



## Revamping Monument Mitra Scheme

**For Prelims:** Monument Mitra Scheme, Corporate Social Responsibility, Adopt A Heritage, Archeological Survey of India (ASI), Indian National Trust for Art & Cultural Heritage (INTACH), National Mission on Monuments and Antiquities (NMMA), 2007, Project Mausam.

**For Mains:** Significance of Heritage, Issues Related to Heritage Management in India, Government Initiatives Related to Heritage Management.

### Why in News?

**Private firms** will soon be able to partner with [Archaeological Survey of India](#) for the upkeep of **1,000 monuments under the Monument Mitra Scheme, which involves adopting and maintaining heritage sites.**

- Revamped scheme would be based on the [Corporate Social Responsibility](#) model and a new website having the **names of all the heritage sites**, would also be launched.

### What is the Monument Mitra Scheme?

- **Monument Mitra** is the term coined for an entity partnering with the government under the ['Adopt A Heritage'](#) project.
  - It was launched under the **Ministry of Tourism** earlier and then transferred to the **Ministry of Culture**.
- The project aims to **develop monuments, heritage and tourist sites** across India by inviting corporate entities, public sector companies or individuals to 'adopt' them

### What is a Heritage?

- **About:**
  - **Heritage** is deemed to mean those buildings, artefacts, structures, areas and precincts that are of **historic, aesthetic, architectural, ecological or cultural significance**.
    - It must be recognized that the **'cultural landscape' around a heritage site is critical for the interpretation of the site** and its built heritage and thus is very much its integral part.
  - The three key concepts that can be considered to determine whether a property can be listed as a Heritage are:
    - **Historic significance**
    - **Historic integrity**
    - **Historic context.**
  - In India, heritage comprises archaeological sites, remains, ruins. The **primary custodian of 'Monuments and Sites'** in the country, i.e. [Archeological Survey of India \(ASI\)](#) and their counterparts protect them.
- **Significance:**
  - **Storytellers of Indian History:** Heritage is a **legacy of physical artefacts and**

**intangible attributes** through the generations that are inherited, preserved, and passed on.

- Heritage has been woven into the fabric of Indian society with spiritual, religious, social, and political significance.
- **Embracing Diversity:** India heritage is itself a museum of different types, communities, customs, traditions, religions, cultures, beliefs, languages, castes and social systems.
- **Economic Contribution:** Heritage sites in India have significant economic significance.
  - These **sites attract millions of tourists every year, which generates revenue for the government and local communities** through tourism-related activities such as accommodation, transportation, and souvenir sales.
- **Issues Related to Heritage Management in India:**
  - **Lack of Centralised Database for Heritage Sites:** India lacks a complete national level database with state wise distribution of heritage structure.
    - However, [Indian National Trust for Art & Cultural Heritage \(INTACH\)](#) has inventoried about **60,000 buildings in around 150 cities** which is still only the tip of the iceberg.
  - **Heritage Encroachments:** Many ancient monuments have been encroached upon by local residents, shopkeepers, and souvenir sellers.
    - There is **no harmony between these structures** and the architectural style of monuments or the surroundings.
    - For instance, according to the **Comptroller and Auditor-General of India (CAG) Report, 2013**, there was encroachment on the Taj Mahal's premises near Khan-i-Alam's Bagh.
  - **Lack of Human Resource:** Lack of adequate numbers of qualified and competent human resources to look after the monuments and carry out conservation activities is the **biggest problem faced by agencies like ASI**.
- **Other Government Initiatives Related to Heritage Management:**
  - **National Mission on Monuments and Antiquities (NMMA), 2007**
  - [Project Mausam](#)

## How can Heritage Sites in India be Further Revamped?

- **Smart City, Smart Heritage:** It is necessary to consider the **Heritage Impact Assessment** for all large infrastructure projects.
  - The **Heritage Identification and Conservation Projects** need to be adjoined to the city master plans and integrate with the Smart City Initiative.
- **Innovative Strategies for Increasing Engagement:** The use of monuments that do not attract a large number of visitors and not have cultural/religious sensitivity can serve as **venues for cultural and wedding programmes** that can fulfil twin objective:
  - The promotion of the associated intangible heritage.
  - Increasing visitor numbers to such sites.
- **Linking Heritage Conservation with Climate Action:** Heritage sites can serve as **opportunities for climate communication and education, and research** on historic sites and **practices to understand past responses to changing climate conditions can help adaptation** and mitigation planners develop strategies that integrate natural science and cultural heritage.
  - For example, **coastal and river communities such as the island of [Majuli](#)** in India have been living with and adapting to changing water levels for centuries.

## UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

### Mains

**Q.1** Safeguarding the Indian Art Heritage is the need of the moment. Discuss. (2018)

**Q.2** Indian Philosophy and tradition played a significant role in conceiving and shaping the monuments and their art in India. Discuss. (2020)

[Source: TH](#)

PDF Refernece URL: <https://www.drishtias.com/printpdf/revamping-monument-mitra-scheme>

