

CURRENT AFFAIRS PROGRAM 2023

PRE-CUM-MAINS

DECEMBER 2022- YOJANA

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1. GENERAL STUDIES PAPER-1

1) CHOLA TEMPLE ARCHITECTURE – BRIHADESHWARA TEMPLE

- **Why in news?**
 - » Yojna (Dec 2022)
- **Example Questions**
 - » Write a short note on Chola Architecture. [10 marks, 150 words]
 - » "Chola Architecture represents the epitome of the Dravida style of temple architecture" Discuss [10 marks, 150 words]
- **Introduction**
 - » The development of Chola architecture is an important landmark in the evolution of Dravida temple Architecture.
 - » The temple architecture of Chola Period can be divided into many phases and sub-phases on the basis of dynastic markers.
- **The Earliest phase** is represented by the Shiva temple at Narttamalai, built by the Chola king Vijayalaya or by a Muttarayar chief in mid-9th century.
 - » The **main features** included **Vimana** (the sanctum and its superstructure) joined to the **Ardhamandapa** (the halls preceding the sanctum) which has two rows of three pillars.
 - » The **sanctum** is circular and contains linga and Yoni.
 - » The main shrine is surrounded by **six subsidiary shrines** known as **Parivaralayas.**



- **The next phase** is represented by the temples built during the reigns of **Aditya I** (871-907 CE) and **Parantaka I** (907-55 CE).
 - **Example Temples** - Brahmapureshvara temple, the Nageshvarsvami temple and the Koranganatha temple.

Brahmapureshvara Temple

Nageshvarsvami temple

Koranganatha Temple



- **The third phase of Chola Temple architecture** is associated with **Shembiyan Mahadevi**, a queen who was a major patron of temple building during the reigns of her husband Gandaraditya, her son Uttama and early reign of Rajaraja I's reign.

- » A large number of brick temples were built in stone during this period.
- » A major change is noticeable in the nature of sculpted figures, which appear rather stiff and lifeless.
- » An e.g. of the temple built at the instance of Shembiyan Mahadevi is the **Agastyeswara temple** at Anangapur.



- **The culmination/Pinnacle of Chola Temple Architecture** is represented by the **Brihadeshwara (also known as Rajarajeshwara) temple** at Tanjavur.



- It was built by Chola King Rajaraja (985-1014 CE) in **1010 CE**. Currently, it is part of the UNESCO's List of World Heritage Sites known as the "**Great Living Chola Temples**", along with Chola dynasty era **Gangaikondacholapuram temple** and **Airavateswara temple**.
- It is also known as **Dakshin Meru** (Meru of South).

- **Key Features**

- » The temple is classified as **Perunkoil** (a big temple built on a higher platform of a natural or man-made mounds). It is one of the largest South Asian temple and is a beautiful example of fully realized **Dravida Architecture**.
- The temple complex is **rectangular** and consists of **five main sections**:
 - a. **Sri-Vimana** (the sanctum with towering Shikhara) is 66 m high and is tallest in the world. The proportioning of the successive tiers of the vimana is the reason behind visually appealing appearance of the structure.
 - » The **pinnacle is a spherical dome (88 tonnes)-like shikhara** (called the **Kumbam**), on which sits the 12-foot tall gold plated Kalasam
 - » The temple is dedicated to **Lord Shiva** and the **Garbhagriha** has a massive linga in the centre. Rising up two stories, it is considered one of the most colossal. It is square in plan and has a passage surrounding it possibly for circumambulation.
 - b. **The Nandi Hall** in front

The **statue of the Nandi** at the entrance of the temple (In front of the main shrine) is carved out of a single stone. The Pavilion on which the *Nandi* sits is by itself a later-period addition. The monolithic Nandi from the Nayaka period was brought in to replace the old nandi installed by Rajaraja. The Mandapam was also constructed by them and the ceiling of the Mandapam was painted by frescos carrying European Influence.



What happened to Chola Nandi?

It was placed in the south side thirumaligaipathi, or the cloistered hall running around the compound wall.

