

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF CULTURE  
**LOK SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-1798**  
ANSWERED ON- 31/07/2023

**THEFT OF IDOLS**

1798. SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI KARUNANIDHI

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:-

- (a) the details regarding the number of temple idols stolen and recovered so far in the country, State-wise including Tamil Nadu during the last 10 years;
- (b) the measures taken by the Government to prevent idol theft in temples;
- (c) the details regarding the number of idols stolen and still not recovered from foreign countries, country-wise; and
- (d) the measures taken by the Government to recover the stolen idols from abroad?

**ANSWER**

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE, TOURISM AND DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION  
(SHRI G. KISHAN REDDY)

- (a) The list of antiquities stolen and recovered from the Centrally Protected Monuments, sites, temples, etc. during last 10 years (2013-2023) is annexed as Annexure-I.
- (b) Archaeological Survey of India is committed towards the protection of monuments, sites and antiquities under its jurisdiction. Besides regular watch and ward staff of Archaeological Survey of India, Private Security Guards, State Police Armed Guards, and Central Industrial Security Force have been deployed as per requirement. Whenever any theft of antiquity is reported, FIR is lodged in concerned police station and 'Look Out Notice' is issued to law enforcement agencies including Custom Exit Channels to keep vigil to trace stolen antiquity and prevent its illegal export.
- (c) Total 31 antiquities have been stolen from the Centrally Protected Monuments, sites, temple, etc. as mentioned Annexure-I, of which 27 are still to be recovered. However, no information is available about their illegal shipping abroad.
- (d) Government is committed to bring back the antiquities of Indian origin which were taken away from India. Whenever any such antiquity of Indian origin surfaces abroad, Archaeological Survey of India takes up the matter with the Indian Embassies/Missions abroad through MEA for their retrieval. Archaeological Survey of India has retrieved 251 antiquities from foreign countries from the year 1976 to 2023, of which 238 have been retrieved from 2014 to 2023.

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART- (a) & (c) LOK SABHA  
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**Details of Idols / Antiquities Stolen from Protected Monuments / Temples  
under ASI in Last Ten Years (2013-2023)**

Sl. No.	States & UTs	Number objects	Recovered
1.	Andhra Pradesh	03	02
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	Nil	Nil
3.	Assam	Nil	Nil
4.	Bihar	04	Nil
5.	Chhattisgarh	02	Nil
6.	Goa	Nil	Nil
7.	Gujarat	Nil	Nil
8.	Haryana	Nil	Nil
9.	Himachal Pradesh	Nil	Nil
10.	Jharkhand	Nil	Nil
11.	Karnataka	14	01
12.	Kerala	Nil	Nil
13.	Madhya Pradesh	Nil	Nil
14.	Maharashtra	Nil	Nil
15.	Manipur	Nil	Nil
16.	Meghalaya	Nil	Nil
17.	Mizoram	Nil	Nil
18.	Nagaland	Nil	Nil
19.	Odisha	04	Nil
20.	Punjab	Nil	Nil
21.	Rajasthan	03	Nil
22.	Sikkim	Nil	Nil
23.	Tamil Nadu	Nil	Nil
24.	Telangana	Nil	Nil
25.	Tripura	Nil	Nil
26.	Uttar Pradesh	Nil	Nil
27.	Uttarakhand	01	01
28.	West Bengal	Nil	Nil
<b>Union Territories</b>			
1.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	Nil	Nil
2.	Chandigarh	Nil	Nil
3.	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	Nil	Nil
4.	Daman and Diu	Nil	Nil
5.	Delhi	Nil	Nil
6.	Jammu and Kashmir	Nil	Nil
7.	Ladakh	Nil	Nil
8.	Lakshadweep	Nil	Nil
9.	Puducherry	Nil	Nil

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