

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CULTURE
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 456
ANSWERED ON 05.02.2024

DIGITAL MAPPING OF ANCIENT SITES

456. DR. T. SUMATHY (a) THAMIZHACHI THANGAPANDIAN:

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:-

- (a) whether the Archaeological Survey of India has made any recent archaeological exploration or expedition to identify and record ancient Tamil Brahmi and early-historic and medieval inscriptions, prehistoric rock paintings, rock engravings in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the important findings made during the last nine years, Circle-wise particularly from Tamil Nadu;
- (c) the steps taken by the Government for the digital mapping of ancient sites having ancient Tamil Brahmi inscriptions, Archaic rock paintings and rock engravings and the funds allocated to the same;
- (d) the measures taken by the Government to excavate the archaic sites in Tamil Nadu to bring to light the archaeological evidences corresponding to the Ancient Tamil Sangam flourished 2000 years ago; and
- (e) the effective steps taken by the Government to catalogue and publish the early historical inscriptions, Numismatics and other important archaeological discoveries made in Tamil Nadu?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE, TOURISM AND DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN
REGION

(SHRI G. KISHAN REDDY)

- (a) The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has undertaken village to village survey and exploration across the country to search and document the archaeological remains, which includes temples, mosques, rock cut caves, stupas, inscriptions, megaliths, sculptures, etc.
- (b) The details are at **Annexure-I**.
- (c) ASI in technical collaboration with Bhaskaracharya Institute for Space Applications and Geoinformatics (BISAG) has launched a mobile application 'Indian Heritage' in September, 2023 containing information on protected monuments and protected areas with textual content and aided by interactive digital maps. The phase that has been launched incorporates 143 ticketed monuments with the ASI.
- (d) During last three years, the ASI has conducted excavations in the state of Tamil Nadu and Central Government has granted approval to the State Department of Archaeology, Universities and Research Institutions for conducting excavations in Tamil Nadu. The details are at **Annexure-II**.
- (e) The ASI publishes the early historical inscriptions, Numismatics and other important archaeological discoveries yearly in departmental publications namely (i) *Indian Archaeology – A Review*, (ii) *Annual Report on Indian Epigraphy*, and *South Indian Inscriptions Volume*.

**ANNEXURE REFERED TO IN REPLY TO PART (b) OF LOK SABHA UNSTARRED
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DETAILS OF FINDINGS DURING THE LAST NINE YEARS

Sl. No.	Name of Circle/ Branch	Number of sites explored (last 9 years)	Important findings
1.	Epigraphy Branch, Mysore	23	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Kongu Chola inscription, Karappadi, District Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu 2. Tamil inscription, Karappadi, District Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu 3. Tamil inscription Kovuru, District Nellore, Andhra Pradesh 4. Chola inscription, Lalgudi, District Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu 5. Three Vatteluttu inscriptions, Irukkandurai, District Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu 6. Chola inscription, Purattur, District Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu 7. Three Chola inscriptions, Lalgudi, District Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu 8. Pandya inscriptions, Avudaiyarkovil, District Pudukkottai, Tamil Nadu 9. Pandya inscription, Tulaiyanur, District Pudukkottai, Tamil Nadu 10. Pandya inscriptions, Melanettur, District Sivagangai, Tamil Nadu 11. Chola inscription, Pudumavilangai, District Tiruvallur, Tamil Nadu 12. Pandya inscription, Kilaikkurichchi, District Pudukkottai, Tamil Nadu 13. Pallava inscription, Devasdanam (Pettaivaitalai), District Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu 14. Hero stone inscription, Sorakulathur, District Thiruvannamalai, Tamil Nadu 15. Vatteluttu inscription, Zameen Ilandaikulam, District Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu 16. A hero stone inscription Melur, District Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu 17. A Vatteluttu inscription, Pichchampatti, District Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu 18. A Chola inscription, Kankotuthavanidam, District Tiruvarur, Tamil Nadu 19. A Pandya inscription, Sittakulam, District Thoothukudi, Tamil Nadu

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			20. Two Brahmi inscriptions, Keeladi, District Sivagangai, Tamil Nadu 21. A Brahmi inscription, Nettarambakkam, District Kanchipuram, Tamil Nadu 22. Inscription of Rajendra I, Bikshandarkovil District Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu 23. Inscription of Rajendra I, Tirukkolakkudi, District Sivagangai, Tamil Nadu
2.	Epigraphy Branch, Nagpur	241	Persian and Arabic inscriptions recovered from Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Telangana, Chhatisgarh, Kerala, Pondicherry, Rajasthan, Odisha, Haryana, Punjab, Bihar, Delhi
3.	Prehistory Branch, Nagpur	6	Megalithic burials, Paleolithic tools, Neolithic polished celts, adzes, chisel, fossils, rock engravings
4.	Excavation Branch V, Vadodara	32	Temples, structural remains, microliths, 500 burials
5.	Aizawl Circle	2	Rock cut -crop with carvings and cup marks, Wangchai.
6.	Amaravati Circle	57	Engraved stone slabs with Telegu inscriptions; sculptures; human, animal and anthropomorphic engravings in temple boundary walls, remains of temples, carved <i>mandapas</i> , hero stones with inscriptions, mosque, Brahmanical and Jain sculptures, megalithic burial, habitational cave with animal paintings and other unidentified graffiti marks, cave with inscriptions, remains of votive stupas, remains of mud fortifications, architectural fragments, remains of colonial architecture
7.	Bangalore Circle	323	Inscribed stones and pillars, inscribed and uninscribed hero stones, memorial stones, sati stones, sculptural fragments, inscribed burials, temple remains, pillared mandapa, architectural members
8.	Chandigarh Circle	2	Prehistoric rock engraving, rock paintings and cup marks
9.	Chennai Circle	358	Natural cave with paintings, Tamil inscription, temple, cist burials, cairn circles, hero stones, sculptures
10.	Dharwad Circle	3	Rock engraving and rock paintings

