

# PARLIAMENT QUESTION: MISSION MAUSAM

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The 'Mission Mausam' mentioned here with related topics such as cultural link and maritime history is not a project of Ministry of Earth Sciences. It is mistaken for the 'Project Mausam' of the Ministry of Culture (MoC), Government of India. The 'Project Mausam' is a transnational project on maritime routes and cultural landscapes across the Indian Ocean rim, at Doha, Qatar, on 20th June 2014, at the 38th Session of the World Heritage Committee, UNESCO.

Mausam, refers to a distinctive wind-system of the Indian Ocean region that follows a regular pattern: southwest from May to September; and northeast from November to March. This regular pattern facilitated the movement of people, goods, and ideas across the Indian Ocean, enabling cultural interactions and exchange until when steam-powered cargo carriers reduced reliance on sailing ships. Project 'Mausam' focuses on how this natural phenomenon has shaped interactions between countries and communities connected by the Indian Ocean. Aims and objectives of Project Mausam

- Reviving lost linkages with nations
- Redefining 'Cultural Landscapes'
- Creating links with existing World Heritage sites
- Achieving transnational nomination under World Heritage, using a unique Cross Culture Convention approach for UNESCO
- Preparing a Transnational World Heritage Nomination Under Project Mausam

The "Mission Mausam" project of the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) has completely different objectives as compared to the "Project Mausam" of the Ministry of Culture. The Mission Mausam is launched by the MoES to make Bharat a "weather-ready and climate-smart" nation, with the following objectives:

- Strengthening observations (in-situ & remote sensing)
- Gaining a better understanding and use of Science, Innovation, Technology, and Data Science for societal benefit
- Improve our Model/Data Assimilation/HPC for giving accurate information to the Public and stakeholders (Numerical+Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning)
- Developing advanced Earth System Models and data-driven methods, including the use of AI/ML
- Trained Manpower in Earth System Science
- Forecast dissemination: Effective communication with Society: Early Warning for ALL

The Ministry of Culture (MoC) has set up a Project Mausam cell comprising of a multi-disciplinary team with specialized expertise in accordance with the directions on the Project Mausam SFC Extension order dated 10.02.2021, having concurrence of the IFD and approval of the HCM. The research cell has created a comprehensive database, bibliography, identifying potential archaeological sites and monuments for a transnational nomination, preparing draft tentative list proposals and more comprehensive thematic papers as well.

As part of the ongoing activities under Project Mausam, the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has prepared a draft Thematic Study framework and three draft Tentative List (TL) proposals. The tentative list proposals have been approved by the Ministry of Culture and shared with the Permanent Delegate of UNESCO to India for the views and comments of experts of the countries whose heritage sites have been identified as potential components in the TL proposal. The intention is to coordinate with respective delegations, engage with technical experts and work towards consensus building on tentative list proposals. The draft proposals and associated countries are as follows:

- On the Trail of the Periplus of the Erythrean Sea – Egypt, Oman, UAE,

- Yemen, Somalia, Sri Lanka
- Bronze Age Maritime Trade Networks of the Western Indian Ocean –
- Iran, Oman, UAE, Bahrain, Kuwait
- Architectural Testimonies of Early Buddhism across the Indian Ocean –
- Sri Lanka, Maldives, Indonesia, Vietnam

Besides the above, various activities such as lecture series, conferences, international seminars and side events are also organized under Project Mausam.

**Other Key activities:**

A National Conference on Project Mausam titled 'Jaladhipurayatra: Exploring cross-cultural linkages along the Indian Ocean Rim countries' was held on 7th and 8th October 2022 at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi. The conference was inaugurated by Hon'ble Ministers of State, Smt. Meenakashi Lekhi and Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal and was attended by delegates of more than 16 countries associated with Project Mausam. Twenty-two papers were presented at this conference by academicians and officials of ASI.

An interactive panel discussion on cross-cultural heritage was organized under Project Mausam on 26 July 2024 during the 46th World Heritage Committee meeting in India, which saw participation from officials of the World Heritage Centre, ASI, scholars, and ambassadors. A Digital exhibition was also on display at the venue of the 46<sup>th</sup> World Heritage Committee.

This information was given by Dr. Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology, Earth Sciences, MoS PMO, MoS Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions, Department of Atomic Energy and Department of Space, in a written reply in the Rajya Sabha today.

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