

E.C. No. 1432

SIXTEENTH REPORT

**ESTIMATES COMMITTEE
(2007-08)**

(FOURTEENTH LOK SABHA)

MINISTRY OF CULTURE

**MAINTENANCE OF MONUMENTS BY ARCHEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF
INDIA**

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Presented to Lok Sabha on March, 2008

**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

March , 2008/Phalguna , 1929(S)

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COMPOSITION OF THE ESTIMATES COMMITTEE
(2007-2008)

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MEMBERS

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1. Smt. P.K. Sandhu - Additional Secretary
2. Shri A. Mukhopadhyay - Joint Secretary
3. Shri C.V. Gadgil - Director
4. Smt. Manju Chaudhary - Deputy Secretary II

* Elected on 28th November, 2007 Vice Shri Vijaykumar Khandelwal, MP passed away on 13th November, 2007.

Vacant since 03.03.2008 due to resignation of Shri B. Vinod Kumar, MP.

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman of the Estimates Committee, having been authorised by the Committee to submit the report on their behalf present this Sixteenth Report on the Ministry of Culture – ‘Maintenance of Monuments by Archaeological Survey of India’.

2. The subject ‘Maintenance of Monuments by Archaeological Survey of India’ was selected for detailed examination by the Estimates Committee(2005-06). The Estimates Committee (2005-06) took briefing on the subject on 17.6.2005 and also took one non-official evidence and two evidences of representatives of Ministry of Culture and Archaeological Survey of India on 09.11.2005 (1100 hrs.), 09.11.2005 (1500 hrs.) and 17.11.2005 respectively. The Estimates Committee (2006-07) took evidence of representatives of Ministry of Culture and Archaeological Survey of India on 06.11.2006. The Committee wish to express their thanks to the officers of the Ministry of Culture and Archaeological Survey of India for placing before them the detailed written notes on the subject and for furnishing information desired in connection with examination of the subject. The Committee also appreciate the frankness with which the officers of Ministry of Culture and Archaeological Survey of India shared their views, perceptions and constraints with the Committee.

3. The Committee would also like to express their gratitude to the Estimates Committee 2005-06 and 2006-07 for the able guidance and right direction provided by them in obtaining information for indepth and comprehensive study of the subject.

4. The Report was considered and adopted by the Committee at their sitting held on 20th December, 2007.

5. The Report consists of six chapters. The Committee inter-alia made the following important observations/recommendations:

- (i) The Ministry of Culture should devise an institutional mechanism to be followed by ASI and State Archaeology Departments so that ASI can get the information regarding the activities of State Archaeology Departments on regular basis.
- (ii) Since the Cabinet Note and Draft Bill are being finalized the amendments should be proposed for strengthening the Antiquities and Art Treasure Act, 1972 with a view to effectively checking the illegal trade and smuggling of the antiquities; and
Local panchayats, patwaris and municipalities should also be involved in taking care of the heritage.
- (iii) The National Heritage Site Commission should be constituted as early as possible with statutory powers to issue directions to all the State Governments.
- (iv) DG, ASI should be a professional and experienced officer and not just an administrative officer, so that ASI can work effectively and efficiently with inspired leadership.
- (v) Ministry of Culture should take appropriate steps to strengthen the staff position, especially at technical levels and posts lying vacant in all groups should be filled up expeditiously.
- (vi) Number of seats in National Institute of Archaeology should be increased and curriculum should be more attractive, job oriented so as to compete with international standard so that bright students get themselves enrolled to study archaeology.
- (vii) ASI should devise new methods/techniques with the collaboration of other Ministries, agencies, institutes, etc. for conserving and preserving the monuments without losing their originality.

- (viii) State Governments should invariably be consulted before taking a decision to declare a monument as a centrally protected. A provision should be included in the Ancient Monuments and Archaeology Sites and Remains Act, 1958 in this regard.
- (ix) The Ministry should take all expeditious steps to get all pending excavation reports completed. A time frame should be fixed for completion of all the excavation reports, which are pending for the last ten to fifteen years.
- (x) Effective provisions should be incorporated in the Ancient Monuments Act to safeguard the monuments from encroachment; and to avoid encroachments, construction should not be allowed in the first 200 metres from the protected limit of a monument instead of 100 metres.
- (xi) Ministry of Culture should initiate expeditious and concrete action to trace out missing monuments and the Ministry in consultation with other authorities should devise such a mechanism that before starting any new developmental work, it should be ascertained that in that particular area, there are no hidden remains.
- (xii) Public/Private partnership should be accepted and availed without any undue benefits for private partners for promoting and preserving India's cultural heritage.

6. For facility of reference, the observations/recommendations of the Committee have been printed in bold type in the body of the Report.

NEW DELHI;
February 29, 2008
Phalguna 10 , 1929(S)

C. KUPPUSAMI,
Chairman,
Committee on Estimates.

CHAPTER-I

Introductory

1.1 The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), under the Ministry of Culture is the premier organization for the archaeological research and protection of the cultural heritage of the nation. Maintenance of ancient monuments and archaeological site and remains of national importance is the prime concern of the ASI. Besides, it regulates all archaeological activities in the country as per the provisions of the Ancient Monument and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958. It also regulates Antiquities and Art Treasure Act, 1972.

1.2 As on date the number of centrally protected monuments of national importance under ASI is 3667.

Historical Background

1.3 The story of Indian archaeology formally starts with the formation of the Asiatic Society in 1784. With the passage of time a need for a department of archaeology was felt which led to the establishment of Archaeological Survey of India (ASI). Alexander Cunningham was appointed Archaeological Surveyor by a Government Order from December 1861. The primary object of ASI was to survey and record the archaeological monuments. Subsequently aspects of preservation of monuments were added to its charter.

1.4 Initially five administrative circles were created to carry out preservation, conservation, exploration and excavation. The concept of

environmental development around monuments and sites was added later. Currently, there are 24 circles through which the Archaeological Survey of India administers the work of preservation and conservation of monuments under its protection. Recently, three Mini-Circles were upgraded to circles with its headquarters at Mumbai, Shimla and Goa for administrative convenience in view of the vast area. Besides, there are six Excavation Branches, two Temple Survey Projects, one Building Survey Project, one Prehistory Branch, one Science Branch, two Epigraphy Branches (one for Arabic & Persian and the other for Sanskrit and Dravidian) and one Horticulture Branch in the ASI through which various research work in different fields is undertaken.

Constitutional provisions and legislation

1.5 As regards the necessity of legislation to protect the archaeological heritage, the Ministry in their brief note furnished to the Committee have stated that in 1878, the Treasure Trove Act was promulgated to combat treasure hunting, besides regulating the lawful disposal of treasures found in accidental digging.

1.6 In 1904, the Ancient Monuments Preservation Act was passed for the preservation of ancient monuments, control over trafficking in antiquities and regulation of archaeological excavations and protection and acquisition of ancient monuments and objects of archaeological, historical or artistic interest. The Antiquities (Export Control) Act, 1947 was promulgated basically to regulate export of antiquities.

1.7 With the promulgation of the Constitution of India on 26th January, 1950, 'archaeology' has been made a concurrent subject under the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution, which reads:

List I (Union List), item 67: ancient and historical monuments and record, and archaeological sites and remains declared by or under law made by Parliament to be of national importance.

List II (State List), item 12: libraries, museums and other similar institutions controlled or financed by the State; ancient and historical monuments and records other than those declared by or under law made by Parliament to be of national importance.

List III (Concurrent List), item 40: archaeological sites and remains other than those declared by or under law made by Parliament to be of national importance.

1.8 In fulfillment of the provisions of the Constitution, Parliament passed the "Ancient and Historical Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act" in 1951 by which all the monuments previously protected under the Ancient Monuments Preservation Act 1904 were re-declared to be of national importance. In 1953, after the merger of the princely states with the rest of India, the ASI took the additional responsibility of upkeep of the monuments in princely states.

1.9 The Ministry further elaborated that the Archeological Survey of India operates Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remain Act, 1958 and Rules 1959 and the Antiquities and Art Treasures Act, 1972 and Rules 1973.

1.10 The Committee enquired as to what mechanism is being followed between the ASI and the State Archaeology Department to keep itself informed about the activities of State Archaeology Departments particularly when the subject falls under the concurrent list, the DG, ASI in this regard stated as follows:-

“....the List-I contains the protected monuments of the ASI. List-II is the State List of monuments protected by the State Governments. It is only the unprotected category which comes under the Concurrent List. In respect of those monuments coming under the State List that is List-II, they fall under the State Governments and are protected by the State Governments. We do not have any system of fund transfer or periodical reporting except that once in an year, there is a meeting with the State Culture Departments. But more than the formal mechanism, there is an informal relationship between the State Archaeological Departments and the ASI. When I go to a State, I meet the Chief Secretary and the State Culture Secretary and our Superintending Archaeologists have been directed that they must have periodical meetings with State Culture Secretaries. So, there is an informal arrangement by which we keep in touch with them. But there is no regular reporting system.”

1.11 When asked, Ministry of Culture in their written reply further stated that there is no institutional mechanism for ASI to keep itself informed of the activities of the State Archaeological Departments except periodical meetings with Secretaries of State Culture Departments. The Superintending Archaeologists of ASI have also been advised to keep in regular contact with the State Departments.