- c. And in between Sri-Vimana and The Nandi Hall -> Main Community Hall (**Mukhamandapam**), the great gathering hall (**Mahamandapam**) and the pavilion that connects the great hall with the sanctum (**ardhamandapam**).
 - The Mandaps have shrines of eight deities symbolic of guardian angels for eight cardinal directions.
 - The corridor walls are painted with murals and carved with different figurines of dancing lord Shiva.



Gopurams form a key feature of the Brihadeswara temple. Brihadeswara temple is entered from the east through massive gateways called **Gopurams**. This temple has two gopurams, the **first one is called the Keralantakan Gopuram** which was built to **commemorate Rajaraja's victory over the Cheras**. This gopuram has **five stories and is relatively less ornate**.

A few meters away, the **second gopuram called the Rajarajan Gopuram** pierces the wall (Krishnan Raman Tiruch-Churuumaligai) which runs along the four sides of the temple, enclosing the temple courtyard. This gopuram is **elaborately decorated with scenes from Puranic texts** and has two monolithic dvarpals guarding the entrance. It also has **carving scenes from lord Shiva's life**.



The two gopurams (gateways) of the Brihadeswara temple.

- The temple complex **integrates a large pillared and covered Veranda** in its spacious courtyard. The **main temple** is entirely made up of **Granite**.

- **Conclusion:**

- » With these features, **Brihadeswara temple** could be seen as the finest **monument of a splendid period of south Indian history, the most beautiful specimen of Tamil Architecture** and perhaps the grandest **humble offering to Lord Siva**.

- **Rajendra - I** (Son of Rajaraja) built a temple called **Brihadeswara** at his **new capital Gangaikondacholapuram**. It **was never completed and lies in a ruinous state**.

- **The last phase** of Chola temple architecture belong to the **12th-13th centuries**. During this phase **Gopurams became more dominant** than the Vimana. This is clearly evident from **Shiva temple at Chidambaram**, built mostly during the reigns of **Kulotunga 1 (1070-1122 CE)** and his successors. **Wheels and horses** were added to the outer walls of the temple, to give it the appearance of a chariot.



- **Conclusion**

- » Over the four centuries (9th century to 13th century), the Chola temples evolved to develop most of the key characteristics of the Dravidian architecture. These temples are thus seen as the most sophisticated buildings of the early medieval India.

2) MUGHAL ARCHITECTURE: HUMANYUN'S TOMB

- Why in news?

- Yojna Dec 2022

- Example Questions

- Discuss the key architectural features of Humanyun's Tomb [10 marks, 150 words]
- Humanyun's Tomb is an important landmark in the evolution of Mughal Architecture. Discuss [10 marks, 150 words]
- Humanyun's Tomb is an Indian rendition of Persian concepts. Elaborate [10 marks, 150 words]

- Introduction

- Humanyun's tomb is a landmark in the development of Mughal architecture. The tomb of the second Mughal emperor is known for introduction of several architectural innovations in the tradition of tomb and garden landscape in India. It was inspired by Persian culture which was imbibed by Humayun during his exile.



- **Beginning:** The construction began in **1564** (after Humanyun's death under the patronage of his widow, Hamida Bano Begum and was completed in 1572 at the cost of Rs 15 Lakh.

- **Architect:** The architect of the building was **Mirak Mirza Ghiyas**, a native of Persia.

- He brought many Persian craftsmen to Delhi to work on the structure and their skills and techniques were liberally employed. Thus, the structure borrowed from Iranian elements and also improvised on them.
- The Tomb has thus become a representative of Indian rendition of Persian concept.

- Though the building was constructed during Akbar's reign, it is treated and studied separately because of certain peculiar Timurid and Persian association.

- Key Features from Timurid and Persian Association

- The **Chahar Bagh** (fourfold garden) in Humanyun's tomb is divided into four parts/squares by paved walkways and two bisecting central water channels.
 - Each of the square is further divided into smaller squares with walkways, creating 36 squares in all.
 - Humanyun's tomb is one of the earliest example of garden enclosures in India.
- The **radially symmetric plan**.
- Mausoleum is placed on a **high quartzite podium (arcaded sandstone platform)** about 6.5 meters tall and containing 17 arches openings on each side giving access to burials chambers. The corners of the platform are cut at an angle to meet the corners of the tomb above, while the central archway gives access, via steep steps to the tomb above.
- The **hasht Bahisht layout** ("the eight paradise or Bhagdadi Octagon")
 - The interior of this building is a group of compartments, the largest in the centre containing the grave of the emperor.

