



KAMARAJ IAS ACADEMY
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India Extends Assistance for Cultural Heritage Preservation in Tuvalu

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India has extended financial assistance to Tuvalu for the preservation of its cultural and heritage sites during an official visit by Pabitra Margherita. The support was provided under the Quick Impact Project (QIP) framework, reflecting India's growing engagement with Pacific Island countries and its commitment to cultural diplomacy.?

Key Features of the Assistance:

During the visit to Funafuti (capital of Tuvalu), India handed over the first tranche of financial assistance aimed at safeguarding cultural and heritage sites. The initiative is part of India's broader development cooperation, focusing on:

- Preservation of traditional heritage structures
- Protection of cultural identity and practices
- Strengthening local capacity for heritage conservation

The assistance was also accompanied by other development initiatives such as healthcare and infrastructure support, highlighting a holistic partnership approach.

Strategic Significance (India–Pacific Relations):

This move is part of India's Act East Policy and its outreach to Pacific Island nations, reinforcing its role as a development partner in the Indo-Pacific region. It aligns with frameworks like:

- FOIP (Free and Open Indo-Pacific)
- South-South Cooperation
- Development diplomacy

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India's engagement with Tuvalu and other Pacific nations strengthens geopolitical presence, climate cooperation, and cultural ties in the region.

Importance of Cultural Heritage in Tuvalu:

Tuvalu's cultural heritage is unique and vulnerable due to:

Its small island geography (coral atolls)

Rich traditions such as handicrafts, dance, and community structures

Threats from climate change and rising sea levels

Tuvalu has even sought recognition under the UNESCO World Heritage framework, with its Pacific atoll-island cultural landscape on the tentative list.

Preserving cultural heritage is crucial for maintaining identity, traditional knowledge, and community cohesion.

About Tuvalu:

Located in the central Pacific Ocean

One of the smallest and most climate-vulnerable countries

Composed of nine low-lying coral atolls

India–Pacific Cooperation:

India engages Pacific Island nations through:

FIPIC (Forum for India–Pacific Islands Cooperation)

Focus areas:

Climate resilience

Capacity building

Sustainable development

Cultural Diplomacy

Use of culture and heritage as tools of soft power in foreign policy

Enhances people-to-people ties and global influence