Ancient Monuments & Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958

1.12 Regarding procedure adopted for declaring a monument as a monument of national importance, the Ministry in their written reply

stated that whenever any ancient monument or archaeological site & remains is found worthy of central protection keeping in view its historical, archaeological and artistic importance, then in accordance with Section 4(1) of the Ancient Monuments & Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958, two month notice is issued through an official gazette notification, expressing its intention to declare the monument/archaeological site to be of national importance. The printed copy of the preliminary gazette notification published in the official gazette of India is made available to all concerned in the respective State Governments. A copy of the same is affixed at a conspicuous place near the monument/site to be declared as monument of National Importance by the respective field office of the Archaeological Survey of India for information of all concerned.

Antiquities & Art Treasures Act, 1972 and Rules 1973

1.13 The Antiquities & Art Treasures Act, 1972 (AAT Act, 1972) along with the Rules 1973 came into force with effect from 5th April 1976 and deals exclusively with movable cultural property of two broad categories- Antiquities and Art Treasures. This Act provides for :-

- (i) compulsory registration of notified categories of antiquities;
- (ii) regulating the export trade in antiquities and art treasures;
- (iii) preservation of smuggling of, and fraudulent dealings in antiquities;
- (iv) compulsory acquisition of antiquities and art treasures for preservation in public places; and
- (v) certain other matters 'connected therewith on incidental or ancillary thereto'.

1.14 In the AAT Act, 1972, compulsory registration of antiquities owned/possessed by an individual has been given priority. Certain notified categories of antiquities have been defined from time to time which are required to be registered as per provision of sub-section 3(A) of Section 14 of the AAT, 1972.

1.15 The Committee during oral evidence asked about the role of ASI in implementation of the Antiquities & Art Treasures Act, 1972 and the Additional Director General, ASI stated as follows:-

“The Archaeological Survey of India is also entrusted with the implementation of the Antiquities and Art Treasures Act, 1972. In order to implement the provisions of the Act, the Archaeological Survey of India acts in close tandem with customs, CBI, DRI as well as police authorities. Under the Act, 28 officers of the State Governments have been notified as Registering Officers for the antiquities. In order to give further fillip to the activities of registration, some ASI officials of the rank of Deputy Superintending Archaeologist and Assistant Superintending Archaeologist have also been recently notified as Registering Officers. “

1.16 The Committee enquired about the drawbacks and proposed amendments in the “Antiquities Art Treasure Act, 1972”, the Ministry of Culture in their written reply stated that the amendments to the Antiquities and Art Treasures Act, 1972 are under active consideration. The Cabinet Note and Draft Bill are being finalized in consultation with the Ministry of Law. The amendments are proposed for strengthening the Act further with a view to effectively checking the illegal trade and smuggling of the antiquities and conferring greater powers on the enforcement authorities.

1.17 When asked about the proposed amendments, the Ministry in their written reply stated that a provision has been made to promote the cultural exchange with other countries by way of allowing a loan of antiquities from museums or excavated sites to educational, research institutes and academic bodies in specific case for the benefit of scholars and academicians to study the cultural wealth of countries.

1.18 There is no provision in the existing Act for the verification of registered objects. Therefore, a new provision has been added to verify the registered antiquities by the concerned Registering Officer periodically so as to confirm the existence and present condition as well as their location to keep track of the antiquities.

1.19 A Proposal has been made that no change, alteration or addition in the format or appearance of an antiquity, purporting to change its character after its registration shall be made without prior approval of the Director General, Archaeological Survey of India or any agency authorized by him for this purpose for the safety of the antiquity or art treasure against damage.

1.20 A new provision has been included that any loss, accidentally or otherwise, damage, defacement or alteration in part or full of registered antiquity shall be reported to the DG, ASI immediately. This will facilitate to assess the damage or loss on account of defacement, alteration in the form, format of any antiquity or art treasure to confiscate the antiquities or art treasures in the public interest.

1.21 It has been experienced in the past that registered antiquities that get transferred in the names of foreign nationals even on their temporary hotel address etc. might result in illicit trade and fraudulent dealings in antiquities. A fresh provision has, therefore, been made to restrict the transfer of ownership of antiquity or art treasure to foreign nationals. It will prevent illicit trade of antiquities or art treasures in the guise of transfer of ownership in the name of foreign nationals.

1.22 To check the movement of the antiquity within the country, a new provision has been incorporated to inform the concerned Registering Officers and the Director General, Archaeological Survey of India.

1.23 The existing provisions in the Act have exempted some of the institutions from getting their collections registered but there was hardly any provision to have a check over the collections in the possession of such institutions. Provision has now been made to make the documentation of such collections obligatory for the exempted institutions, copy of which will have to be submitted to the Director General, Archaeological Survey of India. The Director General or his authorized nominee shall also have powers to inspect such collections as and when necessary.

1.24 The words “Central Government” have been substituted by “the Director General, Archaeological Survey of India”. This will provide opportunity to the Director General, Archaeological Survey of India for taking cognizance of such irregularities and for initiating immediate action in collaboration with the law enforcing agencies without any procedural delay.

1.25 Provisions for constituting Advisory Committee, Appeal Committee of the experts to render expert opinion to the DG, ASI for examination of objects has been made. The formation of the committees including various experts shall eliminate any possibility of error of judgement and the decision arrived at by the DG, ASI or his authorized nominee, will be more broad-based and judicious.

1.26 A new provision has been made to the effect that no person other than Director General, Archaeological Survey of India shall have the authority of preparing true replica of any antiquity or art treasure in the same size, colour, material, type and fabric or shall cause anything to appear like or believed to be an antiquity or art treasure. This measure will prevent the replacement and possible illicit trafficking of original antiquities and art treasures.

1.27 Proposals have also been made to make the punishment deterrent by enhancing the maximum limit of imprisonment on violation of the provisions of the Act. The imposition of fine commensurate with the valuation of antiquity of art treasure in respect of which the offence is committed shall be liable to be confiscated.

Policy

1.28 On being enquired about the policy of the Government relating to archaeological exploration, conservation, preservation and maintenance of monuments and sites of national importance in the country, the Ministry of Culture in their written reply stated that the provisions made in the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958, govern excavations in India. The Director General of the Archaeological Survey of India grants licenses to various excavation

agencies, both government and autonomous institutions, for conducting excavations on the recommendations of the Standing Committee of the Central Advisory Board of Archaeology (CABA).

1.29 Criteria for selecting a site for excavation are:

- (i) bringing of missing gap(s) in the cultural sequence of Indian Archaeology.
- (ii) throwing more light on lesser-known cultures
- (iii) salvage archaeology in the event of a site being submerged by a dam or being destroyed or damaged due to absolutely necessary development works, natural calamities.

1.30 The Archaeological Survey of India conducts excavations through six Excavation Branches located at Nagpur, Delhi, Patna, Bhubaneswar, Vadodara and Mysore besides, the Institute of Archaeology, Prehistory Branch, twenty four Circles also conduct excavations.

1.31 The policy for conservation of monuments is primarily aimed at ensuring their maintenance without altering their original features as existing. Reconstruction of the missing portions is kept to the barest minimum except when it is absolutely necessary for its structural stability. The guidelines for conservation works are laid down in the Archaeological Works Code and Archaeological Conservation Manual.

1.32 Asked about any specific changes needed in the existing policy, the Ministry of Culture stated that the present policy in regard to exploration and excavation is well defined, based on long experience and does not require any change. However, a policy decision has been taken not to grant licence to any excavator after three seasons and till pending excavation report is completed.

Heritage Sites Commission

1.33 In the year 2005, an announcement was made by Hon'ble Culture Minister to form a Heritage Sites Commission. In this regard, Secretary, Ministry of Culture during oral evidence stated as follows:-

“A draft Heritage Commission Bill is being prepared by a small Committee under the chairmanship of DG, ASI.....We hope that Heritage Commission will be able to take up a large amount of the work that is not yet being tackled under the Archaeological Survey of India.”

1.34 About the need of constituting National Heritage Sites Commission, DG, ASI during oral evidence stated as follows:-

“Regarding the various options available for conservation for heritage monuments, you have mentioned three different scenarios. One is entirely by the ASI; second is the ASI and the State combined; third is, of course, the private initiative coming and doing it. I won't be able to give a final view on this matter. Personally, I would like to submit that with such a rich cultural heritage with such a large number of built monuments all over the country, it may not be possible for any one organization, like the ASI, to take care of the entire built heritage. It has to be a shared responsibility. The ASI should only take over monuments which are nationally declared as important, that most important ones. There is a process that has been adopted in almost all the countries of the world. They call it 'listing'. Buildings are listed as List A, List B and List C. These are not under the Government. People are not allowed to damage or restructure buildings under these listings. Some cities like Mumbai, Hyderabad and Chennai have already listed. I would submit that all over the country we must list the heritage buildings. I hope that with the National Heritage Site Commission coming into being, the very important issue of listing the heritage buildings will be addressed.

1.35 He further stated as follows:-

“At the moment there is no legislation for listing all over the country. Maharashtra has brought out in Mumbai that particular order under Town Planning Act. Hyderabad has brought forward an order for listing. Then, certain cities in India have done it at their levels. Once the National Heritage Sites Commission is constituted, it will have legal and statutory powers to issue directions. I hope and it is my firm conviction that this Commission would issue directions to all State Governments to make listing of heritage buildings.”

1.36 The Committee asked about the aims for setting up National Heritage Sites Commission, the Ministry of Culture in their written reply stated that considering the rich heritage of our country scattered all over, a few monuments and sites notified by the Central and State Governments represent only a miniscule fraction of our heritage. With this fundamental point in mind, National Heritage Commission has been conceptualized for which guidelines and contracting frameworks for introducing public private partnership in development and maintenance of historical/heritage sites and monuments are being formulated.