11.	Guwahati Circle	72	Menhirs with table stones, dolmens, petroglyph having description of animal and human; Sivlinga inside a rock shelter; carved elephant; ancient pond; architectural members; large <i>yonipeetha/ pranala</i>
12.	Jaipur Circle	327	Remains of Tombs, temples and other structural remains
13.	Jabalpur Circle	1	Temple remains, inscriptions, rock cut caves, stupas, sculptures, coins etc.
14.	Nagpur Circle	1	Megalithic stone circle
15.	Ranchi Circle	108	Megalith, rock painting, sculptures and structural remains
16.	Shimla Circle	670	Temple remains, sculptures and mosque
17.	Trichy Circle	1	Rock painting
18.	Trissur Circle	11	Temples, heritage buildings, megaliths, mosque, churches, sculptures, palm leaf/manuscripts
19.	Raipur Circle	679	Sculptures, Shivlinga, microliths, Sati pillars, remains of forts and ancient gateway along with fragmented sculptures of Hindu deity in the vicinity of fort, mud fortification, ancient brick remains, ancient brick temple, microliths consisting of blades, scrapers, points, lunet, remnants of ancient mud fort surrounded by a moat on all sides, stone polisher, skin rubber, megalithic menhirs
20.	Temple Survey Project (North Region)	8	Survey and documentation of temples, ruins of forts
21.	Temple Survey Project (South Region)	232	Structural temple of the Pallavas, Kakatiyas, the Kongu Region; survey/ exploration of lesser known unprotected historically important temples in Tamil Nadu.

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (d) OF LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.456 FOR 05.02.2024

1. The Archaeological Survey of India has conducted excavations in Tamil Nadu during the last three years.

Sl. No.	Year	Name of the Site	Name of Office
1.	2021-22	Vadakkupattu, district Chengalpattu, Tamil Nadu	Chennai Circle
2.	2021-22	Adichnallur and its associated Sites in Tamirabarani River Valey, Taluk Srivaikundam, district Thoothukudi, Tamil Nadu	Trichy Circle
3.	2022-23	Vedakkupattu (Guruvanmedu), district Kanchipuram, Tamil Nadu	Chennai Circle
4.	2022-23	Adichanallur Habitation Mound and its cluster of Habitation mounds (Kalvoi, Karungulam, Kongarayakurich, Agaram and Tirukolur), district Thoothukudi, Tamil Nadu	Trichy Circle

2. The Archaeological Survey of India has granted approval to State Department of Archaeology, Universities and Research Institutions for conducting excavations in Tamil Nadu during last three years.

Sl. No.	Year	Name of the Site	Name of Office
1.	2021-22	Keeladi and its cluster, District Sivagangai, Tamil Nadu	Department of Archaeology, Government of Tamil Nadu
2.	2021-22	Sivagalai and its cluster, District Thoothukudi, Tamil Nadu	Department of Archaeology, Government of Tamil Nadu
3.	2021-22	Vembakottai, District Virudhunagar, Tamil Nadu	Department of Archaeology, Government of Tamil Nadu
4.	2021-22	Thulakkarpatti, District Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu	Department of Archaeology, Government of Tamil Nadu
5.	2021-22	Perumbalai, district Dharmapuri, Tamil Nadu	Department of Archaeology, Government of Tamil Nadu
6.	2021-22	Gangaikondacholapuram- Maligaimedu, District Ariyalur, Tamil Nadu	Department of Archaeology, Government of Tamil Nadu
7.	2021-22	Mayiladumparai, District Krishnagiri, Tamil Nadu	Department of Archaeology, Government of Tamil Nadu
8.	2021-22	Ellantakarai and its surroundings, District Sivaganga, Tamil Nadu	Alagappa University, Tamil Nadu
9.	2021-22	Nagapattinam, district Nagapattinam, Tamil Nadu	Tamil University, Tamil Nadu
10.	2021-22	Nerumbur, taluk Tirukalukundram, district Chengalpattu, Tamil Nadu	University of Madras, Tamil Nadu
11.	2022-23	Keeladi and its clusters like Kondagai, Agaram, District - Sivagangai, Tamil Nadu	Department of Archaeology, Government of Tamil Nadu
12.	2022-23	Gangaikondacholapuram- Maligaimedu, District - Ariyalur, Tamil Nadu	Department of Archaeology, Government of Tamil Nadu

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13.	2022-23	Vembakottai, District - Virudhunagar, Tamil Nadu	Department of Archaeology, Government of Tamil Nadu
14.	2022-23	Thulakkarpatti, District - Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu	Department of Archaeology, Government of Tamil Nadu
15.	2022-23	Kilnamandi, District - Thiruvannamalai, Tamil Nadu	Department of Archaeology, Government of Tamil Nadu
16.	2022-23	Porpanaikottai, District - Pudukkottai, Tamil Nadu	Department of Archaeology, Government of Tamil Nadu
17.	2022-23	Boothinatham, District - Dharmapuri, Tamil Nadu	Department of Archaeology, Government of Tamil Nadu
18.	2022-23	Pattaraiperumbudur, District - Tiruvallur, Tamil Nadu	Department of Archaeology, Government of Tamil Nadu
19.	2023-24	Chettimedu Pathur, Taluk Madurantakam, District Chengalpattu, Tamil Nadu	University of Madras, Tamil Nadu
