

REPORT NO.

359



PARLIAMENT OF INDIA
RAJYA SABHA

**DEPARTMENT-RELATED PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE
ON TRANSPORT, TOURISM AND CULTURE**

THREE HUNDRED FIFTY NINTH REPORT

‘Functioning of Archaeological Survey of India’

(Presented to the Rajya Sabha on 21st September, 2023)
(Laid on the Table of Lok Sabha on 21st September, 2023)



Rajya Sabha Secretariat, New Delhi
September, 2023 / Bhadra, 1945 (Saka)

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**RAJYA SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

September, 2023 / Bhadra, 1945 (Saka)

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**COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE
(2023-24)**

(Constituted on 13th September, 2023)

1. **Shri V. Vijayasai Reddy** - **Chairman**

Rajya Sabha

2. Shri Mohammed Nadimul Haque
3. Shrimati S. Phangnon Konyak
4. Shri Manas Ranjan Mangaraj
5. Dr. Sonal Mansingh
6. Shrimati Rajani Ashokrao Patil
7. Shri A. A. Rahim
8. Dr. C. M. Ramesh
9. *(vacant)*
10. *(vacant)*

Lok Sabha

11. Shri Anto Antony
12. Shri Ram Margani Bharat
13. Shri Tapir Gao
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15. Shri Ramesh Chandra Majhi
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21. Shri Sunil Kumar Pintu
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27. Shri Rajbahadur Singh
28. Shri Ramdas Chandrabhanji Tadas
29. Shri Manoj Kumar Tiwari
30. Shri Krupal Balaji Tumane
31. Shri Dinesh Lal Yadav "Nirahua"

SECRETARIAT

Dr. Raghav Prasad Dash, Joint Secretary
Shrimati Monica Baa, Additional Director
Shrimati Subha Chandrashekar, Deputy Secretary
Shri Ranajit Chakraborty, Under Secretary
Shri Raj Kamal Singh, Assistant Committee Officer

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman, Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture, having been authorized by the Committee to present on its behalf, do hereby present this Three Hundred Fifty Ninth Report on 'Functioning of Archaeological Survey of India'.

2. The Committee heard the views of the representatives of the Ministry of Culture and Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), on the subject, in its meeting held on 27th June, 2023. The Committee also heard the views of the representatives of the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) & Aga Khan Trust for Culture, in its meeting on the subject, held on 21st August, 2023. The Committee also took up the issue during its Study Visit to Mumbai on 5th July, 2023 and held discussions with the Ministry of Culture; ASI; and State Government of Maharashtra.

3. The Committee wishes to express its thanks to the officers of the Ministry of Culture; Archaeological Survey of India; State Government of Maharashtra; INTACH; and Aga Khan Trust for Culture, for placing before the Committee, the material and information desired in connection with the subject and for clarifying the points raised by the Members.

4. The Committee considered and adopted the Report in its meeting held on the 19th September, 2023.

NEW DELHI;
September 19, 2023
Bhadra 28, 1945 (Saka)

(V. Vijayasai Reddy)
Chairman,
Department-related Parliamentary Standing
Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture,
Rajya Sabha

ACRONYMS

| | |
|-----------|--|
| 3D | Three Dimensional |
| AMASR | Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains |
| APAR | Annual Performance Appraisal Report |
| ASI | Archaeological Survey of India |
| BE | Budget Estimates |
| BISAG-N | Bhaskaracharya National Institute for Space Applications and Geo-informatics |
| CABA | Central Advisory Board of Archaeology |
| CAG | Comptroller and Auditor General of India |
| CBRI | Central Building Research Institute |
| CISF | Central Industrial Security Force |
| CPCB | Central pollution control Board |
| CPM | Centrally Protected Monument |
| CPMS | Centrally Protected Monuments and Sites |
| CSR | Corporate Social Responsibility |
| DRC | Documentation Resource Centre |
| E-HRMS | e-Human Resource Management System |
| FY | Financial Year |
| GPR | Ground-Penetrating Radar |
| GSI | Geological Survey of India |
| ICFRI-FRI | Indian Council for Forest Research Institute |
| ICOMOS | International Council on Monuments and Sites |
| IHDC | India Heritage Development Corporation |
| IIT | Indian Institute of Technology |
| INR | Indian Rupees |
| INTACH | Indian National Trust for Arts and Cultural Heritage |
| INTERPOL | International Criminal Police Organisation |
| LiDAR | Light Detection and Ranging |
| MoU | Memorandum of Understanding |
| MTS | Multi-Tasking Staff |
| NCF | National Culture Funds |
| NEERI | National Environmental Engineering Research Institute |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organization |
| NMMA | National Mission of Monument & Antiquities |
| PPP | Public Private Partnership |
| RE | Revised Estimate |
| SLCC | State Level Coordination Committee |
| SSC | Staff Selection Commission |
| UNESCO | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization |
| UPSC | Union Public Service Commission |
| UT | Union Territory |
| YOY | Year-over-year |

REPORT

Introduction

The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) distinguishes itself as an eminent institution in the realm of archaeology, preservation, and promotion of India's rich cultural heritage and historical sites. The ASI since its inception in 1861 has evolved into a premier organisation devoted to exploring, excavating, and conserving the country's diverse historical treasures.

With a history spanning over a century and a half, the ASI has earned a formidable reputation of being one of the oldest and most esteemed archaeological departments globally. Studying ancient civilizations, deciphering historical narratives, and safeguarding invaluable artifacts, structures, and sites of India's glorious past have been the traditional areas of expertise and responsibilities of ASI.

Over the years, the activities of ASI have grown in scope and significance, adapting to the changing landscape of archaeological research and conservation. From preserving and maintaining monumental architectural marvels to intricate artifacts and ancient inscriptions, the ASI's endeavours encapsulate the essence of India's cultural tapestry, ensuring that it continues to inspire the present as well as the future generations to appreciate and learn from while contributing to the nation's cultural identity. Its mission remains deeply rooted in preserving India's cultural heritage and disseminating knowledge about the country's historic past to both its people and the global community.

Keeping this significant and overarching role of the Archaeological Survey of India in mind, the Committee took up the subject "Functioning of Archaeological Survey of India", in order to have the nuanced understanding of the role of ASI for suggesting areas of improvements in its functioning. Through the report, the Committee aims to explore ASI's key responsibilities, achievements, challenges, and endeavours in shaping the understanding and appreciation of India's diverse historical past. Based on the discussions with the various stakeholders, both Government and private, for a wholesome understanding of the role and functions of the ASI, the report incorporates the Committee's recommendations and suggestions for improving the working of the ASI in the rapidly evolving times.

The Committee held a total of 04 meetings. The Committee held a meeting each with the Ministry of Culture and the Administrative Head of ASI on 27th June, 2023; and with the NGOs, namely, Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) and Aga

Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC) on 21st August, 2023. The Committee also undertook on-the spot study visits to Mumbai and Bekal and held meetings with the representatives of the Ministry of Culture, ASI, and the State Governments of Maharashtra and Kerala on 5th July, 2023 and 8th September, 2023, respectively.

Responsibilities and Functions of the Archaeological Survey of India

Categorisation of Monuments

1. The Committee notes that the ASI is a paramount body which oversees approximately 3691 monuments notified by the Government of India and which are purported to be of national significance. The Central Government through the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (AMASR) Act, 1958 empowered the ASI to regulate archaeological excavations in the country.
2. The Committee was informed that the monuments and archaeological sites and remains, which are of national importance, are in the Union List and are under the charge of the ASI. These are referred to as 'protected monuments'. The State List contains all other monuments, which are referred to as 'unprotected monuments'. The third category is of archaeological sites and remains which are included in the Concurrent List and as such, are not of national importance, where the State and the Centre, both have jurisdiction.
3. **The Committee notes that there are several problems with the list of Centrally Protected Monuments (CPMs). The list includes a large number of minor monuments with no national significance. It is estimated that this applies to at least a quarter of the current list of 3691 monuments. The list, for instance, includes 75 graves of colonial era soldiers or officials of no notable importance. For an example, a small brick wall enclosure containing two graves located in Kumta, Karnataka is a centrally protected monument under the supervision of the ASI. The graves are those of public works department engineer John Albert Cope (died in 1880) and Henry Gassen (died 1877) who worked for a cotton ginning company. The structure had no architectural value, and the individuals were of no historical significance. Yet, they are supposed to get the same level of protection as the country's most cherished monuments.**
4. **The Committee also observed that the provision of 100 metre prohibited area and 300 metre regulated area around all ASI protected monuments and archaeological sites and remains generally invites public criticism and inconvenience. This provision was introduced in 2010 through an amendment in the AMASR Act, 1958. It prohibits and regulates all activities like mining and construction around 100 metres and 300 metres**

respectively, of all the protected monuments, which causes problem for the local community, living around it. In some cases, the entire village is within a radius of 300 metres which makes it difficult for the entire village to carry out the necessary repair work of their residential houses. Such a situation, at many places, creates a hostile scenario, pitching the local community against the monuments. In this light, the relevant Rules need to be reviewed and made realistic to meet the demands of the time.

5. The Ministry informed the Committee that the Government is working to bring an Amendment of this rules so as to make it relevant and contemporaneous.

6. The Committee recommends that the list of monuments with ASI should be rationalised and categorised on the basis of their national significance, unique architectural value and specific heritage content.

7. As far as the restrictive provisions are concerned, the Committee recommends that the present system of 100 metres and 300 metres around the protected monuments area as 'Prohibited' and 'Regulated', respectively should be rationalised as presently the same rule applies equally to both significant and insignificant monuments. For instance, the rules above apply identically to the iconic Ajanta and Ellora monuments as much as to Kosminars, unknown cemeteries and tombs etc. Rationalisation of the list of National Monuments by way of deletion of some of the kosminars may also be considered.