1.37 The Committee further asked about the latest position of setting up of National Heritage Sites Commission, the Ministry of Culture in their written reply stated that the Government proposes to constitute a Heritage Sites Commission. The Commission would lay down broad policy guidelines and take steps to ensure that such guidelines are observed.

1.38 The proposed Heritage Sites Commission would:

- (i) tender advice to Government on heritage matters.
- (ii) frame guidelines in the matter of conservation of heritage monuments and sites

- (iii) can study or cause to study important matters regarding conservation of heritage and submit reports to the Government
- (iv) suggest appropriate amendments to the existing heritage legislations.

1.39 The draft Cabinet Note along with a copy of the draft bill for setting up the Commission has been circulated to concerned Departments of the Government of India and all State Governments for their comments. Comments have been received from Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Environment and Forest and ten State Governments. These have been compiled and forwarded to the Ministry of Law alongwith the comments of the Ministry of Culture. On receipt of the same the matter will be placed before the Cabinet for approval and for placing the bill in the House.

National Mission on Monuments and Antiquities

1.40 About a mission on built heritage, Secretary, Ministry of Culture stated as follows :-

“Built heritage was a mission that was planned as a five year programme and we have prepared a document on that. It was taken to the Planning Commission and the Finance Ministry for the Expenditure Finance Committee (EFC) and we had asked for a Rs.300 crore which had to reduce. We had asked this amount for five years. We were told to reduce the amount which we have now done.....The budget has been brought down to about Rs.90 crore. In that project we will involve the State Governments, the universities and the NGOs and various other civil society institutions to come forward in a project mode to help us on built heritage. This will help progress of the country also which in turn could form a base for future working. Thereafter the restructuring of the ASI will be done within this mode. We require staff for this

work. This again would be little problem when we go for outsourcing. They will be on fixed time periods. We may have to outsource and get technical staff for field work. The ASI restructuring as such has to be done in a big way. We have not yet planned that except that we have also discussed this mission in the draft Heritage Bill. Maybe, if it is successful, in the Eleventh Plan, we can think of restructuring the ASI. I think we have to emphasise on that.”

1.41 The Committee further asked about the projects being sacrificed to cope with reduced amount, the Ministry of Culture in their written reply stated that there was a proposal of Rs. 400 crore for two missions namely ‘National Mission on Monuments’ and ‘National Mission on Antiquities’. Subsequently, the above two missions got amalgamated into one and coined as ‘National Mission on Monuments and Antiquities’, for which the project cost has been scaled down from Rs. 400 crore to Rs. 90 crore (with 11th Plan Fund requirement of Rs. 90 crore).

1.42 The earlier proposal to have an extensive computer based network has been deferred for the present, but it can be incorporated at a subsequent stage. This also has saved cost.

1.43 The Committee further enquired about the latest position and aims and objectives of constituting National Mission on Antiquities and the Ministry of Culture in their written reply stated that the Mission was formally launched by Minister for Tourism and Culture on the 19th March, 2007 for a period of five years i.e. 2007-2012.

1.44 The goals & objectives of the Mission are as follows;-

1. Prepare National Register of Built Heritage, Sites and Antiquities.

2. Set up State Level data base on built heritage, sites and antiquarian wealth for information and dissemination to planner, researchers etc., and for better management of such cultural resources. It attempts to create a systematic, accessible and retrievable inventory of the built heritage, sites and antiquarian heritage of the country.
3. Promote awareness programme concerning the benefits of preserving the historical and cultural aspects of built heritage, sites and antiquities.
4. Extend training facility and capacity building to the concerned state departments, local bodies, NGO's universities, museums, communities etc. in the field of conservation of built heritage, and preservation and management of antiquarian remains.
5. Help in developing synergy between institutions like ASI, State Departments, concerned institutions and NGO's to generate close interaction.

1.45 The Organizational set up of the Mission is as follows:-

The Mission headquarter will be located at New Delhi and ASI as Nodal Agency. The National Mission Headquarters is headed by a Mission Director. Besides, there will be 9 staff pulled from ASI and 13 personnel on contract basis will also form part of the Mission Office.

1.46 With a view to have better monitoring of the Mission activities there will be a National Mission Monitoring Committee which would be chaired by Secretary (Culture). Besides, Director General, ASI will be the Vice-Chairman. The other members of the Committee include Addl. Director General, ASI; Joint Secretary, MOC; Joint Director General, ASI and Mission Director as Member Secretary.

1.47 To have a better and efficient implementation of the Mission activities in the States and UTs, there will be a State Level Implementation Committee which will work under the Chairmanship of Secretary (C) of all the respective States and Union Territories. The Committee would consist of Secretary, Grampanchayat; Director, State Archaeology and Museums as members; Mission Director (ex-officio member); experts in the field (nominated members) and the Superintending Archaeologist of the concerned Circle as Member Secretary.

1.48 The Archaeological Survey of India as the Nodal Agency will be the implementing authority for the National Mission.

Chapter-II

Finance

Budgetary allocation

2.1 The Committee enquired about budgetary allocation and expenditure incurred on maintenance, conservation and preservation of protected monuments and sites, remains of national importance during each of last five years under plan and non-plan, the Ministry of Culture in their written reply furnished following statement :-

(Rs. In lakhs)

Year	Plan			Non-Plan		
	Allocation (BE)	(RE)	Expenditure	Allocation (BE)	(RE)	Expenditure
2002-03	2200.00	3825.13	3781.37	1500.00	2690.00	2868.81
2003-04	2600.00	3201.30	3191.74	5561.00	5891.00	5836.09
2004-05	4628.00	4089.00	4076.54	6636.00	5255.00	5211.46
2005-06	5025.00	4840.99	4852.35	5720.00	5199.31	5342.19
2006-07	4840.00	5775.43	5747.97	5020.00	5085.00	5068.92

2.2 The Committee enquired whether Government increases ASI's budget allocation every year, DG, ASI during oral evidence stated as follows:

“As a matter of fact, the Government was very kind to us. Over the years, the allocations have increased both under plan and non-plan. I must make a submission that compared with the number of monuments that we are managing and considering the state of maintenance of a large number of them, there is scope for much larger allocations and funds to be utilized. But the ASI can

utilize additional funds only if the organization is strengthened. We have a substantial shortage in the number of technical staff at the field level. Given the allocations and the present level of human resource, we are unable to spend more money. We have a great need to strengthen the organization and then supplement allocation.”

2.3 The Committee enquired whether the available money is sufficient, DG, ASI during oral evidence stated as follows:-

“The available money is quite good for us. But it is certainly inadequate if I have to look after all my monuments. But for that, I require my organization to be strengthened. With the existing staff strength, my capacity to absorb is limited. Even if you give me another Rs. 100 crore this year, I cannot spend because I do not have the manpower. We have a great difficulty in increasing the manpower because the Ministry of Finance is taking a very tough view even for creation of one post. So, we need to strengthen my organization at the field level which will require the concurrence of the Ministry of Finance. So, first my organization has to be strengthened and then my budget has to be augmented. That is why I said that there is no crunch of money with the available manpower resources. If I have to take all my monuments I will require much more money and much more personnel.”

2.4 When asked about the achievements with reference to Budget Estimates the Ministry of Culture stated that under structural conservation more than five hundred monuments received special attention in a year and the achievements includes consolidation of the fabric of foundations and super-structure, replacement of worn out and decayed fabric, water tightening of leaky roofs and damaged open tops, strengthening measures etc. Under preservation a large number of monuments received attention in the form of scientific cleaning of the monuments and paintings, application of fungicidal treatment,

consolidants, preservatives, water repellent coating etc. Considerable progress was achieved in the environment development around World Heritage Sites, and other monuments, which attract large number of Tourists. These include preservation of existing gardens and landscapes appropriate plantation, laying of flower beds etc.

2.5 In addition to the above all protected monuments received attention on a day to day basis which includes measures such as removal of vegetation growth, routine cleaning and sweeping, day to day maintenance work, minor repairs, watch and ward, security arrangements and daily care of the monuments.

2.6 The Committee asked as to whether the money allocated was sufficient and the Ministry in their written reply stated that the allocation of funds was not sufficient considering the need of conservation and preservation of all the protected monuments.

2.7 To a question regarding how much money is required to maintain and conserve all the centrally protected monuments if sufficient manpower is provided to ASI, the Ministry in their written reply stated that it may not be possible to make a precise estimate of the amount required for conservation of all the centrally protected monuments as no such exercise has been undertaken so far. However, in the context of preparation of the 11th Five Year Plan proposals, it was tentatively estimated that the annual allocation for conservation for all ASI monuments should be Rs. 300 crore, and that this must be accompanied with sanction of additional manpower for conservation.

2.8 The Committee further asked the reasons for projecting Rs.300 crore for plan side for 11th Five Year Plan by ASI. DG, ASI during oral evidence stated as follows:

“.....Per year, we are spending Rs. 100 crore on conservation of monuments. With that amount, I am able to attend to about 1000 monuments per year. Since we have around 3667 monuments. I have estimated that there will be a requirement of at least Rs. 300 crore. That is the basis.”

Funding to World Heritage Sites

2.9 In 1972, the General Conference of UNESCO adopted a resolution with overwhelming enthusiasm creating thereby a ‘Convention concerning the protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage’. The main objectives were to define the World Heritage in both cultural and natural aspects; to enlist Sites and Monuments from the member countries which are of exceptional interest and universal value, the protection of which is the concern of all mankind; and to promote co-operation among all Nations and people to contribute for the protection of these universal treasures intact for future generations.

2.10 India is an active member of the World Heritage from 1977 and has been working in close cooperation with other international agencies. At present 27 Cultural Sites have been brought under the World Heritage List.

