Seven Indian Natural Sites Added to UNESCO's Tentative List

Prelims – *Current events of National and International importance| Indian and World Geography.*

Why in News?

Recently, 7 remarkable natural heritage sites from across the country have been successfully included in UNESCO's Tentative List of World Heritage Sites.

- **UNESCO Tentative List –** It is a prerequisite for any site to be nominated for the prestigious World Heritage List.
- India has a total of 69 sites under consideration by UNESCO, comprising 49 cultural, 17 natural, and 3 mixed heritage properties.
- The newly added sites include

Site	State	Description
Deccan Traps at Panchgani and Mahabaleshwar	**Maharashtra**	• It is home to some of the best-preserved and studied **lava flows** in the world. • These sites form part of the massive Deccan Traps and are located within the Koyna Wildlife Sanctuary. • **Koyna Wildlife Sanctuary –** It is already a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
Geological Heritage of St. Mary's Island Cluster	**Karnataka**	• It is Known for its ***rare columnar basaltic rock formations.*** • This island cluster dates back to the **Late Cretaceous period**, offering a geological snapshot from around 85 million years ago.

Meghalayan Age Caves	**Meghalaya**	• The cave systems of Meghalaya, particularly the **Mawmluh Cave**, serve as the global reference point for the Meghalayan Age of the **Holocene Epoch**. • It reflecting significant climatic and geological transitions
Naga Hill Ophiolite	**Nagaland**	• It is a rare exposure of ophiolite rocks. • These hills represent oceanic crust uplifted onto continental plates. • Its offerings a deep insight into tectonic processes and mid-ocean ridge dynamics.
Erra Matti Dibbalu (Red Sand Hills)	**Andhra Pradesh**	• It is a visually striking red sand formation located near Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh. • It showcases unique **paleo-climatic and coastal geomorphological** features that reveal Earth's climatic history and dynamic evolution.
Natural Heritage of Tirumala Hills	**Andhra Pradesh**	• Featuring the **Eparchaean Unconformity** and the iconic Silathoranam (Natural Arch). • This site holds immense geological significance, representing over 1.5 billion years of Earth's history.
Varkala Cliffs	**Kerala**	• It refers to the scenic cliffs along Kerala's coastline that expose the **Warkalli Formation** of the **Mio-Pliocene age**. • It features **natural springs** and **striking erosional landforms**, offering both scientific and touristic value.

Reference

PIB| 7 Natural Heritage Sites in UNESCO Tentative List.



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