

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CULTURE
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.5574
TO BE ANSWERED ON 2.4.2018

NEGLECT OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONUMENTS IN VELLORE CITY

5574. SHRI B. SENGUTTUVAN:

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the historic city of Vellore abounds in a variety of archaeological monuments of ancient origin and if so, the details and significance thereof;
- (b) whether the city has a Fort constructed during the reign of Vijayanagar Kings is not in a state of neglect and if not, the details of the conservation work done at this site in the past three decades;
- (c) whether the Hill Fort constructed by Chatrapathi Shivaji is lying in a state of total neglect and if so, the details thereof along with the conservative works done at this site;
- (d) whether the pillar erected in 1887 to commemorate the Jubilee of Queen Victoria's reign and the Tower Clock erected in memory of the ascension of King George V and also dedicated to the memory of the soldiers who died during the First World War are not in a state of neglect and if not, the details of the conservation work done at these sites in the past three decades; and
- (e) whether the main Fort ground, on the Eastern side, which used to be licenced for conduct of meetings, fairs, exhibitions and circuses is no longer allowed for the said purpose whilst acres and acres of the Fort ground, on the Southern side, has been illegally leased by the archaeology department in collusion with the district administration in violation of the provisions of law to some private individual and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR CULTURE AND
MINISTER OF STATE FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

(DR. MAHESH SHARMA)

- (a) The details are at Annexure-I.
- (b) The Vellore Fort was constructed during the reign of Vijayanagar Kingdom. The other structures related to the progeny of Tipu Sultan and last King of Sri Lanka located inside the Fort are not under the protection of Archaeological Survey of India (ASI). The details of conservation works undertaken by ASI for protection of monuments are at Annexure-II.
- (c)&(d) The said monuments are not under the protection of ASI.
- (e) The area in front of the Vellore Fort has been identified for environmental upgradation for maintaining proper ambience. The area on the southern side of the Vellore Fort has been handed over to District Collector, Vellore by ASI for tourism development proposals around the monument.

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (a) OF LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 5574 FOR 2.4.2018

DETAILS AND SIGNIFICANCE OF MONUMENTS/SITES IN VELLORE

MONUMENTS UNDER ASI

1. Fort Vellore: This fort was constructed by Bomminayaka , a subordinate under Sadasivaraya of the Vijayanagar kingdom in 16th century CE . It is finest specimen of military architecture in south India during Vijayanagar period. This fort has both secular and religious building Tippu mahal, Hydermahal , are among the secular buildings.
2. Jalakantesvara Temple: The temple structure in the Fort was built by Vijayanagara dynasty in mid of 16th Century CE. The significance of the temple is it's Kalyana mandapa. This mandapa with its exquisitely carved 40 pillars is one of the few specimens of the late Vijayanagara architectural style.
3. Old Mosque: The mosque is the only Islamic monument inside the fort. It was constructed by the Nawab Arcot in 17th Century CE. It is rectangular in plan decorated with floral and arch designs.

MONUMENT UNDER STATE ARCHAEOLOGY, GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU

1. Tombs of Ceylon Kings, Vellore: The seven tombs of Ceylon Kings found at the place called Aruganathapoondi. Among them the biggest one is of Vendhan Sri Vikrama Raja singan. It belongs to 19th Cent. A.D. The king of SriLanka Sri Veeraparakrama Narendra Simhan ruled Kandi in 18th Cent. A.D. He was imprisoned by British at Kandi Mahal in Vellore and died in the year 1832.