- The smaller ones on each angle were meant to house the graves of his family member.
- Each room is octagonal in plan and they are connected by diagonal bases
- To the centre of each side of the tomb is a **porch with a pointed arch** providing entrance to the main chamber

v. The **bulbous double dome** on a high drum

- "It has two shells, with the appreciable space in between. The inner shell forms the vaulted ceiling to the inner chambers, and the outer shell rises like a bulb in a proportion with the elevation of the main building"

- **Features derived from pre-Mughal Indian architectural features**

- Red Sand stone and white marble combination
- Lotus-bud fringed arches
- Jalis (perforated stone screen)
- Chajjas (overhanging eaves)
- Corbelled ornamental brackets

- **Conclusion**

- » The tomb is of particular cultural significance as it was the first garden tomb on the Indian subcontinent. It inspired several major architectural innovations, culminating in the **construction of the Taj Mahal**.

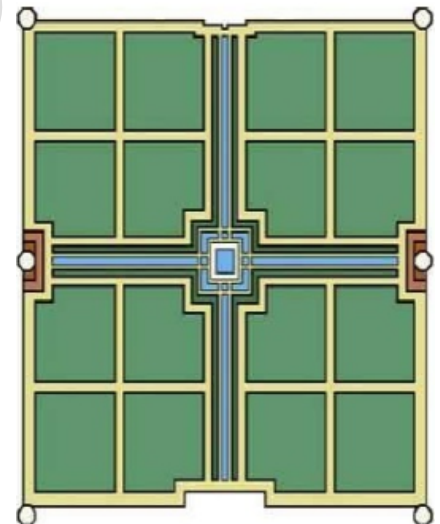
- **More Details About Some Features**

i. **Paradise Garden (Chahar Bagh)**

- Babur had introduced an innovative layout known as Chahar Bagh in Persian (fourfold garden in English)
- Timurid-Persian Scheme of a walled garden was divided into four quarters by raised walkways and canals.

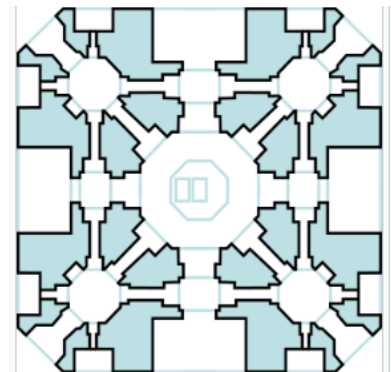
- **The next stage in the evolution of garden architecture was the Tomb Garden**

- Tomb Garden's including those of Humayun's in Delhi, Akbar's in Sikandra, Jahangir's in Lahore, Itmad-ud Daulah's in Agra and Bibi Ka Maqbara in Aurangabad, are considered the greatest innovation of the Mughals in the Garden Architecture.
- Symbolically they represent the Islamic Paradise garden, with the emperor forever in Paradise.
- The large square enclosure divided with geometric precision represented the ordered universe.
- Eternal flowers, herbs, fruits, water and birds, such as those in paradise, added further character to the tomb garden.



ii. **Hasht Bahist**

- In architecture Hasht-Bihisht refers to a specific type of the floor plan common in Persian architecture and Mughal architecture whereby the plan is divided into 8 chambers surrounding a central room.
- It acts as an allusion to the eight gates of paradise garden.



Floor plan of the Taj Mahal showing the eight chambers surrounding the central chamber.

iii. **Double Dome**

- Double dome makes its first appearance in the tomb of Sikandar Lodi at Lodi Garden, Delhi.
- The one at the Humayun's tomb is the **first true double dome** which is mounted on a drum.

- **Other Key Facts:**

- Humayun's tomb, is a UNESCO World Heritage Site
- Humayun's tomb is also known as the 'dormitory of the Mughal's as in the cells are buried over 150 Mughal family members'.

