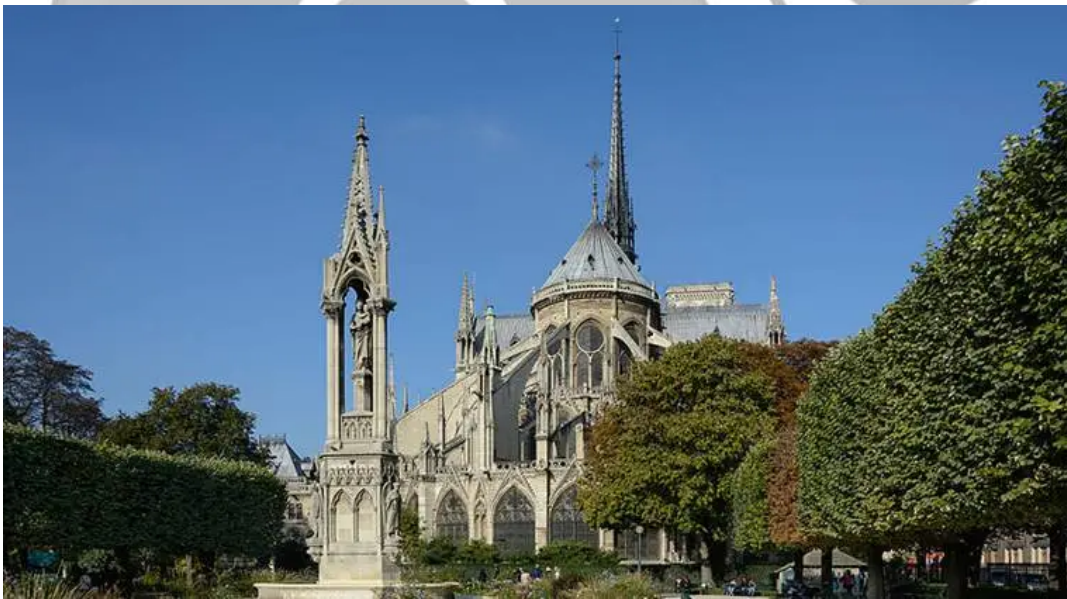
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Why in News?

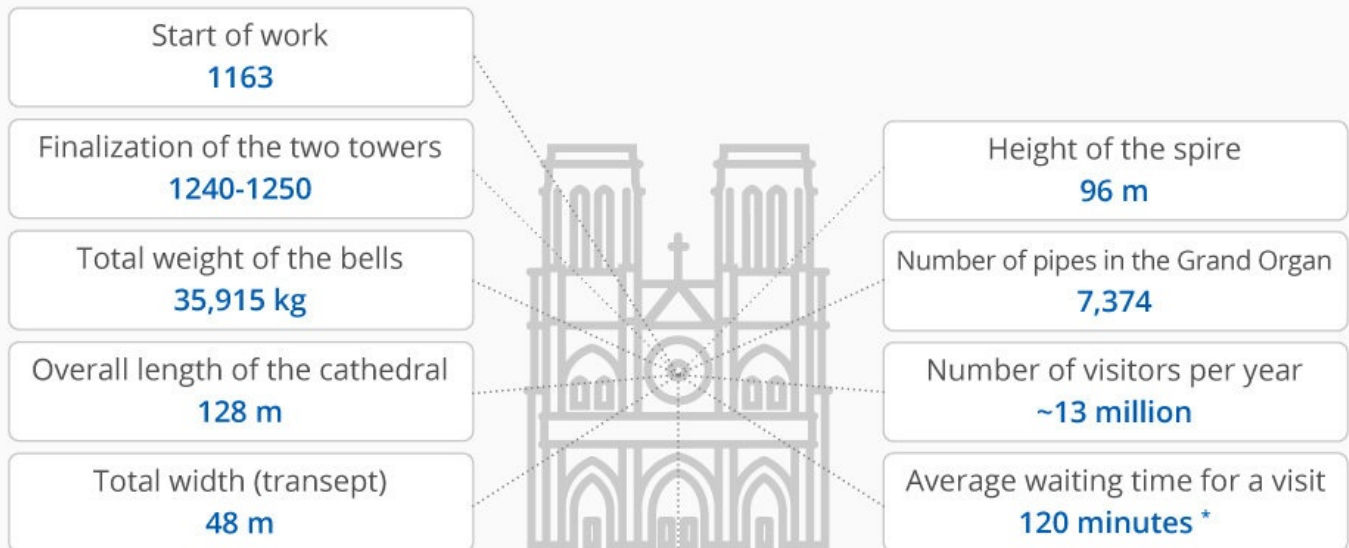
The iconic **Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris** is set to **reopen** after extensive renovations following the devastating fire in April 2019. This reopening will mark a significant milestone in restoring this architectural masterpiece and a vital part of France's cultural heritage.

