

# UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards

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## Topic- Important International Organizations [GS Paper-2]

**Context-** Recently, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation 2022 has been announced.

### Key Highlights

- The UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation is sponsored by a partnership between UNESCO and Ng Teng Fong Charitable Foundation since 2021.
- UNESCO introduced a new category, 'Special Recognition for Sustainable Development', in 2020, together with an updated set of Awards Criteria in order to acknowledge the role and contribution of cultural heritage to sustainable development within the broader framework of the UN 2030 Agenda.
- Since 2000, the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation programme has been recognizing the efforts of private individuals and organizations in restoring, conserving, and transforming structures and buildings of heritage value in the Asia-Pacific region.
- Thirteen projects from six countries that have been acknowledged for awards were;
  - Afghanistan, China, India, Iran, Nepal and Thailand.

### India's Performance

- **Award of Excellence:** Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya, Mumbai
  - The museum is a part of the Victorian Gothic and Art Deco Ensembles of the

world heritage property of Mumbai.

- The museum was established as the Prince of Wales Museum of Western India in 1922.
- **Award of Distinction:** Stepwells of Golconda, Hyderabad
- **Award of Merit:**
  - Domakonda Fort, Telangana- The Domakonda Fort is a private property and was built in the 18th century with an amalgam of styles including stucco work, arched pillars, flat ceiling, and a courtyard with a water garden pond
  - Byculla Station, Mumbai- The station was built in 1853. The first ever train of the country passed through Byculla station almost one-and-a-half centuries ago. The station has been restored to its original Gothic, heritage, architectural glory.

## Significance of Heritage Sites:

- There is a linkage between nature and culture that heritage sites demonstrate.
- The sites can address climate change with net-zero water requirements.
- The restoration of wells shows how conservation of heritage sites can have multiple purposes.

## UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation

- Since 2000, the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation programme has recognised the efforts of private individuals as well as of the organisations in restoring, conserving and transforming structures and buildings of heritage value in the region.
- It also encourages other property owners to undertake conservation projects within their communities, either independently or by public-private partnerships.
- The awards provides people a sense of pride and sense of ownership of their own heritage.