

Mexico's Ancient Pyramid Crumbles to Ruins: A Historic Discovery

Description

Escalating climatic disturbances and the encroachment of rising seas are [jeopardizing invaluable](#) cultural heritage sites globally, placing them in significant peril.

A striking illustration of this troubling trend emerged in 2024, as a stone pyramid in Mexico succumbed to an increasingly erratic global climate.

On July 29, the [15-meter \(approximately 50-foot\)](#) square monument, situated in the state of [Michoacán](#), collapsed catastrophically under the relentless drumming of sustained rainfall, its southern wall disintegrating into a mound of debris.

Esteemed as one of the most well-preserved edifices of the Michoacán Kingdom civilization, the pyramid is part of [Ihuatzio](#), a remarkably intact archaeological site featuring another pyramid, a defensive tower, and several tombs.

This site was first established around 1,100 years ago by Nahuatl-speaking indigenous groups. Subsequently, it became the epicenter of the [P'urhépecha](#) people, renowned as the [only civilization to evade Aztec conquest](#). Their cultural legacy continues to flourish today.

Although only one pyramid sustained damage, personnel from Mexico's National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH) [reported](#) that at least six of its 'stepped bodies' exhibit signs of neglect, encompassing both the outer wall and its core structure.

They attributed the calamity to the extreme meteorological conditions preceding the event.

Pyramid Collapse

The collapse of the south wall of the pyramid at Ihuatzio. (Ramiro Aguayo/INAH)

During July, the apex of the Northern Hemisphere's summer, torrential rain and fierce thunderstorms [assaulted](#) vast regions of Mexico, a stark contrast to the [devastating drought](#) that plagued the nation for three decades, rendering several lakes desiccated.

"The elevated temperatures documented in the region, coupled with the resultant drought, created fissures that facilitated the infiltration of water into the ancient edifice," [stated](#) an INAH announcement.

Consequently, the structure's collapse appeared almost preordained. Authorities are now prioritizing repairs to safeguard the integrity of this significant cultural heritage.

While archaeologists are committed to unraveling the complexities of human behaviour throughout history, it is inescapably clear that their endeavors are invariably affected by contemporary anthropogenic activities.

The escalating incidence of extreme weather phenomena and rising sea levels, fueled by human-induced climate change, emerges as a formidable threat to vital sites representative of our cultural past.

Recently, researchers have discovered that ancient cave paintings in Oceania are deteriorating at an alarming rate due to rapid climatic shifts.

This year, a [study](#) examining the resilience of cultural heritage building materials in Europe and Mexico revealed that significant increases in precipitation pose heightened risks of damage to such structures.

Pyramid INAH

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Another perspective of the pyramid at Ihuatzio, illustrating the damaged south wall. (Ramiro Aguayo/INAH)

According to Tariakuiiri Alvarez, a current member of the P'urhépecha tribe, his ancestors would have interpreted the pyramid's degradation as an ominous sign.

In a Facebook [post](#), Alvarez articulated that prior to the arrival of foreign conquerors in Mexico, similar occurrences were perceived as divine displeasure.

Shortly before the pyramid's collapse in Mexico, Utah's iconic 'Double Arch' also [succumbed](#) to structural failure, presumably due to fluctuating water levels and erosion.

Heritage sites of this nature are invaluable assets that humanity strives to conserve for future generations. Witnessing their disintegration due to a climate drastically reshaped by human actions is a source of profound disquiet, extending beyond ephemeral concerns.



Vocabulary List:

1. **Catastrophically** /kə'tæstrə,fɪkli/ (adverb): In a way that causes great damage or catastrophe.
2. **Encroachment** /ɪn'krəʊtʃmənt/ (noun): Intrusion on a person's territory rights etc.
3. **Deteriorating** /dɪ'tɪəriə,reitɪŋ/ (verb): Becoming progressively worse.
4. **Significant** /sɪg'nɪfɪkənt/ (adjective): Sufficiently great or important to be worthy of attention.
5. **Resilience** /rɪ'zɪljəns/ (noun): The capacity to recover quickly from difficulties.
6. **Anthropogenic** /,ænrəpə'dʒenɪk/ (adjective): Originating in human activity often referring to environmental changes.