OTHER HISTORICAL MONUMENTS IN VELLORE CITY

1. Clock tower Vellore: The Clock Tower at Vellore was erected in memory of the coronation of King George V. The tower is also dedicated to the 22 soldiers who went to fight from this town during the 1st World War (1914-1919).
2. Madarazaye Mohammadiya Masjid: The Madarazaye Mohammadiya Masjid or the Mosque of the Nawab Chanda Sahib was constructed in 1750 CE. The masjid is built with brick and lime. A large prayer hall is put together on the western side for performing namaz. It is 15 feet in breadth and 40 feet in length. The masjid has its entrance on the northern side.
3. Hill fort Vellore, Vellore: This fortress on the hill to east of Vellore City is probably one of the two fortresses which were built during the siege of Vellore Fort by Chhatrapati Shivaji's army in 1678. This fortress is nearly 2 km from the Vellore Fort. This fort believed to be built in 1678 CE by Chhatrapati Shivaji Army during the siege of Vellore Fort.
4. Pillar of Queen Victoria, Vellore: In 1887, to commemorate the Jubilee of queen Victoria , a pillar was erected.
5. Tipu Sultan Family Graveyard: After the Sepoy Mutiny in the year 1806, the British transferred Tipu's son and daughters to another Calcutta. The Bakshi Begam , widow of Hyder Ali, and Padshah Begum, tipu Wife who died in 1834 were died in 1834 and their grave yard is at Vellore.

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (b) OF LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 5574 FOR 2.4.2018

DETAILS OF CONSERVATION WORKS CARRIED OUT AT THE MONUMENTS IN VELLORE FORT FOR PAST THREE DECADES BY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA

1977 -1978– Conservation under SR(P) to providing fencing around the protected area of Fort, Vellore

- Provides for fencing with barbed wire and angle iron posts fixed in 1:5:10 cement concrete etc.
- Provides for provision of 4 nos of welded mesh gates at various places.

1978-1979 – Conservation under SR(P) to Jalakanteswara temple at Vellore

- Provides for fencing with barbed wire and angle iron posts at western side of the temple, south west corner and north west side
- Construction of brick masonry pedestals for the fixing of loose sculptures.
- Mending of broken sculptures.

1993-1994 – Conservation of Old collectorate building (sculpture shed).

- Encasing the brick masonry pedestal with teak ply wood.
- Providing and supplying of one side show cases.
- Providing ms grills for the existing windows of the collector's chamber for the safety of antiquities.
- Making show cases for display of bronzes.
- Provides for rewiring and fixing spot lights for the main sculptures display hall.
- Provides for fixing write-ups in English and Tamil language for historical information.

1993-1994 – Conservation under SR(P) Jalakanteswara temple at Vellore.

- Treatment to stone flooring surface for fixing the RCC columns.
- Fixing pillar capitals for the mandapa over the columns.
- Fixing beam in RCC as per the designs southern side of the Amman Shrine.
- Providing weathering courses for the roof
- Plastering the columns beam pillars capitals and sajja as per the existing ornamental designs.

1993-1994 – Conservation under SR(P) to reconstruction of the fallen moat wall at Vellore.

- Construction of coffer dam in the moat to create the working area between the moat wall and the water area after baling/pumping out the water.
- Baling/Pumping out the water between the coffer dam and the wall.
- Dismantling the carefully removing the precariously standing stone wall of the moat and stocking the stones safely.
- Collecting the old stones of the fallen moat wall from inside the moat and conveying them to the top and stocking them for reuse from north east corner.
- Cleaning the earth and debris in the foundation area for laying proper foundation and throwing away the earth.
- Earthwork excavation in hard gravelly soil.
- Reconstruction of the wall with old available stone and using new stones.
- Packing and consolidating the rear side of the moat wall at north east corner.

- Pointing the masonry joints of the moat wall, brick work and plastering the top of the brick wall.
- Fencing post using old rail girders from north east corner to fisheries depot.
- Providing ms grill fencing with stone wall on the north east corner of the Fort.

1996 -1997 – Conservation under SR(P) to Jalakanteswara temple at Vellore.

- Strengthening the stucco figures on the thirumadil inner and southern thirumadil outer walls.
- Painting to the old wooden doors and windows.
- Painting two coats to the old ms iron grills.
- Construction of masonry dwarf wall and refixing the grill over the dwarf wall.

