



UPSC & STATE PCS CURRENT AFFAIRS · UJIYARI.COM

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

India and Kyrgyzstan Set Up Manas-Mahabharata Civilizational Centre

11 July 2026 ·

HISTORY & CULTURE ·

GS1

GS2

CURATED & WRITTEN BY

**Bharat Choudhary**

UPSC Educator & Content Creator

[in linkedin.com/in/epicbharat](https://www.linkedin.com/in/epicbharat)

ALSO FROM THE CREATOR

BharatNotesFree UPSC notes, MCQs, PYQ analysis. **100% Free.**bharatnotes.com →

ADVERTISE

Advertise with Ujiyari

Reach thousands of UPSC aspirants daily.

[✉ epicbharat@gmail.com](mailto:epicbharat@gmail.com)



India and Kyrgyzstan Set Up Manas-Mahabharata Civilizational Centre

11 July 2026 · 4 min read ·

Source: ujjyari.com — researched, fact-checked & UPSC-mapped

🟢 Every fact web-verified against primary sources (<https://ujjyari.com/how-we-verify/>)

WHY IN NEWS

In early July 2026, India and Kyrgyzstan established an International Centre for Civilizational Studies in Bishkek that pairs the Kyrgyz national epic Manas with the Mahabharata, and released the first-ever Hindi translation of the Manas epic.

WHAT WAS ANNOUNCED

The new **International Centre for Civilizational Studies** in **Bishkek**, the capital of Kyrgyzstan, is designed as a shared space for scholarship that reads the two nations' great epics alongside one another. By pairing the **Manas** with the **Mahabharata**, the centre frames the India-Kyrgyzstan relationship not merely in terms of trade and security but as a meeting of two ancient civilizational traditions.

The launch was accompanied by the release of the **first-ever Hindi translation of the Manas epic**, a milestone in cultural exchange that makes one of Central Asia's foundational texts accessible to Hindi readers for the first time. Such translation projects are a concrete instrument of soft-power diplomacy, building people-to-people familiarity that outlasts any single agreement.

The Two Epics

Ujjayari Current Affairs · ujjayari.com · Free Daily Current Affairs for UPSC & State PCS

FEATURE	MANAS	MAHABHARATA
Tradition	Kyrgyz national epic	Indian itihasa (epic)
Attributed to	Oral bardic tradition (manaschis)	Sage Vyasa
Distinction	Among the world's longest epics	Longest known epic poem
Recognition	UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage	Core text of Indian civilization
Theme	Unity and identity of the Kyrgyz people	Dharma, duty and human conflict

UNDERSTANDING THE MANAS

The **Manas** is the national epic of the Kyrgyz people and one of the longest epic poems in the world. Passed down through an oral tradition of reciters known as **manaschis**, it narrates the deeds of the hero Manas and his descendants and functions as a repository of Kyrgyz history, language and identity. The epic is inscribed on **UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity**, recognition of both its scale and its living oral transmission.

Pairing it with the **Mahabharata**, traditionally attributed to **Sage Vyasa**, invites comparison between two civilizations that each encoded their moral and political imagination in a vast narrative poem. This shared epic sensibility gives the centre a natural intellectual foundation.

CULTURAL DIPLOMACY AS SOFT POWER

Soft power is the ability to shape outcomes through attraction and persuasion rather than coercion (<https://ujjayari.com/vocab/coercion/>), and culture is among its most durable sources. By investing in a civilizational-studies centre and epic translation, India signals that its Central Asia engagement rests on more than transactional interests. Cultural diplomacy of this kind builds goodwill, deepens academic and civil-society links, and creates a reservoir of trust that supports harder cooperation on energy, connectivity and security.

India's Connect Central Asia Policy

The initiative fits India's broader **Connect Central Asia** approach, which seeks to rebuild historic links with a region tied to India by centuries of trade and cultural exchange along the old Silk Road. Key strands include:

- The **India-Central Asia Summit** format, which has convened leaders since **2022**, institutionalising engagement with all five Central Asian republics.

- The **International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC)** (<https://ujiyari.com/terms/instc/>), a multi-modal route linking India, Iran, Central Asia and Russia that offers a shorter alternative to traditional sea lanes.
- Cooperation on **energy, security and connectivity**, areas where Central Asia's resources and location complement India's needs.

INDIA-KYRGYZSTAN TIES

Within this framework, **Kyrgyzstan** is a long-standing partner. The two countries cooperate on defence and counter-terrorism, share membership of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, and have steadily expanded educational and cultural exchange, with many Indian students studying in Kyrgyz institutions. The civilizational centre adds a cultural pillar to a relationship that already spans security and connectivity, reinforcing India's presence in a strategically located region where several major powers compete for influence.