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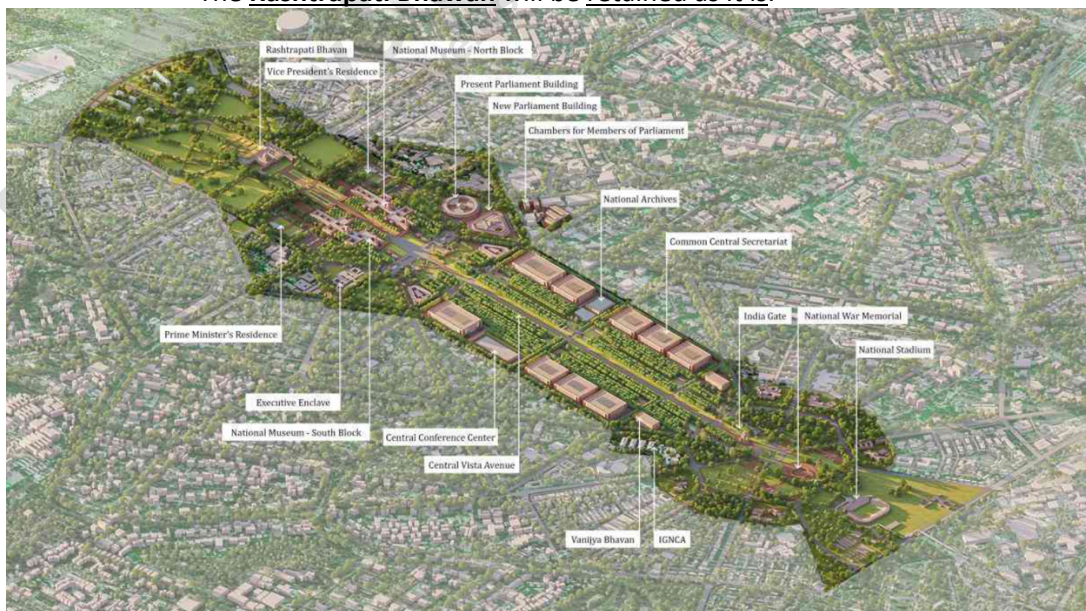
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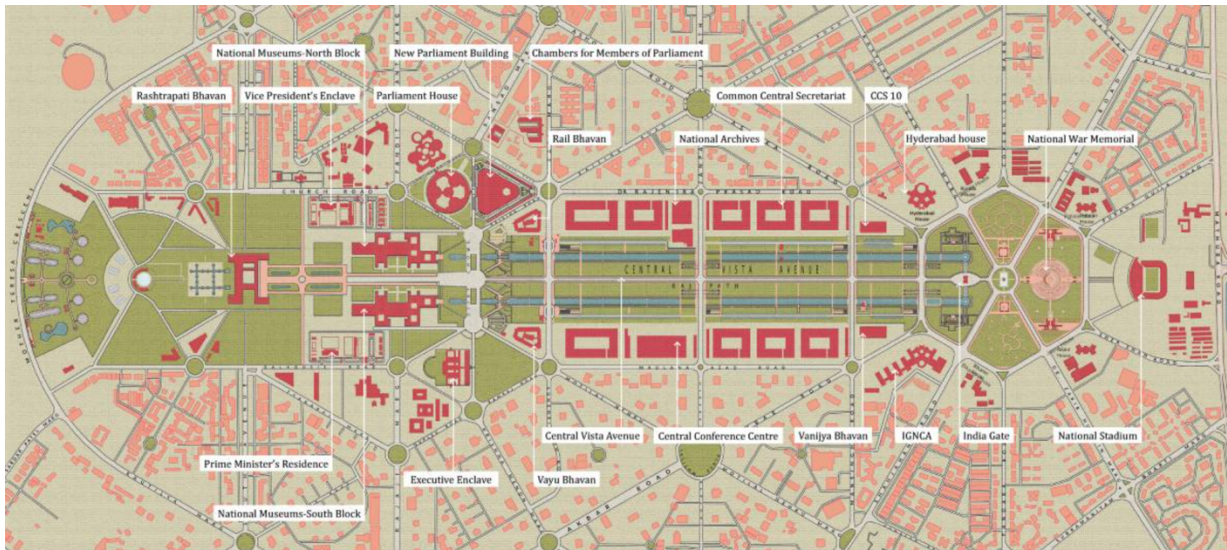
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2. PRELIMS FACTS

