

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF CULTURE  
**LOK SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3945**  
ANSWERED ON-18.08.2025

**ANCIENT TAMIL INSCRIPTIONS IN SOUTH INDIA**

**3945. THIRU D M KATHIR ANAND:**

**DR. T SUMATHY *ALIAS* THAMIZHACHI THANGAPANDIAN:**

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) Whether some historically important Copper Plate Inscriptions of ancient dynastic rulers found in Tamil Nadu by Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and the State Department of Archaeology, Tamil Nadu are kept in Museums abroad and if so, the details thereof and the total number of Copper Plate Inscriptions found in South India, Dynasty-wise and the museums where they are protected;
- (b) whether it is a fact that out of the total of 1.5 Lakh ancient inscriptions found in South India more than 1 Lakh inscriptions are in Tamil Language dating back to 200 BC to AD 1800, if so, the details thereof including the historical inscriptions found in Vellore Lok Sabha Constituency; and
- (c) whether the Epigraphy Branch of ASI has published several volumes of Epigraphica Indica and series of South Indian Inscriptions before and after Independence and if so, the details thereof and the date of publishing of the last volume of Epigraphica Indica and South Indian Inscriptions by the ASI?

**ANSWER**

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

- (a) No copper plate inscriptions found by Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) in Tamil Nadu is kept in museums abroad.
- (b) Total number of inscriptions copied by the ASI is around 73,732 out of them 26,416 are in Tamil script. These inscriptions, including historical inscriptions found in Vellore Lok Sabha Constituency, are deciphered and published in the Annual Reports on Indian Epigraphy.
- (c) The ASI has published several volumes of Epigraphia Indica and the South Indian Inscriptions. The latest volume of Epigraphia Indica was published in 2012 and South Indian Inscriptions in 2025. Out of the 45 volumes of South Indian Inscriptions, 18 were published before independence and the remaining 27 are published since independence.

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