ANALYSIS AND WAY FORWARD

The Manas-Mahabharata centre is a small but telling example of how India can differentiate its Central Asia outreach from that of larger economic players. Its value will depend on follow-through: sustained funding, genuine scholarly exchange, and translation projects in both directions so the flow of ideas is mutual rather than one-sided. Coupling such cultural initiatives with tangible progress on the INSTC and energy partnerships would give India's Central Asia policy both depth and reach, turning civilizational affinity into strategic partnership.

UPSC RELEVANCE

GS Paper 1: Indian culture and its links with the wider world; salient features of world's physical geography and cultural heritage. **GS Paper 2:** India and its neighbourhood; **bilateral** (<https://ujiyari.com/vocab/bilateral/>) and regional groupings involving India; effect of policies of developed and developing countries on India's interests.

Prelims pointers:

- The Manas is the Kyrgyz national epic and among the world's longest, on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.
- Bishkek is the capital of Kyrgyzstan.
- The Mahabharata is traditionally attributed to Sage Vyasa.
- The India-Central Asia Summit format has convened since 2022.
- The International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) links India, Iran, Central Asia and Russia.

Mains question: “Cultural diplomacy is increasingly central to India’s engagement with Central Asia.

Examine how civilizational and soft-power initiatives complement India’s strategic and connectivity interests in the region.” (15 marks, 250 words)

FACTS CORNER

★ FACTS CORNER, KNOWLEDGE PEDIA

Manas: Kyrgyz national epic, among the world’s longest; on UNESCO’s Intangible Cultural Heritage list.

Mahabharata: traditionally attributed to Sage Vyasa.

New centre: International Centre for Civilizational Studies, Bishkek.

Milestone: first-ever Hindi translation of the Manas released.

Bishkek: capital of Kyrgyzstan.

India-Central Asia Summit: running since 2022.

INSTC: links India, Iran, Central Asia and Russia.

Sources: Ministry of External Affairs (<https://www.mea.gov.in/>), Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), Times of India

Source: India and Kyrgyzstan Set Up Manas-Mahabharata Civilizational Centre — [Ujjayari.com](https://ujjayari.com) | Free UPSC & State PCS Current Affairs

RELATED EDITORIALS

INDIAN EXPRESS

[A Temple the Jungle Swallowed: What Prambanan Teaches About Heritage](#)

11 Jul

THE HINDU

[The Taj and the Docket: When Litigation Besieges a Monument](#)

9 Jul

INDIAN EXPRESS

[Five Decades After the Emergency, Difficult Questions, Unheeded Warnings](#)

25 Jun

THE HINDU

[When the Young Took Up Arms: On the Ethics of Revolutionary Violence](#)

22 Jun

RELATED KEY TERMS

Ujjayi Current Affairs · ujjayi.com · Free Daily Current Affairs for UPSC & State PCS

KEY TERM

[Bodh Gaya Temple Management Committee \(BTMC\)](#)

The eight-member statutory body created under the Bodh Gaya Temple...

KEY TERM

[Bombay Reorganisation Act, 1960](#)

The central legislation enacted under Article 3 that bifurcated the...

KEY TERM

[Classical Languages of India](#)

Six Indian languages designated 'Classical' by the Government of India...

KEY TERM

[Eighth Schedule](#)

The constitutional list of India's 22 officially recognised languages,...

Ujiyari Current Affairs · ujiyari.com · ~~Free Daily~~ Current Affairs for UPSC & State PCS

CURATED & WRITTEN BY

Bharat Choudhary

UPSC Educator & Content Creator

 [linkedin.com/in/epicbharat](https://www.linkedin.com/in/epicbharat) [Read Full Article on Ujiyari →](#)<https://ujiyari.com/daily/2026/07/11/india-kyrgyzstan-manas-mahabharata-centre-2026/>

ALSO FROM THE CREATOR

BharatNotes

Free UPSC study platform — subject-wise notes across all 4 GS papers, Prelims MCQs, Mains answer frameworks, PYQ analysis & progress tracking. **100% Free • No Login Required.**

[Start Preparing → bharatnotes.com](#)

OPPORTUNITY

Advertise with Ujiyari

Reach **thousands of serious UPSC & State PCS aspirants** daily through our PDFs, website, and social channels.

Ideal for: Coaching institutes • EdTech platforms • Book publishers • Exam prep apps

 epicbharat@gmail.com

Write to us for rates & media kit

Free UPSC & State PCS Current Affairs · [ujiyari.com](#) · [bharatnotes.com](#)