2.11 About budgetary allocation for World Heritage Sites, DG, ASI during oral evidence stated as follows:-

“.....we make a special funding for World Heritage Sites in our budgetary allocation. The highest priority is given to World Heritage Sites. Broadly speaking, we have divided our monuments into three categories. The first and the topmost

priority is given to World Heritage Sites and those which are in the tentative list.....The second priority is given to the ticketed monuments and monuments where many people come because of religious importance. Then, there are other monuments, which come under the third category. In brief, we give the topmost priority to World Heritage Sites.”

2.12 He further stated as follows :-

“The entire budgetary allocation is distributed to 24 Circles of the Archaeological Survey of India(ASI) all over the country. Each circle is then supposed to distribute the allocation monument-wise. When the circle makes the allocation monument-wise, they provide the maximum allocation for the World Heritage Sites.”

2.13 To a question regarding getting financial assistance for World Heritage Sites by ASI from UNESCO, the DG, ASI during oral evidence stated as follows:-

“As regards UNESCO, there is no direct financial support from UNESCO for any one of these World Heritage Sites. But, we get benefit in the form of capacity building, that is, training of personnel. If a site is declared as a World Heritage Site in danger (for example, India has two sites which are mentioned as World Heritage Sites in danger, namely, Hampi in Karnataka and Manas in Assam) there is a provision of limited funding available under the UNESCO for such sites. But this is a very, small amount. In general, I would say, the financial support from UNESCO to any World Heritage Sites is marginal or virtually nil.”

Revenue

2.14 The Ministry of Culture in their written reply furnished to the Committee have stated that at present the revenue is being generated from various sources like sale of entry tickets, fees for videography/filming of monuments, fee charged for cultural functions in

Centrally protected monuments, sale of publication & guide books, etc. The major source of revenue is the sale of entry tickets. But the various programmes of ASI are carried out through budgetary support of the Central Government and the revenue collected is deposited in the Government account.

2.15 The Ministry further stated that during the following three years, ASI's annual receipts from sale of entry tickets into monuments etc. are as follows:-

(Rs. in Crore)

Year	Amount
2003-04	43.59
2004-05	52.89
2005-06	58.07

2.16 The Ministry of Culture further stated that the above receipts are remitted to the Consolidated Fund of India. In this regard, ASI has made a proposal for creation of "Non-Lapsable Fund for Conservation & Preservation Activities on National Monuments of ASI" by allocating part of the income generated through sale of entry tickets in a separate fund for conservation and preservation as well as for development of tourist amenities in those monuments.

2.17 On this issue, DG, ASI during oral evidence stated as follows:-

"With regard to ticketing of the monuments, we have two slabs for ticketing. For all World Heritage Sites, the entry fee is Rs. 10 for Indian citizens and \$ 5 for foreign nationals. For non-World Heritage Sites, it is Rs. 5 for Indian visitors and \$ 2 for foreign tourists. Sir, the revenue that we collected from entry tickets mainly, was to the tune of Rs. 44.54 crore in 2000-2001. This has gone up to Rs. 52.89 crore in 2004-05. Sir, we do not get any share of this ticketed revenue because the entire collection goes to the Consolidated Fund of India. But the Ministry of Culture has made a request to the Ministry of Finance that, at least, a

percentage of this ticketed revenue should accrue to the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI). At the moment, this matter is with the Planning Commission. We would like to push this matter further and we would like to see that a percentage, at least, of this revenue comes back to the Archaeological Survey of India.”

Chapter-III

Organisational Set-up and Functions

Organisational Set-up

3.1 The Ministry of Culture in their written reply apprised the Committee that the Archaeological Survey of India is the premier organization so far as the archaeological research, data based study on scientific analysis, excavation of archaeological sites, conservation/preservation of centrally protected monuments, maintenance of site museums and overall regulation of antiquities and art objects are concerned. Seeing the scientific nature of work, a group was set up by the DST which recommended that ASI be declared as Science & Technology Department. The Ministry of Human Resource Development notified the Archaeological Survey of India as Science & Technology Department vide Gazette Notification No. A. 36016/3/89-Estt., dated 27.10.1989.

3.2 It is an attached office under the Ministry of Culture, which is headed by the Union Minister for Culture. The Ministry of Culture has a Secretary level officer, who looks after various attached and subordinate offices in the Department.

3.3 The Ministry further stated that being an attached office, the Archaeological Survey of India has its own head designated as Director General. The Director General, in turn, is assisted by an Additional Director General, two Joint Director General and a group of Directors.

At present there are 17 Directors assisting the Director General in performing his duties including two Directors(Epigraphy) stationed at Mysore and Nagpur, and one Director, Science positioned at Dehradun and one Director Conservation. The Director General, ASI enjoys adequate functional autonomy for discharging various functions. There is no undue interference from the Ministry of Culture. However, the ASI functions under the overall guidance of the Ministry which is very much needed.

3.4 The Committee asked as to whether the Ministry have considered to provide more autonomy to ASI for efficient and better functioning, the Ministry in their written reply stated that a proposal for delegation of enhanced financial powers to the Director General, ASI is under the active consideration of the Ministry of Culture.

Post of DG

3.5 DG, ASI is an IAS officer since 1993. The Committee asked the Ministry about the recruitment rules for the post of DG, the representative of Ministry of Culture during oral evidence stated as follows:-

“The recruitment rules provide for both methods. If there are eligible archaeologists, they could be promoted to the post of Director-General in the absence of which the Government can post from the administrative service. As regards the number of years, I will have to check up. I think in 1993, we had a professional archaeologist heading the ASI. Since then, it was member from the Indian Administrative Service heading it. It was highlighted in many fora and Standing Committees. I am afraid I cannot say that this is the view of the Government or this is the policy view of the Government. But it has been brought to the notice of the Government. The Government has not taken a view as to change the rules by which only archaeologists can be posted

as Director-General. That sort of a view is not crystallized. But as this aspect is highlighted, Government can take a view on this point. I cannot give a comment on that.”

3.6 The Secretary, Ministry of Culture during oral evidence further stated as follows :-

“The post of DG, ASI is filled up as per the recruitment rules of the ASI as are prevailing on date and they were notified in May, 2002. Unfortunately since, 1993, there have been no eligible officers in the feeder cadre of the organisation. The Government of India and the DOPT at the highest level have taken a decision that for now they will be filled in by Administrative service officers”

3.7 On this issue, a non-official witness during oral evidence stated as follows:-

“I have served the ASI for 26 years; the first part of my career for 13 years was under professional archaeologists. They were occupying the top positions of DG, Additional DG and Joint DG. Now, the situation has changed and bureaucrats are running the ASI. They are very efficient and competent people but ASI needs a sincere professional kind of commitment, involvement and care and concern for the culture and heritage of the country. So, I think, it is a necessity today. The officers in the ASI are a very frustrated lot. We cannot expect good from a frustrated army. With the bureaucracy, administrative expediency becomes more important than professionalism in execution. Secondly, they are not there for a longer time. They come and go. They keep on coming and going. So, the kind of commitment and concern that we expect to run the ASI may not be that much there. Hence, it is high time that professionalism and technical finesse were brought back to the ASI. The officers of the ASI are the same and the mandate is clear but there is some slackness on their part. Therefore, this is a time for self-introspection and also introspection and review to be taken by the Government. When the colonial powers could establish the ASI, nurture it and carry it forward and make it multifarious, we expect that the national government should be more concerned about the national heritage of the country.”

3.8 The Ministry in their written reply further stated that the ASI is a multidisciplinary agency consisting of archaeologists, scientists, historians, engineers and architects. However, appointment of a generalist administrator as DG, ASI has not hampered the development of ASI as a scientific organization.

3.9 On further asking about the assessment made in this regard, the Ministry in their written reply stated that there is no objective assessment, which has established that appointment of officers from outside the ASI has hampered the functioning of ASI in any way.

Post of ADG (Archaeology)

3.10 The Committee asked about the reason for the post of ADG (Archaeology) remaining vacant since 1991, the DG, ASI during oral evidence stated as follows:-

“With regard to vacancy at the level of ADG what happened is that on 17th October, 1991 the then ADG was promoted as DG, ASI. So the post of ADG fell vacant.”

3.11 He further stated, as follows:-

“As there was nobody to fill in that criterion, the post remained vacant for some time. According to the Ministry of Finance guidelines, if a post remains vacant for one year, it is deemed to have been abolished. So, the Ministry of Finance abolished the post.”

3.12 The Committee then asked about the steps taken to revive the post, DG, ASI during oral evidence stated as under:-

“Then there was a lot of correspondence between the Ministry of Culture and Ministry of Finance to revive the post. However, it was not agreed to by the Ministry of Finance. After a lot of correspondence at the level of the Minister himself and the

Secretary, only this year (2006) the post of ADG was revived by the Ministry of Finance.

We have already taken up with the UPSC to fill up that post. This is the position.”

3.13 On being asked as to whether the Ministry was aware of the guidelines of the Ministry of Finance in this regard, the DG, ASI stated as under :-

“Regarding the abolition of the post of Additional DG in the technical cadre, this was consequent to the fact that there was a circular from the Ministry of Finance that if a post lies vacant for a certain period of time, that post will be abolished.”

3.14 The Committee asked for the reason why the matter of reconsidering the qualification was not taken up with Ministry of Finance, a representative, Ministry of Culture during oral evidence, stated as follows:-

“The question of reconsidering the qualification arises only after the post is revived. At the first instance itself since it could not be filled up in the first year as per the existing qualification at that particular time, it was deemed to have been abolished and further action can be taken only after the revival - be it a question of sending a requisition or modifying the qualification under the recruitment rules.”