1997-1998 – Construction of Toilet block at old collectorate building (sculpture shed), Vellore

- Providing and construction of a new toilet block for visitors

2000-2001 – Conservation under SR(P) Jalakanteswara temple, Vellore

- Mending the old Nandhis.
- Mending the old kodus with stucco figures.
- Providing and making new nandhis in the missing place.
- Providing kodus and stucco in the missing place.

2000-2001 – Conservation under SR(P) to Fort and rampart wall.

- Repairs to fort wall using the old available stones.
- Treatment to weathered old plaster from the upper rampart walls and mending the weathered / broken portion from north to south bays.
- Fixing the GI pipes to the corner gaps (missing portion for safety to the visitors)

2001-2002. Conservation of Rampart walls and upper rampart bastions

- Carefully removing the huge boulders at the top of main entrance of the Fort.
- Carefully removing the earth with boulders at the right side of the Fort entrance for exposing the original structure of the Fort wall.
- Dismantling the damaged/dead plaster from the outer rampart wall west at south side, under pointing the damaged portion and then plastering with combination mortar.
- Carefully removing the old damaged dead concrete on top of the outer rampart.
- Carefully removing the damaged/ old dead plaster from the outer rampart wall inner side and finishing the top with combination mortar.
- Pointing the stone joints of the rampart wall south side to inside the vegetation growths.

2001-2002. Conservation of construction of brick pedestal for fixing the available loose sculptures.

- Carefully removing the old dead plaster from the wall racking out the joints cleaning with potable water and then applying the plastering.
- Construction of brick pedestal with country bricks for fixing the available loose sculptures in cement mortar.
- White washing two coats to the plastered walls
- Color washing two coats to the old exterior walls.
- Painting two coats to the old wooden doors and windows.
- Color washing two coats to the interior walls.
- Providing apron around the IInd building of the museum.

2001-2002 – Conservation of providing of barbed wire fencing to the Fort.

- Providing barbed wire fencing post at northern side (Bangalore road), southern side nursery main gate to basket ball ground.
- Repairs to the iron gates.

2001-2002 – Conservation under SR(P) to Jalakanteswara temple, Vellore.

- Carefully removing the damaged weathering course from the leaky roof.
- Laying brick jelly concrete using pure lime paste, kadukkai and jagary and then laying two layer of flat tiles.
- Construction of copings with terrace over the cloister mandapa.
- Plastering to the coping walls including curing, coloring etc.
- Pointing to the stone flooring joints and treatment
- Painting two coats to the old iron grills.
- Painting to the old wood works.
- Varnishing two coats to the main doors.
- Repairs to the broken wooden frames of the gopura openings.

2002-2003. Conservation of Rampart walls and bays and bastins and providing ms grill fencing at the northern side of the Fort.

- Minor repairs to outer rampart wall of southern side, water tightening etc.
- Repairs to upper and lower rampart wall west side
- Providing ms grill fencing to the protected area of northern side of the fort

2003-2004: Conservation of old sessions court building, Vellore.

- Deplastering and plastering to the interior as well as exterior walls
- Repairs to terrace roof
- Repairs to ceilings

2003-2004 – Conservation under SR(P) to Fort and rampart wall at Vellore.

- Carefully removing the damaged dead plaster from the outer rampart walls south and west side areas.
- Pointing to the fort wall stone joints of the rampart wall of south and west sides areas.
- Supplying and fixing the small iron grill gate to easy access of the staff.
- Supplying and fixing the low level grills including painting.
- Carefully removing the barbed wire fence with RCC post for providing new ms low level grill fencing.

2004-2005 – Conservation of old sessions court building Vellore.

- Repairs to the inner walls and plastering
- Repairs to the ceilings and roof
- Painting two coats to the old wooden doors and windows

2004-2005 – Conservation of old sessions court building Vellore.

- Repairs to the interior walls
- Providing madras terrace roof with one course of terrace bricks and then laying of two layers of flat tiles etc.,
- White washing two coats to the ceilings.
- Color washing two coats to the exterior walls and interior
- Painting two coats to the old wooden doors and windows.

