

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CULTURE
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.3227
ANSWERED ON 21.08.2025

PROTECTION OF CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE

3227. SHRI PRAMOD TIWARI:

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) steps taken to protect, restore and promote vast cultural and natural heritage of the country;
- (b) whether our heritage sites are facing problems of illegal constructions and encroachment, unchecked commercialization, climate change, neglect and lack of awareness, the Battle of narratives: History vs. Mythology etc.; and
- (c) if so, the steps taken to address the issues?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE AND TOURISM
(SHRI GAJENDRA SINGH SHEKHAWAT)

- (a) There are 3685 protected monuments and protected areas (sites) representing cultural heritage across the country which are under care and maintenance of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI). Besides these, considerable number of monuments and sites are also under the protection of State Governments, through their respective state legislations. Further, The Natural/Mixed World Heritage Sites comprise areas already under the Protected Area network of India such as National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries. They are protected and maintained by the respective State Forest Departments by the legal framework of applicable conservation laws of India such as the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, Indian Forest Act, 1927 and Forest Acts of State Governments, Forest Conservation Act, 1980 and Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.

To promote heritage, cultural programmes are organized on various occasions like World Heritage Day, World Heritage Week, International Museums Day, Republic Day, Independence Day, Gandhi Jayanti and other occasions by organizing exhibitions, lectures, workshops, competitions, performances etc. involving general public, school and college students. In addition to that, documentaries on heritage are screened at interpretation centers for the benefit of general public.

- (b)& (c) There are encroachments/illegal constructions at some protected monuments and protected areas (sites), which are addressed through enforcement of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958 and Rules, 1959.

Further, conservation issues caused by natural factors like humidity, rain, sun heat and other climatic factors are taken care of through regular conservation and preservation measures based on requirement and availability of resources, which is a regular phenomenon to ensure better maintenance of protected monument and protected areas.
