

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CULTURE
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3655
ANSWERED ON-11.08.2025

DELAY IN PUBLICATION OF KEEZHADI EXCAVATION REPORT

3655. Smt. Kanimozhi Karunanidhi:
Shri S Venkatesan:

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) the reasons for the delay in publishing the excavation report of the Keezhadi archaeological site in Tamil Nadu, despite completion of multiple excavation phases;
- (b) whether the Government has received and accepted the draft excavation report prepared and submitted to the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) in January 2023 and if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether any objections were raised by the Government or ASI officially thereon;
- (d) the details of the officer(s) currently entrusted with reviewing or modifying the original report and the expected timeline for the final report's public release and tabling before Parliament;
- (e) whether the Government has officially recognised Keezhadi as a site of National Importance despite multiple excavation phases and findings that point to a highly advanced civilization dating back to before 580 BCE; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE AND TOURISM
(SHRI GAJENDRA SINGH SHEKHAWAT)

- (a) The excavation report for the 2014–15 and 2015–16 seasons was received by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) in January 2023 and has since undergone expert vetting in accordance with standard protocol. This process is essential to ensuring academic integrity and is not intended to delay or diminish the significance of the findings.

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(b), (c) and (d) The excavation report for first two seasons has been vetted by experts and deficiencies in methodology, chronology, interpretation, presentation, and analytical rigor, etc. have been communicated to the lead excavator.

(e) and (f) Considering the archaeological potential of the site it was taken for excavation up by ASI between 2014 and 2017. Since 2018, the Tamil Nadu State Department of Archaeology has continued excavations at the site. However, the final report from the State Department has not yet been published.