1) CENTRAL VISTA REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT

- Central Vista Redevelopment Project refers to ongoing redevelopment to revamp the Central Vista - India's central administrative area located near Raisina Hills, New Delhi. The project is scheduled between 2020 to 2026.
- **History:**
 - » Central Vista was originally designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens and Sir Herbert Baker during the British colonial rule. It was needed when the British Raj shifted its capital from Calcutta to Delhi.
 - » After independence, it was retained by GoI.
- **Need of the Redevelopment:**
 - » Expansion in the needs and duties of the government
- **Key Components of the Project**
 - » Revamping of 3 km long Kartavyapath between Rashtrapati Bhavan and India Gate.
 - » Convert north block and south block to publicly accessible museum and create a **new common Central Secretariat** to house all ministries.
 - The new common central secretariat will be located where IGNSA and Rakhsha Bhawan are currently housed. These older structures will be demolished. It will have 8 buildings, each having 7-8 floors and housing 25,000 to 32,000 employees from all ministries.
 - No building will be taller than the India gate i.e. 42 meters, to maintain its glory.
 - » Build a **new Parliament building** near the present one with increased seating capacity for future expansion.
 - The building will be triangular and will have the capacity to seat 900-1200 MPs. It will give space for joint session of both the houses.
 - » **New Residence and Office for the VP and the Prime Minister** near the North block and south block and convert some of the older structures into museums.
 - The PM's residence and office will be relocated behind the south block on Raisina Hills and PMO on its southeast corner.
 - The **Rashtrapati Bhawan** will be retained as it is.





- **Contracts for only two projects** have been awarded so far:
 - New Parliament Building
 - Rejuvenation of Central Vista Avenue
- **Who is the architect: Dr Bimal Patel**

