

AS INTRODUCED IN THE RAJYA SABHA
ON THE 5TH DECEMBER, 2025

Bill No. LXI of 2025

THE HISTORICAL HERITAGE CONSERVATION
BILL, 2025

A
BILL

*to provide for a mechanism to maintain, preserve and protect
identified and unidentified ancient, historical or
archaeological sites, remains, monuments,
modules and carvings in the country
and for matters connected
therewith or incidental
thereto.*

BE it enacted by the Parliament in the Seventy-sixth Year of the Republic
of India as follows:—

1. (1) This Act may be called the Historical Heritage Conservation Act, 2025.
(2) It shall come into force on such date as the Central Government may,
by notification in the Official Gazette, appoint.

Short title and
commencement.

Definitions.

2. In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires, —

(a) “appropriate Government” means in the case of a State, the Government of that State, and in other cases, the Central Government;

(b) “Authority” means the Heritage Conservation Regulatory Authority to be constituted under clause (c) of sub-section (2) of section 3; 5

(c) “historical or archaeological site” means areas having or believed to have ruins or remains of historical or archaeological importance for more than one hundred years, including locations related to Indian civilization or the freedom movement; 10

(d) “historical heritage” includes any historical site, archaeological remain, antiquity, or monument of national or cultural significance;

(e) “non-governmental organisation” means any institution engaged in the conservation of historical heritage for at least three years with a demonstrable track record; and 15

(f) “prescribed” means prescribed by rules made under this Act.

Setting up of a mechanism for heritage conservation.

3. (1) **The Central Government shall, by notification in the Official Gazette, establish a mechanism for the conservation of historical heritage across all States of the country.** 20

(2) The mechanism established under sub-section (1) shall include the following, namely:

(a) entrusting conservation work, to eligible non-governmental organisations, of historical or archaeological sites declared to be of national or local importance by the appropriate Government, in such manner as may be prescribed; 25

(b) defining the eligibility criteria for selection of non-governmental organisations for the purpose under clause (a); 30

(c) **constitution of a Heritage Conservation Regulatory Authority, with such composition, functions and subject to such procedural regulations, as may be prescribed, to monitor, approve, and report on the activities of the selected non-governmental organisations;** 35

(d) **provision of financial assistance to the selected non-governmental organisations on the recommendation of the Authority constituted under clause (c);**

(e) **mandating the selected non-governmental organisations to undertake public awareness campaigns on heritage conservation;** 40

(f) provision for appropriate legal action against selected non-governmental organisations in case of any malpractice or violation of the provisions of the Act;

(g) designating the Union Ministry of Culture as the nodal agency for implementation of the mechanism established under sub-section (1) and oversight on the functioning of the Authority constituted under clause (c); 45

(h) empowering the selected non-governmental organisations to collect nominal entry fees to historical or 50

archaeological sites, with prior approval of the Authority constituted under clause (c); and

(i) authorizing selected non-governmental organisations with the responsibility of excavation, maintenance, and protection of local-level historical or archaeological sites, in such manner as may be prescribed.

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4. **(1) It shall be the duty of the appropriate Government to ensure effective and timely implementation of the provisions of this Act.**

Implementation by the appropriate Government.

10 (2) The appropriate Government shall regularly review and monitor the functioning of non-governmental organisations working in the historical heritage conservation sector as provided under this Act, in such manner as may be prescribed.

15 5. **The Central Government shall, after due appropriation made by Parliament by law in this behalf, provide adequate funds to the State Governments and the Authority for carrying out the provisions of this Act.**

Central Government to provide adequate funds.

24 of 1958.
20 6. The provisions of this Act shall be in addition to and not in derogation of the provisions of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958 or the rules made thereunder or any other law in this regard for the time being in force and in case of any inconsistency, the provisions of this Act shall have over riding effect on the provisions of any such law to the extent of such inconsistency.

Act not in derogation of any other laws.

25 7. If any non-governmental organisation entrusted under this Act is found to have violated the objectives of this Act or misused funds or acted in a manner detrimental to heritage conservation as provided under this Act, the appropriate Government may in addition to taking appropriate legal action as provided under clause (f) of sub-section (2) of section 3, withdraw the work permission entrusted under clause (a) of sub-section (2) of section 3:

Action against non-governmental organisations.

30 Provided that no such work permission shall be withdrawn without giving the concerned non-governmental organisation a reasonable opportunity of being heard in such manner as may be prescribed.

35 8. **(1) The appropriate Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, make rules for carrying out the purposes of this Act.**

Power to make rules.

40 (2) Every rule made under this Act shall be laid, as soon as may be after it is made, before each House of Parliament, while it is in session, for a total period of thirty days which may be comprised in one session or in two or more successive sessions, and if, before the expiry of the session immediately following the session or the successive sessions aforesaid, both Houses agree in making any modification in the rule or both the Houses agree that the rule should not be made, the rule shall thereafter have effect only in such modified form or be of no effect, as the case may be; so, however, that any such modification or annulment shall be without prejudice to the validity of anything previously done under that rule.

45 (3) Every rule made by the State Government shall be laid, as soon as may be after it is made, before each House of the State Legislature, where it consists of two Houses or where such Legislature consists of only one House, before that House.

STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS

India's rich and ancient heritage is a global symbol of civilization, culture, and freedom. However, several historical sites, monuments, and ruins remain unidentified, unprotected, or poorly maintained. Unplanned urbanization, neglect, and lack of local participation threaten this legacy. Therefore, there is a compelling need for a formal mechanism that involves public institutions and credible non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in the conservation effort.

This Bill aims to:

- Identify and preserve both well-known and lesser- explored heritage sites;
- Empower experienced non-governmental organisations to participate in preservation efforts;
- Ensure adequate financial and administrative support for these efforts;
- Create awareness and local ownership for heritage protection.

Hence, this Bill.

DHANANJAY BHIMRAO MAHADIK.

FINANCIAL MEMORANDUM

Clause 3 of the Bill empowers the Central Government to establish a mechanism for conservation of historical heritage across all States of the country including *inter alia* therein to constitute a national-level Heritage Conservation Regulatory Authority to monitor, approve and report on the activities of non-governmental organisations entrusted with the work of conserving historical or heritage sites of national or local importance, provision of financial assistance to such non-governmental organisations and mandating them to undertake public awareness campaigns on heritage conservation. Clause 4 mandates that it shall be the duty of the appropriate Government to ensure effective and timely implementation of the provisions of this Bill. Clause 5 provides that the Central Government shall provide adequate funds to the State Governments and the Authority for carrying out the provisions of this Bill.

The Bill, therefore, if enacted, would involve recurring expenditure from the Consolidated Fund of India, which is estimated at one thousand crore rupees per annum. No major non-recurring expenditure is anticipated.

MEMORANDUM REGARDING DELEGATED LEGISLATION

Clause 8 empowers the appropriate Government to make rules for carrying out the provisions of the Act. As these rules pertain to procedural and administrative detail only, the delegation of legislative power is of a routine and normal character.

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(Shri Dhananjay Bhimrao Mahadik, M.P.)