Exploration and Excavation

8. Excavation of archaeological remains is one of the primary responsibilities of ASI and exploration forms part of excavation activities. The ASI informed that the archaeological research comprises exploration and excavation along with allied studies such as geo-archaeology, palaeo-environment, paleontology, palaeo-botany, ancient metallurgy as. For every excavation, careful objective oriented exploration is a pre-requisite.

9. It was also apprised that the proposals for excavation by universities and learned institutions are required to be routed through the concerned State Governments while the ASI officers require only permission from the ASI Headquarters.

10. The ASI submitted that exploration comprises the discovery and recording of ancient sites and remains still visible on the surface of the ground while excavation unearths the archaeological remains embedded below the surface of the earth. The explorations include village-to-village exploration, problem oriented exploration, salvage exploration, under water exploration and occasional exploration on the information received from the public, media and other sources. On the other hand, excavation comprises debris clearance, salvage operation, problem oriented excavations - trial excavation, small scale excavation, and large scale excavation.

11. The Committee observes that preservation of a monument or a site is a core mandate of the ASI and recommends the ASI to develop preservation plans for all its work, especially before commencing excavations. This includes establishing clear strategies for documenting findings, conserving artifacts, and restoring structures to ensure minimal impact on the site's integrity.

12. The Committee also feels that there is a need to prioritise excavation sites based on a comprehensive assessment of historical significance, research potential, and preservation needs. The ASI should focus on areas that have the potential to answer crucial historical questions and contribute to a deeper understanding of India's rich past.

13. Further, advanced technologies such as LiDAR, ground-penetrating radar, and 3D scanning should be used for enhanced accuracy and efficiency of excavations. These tools can aid in non-invasive site analysis and data collection.

14. The Committee is of the view that the ASI must also adhere to ethical guidelines in managing recovered artifacts. It must respect cultural sensitivities, repatriate objects when appropriate, and ensure that artifacts are preserved, studied, and displayed with responsibility.

15. The Committee also draws attention to the CAG Report No 10 of 2022 which stated that issues connected with exploration and excavation activities i.e. non – existence of action plan, absence of centralized information and monitoring mechanism for excavation activities, delay in Report writing work, insufficient budget allocation, etc. as pointed out in previous Reports have not been resolved.

Conservation and Restoration

16. The conservation and restoration endeavours of the ASI stand as a testament to its commitment to nurturing India's historical legacy. The Committee notes the following conservation and restoration projects of ASI and their impact as highlighted in the succeeding paragraphs:

17. The ASI informed that the conservation and preservation projects of ASI are taken up in accordance with the National Conservation Policy, 2014. The Central Advisory Board of Archaeology (CABA) advises the Government of India on matters relating to Archaeology in India and may also make suggestions on such matters for the consideration of the Government. The Board may set up Sub-Committees, as and when necessary, to examine and report on specific issues before it.

18. The Committee was apprised that the ASI has undertaken the major conservation works at various locations i.e., Kedarnath Temple in Uttarakhand, Ajanta-Ellora Caves in Maharashtra, Sun Temple, Konark in Odisha, Dholavira in Gujarat, Shree Jagannath Temple in Puri, Rani ki Vav in Gujarat, Hampi Group of monuments in Karnataka, Red Fort in Delhi, Taj Mahal in Agra, Raigard Fort in Maharashtra, Rudreshwara Ramappa Temple in Telangana, Hoyasala Temples or Helebidu in Belur and Somnathpur, Vernacular School Building in Vadnagar, Gujarat and Shantiniketan in West Bengal.

19. The ASI informed that it also undertakes conservation measures in foreign countries. These include Bamiyan Buddhas in Afghanistan; Angkor Wat, Ta Prohm and Preah Vihear temples in Cambodia; My Son Group of Temples in Vietnam; Ananda Temple and other monuments in Bagan, Myanmar, Friday Mosque in Male, Maldives. It was informed that the works outside India have been widely appreciated by the International community and the authorities in Fayaztepa and Karatepa Buddhist Sites in Uzbekistan are interested to give their conservation work to ASI.

20. Further, under the international provisions for conservation and restoration of cultural heritage, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Convention, 1970 urged each country to protect its own cultural patrimony as well as join an international effort to carry out concrete measures. In pursuance of this

Convention, the Government of India promulgated the Antiquities and Art Treasures Act, 1972 which came into force w.e.f 5th April, 1976. This is an Act to regulate the export trade in antiquities and art treasures, to provide for the prevention of smuggling of and fraudulent dealings in antiquities. Its objective is to prevent the illegal export of antiquities and art objects outside the country and to make all efforts to bring back antiquities or art objects illegally exported out of the country.

21. The ASI informed that it monitors the trade of antiquities within the country through licensing officers working in the length and breadth of the country. To combat the illegal trafficking of antiquities, various law enforcing agencies are supporting the ASI as per the provisions in the concerned Act and as per the legal mandate. These agencies are also supporting INTERPOL for prevention of illegal trafficking and tracing of the illegally exported antiquities.

22. The Committee was apprised that as far as conservation work of ASI is concerned, there is an issue of shortage of human resource. The Ministry is finding ways and means to acquire human resource by outsourcing some works. However, the ASI expressed that this has its own limitations as such expertise is not available even outside.

23. The INTACH informed the Committee that in India, there are at least two clearly defined approaches to conserving architectural heritage, each with its compelling ideological underpinnings. The first is the Eurocentric approach introduced on account of colonization, which is followed by the ASI. This approach is now legitimised by the Charters promulgated by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS). The second consists of several indigenous approaches rooted in the centuries old regional building and maintenance traditions, which are still practised by Raj Mistris, the master builders in several parts of India, the Sompuras of Western India, the Sthapatis of Eastern and Southern India, the asharis of Kerala, among others.

24. The Committee notes that there are certain places where restoration is being done without taking cognizance of the original design/beauty of the Monument. The restoration works at many sites do not gel with the original design. The Committee in this regard, recommends that the ASI must undertake restoration work keeping the original structure, its relevance and aesthetics in mind. Restoration work must include

maintaining the building's original structure/ character and form. The Committee recommends that the ASI must draw from its vast expertise in the field and scrupulously adhere to the cardinal tenets of restoration that seeks to repair retaining the structural originality rather than replacing it.

25. The Committee feels that indigenous systems and traditional practices are not being emphasized as much as they deserve. The indigenous system believes that buildings live, die and are rebuilt in an organic cycle, described in the concept of *jeernodharanam*. Authenticity, in this perspective, is embedded in the continuously evolving integrity of the life of the building and its intended use. In this view, the site is more venerated than the fungible nature of the building built over it. It reflects the putative “cyclical” concept of time.

26. The Committee recommends that the ASI should integrate sustainable practices in conservation and restoration projects. This includes using eco-friendly materials, energy efficient techniques, and taking into consideration the long-term environmental impact of interventions.

27. The ASI should put in place a comprehensive monitoring system to assess the condition of monuments and sites regularly. Timely identification of issues will allow for proactive maintenance, preventing small problems from escalating into major concerns.

28. The ASI must recognise the uniqueness of each historical site and devise its restoration approaches accordingly. What works for one monument might not be suitable for another due to variations in built-in materials, architectural style, and historical significance of the monument.

29. The Committee also recommends ASI to recognize the impact of climate change on heritage sites and integrate adaptive strategies into restoration plans. This might involve modifying conservation methods to withstand rapidly changing environmental requirements. The ASI should also develop contingency plans to address natural disasters that might threaten historical sites. These plans should outline immediate response measures to minimize damage and facilitate swift restoration.

Documentation and Research

30. With the objective of archaeological research, the ASI lays down archaeological policy in the country and issues licenses for conducting archaeological excavations by various state universities and research institutes. In order to promote and strengthen archaeological research, the ASI formulates policy, signs Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with the universities and research institutes, and organizes conferences, seminars, and meetings of the CABA.

31. During the financial year 2022-23, 33 sites were approved for conducting the archaeological exploration and excavations by the Circles/Branches of ASI and 45 sites were approved for the same to the State Government/ Universities/Research Institution. No formal meeting of the CABA has been held since 2014. A meeting was held on 14th June, 2022 under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Minister for Culture formulating the same. The old policy for the supply of photographs has been revised and approved; and has been uploaded on the website of the Archaeological Survey of India.

32. While the Committee appreciates the successful documentation of 16.80 lakhs antiquities which has become a part of National Database, it also notes that the Central Antiquity Collection houses approximately 3.25 lakh artefacts.

33. The E & E section received 11 excavation/exploration reports from Circles/Branches of ASI, with respect to the following sites:

- 1) Maner (Bihar)
- 2) Sitagraha (Bihar)
- 3) Halebidu (Karnataka)
- 4) Langudi Hills (Odisha)
- 5) Sisupalgarh (Odisha)
- 6) Parabhadi (Odisha)
- 7) Masol (Punjab)
- 8) Keeladi (Tamil Nadu)
- 9) Sengalur (Tamil Nadu)
- 10) Sanauli (Uttar Pradesh)
- 11) Ultakhera, Hastinapur (Uttar Pradesh)

However, it was informed that the vetting of these reports is under process.

34. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the ASI and the Indian Institute of Technology, Gandhinagar on 10th August, 2015. The ASI has been financially supporting to strengthen the Archaeological Sciences Centre and establishment of an Archaeology Chair at IIT, Gandhinagar. The ASI hired the services of IIT, Guwahati for conducting a detailed GPR survey of Bhisimnagar situated in district Lower Dibang valley with high resolution elevation data using LiDAR sensor at Centrally Protected Monuments Arunachal Pradesh. The IIT has submitted a detailed report to the ASI.

35. The Publication Section of the ASI deals with the publishing of books and supply of those books to 115 sale counters in various parts of the ASI. It also supplies books to all circles. The Section is the nodal agency for giving permissions for reproduction of photographs and texts. It is alleged that excavation reports have not been published for a long time.

36. The ASI informed that immediate steps have been taken and a committee meeting of experts was held recently. It was assured that more number of excavation reports is going to be published in the coming year.