3.15 The Committee enquired why the Ministry of Culture did not think to reconsider the qualification and other things, as it was known to them that after year the post of ADG would be deemed to be abolished, a representative, Ministry of Culture stated during oral evidence as follows :

“Within that one year, it is presumed that may be after sometime the person would become eligible for promotion to that particular post. Hence, it was not considered necessary to revise the

qualification because the people would have been eligible by the time they became eligible. Finance Ministry refused to give the permission for revival.”

Manpower

3.16 Noticing the statements of ASI that there is no dearth of money but shortage of manpower, the Committee asked the Ministry as to how many technical posts are lying vacant, the Ministry of Culture in their written reply furnished the following details:-

Name of Group	Sanctioned Strength	Vacancy
Group 'A'	212	49 posts
Group 'B'	460	87 posts
Group 'C'	1595	93 posts

3.17 The Ministry of Culture further stated that continuous efforts are being made to fill up all the vacant posts by conducting DPC meeting and also through UPSC/SSC.

3.18 Regarding shortage of conservation personnel DG, ASI during oral evidence stated as follows:-

“Every year, we are taking more monuments for protection and an existing monument is getting one more year old, which means, it is subject to greater ageing. There is an increasing demand for conservation personnel. I am afraid, we have not been able to keep pace with this demand on the one side and on the other side, the theories and the techniques of conservation are actually evolving day by day. We may not be able to keep pace with the changing requirements.....”

3.19 While expressing ASI's inability to maintain monuments due to shortage of staff, a representative of Ministry of Culture during oral evidence stated as follows:-

“There is a sea change in the role of the ASI now and when it was formed. There is so much of work added on to the same staff. At present, the ASI do not have any architects. As such, there is no civil engineering unit, they do not have any conservation architects which is a new specialization which has happened world wide in the last 15 years. The ASI was primarily formed for survey and also conservation of monuments but more for their maintenance to the best extent possible. But when the role has changed in the last 15 years, we have not been able to keep pace with the restructuring of the ASI accordingly. It has been something which the Ministry has been grappling with. I think it needs to be done now. It will be part of our projects in the Eleventh Plan.”

3.20 The Committee enquired whether ASI has sent any proposal to the Ministry for increase in manpower, the Ministry in their written reply stated that ASI has not sent any fresh proposal to the Ministry of Culture/Ministry of Finance for increase in manpower in ASI.

Functions of ASI

3.21 The Committee asked about the functions of ASI and the Ministry in their written reply stated that a special reference has been made in the Constitution of India of the responsibility of the Indian Citizens for maintenance of cultural property and monuments. In fulfillment of the provisions of the Constitution, Parliament passed the “Ancient and Historical Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act” in 1951 by which all the monuments previously protected under the Ancient Monuments Preservation Act 1904 were re-declared as of national importance. In 1953 after the merger of the princely states with the rest of India, the Archaeological Survey of India took the additional responsibility to maintain, conservation/preservation of monuments previously looked after by the princely states. A new Act called ‘Ancient

Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act 1958' was passed which covers the entire country and is presently in vogue.

3.22 Under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains 1958, the ASI has declared 3659 monuments of national importance in the country. During the last 144 years of its existence, the ASI has grown from a humble beginning to a large organization with an organized work force at the base and the Director General at the apex. Its major activities inter-alia are as under :-

- (i) Maintenance, conservation and preservation of centrally protected monuments/sites and remains;
- (ii) Conducting archaeological explorations and excavations;
- (iii) Chemical preservation of monuments and antiquarian remains;
- (iv) Architectural survey of monuments;
- (v) Epigraphical and numismatic studies;
- (vi) Setting up and re-organization of Site Museums;
- (vii) Training in Archaeology;
- (viii) Bringing out archaeological publications;
- (ix) Archaeological expeditions outside India (Excavation & Conservation);
- (x) Implementation of Antiquities and Art Treasures Act, 1972; and
- (xi) Horticulture operation in and around ancient monuments and sites.

Institute of Archaeology

3.23 About the deviation of Institute of Archaeology from its path, a representative of ASI during oral evidence stated as follows:-

“The Institute of Archaeology is one wing which could serve the country in a big way. Today, this Institute is again a demoralized

and directionless one. Luckily, we have purchased a piece of 25 acres of land in Greater Noida on which we want to create a Heritage Institute which could compare with any fine institution anywhere in the world whether it is Italian, British or anywhere else. So, it is high time that we move the Institute of Archaeology to that 25 acre piece of land. It should have all the facilities and faculties to take care of varied, allied scientific and technological requirements of a archaeology like archaeo-botany, archaeo-zoology, archaeo-geology and dating laboratories.”

3.24 On being asked, DG ASI during oral evidence stated as follows:-

“As of late, we have the Institute of Archaeology. It was supposed to have been shifted to NOIDA in the new campus. We have reviewed the need to shift it to NOIDA. In the meanwhile, what happened was that a huge area has become available to the ASI in the Red Fort campus. After the Army has vacated the Red Fort, a large number of buildings have fallen vacant. They are very nice, colonial buildings. We have shifted that Institute to the campus in Red Fort.”

3.25 When the Committee asked as to when ASI is going to convert it into a National Institute, DG ASI during evidence stated as follows :-

“At one point of time, there is the National Museum Institute. There is a training institute in the Archives. There is the Institute of Archaeology. The Institute of Archaeology, wanted to be converted into a Deemed University. There had been a thinking that instead of having so many little Institutes under various organizations, why could we not have one of a national status with Open University status.”

3.26 On being asked about whether the decision has been taken in this regard, DG, ASI stated as follows :-

“....A decision on this is yet not final....”

3.27 The Review Committee has also suggested that in order that it may grow as the seat of higher learning and research, it may be

upgraded as a full fledged National Institute of Archaeology and Art history with the status of a deemed university with five major schools of Indian Archaeology, World Archaeology, History of Art, Conservation and Heritage Management and Archaeological Sciences. In view of this suggestion the Committee asked about the views of Ministry of Culture and the Ministry in their written reply stated that as per the recommendations of the Review Committee the Ministry of Culture has taken decision in principle to declare the Institute of Archaeology as deemed university. Further modalities are being worked out.

3.28 The Committee asked about the number of seats in the Institute, Secretary, Ministry of Culture further during oral evidence stated as follows :-

“....At present, every year 15 students are taken.....”

3.29 She further stated as follows:-

“....about 300 students apply every year.”

3.30 When asked whether ASI is not getting enough students, Secretary, Ministry of Culture stated as follows :-

“No, I would not say that we are not getting enough students, so far, the seats we have kept are 15 every year.”

3.31 On asking about the facilities available for research in the Institute of Archaeology, the Ministry in their written reply stated that considering the available infrastructure in the Institute of Archaeology, the facility to carry out independent research project is inadequate.

Training of Staff

3.32 The Ministry of Culture in their written reply has stated that the Institute of Archaeology imparts periodical training to employees of Archaeology Survey of India every year alongwith the PGDA students of Institute of Archaeology in the field of maintenance, preservation and structural conservation. The employees are invited from all the circles to attend the conservation and preservation course. Besides, ASI also invites the nominations from State Govt. for training of their employees in the field of conservation and preservation. The employees also get training in excavations as and when recommended by their respective circles alongwith the PGDA students of Institute of Archaeology. In the last five year the Institute has organized such training courses twice at Fatehpur Sikri in the year 2000 and 2001, twice at Sanchi, District Raisen in the years 2002 and 2003, and at Fatehpur Sikri in the year 2004.

3.33 In this regard, DG, ASI during oral evidence stated as follows:-

“The Institute was essentially conducting two-year PG Diploma and we decided that the Institute must also give in-service training to ASI officers. Last year, we have given in-service training to 46 officers of the ASI. There is no strict assessment made on whether this training has been useful or not but I am very confident that this in-service training given by the Institute has been useful to the officers.....”

3.34 ASI also deposes officers for advance training in various countries and also with international institutions like the ICCROM and UNESCO.

CHAPTER IV

MAINTENANCE OF MONUMENTS

Conservation and Preservation

4.1 The Ministry in a brief note furnished to the Committee stated that whenever an ancient structure or an archaeological site/remain is considered to be of national importance, a proposal to this effect is initiated by the circle office and sent to the Director General, Archaeological Survey of India along with its historical, archaeological and architectural importance. On receipt of the approval of the Director General, ASI the proposal is forwarded to the State Government with detailed drawings for the counter signature of the Deputy Commissioner/Commissioner concerned. On receipt of the revenue data duly counter signed, the Central Government issues a notification of its intentions to declare the monument as of national importance with a two months notice. On the expiry of notice and after considering the objections, if any, a final Gazette notification is issued for declaring the said monument as a monument of national importance.

4.2 The Ministry in their written reply furnished to the Committee have stated that the technique/scientific method used by Science Branch of the ASI for preservation and maintenance of monuments, murals, museums objects etc. depends upon the Physico-chemical characterization of the material as well as related conservation problem. The monuments under protection with ASI are located in different parts of the country and are experiencing varied climatic conditions therefore

suffer with variety of conservation problems. Since a variety of building materials have been used for the conservation of monuments, their treatment for preservation is planned very carefully and is carried out under the supervisions of Assistant Archaeological Chemist. The monuments are in general treated for the removal of biological growth and other accretionary deposits with the help of suitable and effective chemical formulations. The fungicidal treatment and preservation treatment are given thereafter on the clean and dried surface. This treatment helps to provide better aesthetic appearance and retard the rate of deterioration because of so many natural factors acting upon the monuments. The technique may vary depending upon the accretionary deposits present on the monuments in case of paintings and museums objects, extra care is taken to stabilize the condition with the suitable treatment.

