Art & Culture · GS - I

Discuss the significance of community participation and Heritage Impact Assessments in conserving India's World Heritage Sites, with reference to Hampi.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 29/10/2026	GS - I	Art & Culture

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

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Answer Hint

Hampi World Heritage Site; Vijayanagara heritage; community participation; Heritage Impact Assessment; sustainable tourism; local livelihoods; heritage governance

Model Answer

Introduction

Hampi in Karnataka preserves the architectural and archaeological legacy of the Vijayanagara Empire. Effective conservation requires protecting its historic structures and landscape while addressing the needs of local communities.

Significance of Community Participation

1. Local stewardship: Residents possess traditional knowledge of the landscape, cultural practices and local heritage, strengthening conservation efforts.

2. Livelihood protection: Consultation can help reconcile conservation restrictions with agriculture, traditional occupations, vending and tourism-related employment.

3. Sustainable tourism: Community involvement can encourage responsible tourism, local entrepreneurship and equitable distribution of economic benefits.

Role of Heritage Impact Assessment

Heritage Impact Assessment evaluates the likely effects of proposed infrastructure and development projects on a site's cultural significance. It can identify risks to monuments, archaeological remains, visual landscapes and traditional settings before project approval.

Challenges and Way Forward

Unplanned construction, tourism pressure, fragmented institutional responsibilities and competing land-use demands can undermine conservation. Strengthening the Hampi World Heritage Area Management Authority, conducting systematic impact assessments, consulting residents and ensuring transparent enforcement can improve outcomes.

Conclusion

Heritage conservation must extend beyond protecting monuments. A participatory approach that integrates scientific assessment, community livelihoods and accountable governance can preserve Hampi for future generations.

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