37. With reference to research laboratories, the Committee was informed that the Science Branch of the ASI has many laboratories which work on preservation of excavated materials, sampling of various components of buildings/monuments/ antiquities, etc., which help in study of the archaeological properties. Apart from this, the ASI takes help from expert agencies and laboratories in dating of the excavated materials as and when required.

38. In addition to it, the ASI has established its own three laboratories for analysis and preservation of excavated objects and other artifacts. Also, a new state-of-the-art science laboratory has been developed at Pt. Deendayal Upadhyaya Institute of Archaeology, Greater Noida to provide more facilities for analysis, preservation and research including skill development in the field of archaeological science.

39. The Committee notes that these laboratories have limited resources for analysis and research, and are facing challenges in infrastructure upgradation and expertise. Such resource shortages may affect the timely analysis and preservation of excavated materials as well as research works. To overcome these limitations, collaboration with specialized institutions, museums and independent research institutions are imperative.

40. The Committee recommends that the ASI should forge collaborations with foreign academic and research institutions, as well as laboratories specializing in conservation and archaeology. These partnerships can help ASI access to the latest domain specific research findings and innovative techniques, thereby enriching manifold the ASI's restoration practices.

41. The Committee observes that the ASI should leverage digital technologies for comprehensive documentation. A database of detailed records, including 3D scans, high-resolution imagery, and archival data, must be created to ensure that requisite information in retrievable format is available for the benefit of posterity.

42. The Committee further recommends that the vetting process of the 11 excavation/ exploration reports must be expedited and the reports should also be published timely and kept in public domain.

Museums

43. The creation, upgradation and maintenance of site museums are an important component of the activities of ASI.

44. It was informed that the concept of site museum was developed by Lord Curzon so that visitors and scholars have an authentic experience of an archaeological site. Site museum is set up near a site to showcase the excavated material. The first archaeological site museum came up in Sarnath in 1910.

45. The ASI informed the Committee that presently there are 52 such archaeological site museums in various parts of this country containing more than 1.36 lakh antiquities. The ASI has also started Bharat Shared Repository of Inscriptions and digitization of one lakh e-stampages of inscriptions has been done.

46. As far as the road map for museums is concerned, the following has been done:

- Creation/upgradation of interpretation centres at Dholavira, Nalanda and Thanjavur;
- Technical support for Vadnagar Experiential Museum and for National Maritime Heritage Complex Museum, Lothal;
- Museum for Epigraphy, Hyderabad;
- Museum of ASI in Red Fort, Delhi;
- Up-gradation of Children's Museum at Siri Fort, Delhi;

- Up-gradation of three museums under Buddhist Circuit - Sarnath, Bodh Gaya and Nalanda.

47. The Committee appreciates the efforts made by the ASI regarding expansion and upgradation of site Museums. However, the Committee finds that the promotion and outreach of these museums is very limited. The Committee, therefore, recommends that the ASI should develop a comprehensive strategic plan for museum expansion and upgradation, considering factors like target audiences, thematic focuses, accessibility, and sustainable practices.

48. The ASI should prioritize visitors' experience in museum design and create interactive and immersive exhibits that engage diverse audiences and facilitate a deeper understanding of historical contexts.

Adopt a Heritage

49. The Committee was apprised that the 'Adopt a Heritage: Apni Dharohar, Apni Pehchan' programme was launched on 27th September, 2017 by the Ministry of Tourism, in collaboration with Ministry of Culture and ASI and various States/UTs Government with the main objective to develop amenities at heritage sites, monuments and tourist sites. The objective of the programme is to make them tourist friendly and increase the site's tourism potential by enhancing the tourist experience in a planned and phased manner. The conservation works under Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) scheme are carried out by the ASI while illumination / development works at some of the monuments are carried out through CSR scheme under National Culture Funds (NCF) either by the donor or ASI itself. The details of the ongoing works under NCF are attached at **Annexure-I**.

50. The entities so engaged are permitted to work in non-conservational aspects like cleaning of monument premises, besides providing and maintaining basic tourist amenities like washroom, drinking water, child care room, benches, pathways, garbage bins, signage, etc. under the guidance of ASI. However, the archaeological conservation of Centrally Protected Monuments and Sites (CPMS) is attended by the experts of ASI only under their allotted budget.

51. A revamped version of the programme exclusively for CPMS is envisioned wherein the ASI envisages creating a framework for engaging with the private/ public sector companies/ Trusts/ NGOs/Societies, etc. to develop/ provide group of amenities at CPMS

through CSR funds to maximise visitors' experience with a view to make the monument truly visitor friendly. This revamped version is titled as "Adopt a Heritage Programme 2.0".

52. Since it is a contributory programme cost saving has not been of any priority. However, the provision of separate budget allocation for the program was neither part of it during the erstwhile version nor is provisioned for the said revamped version.

53. The Committee notes that under the said module with respect of Centrally Protected Monuments and Sites (CPMS) a total of twenty four MoUs were signed with various Monument Mitra (MMs). However, effective engagement had taken place only under 4 MoUs (Annexure-II).

54. The Committee notes that concerns have been raised about the lack of prior experience of the private firms involved in restoration and conservation. There have been instances when companies without any expertise in the requisite domain are permitted to undertake those works, it has resulted in avoidable damage or destruction.

55. The Committee, therefore, recommends that only active and experienced Monument Mitras may be hired for the purpose of restoration of Monuments. Further, the Committee would like to know the criteria adopted for selecting a particular company for undertaking the restoration work of a Monument. In addition, the Committee may also be apprised of the measures taken to ensure transparency and fairness in the process of selection of Monument Mitras.

National Mission on Monuments and Antiquities

56. The ASI is responsible for implementing the National Mission on Monuments and Antiquities (NMMA), which is aimed at the creation of a national database on built heritage/sites and on antiquities.

57. With reference to the progress made under NMMA, the ASI informed that the proposed budget for the last 10 years is Rs.189 Crore; Actual Allocation Rs.53.39 Crore (actual Utilization = Rs.29.04Crore only); Total staff proposed = 16 permanent+38 contractual. Actual allocation = 11 persons including contractual and MTS; Total documentation of antiquities so far =16.84 lakh; Total documentation of BHS= 1.8 lakh (approx).

58. The ASI informed that the antiquities have multiple ownerships and are ever increasing in volume. Therefore, it is not possible to provide an estimated timeline for the completion of documentation.

59. In order to expedite the process of documentation, young archaeologists have been engaged on contractual basis and are posted in the ASI field offices. Also, regular webinars were arranged during the period of Covid-19 and 06 regional workshops are being conducted in the last financial year 2022-23.

60. The Committee observes that the progress under the NMMA has been sluggish. Only about 16.8 lakh antiquities out of a total estimated 58 lakh antiquities have been documented till date. The Committee recommends that the NMMA may encourage and engage more Departments of State Archaeology and Museums, Universities and Non-Governmental Heritage bodies to get themselves recognized as Documentation Resource Centres (DRCs) to help expedite the documentation process. The advanced technology such as 3D imaging and virtual reality should be used fully to create a comprehensive database of monuments and antiquities.

61. The NMMA should invest in capacity-building initiatives, such as training and hiring more young archaeologists and professionals, to increase the speed and accuracy of the documentation process.

62. The ASI should explore options to increase funding to expedite the documentation process and accomplish the targets in a time-bound manner. The Committee is of the view that by implementing these recommendations, the documentation process of monuments and antiquities under NMMA can be expedited, which will enable better preservation and protection of the country's cultural heritage.

II

Challenges Faced by ASI

Encroachment of ASI land

63. The Committee observes that till date, 531 monuments, that is, about 14.4 per cent of ASI's total 3693 Centrally Protected Monuments have been encroached. However, encroachments from only 9 monuments have been removed since 2015. There is a lack of clarity in guidelines for preservation and delay in the classification of Centrally Protected Monuments (CPMs).

64. The Ministry submitted that the encroachment in the premises of the protected monuments and protected areas of CPMs are removed as per the provisions contained in the AMASR Act, 1958 and Rules framed thereunder:

65. In order to arrest the encroachments and remove them, the Superintending Archaeologists in charge of the Circles have been vested with the powers of an Estate Officer to issue eviction notices/orders to the encroachers under public premises (Eviction of Unauthorized Occupants) Act, 1971. They are also authorized to issue show cause notices under the provisions of AMASR Act, 1958 and Rules 1959 followed by a direction to the District Collector /Magistrate by Central Government to remove such encroachment under section 19 of the AMASR Act, 1958 and Rule 38 of the AMASR Rules 1959. Assistance in containing and removing encroachments is also sought from the respective State Governments/Police force. Further, in addition to the regular watch and ward staff, private security personnel, State police guards and CISF have also been provided for the safety and security of selected monuments.”

66. The Committee recommends that the ASI should conduct a comprehensive survey of encroachments around all monuments under its jurisdiction and document the nature, extent and impact of encroachments on each site to create a database for informed decision-making in this regard.

67. The ASI should strive to involve local communities in the process of identifying encroachments and finding solutions, engage them as stakeholders in preserving their cultural heritage and seek their cooperation in the encroachment eviction efforts. Further, public awareness campaigns should be launched to inform and educate local communities and the public about the importance of preserving historical monuments

and the deleterious impact of encroachments on tourism and other developments of the historical monuments and sites.

68. The Committee recommends that the ASI should also provide support and assistance to individuals or families affected in the process of encroachment removal and help them transition to alternative livelihoods. This has the potential to reduce the likelihood of public resistance and create a much cooperative atmosphere.

