TREASURES/ ARTEFACTS FOUND DURING EXCAVATION

† 2448.   **SHRI MUKESH RAJPUT:**
             SHRI MANSHANKAR NINAMA:

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a)   whether the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has discovered artefacts and found evidence of valuable treasures of rulers of different time periods of India;

(b)   if so, the details thereof and the total number of sites where research and excavation activities are presently being carried out by the ASI;

(c)   the details of artefacts found during the excavation in different parts of the country, State-wise including Farrukhabad district of Uttar Pradesh along with the names of the places where these articles have been kept;

(d)   whether the Government has any plan to undertake more excavation work in future and if so, the details thereof; and

(e)   whether the Government has formulated any plan to conserve, renovate/ rejuvenate historical monuments located on the banks of the Ganges in Farrukhabad district of Uttar Pradesh and if so, the details thereof?

MINISTER OF STATE, CULTURE AND TOURISM (INDEPENDENT CHARGE)

(DR. MAHESH SHARMA)

(a)   Yes, Madam.

(b) & (c)   The details of the excavations carried out by the Archaeological survey of India (ASI) during the year 2015-16 are at **Annexure**. However, the Archaeological Survey of India has not conducted any excavation in Farrukhabad district. The objects/articles recovered from the excavations are well preserved and under the custody of concerned field offices of Archaeological Survey of India.

(d)   Yes, Madam. Such excavations are normally conducted during the month of November/December to April/May depending upon climate conditions and requirement of a site after the recommendation of Standing Committee of Central Advisory Board of Archaeology (SC of CABA).

(e)   No, Madam. No such specific plan has been formulated by ASI.

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY PART TO (b) & (c) OF LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2448 FOR 1.8.2016

STATEMENT SHOWING THE EXCAVATION CARRIED OUT BY THE ARCHAEOLOGIAL SURVEY OF INDIA DURING THE YEAR 2015-16.

Some of the sites excavated by Archaeological Survey of India which have yielded important finds are mentioned below:

1.	**Binjore, District ,Shri Ganga Nagar, Rajasthan, 2015-16.**

There are two cultural assemblage found during the excavation i.e. Early-Harappan and Mature-Harappan, represented by various antiquities such as fish-hook, arrowheads, knife, celt, bangles, terracotta bangles, faience bangles, shell bangles, beads of carnelian, agate, faience, gold foil and ring, terracotta toy cart frame, cake *mustika* & bull figurine. Harappan seal made of steatite depicting figure of unicorn with five letters on Harappan script. The early Harappan level has revealed pottery similar to the Kot-diji, which includes vase, basin, jar and goblet. Lots of storage pots have been found placed over stand to store the food grains. The structures of Early-Harappan period were made of mud bricks (size of 10:20:30 cm.) In the Early-Harappan phase Hakara ware (incised and mud appliqué design) has also been found.

2. .	**Rukministhan, District, Nalanda, Bihar,2015-16**
The mound revealed several structures like votive stupas, brick walls, steps to the north of the temple containing colossal image of Buddha and rammed floors etc. The remains of an enclosure wall were exposed measuring about 25 m towards southern portion of the site. These structures as per their nature and associated antiquities and potteries are ranging from Gupta to Pala period. The important antiquities like terracotta sealings, inscribed tablets, fragments of sculptures of *Ganesh* and *Avalokiteshvara*, beads, sling balls, etc. were found during excavation. The pottery revealed from excavation consists of red ware and red slipped ware.

3.	**Suabarei, District Puri (Odisha) V, Bhubaneswar, 2015-16.**

The significant achievement of the excavation at Suabarei is the evidence of a separate Neolithic horizon attested by the presence of gritty handmade potsherds of thin to medium fabric and a chisel of dolerite below chalcolitic level separated by a sterile layer number (11) measuring a maximum thickness of 55 cm in Qdt. 2 of XB1 and about 25 cm in Qdt. 4 of ZB2. Besides, a large number of charred animal bones having cut marks, charred tortoise cell, charred fish bones and pieces of mollusc cells and charred grains have also been found from the excavation. Circular huts with post holes, series of hearths, floor levels, burning activities with ash & charcoal and flood deposits have also been encountered during the course of excavation. Although the excavation has not yielded the any evidence of human burial, however, evidence of animal burial represented by animal bones along with miniature pots probably with favourite grave goods have been found which indicate the burial practice for their favourite animal.
The excavation at Suabarei has proved that it was an important Neo-Chalcolithic site in between the Daya River and the Gangua rivulet. They

were subsisted by hunting, gathering, fishing and farming as evident from the charred animal bones, fish bones, fish hook and charred grains. A single shark tooth found from the excavation suggests some sort of probable sea link. Presence of carnivorous canine teeth also indicates the hunting of wild animals etc.

4. **Vadnagar, District, Mehsana, Gujarat ,2015-16**

The excavations at Vadnagar was a multidisciplinary approach involving archaeology (geo and landscape archaeology), geo-informatics and sedimentology. The earliest deposit of the sites goes back to 1st- 2nd Century BCE at **Baba –no Tekdo** locality as more than 300 coins of various metals and alloys such as copper, lead, potin, billon etc. of different periods have been found during the course of excavation.Besides coin blanks, seal, weights stone beads, pendant, glass bangles, bone objects, terracotta figurines etc, have also been found.

At **Kirti Torana** revealed remains of the 9th-10th Century CE so far. A few burnt brick structures like remains of houses, walls, floors, drains and a unique furnace was found during the course of excavation, besides fine quality of ceramics.

The entire process of study and analysis is to compose the several phases such as the digitization of known geomorphological, geological and archaeological data from primary and secondary sources, creation of Digital Elevation Models (DEM) for the entire Mehsana district, creations of slope and aspects from resultant DEMs and employing complex algorithms and decisive models in ArcGIS.

Sequential Query Language or SQLs were created in ArcGIS to identify regional centres with close proximity to various resources and proximity to other sites. As a result several archaeological maps of various themes were recorded for Mehsana district with special reference to Vadnagar.

5. **Keeladi, District, Madurai, Tamil Nadu, 2015-16.**
The site has revealed early historic remains (c. 3rd BCE – 3rd CE) in the form of brick structures and also evinced interesting finds like Rouletted and Arretine pot sherds suggesting trade contacts maintained by this settlement with western world. These pot sherds are considered deluxe varieties and might have been reached here through traders. At a later date these varieties were imitated and manufactured locally at the site. Another important find during the excavations are that of inscribed pot sherds having names of individuals written in Tamil – Brahmi script over them.

Besides the above, the site has also yielded antiquities like glass, pearl and terracotta beads, terracotta figurines, grooved roof tiles, legged quern, antimony rods, spearhead, hop scotches, etc. The ceramic assemblages

6. **Vangchhia, District Champai, Mizoram- 2015-16**

A team of an archaeologist of Archaeological Survey of India has recently excavated the site at Vangchhia, District Champhai Mizoram, They also discovered one of the Biggest Necropolis (Burials/related structures) in India.