- Repairs to the broken windows and sun shades etc.,

2004-2005 – Conservation under SR(P) to Fort and rampart wall at Vellore.

- Cleaning the vegetation growth at the lower and upper rampart wall areas.
- Repairs to the Fort rampart wall of north, south and west side.
- Providing small ms iron grills gates.
- Providing ms grill fencing from north west corner to two wing main gate and from two wing gate to kal arasan tree including painting after removing the old barbed wire fencing with RCC posts and providing a ms grill gate.

2005-2006 - Conservation under SR(P) to Fort and rampart wall at Vellore.

- Repairs to upper rampart wall at west and northern sides and southern sides
- Providing small ms iron grills gates.
- Providing ms grill fencing from alwar temple to ex nora opposite to ex nora to police kalyana mandapam including painting after removing the old barbed wire fencing with RCC posts and providing a ms grill gate.

2006-2007- Construction of Toilet block inside the Fort, Vellore.

- Construction of Toilet block inside the Fort, Vellore.

2008-2009 – Conservation under SR(P) to Fort and lower moat wall at Vellore.

- Carefully removing the heavy jungles at northern side of lower moat wall.
- Excavating and leveling the area with a depth of 0.30mtrs conveying and keeping round stones for providing grills
- Providing ms grill fencing from police kalyanamandapam to fort maidan southern side upto old existing grill fencing
- Providing ms grill gates for easy access
- Restoration of retaining walls at northern side of the lower fort moat wall.

2010-2011 – Conservation under SR(P) to Jalakanteswara temple at Vellore.

- Carefully cleaning the old surface by removing the mass and lichens with coir brush to the main gopuras, Thirumadil walls etc.
- Color washing two coats to the gopura, vimanas, thirumadils and stuccos etc.
- Painting two coats to the old grills, grill doors, wooden doors, windows and temple doors etc.
- Water tightening the leaky roof of the cloister mandapa and western side and eastern side.
- Providing apron in the outer prakara for easy move of the temple car and visitors.
- Providing ms grill fencing from garden gate to steps and from steps to ramp gate and from ramp gate to existing low level grills including painting etc.

2012-13 – Conservation under SR(P) to Jalakanteswara temple at Vellore.

- Providing apron in the outer prakara for easy movement of the temple car and visitors at north side, west side and east side.

2013-14– Conservation under SR(P) to Jalakanteswara temple at Vellore.

- Removing the existing damage rusted low level ms grills in front of the kalyanamandapam.
- Dismantling the RR stone masonry wall at kalyanamandapa.
- Removing the undulated rough huge stone pavement around the bathalamandapama under way structure.
- Providing new granite flooring for easy movement of the temple car and visitors at outer prakara south east side.

- Removing the existing stone flooring for easy drain out of drain water and resetting the same in position.

2010-2011 – Conservation under SR(P) to Fort at Vellore.

- Carefully removing the vegetation growth, excavating and leveling the area, carefully removing the fallen huge size stones, carefully removing the precariously standing out of plumb, earth work excavation in hard gravelly soil.
- Construction of retaining RR masonry wall at western side corner including packing and consolidating the rear side of the lower moat wall including plastering and pointing to the stone joints.

2011-2012- Conservation under OW(P) to old collectorate building, Vellore

- White washing to the ceilings, Color washing to the exterior and interior walls, painting to the old wooden doors and windows, providing new sun shades after replacing the broken sun shade.
- Water tightening to the leaky roof of the badusha mahal 1st floor.

2012-13 - Conservation under SR(P) to Fort at Vellore

- Carefully removing the vegetation growth, excavating and leveling the area, carefully removing the fallen huge size stones, carefully removing the precariously standing out of plumb, earth work excavation in hard gravelly soil.
- Reconstruction of fallen moat wall at western side including packing and consolidating the rear side of the lower moat wall including plastering and pointing to the stone joints.