Climate Change and Missing Monuments

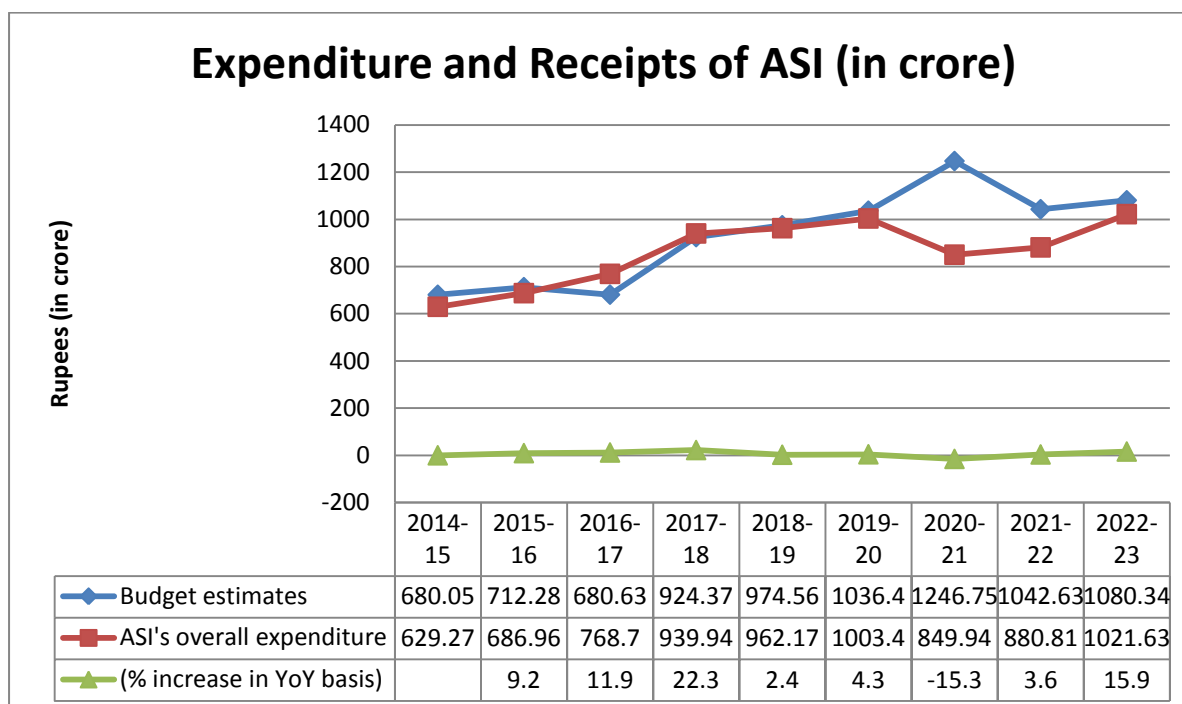
69. Historical monuments are an integral part of the country's cultural heritage, and climate change can have a devastating impact on them. The Committee may be apprised as to whether the conservation plans which are presently in force, factor in the adverse effects of climate change on the monuments. There is an imperative need for regular monitoring of historical monuments to ascertain as to whether any signs of damage or degradation have been caused by climate change. Monitoring can help identify potential problems early on, so that appropriate action can be taken to mitigate any adverse impact. The Committee feels that using climate resilient materials during restoration or conservation work can help protect monuments from the damaging effects of climate change.

70. The Committee further notes that the CAG had declared 92 Centrally Protected Monuments as "missing". The ASI has located only 42 of these monuments. The remaining 50 monuments are either affected by rapid urbanisation, submerged under reservoirs/dams or are untraceable. The Committee observes that monuments once lost cannot ever be retrieved. The CPMS are central to our historical heritage. The ASI should, therefore, give the highest priority to ensuring the physical security of all CPMs across the country. The Committee recommends that the Ministry may conduct a survey of all remaining monuments to ensure their physical existence and safety.

71. The Committee further recommends that regular physical surveys of all CPMs should be carried out from time to time. The ASI should maintain digital log books that include textual and photographic/ video records of the monument's physical state and location coordinates. This would also allow the ASI to check encroachment, if any, of these CPMs at an early stage.

Expenditure and Receipts of ASI

72. The Committee notes that though the Ministry was allotted budget of Rs. 5,000 crore for 2023-24, yet, the expenditure is only 50 per cent. Further, allocation to ASI for FY 2023-24(BE) is Rs.1102.83 Crore of which expenditure till date is Rs 348.63 Crore which is only 31.61%.



Expenditure and Receipts of ASI (in crore)

73. It may be suitably inferred from the above Table that the ASI's overall expenditure on Year on Year (YoY) basis has increased except during 2020-21 and 2021-22 due to Covid-19 pandemic induced lockdown, impacting the overall work being carried out by the ASI.

74. The Ministry submitted that the budget requirement is worked out keeping in view the previous years' allocation, projects in hand and anticipated expenses and utilization capacity. The Ministry further submitted that the ASI's projected demand for the F.Y. 2023-24 was Rs. 1201.57 Crore and Rs 1102.83 Crore is the allocation to ASI for 2023-24 F.Y (BE).

75. It was informed that the budget requirement in different budget heads is periodically reviewed and the ASI projects the increased allocation in budget sub heads on requirement basis for issue of re- appropriation orders by the Ministry of Culture.

76. The Committee notes that as per estimates, India spends a little amount on the protection and upkeep of monuments. It approximately amounts to INR 11 lakhs per monument of national importance (INR 428 crores for 3693 monuments in 2019-20). The Committee feels that this is precious little for a culturally rich country like India.

77. The Committee recommends that the ASI should evolve innovative methods like CSR and Public-Private Partnership (PPP) to maximize the participation of non-government organizations in the field of promotion and conservation of art and culture. The Committee feels that till the time a satisfactory level of investment is made by the private sector, the Ministry should ensure that adequate funds are available with the ASI to perform its crucial role of preservation of monuments. The Committee, therefore, recommends that the Ministry may seek additional funds to ensure that the ASI's projected demands are met at the 2023-24 R.E. stage.

78. The Committee recommends that the Ministry should request the Ministry of Finance to allocate sufficient funds to enable the ASI to carry out its planned activities for restoration of unprotected monuments as well.

Vacancies and staff expertise in ASI

79. The Committee notes that a huge number of vacancies are lying vacant in the ASI and its circles, which hamper the working of the organisation; and the excavation, conservation, documentation and research works also immensely suffer due to it.

80. The ASI informed that the vacancies are filled up by Promotion, Deputation and Direct Recruitment. The Departmental Promotion Committee meetings for filling up the vacant posts are held at regular intervals. Posts falling under Direct Recruitment quota are promptly reported to the Recruitment agencies i.e. UPSC and SSC. Posts to be filled up by deputation are advertised as per the laid down procedures. The vacant posts under Direct Recruitment quota will be filled up as and when candidates are made available by the respective Recruitment agencies (UPSC and SSC). A detail of vacancies in ASI is as under:

| Group | Sanctioned Strength | Person in Position | Total Vacancies |
|--------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| 'A' | 313 | 144 | 169* |
| 'B' | 979 | 702 | 277 |
| 'C' | 1334 | 779 | 555 |

| | | | |
|-----------------------|------|------|------|
| 'C' (MTS)' | 6152 | 4452 | 1700 |
| Total | 8778 | 6077 | 2701 |

**116 posts vacant for more than two years have been reported to Department of Expenditure for revival.*

81. The Ministry further informed that 758 additional posts, which included technical posts, were created in 2021. These posts are part of the sanctioned strength of 8778. The vacancies in ASI are mostly in the grade of MTS. The attrition rate in this grade is very high and the people are leaving the job for better career prospects.

82. The Ministry also informed that 259 compassionate appointments have been made. The ASI is also chalking out a plan for restructuring like merger of horticulture divisions with circles to create synergy and establishment of new science branches and circles at Rajkot, Jabalpur, Trichy, Meerut, Jhansi, Raiganj and Puri. The ASI has also planned to recruit young talent and under an Interns Scheme of the organisation, 53 interns have completed their assignment recently, 22 young archaeologists on rolls were engaged in work related to antiquities and excavation, six Archival Associates and 12 Archival Assistants were engaged and 15 young legal professionals are being recruited. The Committee was also informed that ASI has also reframed policies regarding E-HRMS, Sparrow APAR and Recruitment Rules for all cadres and comments are being sought. Further, for refresher courses, engagement with Capacity Building Commission is under process.

83. The ASI has accepted the fact that there are a large number of unfilled posts and it is taking recourse to five R's, depicted below in the image.



84. The Committee notes that with the passage of time and new developments, requirements and demands, the ASI has not evolved or re-structured itself with reference to the expertise in this field. Therefore, the restructuring and rationalization of ASI would be useful in the larger interest of the country. The Committee observes that the ASI requires the following three functional verticals:-

- a) The expert archaeologists, who are involved in excavation, documentation and interpretation of the historical finds.**
- b) Well skilled conservationists, who will be required to conserve and preserve the monuments on a regular basis, following the latest technologies in the field of conservation and continuously upgrading their technological skill sets.**
- c) ASI should consider developing a management cadre for the management of centrally protected monuments with a mandate to manage the monuments and sites on a daily basis to ensure their safety and protection; manage ticketing and circulation of visitors; ensure ease of access to monuments by providing battery operated vehicles, signages, interpretation centres, audio visual guides, souvenirs shops, cafe, site museums, etc. Alternatively, to make the ASI an effective agency, it would be advisable to divide the organization into two wings - the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and India Heritage Development Corporation (IHDC). While the former can look after the core mandate of ASI i.e. exploration, excavation and conservation aspects, the latter can deal with the ASI's entire revenue, such as ticket collection, conducting auctions, issuing licences, running cafeterias, selling mementos and running Sound and Light systems, etc. This bifurcation will be functionally desirable to enhance greater**

professionalism of the ASI in handling both the cerebral and the managerial aspects of its functioning.

85. The Committee recommends that the museologists should be associated while setting up and curating site museums which are required to be of international standard, especially for the World Heritage Sites.