4.3 The Committee enquired about the procedure adopted for declaring a monument as a monument of national importance, the DG, ASI during oral evidence stated as under :-

“There is Central Legislation called Archaeological Monuments and Sites Act. Whenever, we note that there is a monument which has got significant historical and architectural aspects features then under Section 4 of this Act, we issue a preliminary notification stating that the Central Governments intends to declare the particular monument as a monument of national importance.”

4.4 They further stated that the State Governments are consulted if the proposed monument is State protected and is proposed to be taken over by the ASI. In all other cases, State Governments are involved only

to the extent of preparation of relevant revenue papers required for the notification or subsequently if land or building compensation is involved.

4.5 The Committee enquired whether any prior consultations are held with State Governments or other authorities on the subject, DG, ASI during oral evidence stated as under :-

“...There is no procedure mentioned in the Act or rules of direct consultation with the State Governments in the Department of Culture or the Directorate of Archeology.”

4.6 DG, ASI further stated as under :-

“But I personally feel that is better to consult the State Governments.”

4.7 The Committee asked whether ASI is well equipped with state-of-the art technology and scientific methods for conserving and maintaining the monuments, painting, frescoes, etc, the Ministry in their written reply stated that ASI is equipped with the latest technology and scientific methods. However, there is a room for improvement. Conservation of a monument is a multidisciplinary phenomenon and we seek advice, expertise of the respective expert agency as per the requirement of a particular conservation issue. We have referred our conservation problems to specialized institutions like Central Building Research Institute, Roorkee, IITs, Survey of India , Structural Engineering Research Centre, Chennai, etc. and we get their technical assistance from time to time.

4.8 To a question about the prescribed time schedule being followed by ASI for conservation and maintenance of monument, the Ministry in

their written reply stated that it may be mentioned that ASI undertakes conservation measures at far more number of monuments. Generally we undertake more than 1000 works pertaining to structural conservation, chemical preservation and horticultural operation in a year. Besides, day to day maintenance is attended to in most of the monuments. Conservation of monuments is undertaken as per the priority and need of a particular monument. Yearly conservation programme is prepared for structural conservation, chemical preservation and horticultural operation under special repairs (Plan) and Non Plan by every circle and science and horticulture branches of ASI. Day to day maintenance is carried out for the monuments separately under Non Plan head.

4.9 During oral evidence, the Committee asked about the views of Archaeological Survey of India on the report published in 'The Indian Express' which has practically exposed the manner in which different world heritage are being maintained and about their present conditions including the Sun Temple in Konark, the caves of Ajanta and Ellora and different other site, in this regard, the DG, ASI stated as follows:-

"You have made a reference to the report that appeared in The Indian Express. I have gone through all the reports. I would not like to make any defensive argument, but I would only like to submit this much that in the best run organizations, there are always some shortcomings. I am not saying that we are without faults. Take the example of the first report that appeared on Taj. There is a photograph of a marble stone that has cracked. Under the established rules of conservation, we do not just replace stones from these monuments because these are all original stones. Even if a crack appears, we will not change it unless that crack leads to structural instability. It is not that we routinely replace marbles and making them appear new. A simple

photograph may convey an entirely wrong picture on the conservation efforts. Taj is such a huge monument. A stone here or there may have developed a crack but as long as it does not affect the structural stability of the Taj, we would not like to change it.”

4.10 DG, ASI further as under :-

“Similarly, they have shown the temple of Konark that is supported by a metallic frame. These were erected because one of the top lintels was broken which is now supported by the metallic frame. We are already consulting people on how to remove this metallic frame and see that the structure is stable. The limited point is there may be shortcomings here and there and I am sure that there are shortcomings. We do take action if anybody brings to our notice that these are the mistakes as they will help us in improving our performance. But it is not correct to say that the world heritage sites are not looked after properly.”

Exploration/Excavation

4.11 The work of exploration and excavation in the Survey is an ongoing process and a special scheme known as the Village-to-Village Survey is operational for this purpose. Under this survey, comprehensive surveys of the villages throughout the country are being conducted to know about the archaeological potential of particular area.

4.12 Further, the Survey also selects definite areas for special surveys, for example an area which is threatened for submergence owing to construction of dams, etc. Such areas are thoroughly surveyed so that the prominent archaeological remains/sites can be salvaged. The ASI conducts excavation through six Excavation Branches located at Nagpur, Delhi, Patna, Bhubneshwar, Vadodra and Mysore. Besides the

Institute of Archaeology Prehistory Branch and Circles also conduct excavations.

4.13 Asked about any changes needed in lieu of existing system on methodology for selection of archaeological sites, the Ministry of Culture in their reply stated that the existing system of methodology for selection of archaeological sites does not require any change. However, employing modern technologies like GIS (Geographical Information System), GPR (Ground Penetrating Radar System) would result in accurate documentation of site features and their quick analysis.

4.14 With the help of GPR, buried structures, water bodies and several other features can easily be detected and search can be focused on specific problem areas, which otherwise take long for formulating strategy after going through strenuous field excavations.

4.15 The Committee enquired about the norms set up for carrying out exploration and excavation work and number of proposals taken up during the last five years, the DG, ASI during oral evidence stated as follows:-

“.....The procedure is that there is a Standing Committee of the Central Advisory Board of Archaeology i.e., CABA. This Committee examines all the proposals received for excavation and exploration every year and recommends whichever are appropriate. In the year 2006, we have received 135 applications for excavation. Out of this, the CABA cleared 96 cases of excavation for the current year. Out of the 96 cases, 42 cases belong to Universities. So, any University can give a request for excavation/exploration but it must be approved by this Committee. We issue a licence. So, that is the procedure”

Excavation Reports

4.16 When the Committee asked about the excavation reports, DG, ASI during oral evidence stated as follows:-

“....ASI is also undertaking excavation in the country. But, unfortunately, in the last many years, some excavation reports that were due have not been given. These are old reports. Some are eight year old and some are older reports of ten to fifteen years. So, a grave view was taken on this account in the Ministry as well as various other Committees including the Standing Committee as well as the Central Advisory Board of Archaeology.”

4.17 When the Committee enquired about the reasons for delay in excavation report, DG, ASI stated that :-

“These excavation reports did not come because the concerned people retired or they were transferred midway and there were problems in giving reports. Now, ASI has been told that these reports have to be completed and they have a time frame for the next 18 months. We will be taking quarterly review and these reports will be completed in mid 2007. I may also inform the Committee in this connection that the PMO has also taken note of this lacuna. One of our thrust areas for reporting to PMO is the pending excavation reports of the ASI. Since conservation and protection of our heritage sites are something which the entire country has to take up in a big way.”

4.18 To a question whether ASI insist on the earlier findings when anyone comes for fresh licence for excavation, DG, ASI during oral evidence stated as follows:-

“Till two years ago, we were not insisting that they must come up with the findings of the earlier excavation to get a fresh licence for excavation. Last year and this year, we have made it mandatory that if anybody comes for a licence for excavation, he must submit

the result of last year's excavation. Now, this is mandatory. Unless one produces last year's report and the findings, we will not consider the application for fresh excavation."

Maps

4.19 To a question whether there is a need for mapping for carrying out excavation and exploration work, a representative of ASI during oral evidence stated as follows:

"Well old maps are there. Every year some new sites are brought to light. Yes, I feel that old maps which were prepared 20 to 30 years ago need updating. Secondly, a scheme was started to have an Atlas of 50 years, in which the situation of India, at a given point of time, was to be made. But somehow it did not take well, it could not start well. But yes, certainly, it is needed."

Laboratories

4.20 The Committee enquired about the technology being used and latest methodology adopted for preservation and maintenance of monuments, rare antiquities, the Ministry of Culture in their written reply stated that the ASI is equipped with a well established laboratory at Dehradun having all modern equipments. Investigative studies are carried out whenever required for developing safe yet effective methods and materials for the treatment and the execution is done very carefully under the strict supervision of an experienced chemist using latest equipments. The use of relevant and appropriate technology for the preservation and maintenance of monuments and rare artifacts is important to achieve good and lasting results.

4.21 To a question, regarding bringing all the laboratories under one roof, DG, ASI during oral evidence stated as follows:-

“ASI has got a full-fledged laboratory in Dehradun. It is fairly up-to-date and well-equipped laboratory. We have small laboratories in various places. The laboratory in Pune is not just for the ASI. It is for general conservation. But in today’s world with the scientific developments taking place in such a fast pace, it is not possible to have in-house facility in each organization. We must draw upon the resources of other organizations. The CSIR has got a lot of laboratories. The Central building Research Institute at Roorkee has a laboratory. They are always coming to our help. Then, Survey of India is coming to our help. There is a Structural Research Institute in Chennai. We are in constant touch with a large number of organizations. Above all, I would like to submit that IIT, Kanpur has extended complete support to the ASI for all its activities. So, my submission is that we should rather try to make use of available facilities in various labs. We will, of course, strengthen our own laboratories. But we may not be able to have full in-house capacities created.”

4.22 About insufficiency of laboratories, a non-official witness during oral evidence stated as follows:-

“One aspect that is very sadly lacking in the ASI is research and development. We have one laboratory at Dehradun but I do not think it is functioning adequately these days.”