What Does the Restoration of Notre-Dame Mean for Cultural Heritage?

- **About Notre-Dame:**
 - It is a **medieval Catholic cathedral** located on an island in the **Seine River in Paris, France**.
 - The cathedral is **consecrated to the Virgin Mary** and considered to be one of the finest examples of **French Gothic architecture**.
 - It contains the **Holy Crown of Thorns** the most precious item of **Holy relics** and relics from the **crucifixion of Jesus- a piece of the cross** on which he was nailed and one of the nails.
 - It is a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**.
- **Historical Significance:**
 - **Notre-Dame** is believed to be built on the site of a **former Gallo-Roman temple dedicated to Jupiter**. Following the arrival of Christianity in France, four churches were built on the same site.
 - The **construction** of Notre-Dame **began in 1160 under Bishop Maurice de Sully** and was largely completed by 1260.
 - When **Napoleon Bonaparte** became ruler of France in 1801, he chose Notre-Dame for his coronation and pledged to restore it.
 - It also hosted his **1810 marriage to Marie-Louise of Austria**.
 - It is renowned for its architectural features, including **rib vaulting, flying buttresses, and stunning stained-glass windows**.
- **Cultural Revival:** The restoration aims not only to rebuild but also to enhance the cathedral's beauty through thorough cleaning and renovation of its artworks.
- **French Gothic architecture:** The French architectural style featured shutter windows, carved archways, and narrow street fronts, harmonizing well with the courtyards and backyard gardens of traditional Bengali homes.
 - French Architects like **Le Corbusier** laid the foundations of modern urban planning in India.
 - **Examples of Indo-French Architecture Chandernagor, West Bengal:**
 - Governor's House, the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception, and the Church of St. Francis Xavier.



Notre Dame Cathedral By The Numbers



Historical events:

- 1302** Philip the Fair opens the first Estates General
- 1715** Louis XIV's bowels are buried
- 1804** Napoleon's coronation as Emperor
- 1831** Publication of the novel "Notre-Dame de Paris" by Victor Hugo
- 1944** Mass held during the liberation of Paris and attended by De Gaulle
- 1996** Funeral of François Mitterand
- 2019** Huge fire destroys large part of the roof and spire

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Prelims

Q. Consider the following historical places: (2013)

1. Ajanta Caves
2. Lepakshi Temple
3. Sanchi Stupa

Which of the above places is/are also known for mural paintings?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 1 and 2 only
- (c) 1, 2 and 3
- (d) None

Ans: (b)

Q. Some Buddhist rock-cut caves are called Chaityas, while the others are called Viharas. What is the difference between the two? (2013)

- (a) Vihara is a place of worship, while Chaitya is the dwelling place of the monks

- (b) Chaitya is a place of worship, while Vihara is the dwelling place of the monks
- (c) Chaitya is the stupa at the far end of the cave, while Vihara is the hall axial to it
- (d) There is no material difference between the two

Ans: (b)

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