86. The Committee also recommends that ASI should invest in training programs for ASI staff and artisans involved in restoration work. Enhancing their skills in traditional craftsmanship, modern conservation methods, and the use of advanced technologies will eventually contribute to the quality of restoration projects.

Coordination with States

87. The Ministry informed that almost every State has its own 'Department of Heritage/Archaeology' responsible for monuments of local importance. However, at present, there is minimum dialogue between the ASI regional circles and the Archaeology Departments in the States with respect to improving and enhancing the conservation efforts at the State/local level.

88. The Committee was apprised that the State Level Coordination Committee (SLCC) has already been constituted in the State of Kerala, Maharashtra, Chattisgarh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Odisha, Puducherry, Assam, Punjab, Meghalaya, Jammu & Kashmir and Sikkim. The States which have not set up a State Level Coordination Committee as yet, have been requested to form their respective SLCCs. ASI is continuously corresponding with these States to constitute SLCCs. However, few states had held the meeting to address the issues flagged by ASI. The Heads of the Departments of Archaeology of each State Government are *ex - officio* member of the CABA wherein they keep their views on the various matters pertaining to the Archaeology.

89. Apart from this, every year the ASI invites proposals from the State Departments of Archaeology, Universities and Research Institutions for conducting archaeological activities like explorations and excavations wherein the recommendations of the State Government are one of the essential conditions for finalizing these proposals. The ASI is providing full support to the State Archaeology Department in respect to improving and enhancing

conservation efforts at the State/local level except in those areas/States where State Government did not approach/accept ASI intervention.

90. The Committee notes that certain States have not yet constituted SLCC. The Ministry and the ASI should persuade these States to constitute the same as early as possible in the larger interest of building greater interface and co-ordination between the ASI and the State's Archaeology Department.

91. The Committee recommends that the Ministry should also form joint committees comprising representatives from ASI and state archaeological departments. These committees can facilitate regular communication, information exchange, and decision-making related to heritage sites.

92. The ASI should implement systems for data sharing and integration between ASI and State Archaeological Departments. A centralized database can provide a comprehensive overview of heritage sites, their condition, and ongoing activities.

93. The Committee also recommends organizing workshops and training programs for state officials to enhance their understanding of heritage preservation techniques, legal frameworks, and conservation best practices.

94. The ASI must establish mechanisms for resolving conflicts that may arise between ASI and State authorities. Open dialogue and mediation processes can prevent issues from escalating. Further, a two-way medium of communication should be developed to facilitate the sharing of best practices and success stories between ASI and State Archaeological Departments. Learning from each other's experiences can enhance preservation approaches manifold.

Security issues at sites

95. The Committee notes that the security of the monuments is a big challenge. The Monuments in India lack proper security and safety provisions. The security of monuments is being managed by monument attendants; private security and CISF at select monuments. There are, however, many challenges including lack of adequate number of personnel to ensure round the clock security of centrally protected monuments.

96. In this regard, the ASI has informed that a MoU has been signed with IIT Delhi in June 2022 for two years and an interim report is expected in August 2023. Based on an in-house assessment, hiring of additional 5,340 security personnel has been proposed.

97. The Committee recommends that the hiring process of the security personnel must be expedited without any further delay. Time bound action regarding deployment of security personnel in the historical monuments and sites will also act as a deterrent to the potential threats of encroachment of ASI premises.

98. The Committee recommends ASI to conduct regular and comprehensive security audits of all heritage sites under its purview. These audits should identify vulnerabilities, assess risks, and inform the development of tailored security plans.

99. Further, the ASI should leverage advanced technologies such as surveillance cameras, motion sensors, and intrusion detection systems to monitor and secure monument premises effectively.

100. The ASI should assure that regular training and mock drill sessions on security protocols, emergency response, and crowd management are held from time to time.

101. The Committee also recommends ensuring proper lighting and surveillance coverage, particularly during night-time hours. Well-lit areas deter vandalism and illegal activities, while surveillance helps in monitoring suspicious behaviour. Further, implementation of controlled access and visitor management protocols including limiting the number of visitors, conducting bag checks, and ensuring guided tours to prevent unauthorized activities can also be helpful.

102. During its Study Visit to Kerala from 4th September to 8th September, 2023, the ASI has apprised the Committee that visitor's access is regulated during a fixed time across all monuments, barring a few exceptions in case of prominent monuments. Both the Departments of Tourism and Archaeology, the Government of Kerala have drawn the attention of the Committee to the need for opening the Bekal Fort, District Kasargod, Kerala till 21:00 hours from its existing closure time of 17:00 hours as the visiting tourists prefer to spend the evening time at the Fort to enjoy its tranquil and scenic surrounding including the sunset. The Committee has found merit in the submissions and recommends that the ASI should actively consider extending the closure timing of the Bekal Fort and any other such monument in the country by way of

relaxation of rules in the interest of enhancing the tourist footfalls and improving tourism dependent local economy.

III

Way Forward

Integration of Modern Technologies

103. The Committee notes that technology plays a significant role in preservation of monuments, enhancing various aspects of archaeological research, site management, documentation, and conservation. It aids in efficient research, conservation, and public engagement while minimizing the impact on fragile archaeological sites and artifacts.

104. The ASI informed that during excavation, it uses different technologies i.e. GPR Survey, LiDAR Survey, Total Station Machine for surveying whereas various dating methods i.e. C-14, Thermo luminescence, potassium-argon, fission track, etc. are used during the course of excavation for dating of antiquities and other archaeological remains.

105. The ASI incorporates modern tools and nondestructive techniques for scientific investigations to improve efficiency, accuracy, and our understanding of cultural heritage. Remote sensing techniques help to identify potential archaeological sites, map landscapes and detect subtle features not easily visible on the ground. These technologies aid in initial site selection and overall landscape analysis. Modern 3D scanning technologies enable detailed and accurate documentation of artifacts, structures and sites. This digital representation allows for virtual reconstructions, analysis, and preservation of fragile items. LiDAR is used to create high-resolution 3D maps of terrain and vegetation as well as excavated site. In archaeology, LiDAR can reveal hidden or overgrown structures beneath the surface, providing insights into the layout of ancient settlements and landscapes.

106. The Committee welcomes the initiatives being taken by the ASI and the Ministry of Culture to employ digital techniques to aid and assist in the varied activities that they perform. However, the Committee feels that there are more scopes to use cutting edge technology by ASI to ensure the best outputs using the latest available technology in their respective fields of work. The Committee recommends that the ASI may organise training and workshops from time to time to educate its staff working in the different departments of the organization. This will allow the staff to keep themselves abreast of the latest advancements, in the field of digital technology.

107. The Ministry may encourage research and development in the field of digital techniques for technology- induced cultural preservation. This will lead to the development of new and innovative techniques that can help in better preservation and management of cultural heritage sites.

Involvement of Local Communities

108. The Committee notes that the ASI organises many awareness programmes on the occasion of World Heritage Day/Week, Museum Day, Yoga Day etc. at the monuments/sites across the country.

109. As far as the public relations are concerned, the ASI informed that in the process of rolling out a scheme called 'Jan Bhagidari' the stakeholders are involved at the State/local level to protect the unprotected monuments, as well as the protected monuments, which are under the ambit of CPMs of the ASI. Similarly, emphasis is laid on the capacity building through the Capacity Building Commission. Here, ASI sensitizes various officers and the staff working in the ASI towards having a cordial relationship with the visitors. Further, under the 'Adopt a Heritage' scheme, through feedback mechanism, the visitors can share their feedback and suggest the ways to improve our facilities and that will be taken care of.

110. The Committee is of the view that 'Adopt a Heritage' Scheme, being innovative and visible, ASI should take maximum advantage of it. The Committee recommends organizing regular workshops, town hall meetings, and focus group discussions to provide a platform for communities to voice their opinions, concerns, and ideas regarding monument preservation.

111. The ASI should involve community members in small-scale conservation projects, such as cleaning, landscaping, or restoration under the guidance of domain expert. This fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility. Further, local youths can be engaged in heritage preservation activities through workshops, internships, and volunteer programmes. This will go a long way in encouraging the new generation to value and protect their cultural legacy.

112. The Committee also recommends ASI to acknowledge and celebrate community contributions through conferring awards, certificates, or public recognition. This will

have positive spin-off effect on others to join the community engagement activities for better preservation of monuments.

Collaboration with National and International Organisations

113. It was apprised that ASI is taking technical assistance from other national and international organizations, research institutions like IITs and CBRI, NGOs and universities as and when required.

114. Science Branch, ASI undertakes scientific conservation, restoration & preservation for evaluation of methods and materials, processes to be adopted in the field and archaeological questions to be answered. To achieve these objectives interdisciplinary approach is adopted and collaborations with national and international institutions and their expertise integrated to achieve scientific objectives.

115. The ASI has collaborated with prestigious national Institutes like NEERI (National Environmental Engineering Research Institute), CBRI (Central Building Research Institute) Roorkee, CPCB (Central Pollution Control Board), GSI (Geological Survey of India), ISRO Bangalore, IIT Kanpur, IIT Gandhinagar and ICFRI-FRI (Indian Council for Forest Research Institute). These Institutes have worked with ASI on various issues related with cultural heritage conservation and have contributed in development of methodology and strategy for better preservation of the National heritage.

116. Further, since the last five years, the ASI has collaborated with the following national institutions/agencies:

- Indian Institute of Technology, Gandhinagar
- Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur
- Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati
- Birbal Sahani Institute of Palaeo-Sciences, Lucknow
- Institute of Sesmiological Research, Gandhinagar
- Indian Institute of Geo Magnetism, Mumbai
- National Forensic Science University, Gandhinagar
- Department of Space, Physical Research Laboratory, Ahmedabad
- Bhaskaracharya Institute for Space Applications and Geoinformatics (BISAG-N) Gandhinagar

117. The ASI is also providing technical support for restoration of monuments in foreign countries and has brought back to life the historical and civilizational links that India holds with other nations. A MoU was signed with the University of Foscari Venezia, Italy for creating a network and sharing skills for conservation, restoration and protection of monuments. MoUs between Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur, Gandhinagar and Geological Survey of India also been signed.