Carbon Dating Machine

4.23 About carbon dating, thermo-luminescence and potassium organ dating a non-official witness during oral evidence stated as follows:-

“We do have it in the PRL, in the Birbal Institute in Lucknow. Recently, the AMS lab has been opened in Bhubneswar. Unfortunately, they are not dedicated to archaeology. They are more interested in measuring the samples for geology because working in the area of geology gets them quick international recognition. That is not the case with archaeology. All the countries are interested only in getting things done for geology to find out formation of mineral wealth and for dating them. They are more dedicated to dealing with geological samples, not archaeological samples. I do remember that scores of samples have been sent to the Physical Research Laboratory from my own

excavations and for more than two decades we are yet to get the results. That is the dismal situation. The ASI and the State Departments of Archaeology and universities are generating a lot of samples every year. They do not know where to go for their time-determination. If they send them abroad, there are some legal and technical hassles and secondly the charges are exorbitant.”

4.24 DG, ASI also stated about carbon dating machine during oral evidence as follows:-

“As regards carbon dating machine, we do not have that such a machine. There are two institutes which does carbon dating for ASI. One is Birbal Research Institute, Lucknow and the other is the Physical Research Laboratory, Ahmedabad. Both these laboratories do it for ASI. The whole matter of establishing a bigger laboratory in ASI was discussed earlier and at that point of time, the general feeling was that there are many research laboratories under CSIR. So, ASI should make use of these facilities in these laboratories under the CSIR and this is what is being done now. Alongwith this, the ASI itself has a laboratory in Dehradun where such tests can be done.”

Security of Monuments/Sites

4.25 The Committee asked about the steps taken by ASI to improve safety and security arrangements at the monuments sites and structures and the Ministry of Culture in their written reply stated that for safety and security of protected monuments and sites, monument attendants and temporary status staff have been provided for discharging day to day watch and ward duties. In addition, 803 private security guards have also been deployed for round the clock security and safety at selected centrally protected monuments in different circles. As per the direction of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India, the CISF has been deployed at

Taj Mahal for its peripheral security w.e.f. 1st May 2002. Recently after the Indian Army decided to vacate Red Fort, CISF has been deployed in phases for the security of Red Fort w.e.f. 8th April 2003.

4.26 The Ministry of Culture further stated that in this connection, in 1984, an expert group on archaeology constituted by the Government of India under the Chairmanship of Shri R.N. Mirdha, M.P., recommended that ASI should have atleast 9000 Monument Attendants to cover all important monuments in the country. The Committee felt that even with this proposed increase, many monuments and sites will be having only one Monument Attendant for its supervision.

4.27 About shortage of monument attendants, DG, ASI during oral evidence stated as follows:-

“As far back as 1984, it was estimated that ASI requires 9000 monument attendants all over the country. We still have only 4000 of them. We are short by 5000 monument attendants as on date. We have the difficulty of taking over more monuments because of shortage of manpower.”

4.28 The Expenditure incurred by ASI on different security agencies is as follows:-

(A) Deployment of CISF

No. of Personnel deployed	Annual Expenditure
459	Rs. 9.25 crores

(B) Deployment of State Police

No. of Personnel deployed	Annual Expenditure
100	Rs. 1.50 crores

(C) Private Security Personnel

No. of Personnel deployed	Annual Expenditure
803	Rs. 5.50 crores

Museums

4.29 About Museums, a representative of Ministry of Culture during oral evidence stated as follows:-

“The Archaeological Survey of India has 41 site museums under its control and a project has been taken up for holistic upgradation of the site museums including architectural renovation, display, security, modernization and provision of various facilities for the visitors.”

4.30 On being asked about the preparation of any list of sites where site museums can be developed, the Ministry of Culture in their written reply stated that the Archaeological Survey of India maintains 41 sites museums. Besides two small museums/galleries in the Guard Room and Zanana Enclosure at Kamalapur (Hampi) in Karnataka are being organized/developed as an extension to the existing site museum. In addition to the above, following site museums are being set up at:

- (i) Fatehpur Sikri, Agra (U.P)
- (ii) Dholavira, Kuchchh (Gujarat)
- (iii) Deeg Palace, Bharatpur (Rajasthan)

4.31 They further stated that however, no list of sites where museums can be developed, has so far been prepared by the Archaeological Survey of India. But the potential for setting up site museums is being continuously explored.

4.32 The Committee further asked about the steps taken by ASI to modernize the site museums and make them discharge a positive role in promoting education, research and tourism instead of keeping them as

mere repositories of ancient culture, the Ministry of Culture in their written reply stated that the Archaeological Survey of India has initiated steps for upgradation/modernization of the site museums in a phased manner. A holistic approach is being adopted to develop museums as an institute of learning, interactive entertainment and communication as a popular and attractive destination for people from all walks of life by modernizing display system, contextual visitors interpretation, thematic organization and story telling, improved access communication & circulation, digital documentation of the artifacts, signage, information kiosk, etc. The Archaeological Survey of India in collaboration with the National Museum of India has empanelled architects/designers after inviting application through Expression of interest and due screening.

4.33 The Ministry of Culture in their written replies further stated that due to allocation of insufficient funds, the ASI has now taken up the modernization and upgradation of selected museums in a phased manner.

4.34 The Committee asked as to whether the literature on items in the museums is being made available to visitors, the Ministry of Culture in their written reply stated that the literature in the form of brochures, giving general information about the museums is made available to visitors. The guide books are also available for a limited number of museums.

Inspection of sites

4.35 The Committee enquired about the system of inspection carried out in Archaeological Survey of India, the Ministry of Culture in their

written reply stated that regular inspection of sites/monuments are being carried out by Circle/Branch Officers/Officials and officers from DG's office to the monuments. For major project works, inspections are carried out whenever required. Several times inspections are carried out and works are executed as per instructions of inspecting officers and shortcomings are overcome. In addition, where some monuments are effected/damaged by natural calamities like earthquake, flood, cyclone, senior officers from Headquarter also visit the site.

4.36 They further stated that the Superintending Archaeologist, Chief Horticulturist, Director Science regularly inspect the monuments and monitor the conservation and preservation problems. Besides this, officers of the Directorate also inspect important project areas and thereby monitoring exercise is carried out.

4.37 To look after 3667 Centrally protected monuments and sites, there are 24 Circle Offices. It was also pointed out by the Review Committee appointed on May 4, 2000 to go into the functioning of Archaeological Survey of India that there was no effective on-the-spot supervision in the Circles. The Committee had suggested that middle-level supervision should be strengthened and the Headquarters should confine itself to policy and administrative matters. For effective monitoring of the Circles, the Committee had also suggested that the territorial archaeological circles be grouped into six Regions with the headquarters located in the Region itself.

4.38 The Committee asked about the action taken on the proposal made by the Review Committee for restructuring of ASI and delegating more powers to Circles, the Ministry in their written reply stated that the ASI has been restructured. On the technical side, DG is assisted by two Joint Directors General and 17 Directors in the field of Archaeology, out of which five Directors have been designated as Regional Directors. Besides, there are two Directors (Epigraphy) stationed at Mysore and Nagpur, one Director(Admn.). The delegation of financial powers to the Circles has been recently enhanced. Besides, the Mini-Circles have been upgraded as Circles and therefore, there are 24 Circles at present.

4.39 When the Committee enquired regarding move to reorganize ASI, especially the Circles and mini-circles to facilitate more effective monitoring and supervision of the monuments and sites, the Ministry in their written reply stated that three mini-circles, namely, Shimla mini-circle, Goa mini-circle and Mumbai mini-circle have been upgraded to full-fledged Circles for more effective monitoring and supervision of the monuments/sites under these Circles.

Chapter-V

Miscellaneous

Encroachments/Illegal Constructions

5.1 On being asked about the instances of encroachments, the Ministry in their written reply stated that the most common type of encroachment is found in the form of construction of multistoried buildings for dwelling, commercial activity including godowns, religious buildings and Jhuggi-Jhoparies besides construction of State Government agencies. There are also concrete structures as well as of brick and cement structures, some are built on the basis of clearance given by the respective Civic bodies/Municipal corporations, etc.

5.2 The Ministry further stated that due to inadequate strength of regular watch and ward, private security personnel have been deployed at World Heritage and some of the important centrally protected monuments.

5.3 On being asked about the measures taken in this regard, the Ministry stated that as a long time measure, the centrally protected monuments have also been fenced and the field officers have been advised to make provisions for such fencing work in the remaining centrally protected monuments. This has certainly yielded positive results in containing the encroachments.

5.4 Further, to prevent encroachments in the protected limits of the centrally protected monuments, the Superintending Archaeologists, i.e. the field officers in charge of the respective monuments in a state/regions have been vested with the powers of Estate Officer and

authorized to issue eviction notices to the encroachers under the provisions of Public Premises (Eviction of unauthorized occupants) Act, 1971.

5.5 When the Committee asked about the action initiated on noticing the encroachment, the Ministry in their written reply stated that as and when any encroachment is noticed, immediate legal measures under the provision of Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Remains Sites Act, 1958 and Rules, 1959 are initiated by the field officers followed by the action of the Directorate of Archaeological Survey of India and wherever needed/ required the assistance from the local State Government/State Police is requisitioned and with their assistance as and when provided the encroachments are removed from the protected limits of centrally protected monuments. This exercise has certainly yielded a very positive response from various regions.

5.6 DG, ASI during oral evidence also stated as follows:-

“As you have rightly mentioned, encroachment is a major problem with the ASI. Wherever we notice encroachment, we must get the help of the State Government to remove the encroachment because this is always a law and order situation.”