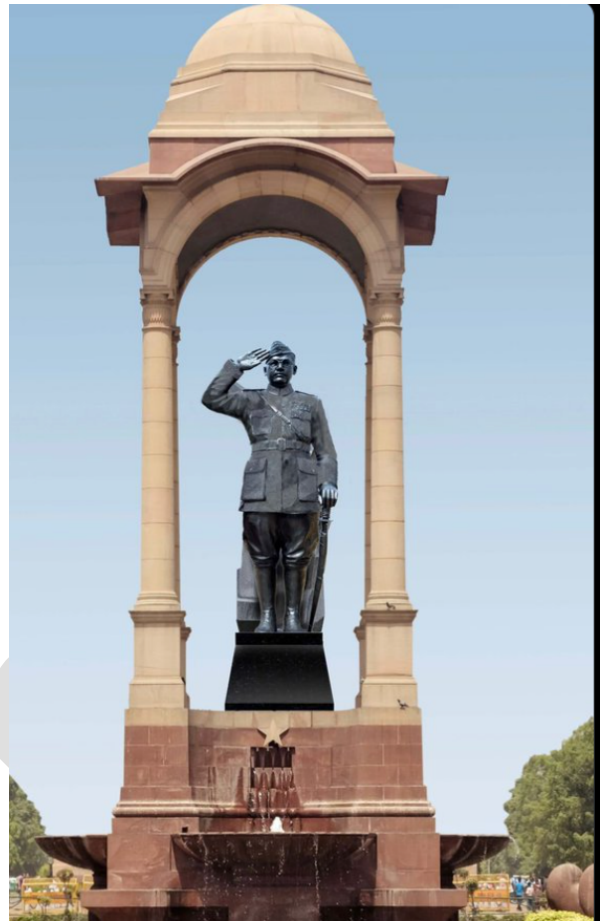
A) KARTAVYA PATH

- In Sep 2022, the historic Rajpath was renamed to **Kartavya Path** ahead of inauguration. The decision was taken by New Delhi Municipal Corporation after a formal meeting.
 - It will include erstwhile Raj Path and the Central Vista lawns.
 - The **whole stretch and areas** from the statue of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose to Rashtrapati Bhavan will be considered as **Kartavya Path**.
- **History:**
 - The stretch was constructed as a ceremonial boulevard by Edwin Lutyens and Herbert Baker. It was named **Kingsway** as an honour to the Emperor of India, King George V, who visited Delhi during the Delhi Durbar of 1911.
 - After independence, it was renamed as **Rajpath**.
- '**Kartavya Path**' symbolizes a shift from the erstwhile Rajpath being an icon of power to being an example of public ownership and empowerment.
- **Key updates:**
 - Eight underground public amenity blocks and six vending plazas have been designed, keeping existing trees in mind, to make it comfortable for civic users and tourists.
 - A total of four pedestrian underpasses 8 m wide each - two each at Janpath and C-Hexagon junctions - have been provided keeping pedestrian safety in mind.

B) CANOPY AND NETAJI STATUE

- About 150 meters east of the gate, at a junction of six roads, is a 73 feet (22 meters) cupola, inspired by a sixth-century pavilion from Mahabalipuram.

- It once housed the statue of British monarch King George V. The canopy along with the king's statue came up in the shape of a memorial after his death in 1936. 500 feet from the war memorial, it was set on a pedestal in a circular pool of water.
- But, It quickly became a target of India's independence movement, and in 1943, during Quit India Movement, Hemvati Nandan Bahuguna and Manubhai Shah scaled the statue, smashed its nose and draped it with a large black cloth inscribed "Death to the Tyrant". But, the statue continued to be there till 1968. In Aug 1958, the royal insignia of George V and the Tudor crown atop the canopy was removed. In 1968, the statue was finally removed. It was shifted to the coronation park after it was partially damaged during a public demonstration against it.

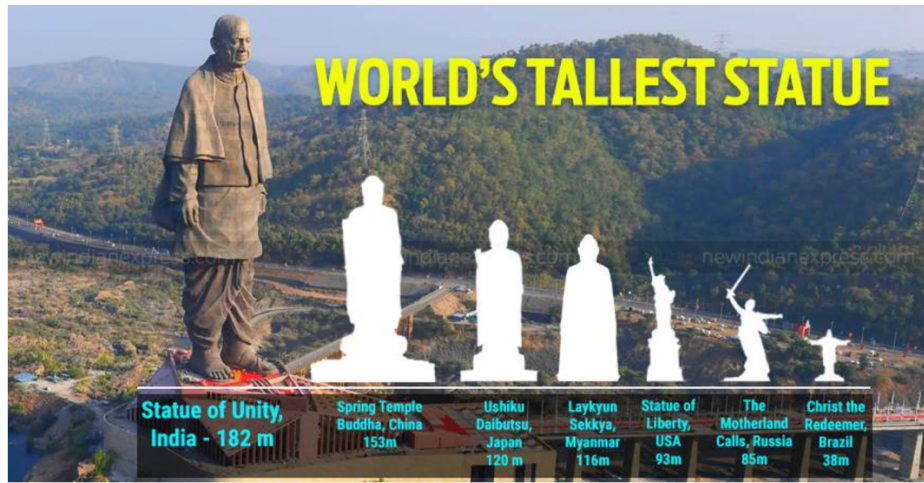


- **Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Statue:**

- The statue of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose is installed at the India gate canopy. The granite statue is a fitting tribute to the immense contribution of Netaji to our freedom struggle and would be a symbol of the country's Indebtness to him.
- It has been crafted by Arun Yogiraj, who was the main sculptor.
- The **28 feet tall** statue has been carved from a monolithic granite stone and weighs 65 metric tonnes. It has been completely hand-sculpted using traditional techniques and modern tools.
- The **monolith** was brought from **Khammam** in Telangana to New Delhi on a specially designed 100 feet long truck with 140 wheels.