118. The Committee recommends that extensive collaborations with national level premier research institutions and, in particular, the foreign organizations should be made a priority for better learning of best practices as also the and knowledge sharing.

Need for new/updated policies

119. The Committee notes that the implementation of the National Policy for Conservation, 2014 by ASI has been far from satisfactory. Being largely outdated, it does not consider new and modern techniques for protection and preservation. At the same time, there is a glaring absence of national policies on archaeological exploration and antiquities preservation.

120. The Ministry informed that the conservation of monuments throughout the country is carried out as per the National Policy for Conservation, 2014 as the conservation of monuments is a process to maintain the original fabric and architecture of the monuments and needs least intervention. However, documentation and modern techniques like LiDAR Survey, drone photography is adopted. The Policy on Exploration and Excavation exists, however process of revising this policy is under way. Various modern scientific equipments, techniques and methodologies are applied in the field of scientific conservation and preservation to identify and compare the building materials with ancient and available materials to achieve better results of scientific conservation. Science branch of ASI regularly help in preserving heritage with analysis of antiquities, art/excavated objects and monitoring of environmental factors by using modern scientific techniques. Air pollution monitoring lab-Taj Mahal Agra and Bibi ka Maqbara, Aurangabad; Stone Conservation lab, Agra; Conservation Research lab, Ajanta; and Science Lab, Dehradun are functioning while a state-of-art science laboratory has been developing at Greater Noida.

121. The Committee recommends that archaic and colonial era related laws which have lost their relevance must be dispense with. Further, the Ministry of Culture/ ASI

should conduct a comprehensive comparative study of the excavation, conservation and restoration laws of foreign countries to come up with the best practices being followed globally and bring out the requisite course corrections in the present policy accordingly.

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS - AT A GLANCE

The Committee notes that there are several problems with the list of Centrally Protected Monuments (CPMs). The list includes a large number of minor monuments with no national significance. It is estimated that this applies to at least a quarter of the current list of 3691 monuments. The list, for instance, includes 75 graves of colonial era soldiers or officials of no notable importance. For an example, a small brick wall enclosure containing two graves located in Kumta, Karnataka is a centrally protected monument under the supervision of the ASI. The graves are those of public works department engineer John Albert Cope (died in 1880) and Henry Gassen (died 1877) who worked for a cotton ginning company. The structure had no architectural value, and the individuals were of no historical significance. Yet, they are supposed to get the same level of protection as the country's most cherished monuments.

(Para 3)

The Committee also observed that the provision of 100 metre prohibited area and 300 metre regulated area around all ASI protected monuments and archaeological sites and remains generally invites public criticism and inconvenience. This provision was introduced in 2010 through an amendment in the AMASR Act, 1958. It prohibits and regulates all activities like mining and construction around 100 metres and 300 metres respectively, of all the protected monuments, which causes problem for the local community, living around it. In some cases, the entire village is within a radius of 300 metres which makes it difficult for the entire village to carry out the necessary repair work of their residential houses. Such a situation, at many places, creates a hostile scenario, pitching the local community against the monuments. In this light, the relevant Rules need to be reviewed and made realistic to meet the demands of the time.

(Para 4)

The Committee recommends that the list of monuments with ASI should be rationalised and categorised on the basis of their national significance, unique architectural value and specific heritage content.

(Para 6)

As far as the restrictive provisions are concerned, the Committee recommends that the present system of 100 metres and 300 metres around the protected monuments area as 'Prohibited' and 'Regulated', respectively should be rationalised as presently the same rule applies equally to both significant and insignificant monuments. For instance, the rules above apply identically to the iconic Ajanta and Ellora monuments as much as to Kosminars, unknown cemeteries and tombs etc. Rationalisation of the list of National Monuments by way of deletion of some of the kosminars may also be considered.

(Para 7)

The Committee observes that preservation of a monument or a site is a core mandate of the ASI and recommends the ASI to develop preservation plans for all its work, especially before commencing excavations. This includes establishing clear strategies for documenting findings, conserving artifacts, and restoring structures to ensure minimal impact on the site's integrity.

(Para 11)

The Committee also feels that there is a need to prioritise excavation sites based on a comprehensive assessment of historical significance, research potential, and preservation needs. The ASI should focus on areas that have the potential to answer crucial historical questions and contribute to a deeper understanding of India's rich past.

(Para 12)

Further, advanced technologies such as LiDAR, ground-penetrating radar, and 3D scanning should be used for enhanced accuracy and efficiency of excavations. These tools can aid in non-invasive site analysis and data collection.

(Para 13)

The Committee is of the view that the ASI must also adhere to ethical guidelines in managing recovered artifacts. It must respect cultural sensitivities, repatriate objects when appropriate, and ensure that artifacts are preserved, studied, and displayed with responsibility.

(Para 14)

The Committee also draws attention to the CAG Report No 10 of 2022 which stated that issues connected with exploration and excavation activities i.e. non – existence of action plan, absence of centralized information and monitoring mechanism for excavation activities, delay in Report writing work, insufficient budget allocation, etc. as pointed out in previous Reports have not been resolved.

(Para 15)

The Committee notes that there are certain places where restoration is being done without taking cognizance of the original design/beauty of the Monument. The restoration works at many sites do not gel with the original design. The Committee in this regard, recommends that the ASI must undertake restoration work keeping the original structure, its relevance and aesthetics in mind. Restoration work must include maintaining the building's original structure/ character and form. The Committee recommends that the ASI must draw from its vast expertise in the field and scrupulously adhere to the cardinal tenets of restoration that seeks to repair retaining the structural originality rather than replacing it.

(Para 24)

The Committee feels that indigenous systems and traditional practices are not being emphasized as much as they deserve. The indigenous system believes that buildings live, die and are rebuilt in an organic cycle, described in the concept of *jeernodharanam*. Authenticity, in this perspective, is embedded in the continuously evolving integrity of the life of the building and its intended use. In this view, the site is more venerated than the fungible nature of the building built over it. It reflects the putative “cyclical” concept of time.

(Para 25)

The Committee recommends that the ASI should integrate sustainable practices in conservation and restoration projects. This includes using eco-friendly materials, energy efficient techniques, and taking into consideration the long-term environmental impact of interventions.

(Para 26)

The ASI should put in place a comprehensive monitoring system to assess the condition of monuments and sites regularly. Timely identification of issues will allow for proactive maintenance, preventing small problems from escalating into major concerns.

(Para 27)

The ASI must recognise the uniqueness of each historical site and devise its restoration approaches accordingly. What works for one monument might not be suitable for another due to variations in built-in materials, architectural style, and historical significance of the monument.

(Para 28)

The Committee also recommends ASI to recognize the impact of climate change on heritage sites and integrate adaptive strategies into restoration plans. This might involve modifying conservation methods to withstand rapidly changing environmental requirements. The ASI should also develop contingency plans to address natural disasters that might threaten historical sites. These plans should outline immediate response measures to minimize damage and facilitate swift restoration.

(Para 29)

The Committee notes that these laboratories have limited resources for analysis and research, and are facing challenges in infrastructure upgradation and expertise. Such resource shortages may affect the timely analysis and preservation of excavated materials as well as research works. To overcome these limitations, collaboration with specialized institutions, museums and independent research institutions are imperative.

(Para 39)

The Committee recommends that the ASI should forge collaborations with foreign academic and research institutions, as well as laboratories specializing in conservation and archaeology. These partnerships can help ASI access to the latest domain specific research findings and innovative techniques, thereby enriching manifold the ASI's restoration practices.

(Para 40)

The Committee observes that the ASI should leverage digital technologies for comprehensive documentation. A database of detailed records, including 3D scans, high-resolution imagery, and archival data, must be created to ensure that requisite information in retrievable format is available for the benefit of posterity.

(Para 41)

The Committee further recommends that the vetting process of the 11 excavation/ exploration reports must be expedited and the reports should also be published timely and kept in public domain.

(Para 42)

The Committee appreciates the efforts made by the ASI regarding expansion and upgradation of site Museums. However, the Committee finds that the promotion and outreach of these museums is very limited. The Committee, therefore, recommends that the ASI should develop a comprehensive strategic plan for museum expansion and upgradation, considering factors like target audiences, thematic focuses, accessibility, and sustainable practices.

(Para 47)

The ASI should prioritize visitors' experience in museum design and create interactive and immersive exhibits that engage diverse audiences and facilitate a deeper understanding of historical contexts.

(Para 48)

The Committee notes that under the said module with respect of Centrally Protected Monuments and Sites (CPMS) a total of twenty four MoUs were signed with various Monument Mitra (MMs). However, effective engagement had taken place only under 4 MoUs (Annexure-II).

(Para 53)

The Committee notes that concerns have been raised about the lack of prior experience of the private firms involved in restoration and conservation. There have been instances when companies without any expertise in the requisite domain are permitted to undertake those works, it has resulted in avoidable damage or destruction.

(Para 54)

The Committee, therefore, recommends that only active and experienced Monument Mitras may be hired for the purpose of restoration of Monuments. Further, the Committee would like to know the criteria adopted for selecting a particular company for undertaking the restoration work of a Monument. In addition, the Committee may also be apprised of the measures taken to ensure transparency and fairness in the process of selection of Monument Mitras.

(Para 55)

The Committee observes that the progress under the NMMA has been sluggish. Only about 16.8 lakh antiquities out of a total estimated 58 lakh antiquities have been documented till date. The Committee recommends that the NMMA may encourage and engage more Departments of State Archaeology and Museums, Universities and Non-Governmental Heritage bodies to get themselves recognized as Documentation Resource Centres (DRCs) to help expedite the documentation process. The advanced technology such as 3D imaging and virtual reality should be used fully to create a comprehensive database of monuments and antiquities.