Vocabulary quizzes

Multiple Choice (Select the Correct answer for each question.)

1. Which adverb means involving a sudden and widespread disaster?
Option: Encroachment
Option: Deteriorating
Option: Catastrophically
Option: Significant
2. Which term refers to environmental pollution originating from human activity?
Option: Solitude
Option: Isolation
Option: Resilience
Option: Anthropogenic
3. What do we call a widespread occurrence of an infectious disease in a community at a particular time?
Option: Corroborates
Option: Epidemic
Option: Deliterious
Option: Nuanced
4. Which verb means to make someone anxious or unsettled?
Option: Perturb
Option: Proclivity
Option: Diminished
Option: Axiom
5. What term describes information based on observation or experience rather than theory or pure logic?



Option: Ramifications

Option: Infused

Option: Elicited

Option: Empirical

6. Which term relates to the progressive loss of structure or function of neurons in the brain or spinal cord?

Option: Augmented

Option: Neurodegenerative

Option: Elucidate

Option: Cohort

7. What term describes a mutual relationship or connection between two or more things?

Option: Disparity

Option: Proclivity

Option: Correlation

Option: Modulating

8. Which word describes an individual who is separated from others or feeling alone?

Option: Infused

Option: Isolated

Option: Elucidated

Option: Diminished

9. Which term describes a lack of harmony or agreement between things?

Option: Diminished

Option: Dissonance

Option: Augmented

Option: Axiom

10. Which term refers to the act of adjusting or regulating something?

Option: Elicited

Option: Modulating

Option: Pivotal

Option: Correlation

Gap-Fill (Fill in the blanks with the correct word from the vocabulary list.)

11. _____ is the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties; toughness.

12. The research findings suggest a _____ improvement in the treatment outcomes.



13. The author's argument is _____ and requires careful consideration.
14. Teamwork plays a _____ role in the success of this project.
15. The new technology _____ the capabilities of our existing system.
16. Could you please _____ your statement for better understanding?
17. The quality of service _____ after the recent restructuring.
18. In science the law of conservation of energy is considered a fundamental _____.
19. The decision will have far-reaching _____ on our business operations.
20. The question _____ interesting responses from the audience.

Matching Sentences (Match each definition to the correct word from the vocabulary list.)

21. The rapid urbanization led to increased _____ on the wildlife habitats.
22. The company's financial _____ situation has been _____ over the past year.
23. John sought the tranquility of the mountains to find peace and _____.
24. The effects of smoking on health are largely _____ in the long run.
25. The new evidence _____ strongly the witness's version of events.
26. There is a noticeable _____ in the distribution of wealth in the country.
27. Her natural _____ for music led her to pursue a career in the arts.
28. The chef _____ the dish with aromatic spices to enhance the flavor.
29. The sudden change in plans seemed _____ to her usual calm demeanor.
30. The professor _____ the complex theory with simple examples for better understanding.

Answer

Multiple Choice: 1. Catastrophically 2. Anthropogenic 3. Epidemic 4. Perturb 5. Empirical 6. Neurodegenerative



7. Correlation 8. Isolated 9. Dissonance 10. Modulating

Gap-Fill: 11. Resilience 12. Significant 13. Nuanced 14. Pivotal 15. Augmented 16. Elucidate 17. Diminished
18. Axiom 19. Ramifications 20. Elicited

Matching sentence: 1. Encroachment 2. Deteriorating 3. Solitude 4. Deliterious 5. Corroborates 6. Disparity
7. Proclivity 8. Infused 9. Perturb 10. Elucidated

CATEGORY

1. Health - LEVEL6

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