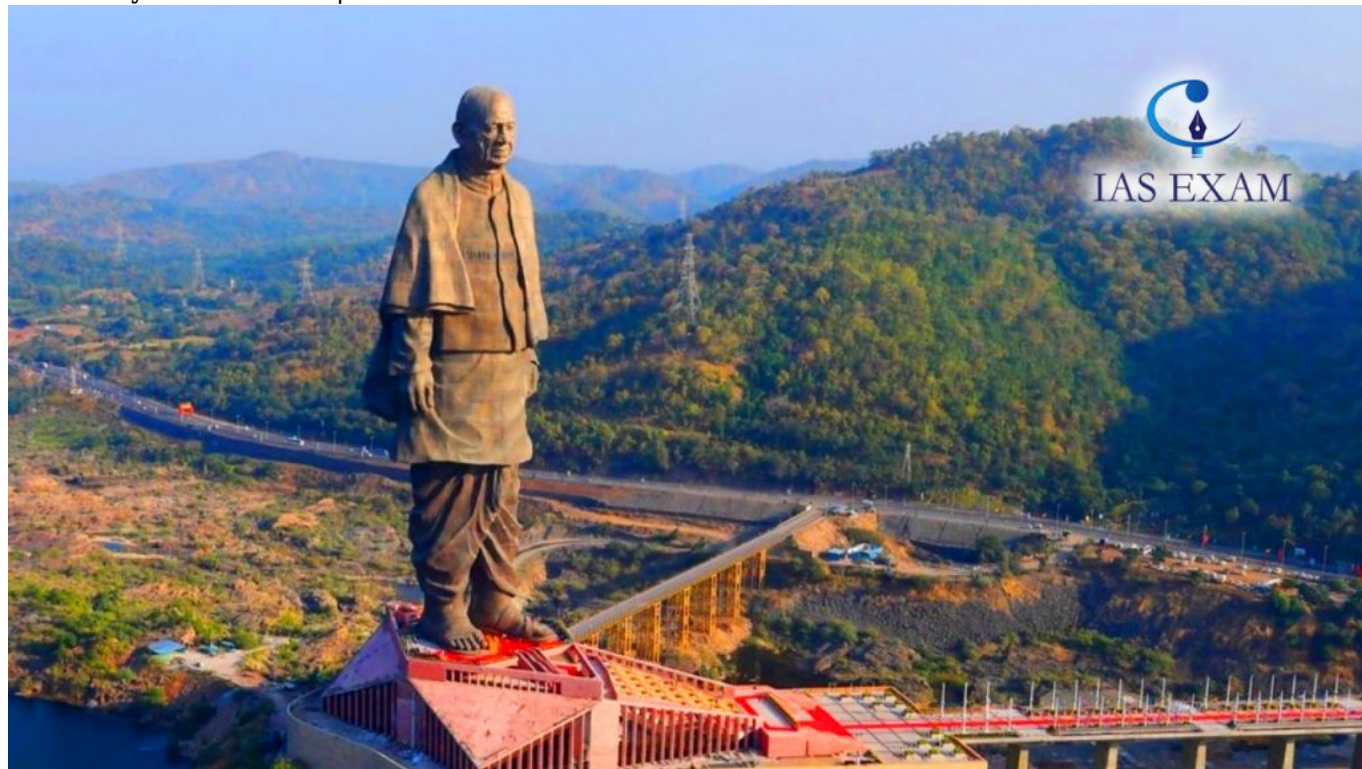


# India's 'Statue of Unity' included in '8 Wonders of SCO' list

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The 182-meter tall Statue of Unity in Gujarat has been included in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization's '8 Wonders of SCO' list, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar announced. Jaishankar appreciated the SCO's efforts towards promoting tourism among member nations and asserted that the statue's inclusion in the list will "surely serve as an inspiration".

The 'Statue of Unity', the world's tallest statue, is a monumental tribute to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, independent India's first home minister as well as deputy prime minister. The statue was inaugurated in October 2018 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the occasion of Patel's 143rd birth anniversary.

Designed by Indian sculptor Ram V Sutar, the project was first announced in 2010. In November 2019, the world's tallest statue surpassed the footfall at the 133-year-old Statue of Liberty in the US, with an average of over 15,000 tourists visiting the monument in Gujarat daily.

Apart from Statue of Unity, the other seven wonders of SCO include:

- Daming Palace in China
- Navruz Palace in Tajikistan
- Mughals Heritage in Pakistan

- Tamgaly Gorge in Kazakhstan
- Po-i-Kalan Complex in Uzbekistan
- The Golden Ring of Russia and Lahore
- Lake Issyk-Kul of Kyrgyzstan

## **About Shanghai Cooperation Organization**

- The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), or Shanghai Pact, is a Eurasian political, economic, and security alliance, the creation of which was announced on 15 June 2001 in Shanghai, China by the leaders of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan; the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Charter, formally establishing the organisation, was signed in June 2002 and entered into force on 19 September 2003.
- The original five nations, with the exclusion of Uzbekistan, were previously members of the Shanghai Five group, founded on 26 April 1996. Since then, the organisation has expanded its membership to eight countries when India and Pakistan joined SCO as full members on 9 June 2017 at a summit in Astana, Kazakhstan.
- The SCO is widely regarded as the “alliance of the East”, due to its growing centrality in Asia-Pacific, and has been the primary security pillar of the region. It is the largest regional organisation in the world in terms of geographical coverage and population, covering three-fifths of the Eurasian continent and nearly half of the human population.

**SOURCE:** *Livemint, Business Today*