(Para 60)

The NMMA should invest in capacity-building initiatives, such as training and hiring more young archaeologists and professionals, to increase the speed and accuracy of the documentation process.

(Para 61)

The ASI should explore options to increase funding to expedite the documentation process and accomplish the targets in a time-bound manner. The Committee is of the view that by implementing these recommendations, the documentation process of monuments and antiquities under NMMA can be expedited, which will enable better preservation and protection of the country's cultural heritage.

(Para 62)

The Committee recommends that the ASI should conduct a comprehensive survey of encroachments around all monuments under its jurisdiction and document the nature, extent and impact of encroachments on each site to create a database for informed decision-making in this regard.

(Para 66)

The ASI should strive to involve local communities in the process of identifying encroachments and finding solutions, engage them as stakeholders in preserving their cultural heritage and seek their cooperation in the encroachment eviction efforts. Further, public awareness campaigns should be launched to inform and educate local

communities and the public about the importance of preserving historical monuments and the deleterious impact of encroachments on tourism and other developments of the historical monuments and sites.

(Para 67)

The Committee recommends that the ASI should also provide support and assistance to individuals or families affected in the process of encroachment removal and help them transition to alternative livelihoods. This has the potential to reduce the likelihood of public resistance and create a much cooperative atmosphere.

(Para 68)

Historical monuments are an integral part of the country's cultural heritage, and climate change can have a devastating impact on them. The Committee may be apprised as to whether the conservation plans which are presently in force, factor in the adverse effects of climate change on the monuments. There is an imperative need for regular monitoring of historical monuments to ascertain as to whether any signs of damage or degradation have been caused by climate change. Monitoring can help identify potential problems early on, so that appropriate action can be taken to mitigate any adverse impact. The Committee feels that using climate resilient materials during restoration or conservation work can help protect monuments from the damaging effects of climate change.

(Para 69)

The Committee further notes that the CAG had declared 92 Centrally Protected Monuments as "missing". The ASI has located only 42 of these monuments. The remaining 50 monuments are either affected by rapid urbanisation, submerged under reservoirs/dams or are untraceable. The Committee observes that monuments once lost cannot ever be retrieved. The CPMS are central to our historical heritage. The ASI should, therefore, give the highest priority to ensuring the physical security of all CPMS across the country. The Committee recommends that the Ministry may conduct a survey of all remaining monuments to ensure their physical existence and safety.

(Para 70)

The Committee further recommends that regular physical surveys of all CPMS should be carried out from time to time. The ASI should maintain digital log books that include textual and photographic/ video records of the monument's physical state and location coordinates. This would also allow the ASI to check encroachment, if any, of these CPMS at an early stage.

(Para 71)

The Committee notes that as per estimates, India spends a little amount on the protection and upkeep of monuments. It approximately amounts to INR 11 lakhs per

monument of national importance (INR 428 crores for 3693 monuments in 2019-20). The Committee feels that this is precious little for a culturally rich country like India.

(Para 76)

The Committee recommends that the ASI should evolve innovative methods like CSR and Public-Private Partnership (PPP) to maximize the participation of non-government organizations in the field of promotion and conservation of art and culture. The Committee feels that till the time a satisfactory level of investment is made by the private sector, the Ministry should ensure that adequate funds are available with the ASI to perform its crucial role of preservation of monuments. The Committee, therefore, recommends that the Ministry may seek additional funds to ensure that the ASI's projected demands are met at the 2023-24 R.E. stage.

(Para 77)

The Committee recommends that the Ministry should request the Ministry of Finance to allocate sufficient funds to enable the ASI to carry out its planned activities for restoration of unprotected monuments as well.

(Para 78)

Vacancies and staff expertise in ASI

The Committee notes that a huge number of vacancies are lying vacant in the ASI and its circles, which hamper the working of the organisation; and the excavation, conservation, documentation and research works also immensely suffer due to it.

(Para 79)

The Committee notes that with the passage of time and new developments, requirements and demands, the ASI has not evolved or re-structured itself with reference to the expertise in this field. Therefore, the restructuring and rationalization of ASI would be useful in the larger interest of the country. The Committee observes that the ASI requires the following three functional verticals:-

d) The expert archaeologists, who are involved in excavation, documentation and interpretation of the historical finds.

e) Well skilled conservationists, who will be required to conserve and preserve the monuments on a regular basis, following the latest technologies in the field of conservation and continuously upgrading their technological skill sets.

f) ASI should consider developing a management cadre for the management of centrally protected monuments with a mandate to manage the monuments and sites on a daily basis to ensure their safety and protection; manage ticketing and

circulation of visitors; ensure ease of access to monuments by providing battery operated vehicles, signages, interpretation centres, audio visual guides, souvenirs shops, cafe, site museums, etc. Alternatively, to make the ASI an effective agency, it would be advisable to divide the organization into two wings - the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and India Heritage Development Corporation (IHDC). While the former can look after the core mandate of ASI i.e. exploration, excavation and conservation aspects, the latter can deal with the ASI's entire revenue, such as ticket collection, conducting auctions, issuing licences, running cafeterias, selling mementos and running Sound and Light systems, etc. This bifurcation will be functionally desirable to enhance greater professionalism of the ASI in handling both the cerebral and the managerial aspects of its functioning.

(Para 84)

The Committee recommends that the museologists should be associated while setting up and curating site museums which are required to be of international standard, especially for the World Heritage Sites.

(Para 85)

The Committee also recommends that ASI should invest in training programs for ASI staff and artisans involved in restoration work. Enhancing their skills in traditional craftsmanship, modern conservation methods, and the use of advanced technologies will eventually contribute to the quality of restoration projects.

(Para 86)

The Committee notes that certain States have not yet constituted SLCC. The Ministry and the ASI should persuade these States to constitute the same as early as possible in the larger interest of building greater interface and co-ordination between the ASI and the State's Archaeology Department.

(Para 90)

The Committee recommends that the Ministry should also form joint committees comprising representatives from ASI and state archaeological departments. These committees can facilitate regular communication, information exchange, and decision-making related to heritage sites.

(Para 91)

The ASI should implement systems for data sharing and integration between ASI and State Archaeological Departments. A centralized database can provide a comprehensive overview of heritage sites, their condition, and ongoing activities.

(Para 92)

The Committee also recommends organizing workshops and training programs for state officials to enhance their understanding of heritage preservation techniques, legal frameworks, and conservation best practices.

(Para 93)

The ASI must establish mechanisms for resolving conflicts that may arise between ASI and State authorities. Open dialogue and mediation processes can prevent issues from escalating. Further, a two-way medium of communication should be developed to facilitate the sharing of best practices and success stories between ASI and State Archaeological Departments. Learning from each other's experiences can enhance preservation approaches manifold.

(Para 94)

Security issues at sites

The Committee notes that the security of the monuments is a big challenge. The Monuments in India lack proper security and safety provisions. The security of monuments is being managed by monument attendants; private security and CISF at select monuments. There are, however, many challenges including lack of adequate number of personnel to ensure round the clock security of centrally protected monuments.

(Para 95)

The Committee recommends that the hiring process of the security personnel must be expedited without any further delay. Time bound action regarding deployment of security personnel in the historical monuments and sites will also act as a deterrent to the potential threats of encroachment of ASI premises.

(Para 97)

The Committee recommends ASI to conduct regular and comprehensive security audits of all heritage sites under its purview. These audits should identify vulnerabilities, assess risks, and inform the development of tailored security plans.

(Para 98)

Further, the ASI should leverage advanced technologies such as surveillance cameras, motion sensors, and intrusion detection systems to monitor and secure monument premises effectively.

(Para 99)

The ASI should assure that regular training and mock drill sessions on security protocols, emergency response, and crowd management are held from time to time.

(Para 100)

The Committee also recommends ensuring proper lighting and surveillance coverage, particularly during night-time hours. Well-lit areas deter vandalism and illegal activities, while surveillance helps in monitoring suspicious behaviour. Further, implementation of controlled access and visitor management protocols including limiting the number of visitors, conducting bag checks, and ensuring guided tours to prevent unauthorized activities can also be helpful.

(Para 101)

During its Study Visit to Kerala from 4th September to 8th September, 2023, the ASI has apprised the Committee that visitor's access is regulated during a fixed time across all monuments, barring a few exceptions in case of prominent monuments. Both the Departments of Tourism and Archaeology, the Government of Kerala have drawn the attention of the Committee to the need for opening the Bekal Fort, District Kasargod, Kerala till 21:00 hours from its existing closure time of 17:00 hours as the visiting tourists prefer to spend the evening time at the Fort to enjoy its tranquil and scenic surrounding including the sunset. The Committee has found merit in the submissions and recommends that the ASI should actively consider extending the closure timing of the Bekal Fort and any other such monument in the country by way of relaxation of rules in the interest of enhancing the tourist footfalls and improving tourism dependent local economy.

(Para 102)

The Committee welcomes the initiatives being taken by the ASI and the Ministry of Culture to employ digital techniques to aid and assist in the varied activities that they perform. However, the Committee feels that there are more scopes to use cutting edge technology by ASI to ensure the best outputs using the latest available technology in their respective fields of work. The Committee recommends that the ASI may organise training and workshops from time to time to educate its staff working in the different departments of the organization. This will allow the staff to keep themselves abreast of the latest advancements, in the field of digital technology.

(Para 106)

The Ministry may encourage research and development in the field of digital techniques for technology- induced cultural preservation. This will lead to the development of new and innovative techniques that can help in better preservation and management of cultural heritage sites.

(Para 107)

The Committee is of the view that 'Adopt a Heritage' Scheme, being innovative and visible, ASI should take maximum advantage of it. The Committee recommends organizing regular workshops, town hall meetings, and focus group discussions to provide a platform for communities to voice their opinions, concerns, and ideas regarding monument preservation.

