

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CULTURE
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1460
ANSWERED ON 12/02/2026

PREVENTION OF ILLICIT TRAFFICKING OF ANTIQUITIES

1460. SHRI A. A. RAHIM :

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:-

- (a) the number of cases of illicit trafficking, theft or illegal export of antiquities and cultural artefacts reported in the country during the last five years, year-wise and State-wise;
- (b) the number of investigations initiated, arrests made, prosecutions launched and convictions secured in such cases;
- (c) the estimated value and type of cultural property involved in these cases;
- (d) whether any measures have been instituted to strengthen surveillance, documentation and inter-agency coordination with customs, police and international bodies to prevent illicit trade; and
- (e) the steps taken or proposed to empower local heritage bodies and communities to protect cultural property and curb trafficking at source?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF CULTURE AND TOURISM
(SHRI GAJENDRA SINGH SHEKHAWAT)

(a)to(c) Six theft cases have been reported from the Monuments of National Importance. Recovery have been made in four cases. (Annexure I). FIR was lodged in all the cases. None of the above has been reported to have moved abroad. No valuation by Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has been done regarding the above antiquities.

(d)&(e) The Government takes necessary steps towards the prevention of illicit trafficking of cultural property. Besides regular watch and ward staff, Private Security Guards and Central Industrial Security Force have been deployed as per requirement at monuments, sites and museums. Whenever any theft of antiquity is reported; FIR is lodged and 'Look Out Notice' is issued to the law enforcement agencies including Custom Exit Channels to keep vigil to trace stolen antiquity and prevent its export. Efforts are being made to raise awareness towards preserving cultural heritage.

ANNEXURE-I

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (A) TO (C) OF LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO 1460 FOR 12.02.2026

DETAILS OF STOLEN ANTIQUITIES FROM THE MONUMENTS OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE DURING THE LAST FIVE YEARS

S.No.	State	Name of Monuments/Sites (from where the antiquities were stolen and location)	Name of object stolen	Year of theft	Status
1.	Andhra Pradesh	Golingeswara group of Temples, Biccavolu, District East Godawari.	Nandi sculpture	2021	Recovered
2.	Uttarakhand	Bhairav Temple, Mrityunjay Temple Complex, Dwarahat, District Almora.	Shiva Linga	2021	Recovered
3.	Jharkhand	Sitagarha Archaeological Excavation Site, District Hazaribagh.	Two sculptures of Buddha in bhumisparsha mudra	2021	Recovered
4.	Karnataka	Ganpati Amma Shrine of Lakshminarasimha Temple, Marehalli, District Mandya.	Stone idol of Ganpati	2022	-
5.	Bihar	Village Dattina, P.S Vikram, District Patna.	Image of Vishnu	2022	-
6.	Tamil Nadu	Parthasarathi and Krishna Temples, Parthivapuram, Vilavancode, District Kanyakumari.	Idol of Vishnu	2024	Recovered