2) THE STATUE OF UNITY

- The statue of Unity is the world's tallest statue, with a height of 182 meters. It has been built as an ode to the Iron Man of India, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the first home minister of Independent India.
- The colossal statue stands on the isle of Sadhu-Bet in River Narmada, at **Ekta Nagar**, District Rajpipla in the Indian state of Gujarat, with the majestic Vindhyachal and Satpura mountain ranges in the backdrop.
 - » It is linked to the mainland mass by a bridge for vehicles and pedestrians.
- **Outreach program for the project:** As a part of an outreach program for the project, the state government had asked Indian farmers to donate their used farming equipment to collect iron needed for the statue of Sardar Patel. Eventually, about 5,000 tonnes of iron is believed to be collected.
- **Creator/Sculptor:** The monument was cleared by Indian Sculptor Ram V. Sutar.
- **World's Tallest Statue:**



At 182 meters from the road entry and 208.5 meters from the river entry, the SoU is the tallest statue in the world; taller than the 153 m tall Spring Temple Buddha in China and almost twice as tall as the world famous Statue of Liberty in New York. For a sense of its height, the statue is 100 times larger than a man of average height of about 5 to 5 and a half feet!

- This monument has **many other attractive tourist spots in its proximity** such as Valley of Flowers, the Shoolpaneshwar Sanctuary and sacred temple, Sardar Sarovar Dam and its water dykes, the scenic Zarwani falls and the majestic palaces of Rajpipla.
- **Key challenges overcome by the creators:**
 - » **Wind:** The statue is exposed to the tunnel effect of winds sweeping down the river because it is located directly in the centre of the Narmada River. Studies found that in the worst case, the windspeed upto 130km/hr may buffet the statue. Thus the statue has been constructed to withstand at least 180km/hr of wind speed.
 - » **Flood:** The statue base is higher than the Narmada dam nearby maximum flood level ever recorded over a 100 year span.
 - » **Earthquake:** It can also withstand earthquake of 6.5 intensity on richer scale.

3) PRADHANMANTRI SANGRAHALAYA

- It is a tribute to every Prime Minister of India since independence. It is a narrative record of how each one has contributed to the development of our nation over the last 75 years.
- The museum building integrates the Teen Murti Bhawan in New Delhi, designated as block-1 with the newly constructed Block-II. The total area of the two blocks is over 15,600 sqm. There are 43 galleries in the Sangrahalaya.
 - Note: The Teen Murti Bhawan, was the home to India's first PM Jawaharlal Nehru for 16 years.
- The Sangrahalaya is a seamless blend which begins at the renovated and refurbished Nehru museum building, now completely updated and technologically advanced displays on the life and contribution of Shri Jawaharlal Nehru. The panorama includes a section which exhibits a large number of rare gifts received by him from all over the world but never put on display. The Saga of modern India starts with the freedom struggle and the making of a great Constitution. The Sangrahalaya goes on to tell the story of how our Prime Ministers navigated the nation through various challenges and ensured the all-round progress of the country. Within this story is a message for the younger generation: there are greater horizons to conquer as we transform India into New India



4) BRUTALIST ARCHITECTURE (YOJNA, DEC 2022)

- **Introduction:**
 - » In contrast with classical architecture and its romantic continuity, some **bold and contrasting modernistic trends gradually emerged and ramified into certain sub-trends**, of which **Brutalist Architecture** is a prominent player.
- Brutalist architecture is characterized by minimalist constructions that showcase the bare building materials and structural elements over decorative designs.
 - » It makes use of exposed, unpainted concrete or brick, angular geometric shapes and a predominantly monochrome colour palette; other materials, such as steel, timber and glass, are also featured.
- It is outcome of a line of thought that wants to strip buildings of their unnecessary intricacies, embellishments, superfluous decorations, cover-ups with the employment of multifarious concealing materials and finishes that hide the core structure and basic character of it.
- This started in 1950s and practiced architecture as simple, undecorated, almost intimidating in its stark and imposing presence.
- A very important point here is to remember that without such branding and brandishing, many old structures, especially the houses of the poor and the middle class in the past, had several characteristics of Brutal architecture.
- **Significance:**
 - » Wastelessness, Frugality -> less resource utilization -> sustainability.



3. PRACTICE QUESTIONS

Visit our telegram channel: <https://t.me/Santoshkumarcurentaffairs> for 10 MCQs on this Yojna series. These MCQs will be posted on 9th and 10th December 2022