

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CULTURE
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4258
TO BE ANSWERED ON 22.03.2021

DECLARATION OF MADURAI AS HISTORICAL CITY

4258. SHRI S. VENKATESAN:

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it has come to the notice of the government that the Madurai District of Tamil Nadu has evidence based history of Jainism, Buddhism and Dravidian Culture excavated at Keeladi similar to Harappan Civilisation;
- (b) if so, whether the Government is considering to declare Madurai district of Tamil Nadu as historical city and if not, the reason therefor; and
- (c) whether more rail and air connectivity may be given for promoting tourism at Madurai?

ANSWER

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

(SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL)

- (a) ASI conducted excavations at Keeladi for three field seasons (2014-15 to 2016-17) and brought to light the following three cultural periods:

Iron Age (pre 300 BCE)

Early Historic Period (300 BCE– 300 CE)

Post Early Historic Period (Post 300 CE)

The artefacts findings consists of beads of glass, terracotta, semiprecious stones, like carnelian, quartz; ivory ornaments and dice, terracotta figurines, dice, spindle whorls, disc, gamesmen and terracotta seal, various forms of copper and iron objects, bone points, shell bangles, legged quern, etc. The ceramic assemblage includes black and red ware, russet coated ware, white painted black and red ware, red slipped ware, etc.

- (b) At present, there is no such proposal.
- (c) Indian Railways, through IRCTC, is running Bharat Darshan, Pilgrimage Special Tourist Train, Land & Air Packages to Madurai as important tourist destination.