2013-14 – Conservation of Repairs to the Fort complex building, Vellore

- Providing ms grill fencing over the dwarf wall including painting etc complete.
- Carefully removing the old dead plastering and replastering.
- Color washing two coats to the exterior walls, wooden doors and windows

2014-15- Conservation under SR(P) to Jalakanteswara temple at Vellore.

- Providing and laying granite stone apron at western side from kalyanamandapam to badhalamadapam, northern side from badhalamandapam to yagasalamandapam, eastern side from yagasalamandapa to alangaramandapa and southern side from madapali to main gopura.
- Fixing ms angle iron grill for covering the rain water outlets channels in the existing stone flooring in the surface level to easy drain out of rain water.

2014-15 – Conservation under SR(P) to Fort maidan and open area, Vellore.

- Providing ms grill fencing over the dwarf wall including painting etc at Fort maidan south east corner.
- Earthwork excavation and clearing the accumulated earth including removing vegetation growth, collecting and conveying the earth/debris inside the area to far off place outside the town.
- Excavating and leveling the area of Fort maidan.

2014-15 - Conservation under SR(P) to Fort at Vellore

- Carefully removing the vegetation growth, excavating and leveling the area, carefully removing the fallen huge size stones, carefully removing the precariously standing out of plumb, earth work excavation in hard gravelly soil.
- Reconstruction of fallen moat wall at western side IIIrd portion including packing and consolidating the rear side of the lower moat wall including plastering and pointing the stone joints.

2014-15 – Conservation under OW(P) to structural repairs to the old collectorate building, Vellore

- Minor repairs to the old iron grills and cleaning of debris.

2015-2016- Conservation under SR(P) to Fort, Vellore.

- Carefully removing the vegetation growth, excavating and leveling the area, carefully removing the fallen huge size stones, carefully removing the precariously standing out of plumb, earth work excavation in hard gravelly soil.
- Reconstruction of fallen moat wall at western side IIIrd portion including packing and consolidating the rear side of the lower moat wall including plastering and pointing the stone joints.

2016-17- Conservation under SR(P) to Fort, Vellore.

- Carefully removing the vegetation growth, excavating and leveling the area, carefully removing the fallen huge size stones, carefully removing the precariously standing out of plumb, earth work excavation in hard gravelly soil.
- Reconstruction of fallen moat wall at western side IVth portion including packing and consolidating the rear side of the lower moat wall including plastering and pointing to the stone joints.

2016-17 – Conservation under SR(P) to Jalakanteswara temple at Vellore.

- Water tightening the cloister mandapa roof by laying brick jelly concrete and laying flat tiles, painting and varnishing to the temple doors.

2016-17 – Conservation under OW(P) to old sessions court building, Vellore

- Removing of damaged rafters and beams of madras terrace roof and replacing with “I” sections etc complete.

2016-17 – Conservation of Repairs to the fort complex building.

- Providing ms grill fencing over the dwarf wall including painting etc.
- Carefully removing the old dead plastering and replastering.
- Color washing two coats to the exterior walls, wooden doors and windows
- Water tightening the ceiling and drainage.

2016-17 – Conservation of old collectorate building, Vellore.

- Providing and laying brick on edge flooring, color washing to the exterior wall and interior walls, painting to the old wooden doors and windows.

2017-18 - Conservation under SR(P) to Fort at Vellore.

- Carefully removing the vegetation growth, excavating and leveling the area, carefully removing the fallen huge size stones, carefully removing the precariously standing out of plumb, earth work excavation in hard gravelly soil.
- Reconstruction of fallen moat wall at western side Vth portion including packing and consolidating the rear side of the lower moat wall including plastering and pointing the stone joints.

2017-18 – Conservation of old sessions court building, old pensioners building, NAPCO print association building, Jalakanteswara temple.

In addition to every year maintenance works like cleaning, white washing and color washing, watch and ward and maintenance done under annual maintenance and upkeep and average 10 hectares of lawn developed as garden and maintained by Horticulture branch of Archaeological survey of India.