(Para 110)

The ASI should involve community members in small-scale conservation projects, such as cleaning, landscaping, or restoration under the guidance of domain expert. This fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility. Further, local youths can be engaged in heritage preservation activities through workshops, internships, and volunteer programmes. This will go a long way in encouraging the new generation to value and protect their cultural legacy.

(Para 111)

The Committee also recommends ASI to acknowledge and celebrate community contributions through conferring awards, certificates, or public recognition. This will have positive spin-off effect on others to join the community engagement activities for better preservation of monuments.

(Para 112)

The Committee recommends that extensive collaborations with national level premier research institutions and, in particular, the foreign organizations should be made a priority for better learning of best practices as also the and knowledge sharing.

(Para 118)

The Committee recommends that archaic and colonial era related laws which have lost their relevance must be dispense with. Further, the Ministry of Culture/ ASI should conduct a comprehensive comparative study of the excavation, conservation and restoration laws of foreign countries to come up with the best practices being followed globally and bring out the requisite course corrections in the present policy accordingly.

(Para 121)

ANNEXURES

Details of ASI-NCF Projects

| Sr. No. | Project | Donor | Status | Expected date of completion |
|---------|---|-------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| 1 | Restoration & Development of centrally protected monument site at Devbaloda, Bhilai, Chhattisgarh | SAIL-Bhilai Steel Plant | MOU was signed on 21 December 2022. Thereafter funds released by NCF / MOC on 3 March 2023 Estimates have been prepared and submitted for approval. Proposed works include-conservation of monument and development of Parking lot, cafeteria, toilets and drinking water. | March 2024 |
| 2 | Conservation work and providing tourist amenities at Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Temple Nuggehalli, Channarayapatna Taluk Hassan District, Bengaluru, Karnataka | Smt. N. Nagarthamma | Conservation of the temple has been started. 50 % works have been completed. | December 2023 |
| 3 | Conservation and restoration of Vishnu Temple, Bateshwar, Morena, Madhya Pradesh | Infosys Foundation | Conservation of temple is started. 65 % works have been completed. | November 2023 |
| 4 | Supply, Installation, commissioning and maintenance of Turnstile & RFID based access control system for the visitors at ASI monuments in Delhi, UP, Odisha, Maharashtra & Gujarat | IIFCL | Installation has been completed. AMC is ongoing on 8 monuments. | March 2024 |
| 5 | Conservation and development of excavated remains at Vikramshila, Bihar | NTPC | Estimates are under preparation for conservation of excavated remains and providing of pathway amenities (new toilet blocks) booking counter, cloak room etc. | March 2024 |
| 6 | Ahom Group of Monuments at Sibsagar Distt. Assam. •Rang Ghar | ONGC | Estimates have been prepared and approved. Funds (2.21 Cr) have been released by NCF. Work under progress. | March 2024 |

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|---|---|----------|--|---------------|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •KarengGhar – (Garhgoan) •TalatalGhar •Group of Four Madaims at Cheraideo | | Conservation of Rang ghar, Kareng Ghar & Talat ghar monuments and tourist amenities like toilet blocks, parking, pathways drinking water are proposed at Group of four Madaims at Charaideo. | |
| 7 | Improving Tourist Amenities at Hidimba Devi Temple, Himachal Pradesh. | UCO BANK | | December 2023 |

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|----|--|-----------------------------|--|---------------|
| 8 | Development of infrastructure and other facilities at Lauriya Nandangarh, Chankigarh and Rampurva, Bihar. | SAIL- Bokaro Steel Plant | Estimates have been prepared for developmental works like installation of signages, providing of drinking water, toilet blocks, boundary wall etc. | Masrch 2024 |
| 9 | Up gradation of Sarnath Site & Museum | Sony India Ltd. | Unspent funds 1.87 Lac are being utilized for purchase of hardwares, cctv cameras, memory disc etc. | October 2023 |
| 10 | Preservation of the Dhamekh Stupa, Sarnath & Mahaparinirvana Temple,, Khushinagar, U.P. | Vong Group, Thailand | Estimates have been prepared for conservation / preservation of structures and providing railings etc. | March 2024 |
| 11 | Jantar Mantar Project | Apeejay Surrendra Park Hote | Development of entry gate and providing amenities. | November 2023 |
| 12 | Conservation, upgradation and involvemenal development of Hazardurai Palace, Murshidabad, West Bengal, West Bengal | SBI | | December 2023 |
| 13 | Shiv Mandir, Ambernath, Maharashtra | Nagrik Sewa Mandal | | March 2024 |

Details of ASI-IOF Projects

| Sr. No. | Name of Project | Executing Agency | Status | Estimated date of completion |
|---------|---|------------------|---|------------------------------|
| 1. | Tourist Infrastructure facilities at Kala Aamb, | | DPR have been approved on 14-2-2023. IOF has sought | March 2024 |

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|---|--|-----------|---|-------------------------------|
| | Panipat Haryana | IOF / IOC | revenue details of the monument ON 10 August 2023 which have been provided on the same day. Works has to be started by IOF. Major items of work includes Development of parking, entry plaza, cafeteria, Interpretation centre, public amenities like construction of toilet blocks, providing of drinking water facilities, free standing installation, etc. | |
| 2 | Tourist Infrastructure facilities at Se Cathedral, Aguada Fort & Illumination at Mahadev Temple, Goa | | The illumination of monument, providing of pathway, parking drinking water, toilets etc are in progress. | March 2024 |
| 3 | Tourist Infrastructure facilities at Ancient remains at Mansar, Maharashtra | | DPR has to be prepared by IOF. | June 2024 |
| 4 | Facade illumination at Group of Temples, Pattadakal, | | Work order have been issued by IOF for illumination of temples. | December 2023 |
| 5 | Facade illumination at Golconda Fort. | | Work order for illumination of monument has been issued by IOF, Script for light & sound show is being vetted.. | October 2023 |
| 6 | Facade illumination at Charminar Hyderabad, Telangana | | Work completed | Inaugurated on 5 August 2023. |
| 7 | Tourist Infrastructure facilities at Singorgarh Fort & associated sites - Damoh, Madhya Pradesh | | Land has to be transferred from State Government to A.S.I. for further handing over to IOF for commencement of works. Proposed item of works are construction of entry gate, Gazebo, interpretation centre, cafeteria etc. | March 2024 |
| 8 | Facade Illumination of Lucknow Residency, Uttar Pradesh | | Work order have been issued by IOF for illumination of monument. | November 2023 |

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|---|--|--|---|------------|
| 9 | Tourist Infrastructure facilities at Ananta Sayan, Lord Vishnu and Kapileswara Temple, Dhenkanal, Odisha | | DPR approved by A.S.I. on 14 February 2023. IOF has sought revenue details of the said monuments on 10 August 2023 which have been provided on the very next day. Proposed work items are construction of boundary wall, approach road, watch tower, cafeteria and other amenities etc. | March 2024 |
|---|--|--|---|------------|

Annexure II

| Sl. No | Name of Site | State/ UT | Name of Agency |
|--------|--|--|--|
| 1. | Development of Multi-Lingual Audio Guide for 9 Iconic Sites i. Dholavira, Gujarat ii. Humayun's Tomb, Delhi iii. Red Fort, Delhi iv. Purana Quila Delhi v. Fatehpur Sikri, Agra vi. Taj Mahal, Agra vii. Mahabalipuram, Tamil Nadu viii. Khajuraho, Madhya Pradesh. | 8-ASI (Centrally Protected Monuments) | Resbird Technologies Pvt. Ltd. (Now "Bird Heritage Foundation") |
| 2. | Tomb of Abdur Rahim Khan – I -Khana | New Delhi | Interglobe Foundation |
| 3. | Qutub Minar | Delhi | Yatra Online Pvt. Ltd. |
| 4. | Jantar Mantar | Delhi | ApeejaySurrendra Park Hotels (P) Ltd. |
| 5. | Sun Temple, Modhera | Gujarat | Akshar Travels Pvt. Ltd. |
| 6. | Bekal Fort | Kerala | Drishiti Lifesaving Pvt. Ltd. |
| 7. | Rani ki Vav, Patan | Gujarat | Akshar Travels Pvt. Ltd. |
| 8. | Red Fort | Delhi | Dalmia Bharat Ltd. |
| 9. | Gandikota Fort | Andhra Pradesh | Dalmia Bharat Ltd. |
| 10. | Surajkund | Haryana | Bliss Inn (India) Pvt. Ltd. (V Resorts) |
| 11. | Aguada Fort | Goa | Drishiti Lifesaving Pvt. Ltd. |
| 12. | Mandore Fort | Rajasthan | Mehrangarh Museum Trust |
| 13. | Ajanta Caves | Maharashtra | Yatra Online Pvt. Ltd. |
| 14. | Hazara Rama Temple | Karnataka | Yatra Online Pvt. Ltd. |
| 15. | Leh Palace | Ladakh | Yatra Online Pvt. Ltd. |
| 16. | Champaner-Pavagadh Archaeological Park | Gujarat | Akshar Travels Pvt. Ltd. |
| 17. | Buddhist Caves, Uparkot, Junagadh | Gujarat | Akshar Travels Pvt. Ltd. |
| 18. | Krishna Temple, Hampi | Karnataka | Heritage Resorts, Hampi |
| 19. | Elephant Stables, Hampi | Karnataka | Orange County Resorts, Hampi |
| 20. | Pattabhirama Temple, Hampi | Karnataka | Orange County Resorts, Hampi |
| 21. | Lotus Mahal (Zenana Enslosure), Hampi | Karnataka | Orange County Resorts |
| 22. | Ugra Narashimha, Hampi | Karnataka | Hotel Malligi |

| Sl. No | Name of Site | State/ UT | Name of Agency |
|---------------|----------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| 23. | Badavalinga, Hampi | Karnataka | Hotel Malligi |
| 24. | Rock Shelters of Bhimbetka | Madhya Pradesh | HEG Ltd |
