

UNESCO recognises four historical heritage sites in Madhya Pradesh

Madhya Pradesh's rich historical heritage has gained global recognition, with four of its sites newly included in UNESCO's Tentative List. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the state has achieved yet another milestone in promoting its cultural legacy on the world stage.

Chief Minister Dr Mohan Yadav said that the inclusion of Ashokan Edict Sites, Chausath Yogini Temples, Gupta Period Temples and the Palace-Fortresses of the Bundelas in UNESCO's Serial Nomination for Tentative Listing highlights Madhya Pradesh's distinct place in India's cultural and historical landscape. This recognition is a testament to the state's commitment to preserving its invaluable heritage.

Last year, UNESCO also included six heritage sites from Madhya Pradesh in its Tentative List, namely, Gwalior Fort, Khooni Bhandara of Burhanpur, Rock Art Sites of the Chambal Valley, Bhojeshwar Mahadev Temple in Bhojpur, Gond Monuments of Ramnagar in Mandla and The Historic ensemble of Dhamnar

With this latest inclusion, Madhya Pradesh now boasts 18 UNESCO-recognised heritage sites—three on the Permanent List (Khajuraho Group of Temples, Bhimbetka Rock Shelters and Buddhist Monuments of Sanchi) and 15 on the Tentative List. Other sites in the Tentative List include Monuments of Mandu, Historic Group of Orchha, Bhedaghat-Lametaghat in Narmada Valley, Satpura Tiger Reserve and Chanderi in Iconic Saree Weaving Cluster of India.

This recognition underscores the state's dedication to heritage conservation and sustainable tourism. On this significant occasion, CM Dr Mohan Yadav extended his heartfelt congratulations to the Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board, the Department of Culture, archaeologists, history enthusiasts, organisations and citizens who have contributed immensely to preserving Madhya Pradesh's cultural legacy.

He further called upon the people of Madhya Pradesh to unite in their commitment to safeguarding these historical treasures, ensuring that the state's cultural glory continues to rise on the global tourism map.

Ashokan Edict Sites along the Mauryan Routes stand as India's earliest written records, with rock and pillar inscriptions revealing Emperor Ashoka's messages on Buddhism, governance and ethics, preserved for over 2,200 years. Madhya Pradesh offers its visitors to experience Sanchi pillar edicts, Rupnath Minor rock edicts in Jabalpur, Gujjara Minor rock edicts in Datia and Panguraria Minor rock edicts in Sehore.

The Chausath Yogini Temples dating back to the 9th-12th centuries, embody Tantric traditions with their unique circular, open-air designs, intricate stone carvings, and deep-rooted spiritual significance in nestled in Khajuraho, Morena, Jabalpur, Mandsaur and Shahdol and other states.

The Gupta Temples of North India, including Gupta temples at Sanchi in Raisen district, Udaigiri in Vidisha district, Nachna temple in Panna district, Tigawa in Katni district, Bhumara in Satna district, Sakor in Damoh district, Deori in Sagar district and Pawaya in Gwalior district represent a turning point in temple architecture, blending Buddhist and Hindu influences with intricate carvings, shikharas, and artistic brilliance.

The Palace-Fortresses of the Bundelas, such as Garhkundar, Raja Mahal, Jahangir Mahal and Datia Palace and Dhubela Palace showcase a stunning fusion of Rajput and Mughal styles, exemplifying Bundela-era craftsmanship, military ingenuity, and cultural exchange. Submitted to ASI in 2024, these sites now move closer to potential UNESCO World Heritage status, further cementing Madhya Pradesh's reputation as a treasure trove of history and heritage.