

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CULTURE
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2118
TO BE ANSWERED ON 08.03.2021

ROADMAP TO RECOVER ANCIENT IDOLS AND OTHER ARTIFACTS

**2118 SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA VISWANATH:
SHRI P.C. GADDIGOUDAR:**

Will the **Minister of CULTURE** be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of ancient idols and artifacts stolen from India and taken to various countries abroad as well as returned during the last three years, year-wise and country-wise along with the estimated value of recovered idols;
- (b) whether the Government is in a process of consultation with various countries to recover remaining stolen idols and artifacts and if so, the details thereof along with the time by which all the stolen artifacts are likely to be recovered;
- (c) whether the Government is working on a plan to coordinate with the State Governments and come up with a roadmap to recover ancient idols, jewellery and other artifacts reportedly missing from several temples in the States as the national treasures could not be allowed to be looted and smuggled abroad;
- (d) if so, the details thereof during the last five years and current year as on date and steps being taken to locate the temples from where idols, jewels and ancient artifacts were missing and take appropriate action to retrieve them and also for preserving the heritage temples;
- (e) whether some of the temples were found 'missing' and some were in very bad condition and if so, the details thereof and reasons therefor along with the corrective steps being taken in this regard?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR CULTURE & TOURISM

(PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL)

- (a) The details of stolen ancient idols and artefacts which were returned during the last three years year-wise and country-wise is placed in Annexure I & II respectively. All antiquities are priceless, their valuation is not done.
- (b) Yes Sir, ASI is in touch with various countries like USA, Switzerland, Australia, Singapore, Canada, etc. for the retrieval of the antiquities. No time line has been fixed for the same, but this will be done as soon as possible, after following due process. Details are at Annexure III.
- (c) Whenever ASI receives any theft case from Centrally Protected Monuments, State Protected & Monuments, or antiquities that were in private ownership; ASI issues a "Look Out Notice" to all
- (d) concerned enforcing agencies like CBI, DRI, police, and Customs. For retrieval of antiquities from abroad, ASI is in communication with various foreign countries. During the last five years 35 antiquities have been retrieved from the USA, Australia and UK.
- (e) A list of 'missing' monuments has been attached at Annexure IV. However, the conservation work of protected monuments of ASI, including temples, is attended regularly as per availability of resources due to which they are in a good state of preservation.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY OF PART (a) of LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2118 FOR 08.03.2021

ANNEXURE - I

- **Statement giving details of theft of antiquities from Centrally Protected Monuments/Sites/Museums maintained by the Archaeological Survey of India in the year 2017.**

1.	Andhra Pradesh	Theft of a Nandi idol from Sri Anadavalli Ammavaru Temple, Parasurameshwara Swamy Complex, Gudimallam, Chittoor district	Stone	5-10-2017	F.I.R Lodged	Not recovered
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- **No theft is reported from Centrally Protected Monuments/Sites/Museums maintained by the Archaeological Survey of India in the year 2018 and 2019.**

- **Statement giving details of theft of antiquities from Centrally Protected Monuments/Sites/Museums maintained by the Archaeological Survey of India in the year 2020**

1.	Karnataka	Theft of Kalasa fixed to the shikara of Sadashiva Temple, Nuggehalli, Taluk Chennarayapatna, District Hassan, Karnataka	Copper	25-02-2020	F.I.R Lodged	Not recovered
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- **Statement giving details of theft of antiquities from Centrally Protected Monuments/Sites/Museums maintained by the Archaeological Survey of India in the year 2021.**

1.	Uttarakhand	Theft of Shiva Linga from Bhairv Temple, Mrityunjay Temple Complex, Dwarahat, Distrit Almora	stone	10.02.2021	F.I.R Lodged	Police has caught the thief and the stone Shiva <i>linga</i> has been Recovered.
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ANNEXURE - II

THE DETAILS OF ANCIENT IDOLS AND ARTEFACTS STOLEN FROM INDIA TO VARIOUS COUNTRIES ABROAD AS WELL AS RETURNED DURING THE LAST THREE YEARS (2018-2021)

Sl. No.	Description of object	Provenance	Country from which retrieved	Date/ year of Retrieval
1	Durga Mahishasurmardini	Uttarakhand	USA MET Museum	2018
2	Bodhisattva Head	Andhra Pradesh	USA MET Museum	2018
3	Image of Buddha	Bihar	UK	2019
4	Idol of Bronze Nataraja	Tamil Nadu	Australia	2019
5	Nagaraja (The serpent King) Stone sculpture	Central India exact state not known.	Australia	2020
6	Dwarpala, stone sculpture	Tamil Nadu	Australia	2020
7	Dwarpala, stone sculpture	Tamil Nadu	Australia	2020
8	Dancing Shiva	Rajasthan	UK	2020
9	Limestone pillar	Andhra Pradesh	UK	2020
10	Metal idol of Rama	Tamil Nadu	UK	2020
11	Metal idol of Laxamana	Tamil Nadu	UK	2020
12	Metal idol of Sita	Tamil Nadu	UK	2020
13	Navaneetha Krishna	South India	UK	2021

NUMBER OF CASES: RETRIEVAL OF ARTIFACTS UNDER PROCESS

Sl. No.	Country	Number of antiquities/ artifacts
1.	Canada	1
2.	Switzerland	1
3.	Australia	19
4.	Belgium	1
5.	Singapore	17
6.	France	1
7.	Germany	1
8.	USA	71
9.	UK	1

LIST OF MONUMENTS/ SITES WHICH ARE UNTRACEABLE

Assam	
1.	Guns of Emperor Sher Shah, Sadia, Tinsukia
Arunachal Pradesh	
2.	The Ruins of Copper Temple, Paya, Lohit
Haryana	
3.	Kos Minar, Mujesar, Faridabad
4.	Kos Minar, Shahabad, Kurukshetra
Uttarakhand	
5.	Kutumbari Temple, Dwarahat, Almora
Delhi	
6.	Bara Khamba Cemetery, Delhi
7.	Inchla Wali Gumti, Mubarakpur Kotla
Madhya Pradesh	
8.	Rock Inscription, Satna
Maharashtra	
9.	Old European Tomb, Pune
10.	One Buruj, Agarkot
Rajasthan	
11.	Inscription in Fort, Nagar, Tonk
12.	12 th Century Temple, Baran
Uttar Pradesh	
13.	Ruins of three small linga temple circle 1000 AD, Ahugi Mirzapur
14.	Three sites with megaliths on the western and north eastern toes of the hill, Chandauli
15.	Tablet of Treasury Building, Varanasi
16.	Telia Nala Buddhist ruins, Varanasi
17.	A Banyan grove containing traces of an ancient building, Amavey, Ballia
18.	Closed Cemetery, Katra Naka, Banda
19.	Gunner Burkill's Tomb, Mehroni, Lalitpur
20.	Three Tomb, Lucknow- Faizabad Road, Lucknow
21.	Cemeteries at miles 6 and 7, Jahraila Road, Lucknow
22.	Cemetery at Gaughat, Lucknow
23.	Large ruined site called Sandi-Khera, Pali, Shahabad, Hardoi
West Bengal	
24.	Ruins of Fort, Bamanpur, Nadia
