

# Shantiniketan in the tentative list of UNESCO World Heritage

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**Context-** The UNESCO world heritage center has recently recommended the inclusion of Shantiniketan, a cultural site in West Bengal, India in the UNESCO world heritage list.

## **Key highlights.**

- The recommendations have been made by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), a French International non-governmental organization that is the advisory body to the UNESCO World Heritage Center.
- The Union Culture Minister G. Kishan Reddy welcomed the initiative and hopes to have the official inclusion of Shantiniketan in the World Heritage List at the World Heritage Committee meeting to be held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, September 2023.

## **About Shantiniketan**

- Popularly known as the university town in the Birbhum district, far from north Kolkata, it was originally an ashram built by Debendranath Tagore, the father of the Poet and Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore.
- Originally an ashram and later turned into an university by Rabindranath Tagore. The ashram allows anyone irrespective of caste and creed to spend time and meditate at the center.
- It has important structures like the Shantiniketan Griha and the Mandir, all aimed at revival and renaissance of religion. The university named Vishwabharti provides courses in humanities, science, fine arts, music, social science, education, performing

arts, agricultural science , and rural reconstruction.

### **About world heritage sites**

- The UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) through world heritage sites list aims in the identification, protection and preservation of cultural and natural heritage around the world.
- The list today includes 1157 world heritage sites with 900 cultural,218 natural and 39 mixed sites worldwide.
- The list is embodied in the treaty of the Convention Concerning Protection of the World Cultural and Natural heritage,1972 adopted by UNESCO.
- India has a total of 40 world heritage sites tagged by UNESCO with 32 cultural sites,7 natural sites and one mixed site.