5.7 When the Committee asked about the latest information on the encroachment, DG ASI stated as follows: -

“As on, we have collected information on encroachment. I have 252 cases of encroachment reported in various circles of ASI. We have got 202 cases pending in various courts. I am mentioning only about the cases in higher courts, of which 185 cases are in the High Courts and 17 cases are in the Supreme Court. I have a list of encroachments in various circles. It is a time-taking process

to get rid of the people who have encroached on the monuments. In Delhi we are relatively lucky because a committee has been constituted and periodical evictions are carried out in Delhi.”

5.8 Regarding measures to be taken to prevent encroachment, a non-official witness during oral evidence stated as follows:-

“I have emphasized that our first priority should be fencing of heritage area, whether it is a monument or an archaeological site. Earlier it could not be done because funds were not adequate, but now possibly, the funds are enough. Almost all nationally protected sites should be fenced first.”

5.9 He further stated as follows:-

“The piece of land in the ownership of the State Government or any Department of the State Government or the Central Government should be transferred in the name of ASI and the land that is in private possession should get acquired. Had it been done 50 years ago, many of the problems of our monuments would not have been there. Now, there is lot of litigation and lot of encroachments. We are not in a position to remove them. So, fencing of a monuments or site and acquisition of land, whether Government or private, is a must.”

5.10 The Committee asked about the parameters being followed for construction near the historical monuments, the DG, ASI during oral evidence stated as follows:-

“Sir, under the provisions of the Ancient Monuments Act, no construction is allowed in the first 100 metres from the protected limits of a monument and another 200 metres from this, constructions are allowed by the ASI depending on the nature of the building, the purpose and the height of the building. For first 100 metres in the second zone, we allow constructions up to 15 metres of height. In the second 100 metres, construction is

allowed up to 30 metres height. These are the statutory restrictions on construction around the protected monuments.”

Theft/smuggling

5.11 According to the information furnished by the Ministry of Culture, 44 cases of the theft of idols, statues, etc. from the Centrally Protected Monuments have been reported during the last five years out of which only in 14 cases the stolen objects have been recovered and in the remaining cases the matter is under investigation.

5.12 The Committee asked about the measures initiated to keep a check on theft/smuggling to recover the stolen objects, the Ministry of Culture in their written reply stated that in order to ensure the security and protection of the ancient sculptures, idols and artifacts, watch and ward staff have been deployed at centrally protected monuments, archeological sites and museums. The security has been further supplemented by engagement of private security guards and the state police. The Government is also considering the amendment of the Antiquities and Art Treasures Act 1972 to firmly deal with illicit traffic in antiquities. Look out notices are issued to enforcing agencies to locate and recover the stolen objects.

5.13 In this regard, a non-official witness during oral evidence stated as follows:-

“First of all, I would like to make it clear that Police Department and ASI are working in a nice way in preventing smuggling of antiquities. If anything is brought to the notice of ASI, it quickly

notifies it to different Police Departments and Interpol. There is a system. If they get any information, they pass it on to us and if we get some information, we pass it on to them. It is not that it is only the duty of the Police Department. Certainly, Police has some powers, which it can utilize for recovering or chasing those lost things.”

5.14 When Committee asked about the protection of antiquity, the representative of ASI during evidence stated as follows:-

“So far as protection of any antiquity from any site is concerned, it is a humanly impossible task in India because practically every two villages have an archaeological heritage site either in the form of an ancient site or a monument. I tried to make an experiment in Haryana. Through our Director, I sent a circular to all the District Collectors to advise Patwaris and local persons to give information about monuments or stray antiquities in their zones. So, a lot of information has started flowing in. Possibly at some point of time, we shall have to think how we can involve local panchayats, even patwaris and municipalities, to take care of the heritage.”

5.15 He further stated as follows:-

“Not after the Act was promulgated, but smuggling does take place. That is why, ASI has impressed upon the Police Department to have a special cell in the Police Department to deal with those things.”

5.16 In regard to theft, DG, ASI stated as follows:-

“With regard to the suggestion of possibility of theft etc. I have submitted that we have tried our best to curtail such incidents. We have a terrible shortage of Monument Attendants. ASI have hired a private agency and about 803 private security guards have been hired by the ASI. We have taken help from CISF and local police.

But even then I have to confess that we have several monuments which are not adequately protected. So, this is a serious problem. That is one of the areas where we require additional allocation for hiring more private manpower.”

5.17 He further stated as follows:-

“With regard to the idol theft, I would like to submit that the actual matter of prevention of theft or investigation is done by the law enforcing agency which is the police, CBI or customs. The Archaeological Survey of India is only implementing the Antiquities and Art Treasures Act. Though for processing the case, the law enforcing agencies take the help of the ASI, we do not have any field staff for this matter. The entire responsibility for investigating the theft or prevention of theft is that of the law enforcing agency. When it comes to across the border, it is the customs that does the investigation. But there is a proposal for amendment of the Antiquities and Art Treasures Act so that the legal provision can be made more stringent. Some amendments have already been proposed and the proposed amendments are in the final shape.

Untraceable Monuments

5.18 The Committee asked as to whether any enquiry have been conducted in regard to untraceable monuments, the Ministry of Culture in their written reply stated that the major causes for the disappearance of the ancient monuments and sites are rapid urbanization, construction of multistoried residential and commercial buildings, implementation of development projects, etc. Instructions were issued to all Circle Officers to personally verify the status of such monuments/sites, falling under their respective jurisdiction.

5.19 The Committee asked whether any responsibility has been fixed on the officials of ASI, local police or any individuals for the untraceable monuments. DG, ASI during oral evidence stated as follows:-

“With regard to the missing monuments, the position is, these monuments have been missing not in the recent past. Many of them have been missing since long. I have got a detailed list in respect of Delhi monuments. In 1999-2000 a detailed inquiry was made into each of the cases. Many of them have vanished many years back. Monuments which were declared protected under 1904 Act and which were protected in 1920, all of them have been deemed to have been protected under the new Act. Many of them are protected for 100 to 150 years. A total of 35 monuments are untraceable. As on date, it may not be possible to fix responsibility. But in all cases where monuments are reportedly missing, we have asked the officers concerned to give a detailed report. For Delhi we have got a detailed report.”

Private Sector Participation – National Culture Fund (NCF)

5.20 On being asked about the public private participation, the Ministry in their written reply stated that in order to facilitate the infusion of private and public sector funds into the field of heritage preservation, the National Culture Fund(NCF) was established as a Trust in November 1996 to enable institutions and individuals to perform their rightful role in promoting and preserving India’s cultural heritage.

5.21 About public-private sector participation, the Secretary of Ministry of Culture during oral evidence stated as follows:-

“..... In the Ministry of Culture, we have established a National Culture Fund about eight-nine years ago. Within that Culture Fund, we have tried hard to get help from the private sector and other public sector agencies. We have not been very successful. But some big projects have certainly been taken up.”

5.22 On being asked about the aim and objectives of National Culture Fund the Ministry of Culture in their written reply stated that India's rich cultural and historical heritage is embodied in its ancient monuments. We have been preserving this priceless heritage with limited resources. It is the responsibility not only of the Government but also of every citizen of the country to come forward to save these intricately crafted buildings, forts, temples, palaces, etc. It is the prime duty of every citizen in India to join hands to preserve our past glory.

5.23 Secretary, Ministry of Culture in this regard further stated as follows:-

“We have a corpus which has been given to us by the Finance Ministry. The corpus is there in the Ministry of Culture. The corpus is of quite a large amount. At the moment we have with us about Rs. 15 Crore. I think that is the amount that we have and the secondary corpus is also available but we cannot use the corpus. We utilize the interest that we earn from the corpus. It is also important to inform the Hon. Members that we have held various meetings. We have a Committee under the Chairmanship of our Minister where there are a large number of members from the corporate sector and public sector undertakings but a very few people are coming forward to take up monuments.....

....They have been working there for three years. Similarly, we are trying for other private sector people or the public sector to come forward but it is very difficult. We will again discuss the NCF procedures with FICCI. Income tax benefits are available under the NCF to anyone who gives grant and helps under that programme. It is difficult. Even the corporate sector will not easily come forward unless they see some benefits and visibility. Public sector also will come if you give them enough visibility.

But the private sector will come only if they improve their bottom line which is something concrete at which they can look at. It is not just visibility for the private sector. If the public sector has

sufficient visibility and some economic returns, they are willing to help.”

5.24 The Committee asked about the latest developments with innovative ideas in this regard, Secretary, Ministry of Culture during evidence stated as follows:-

“Our Minister has taken a decision for creating a Heritage Commission. The Heritage Commission Bill is being drafted. If this Commission is formed, it will also come up with innovative ideas in future to involve the civil society in many ways. The civil society has to come forward. The non-governmental organisations and the State Governments in their own capacities have to come forward to help in the preservation and also whatever we can have economic returns from the heritage sector over a period of next decade if it is planned properly.”

5.25 To further elucidate, a non-official witness during oral evidence stated as follows:-

“So long as I was in the ASI, the private sector were promising a lot and wanted a lot from the ASI but not contributing very substantially. I think, we are still in a very early stage. Private sector also has to learn the sensitivities of the ASI and vice versa. It is a welcome thing but if private sector comes forward without strings or without a lot of interference, they are welcome. Once they promise the money, they start putting so much constraints or conditions and it becomes impossible for the ASI to move forward.”

Projects sponsored under NCF

5.26 On being asked, Ministry in their written reply stated that following projects have been sponsored under NCF:-

- (a) Pro-active generation of projects and sponsorship to bring about visible improvements at monuments and sites, heritage complexes and their environments.

- (b) To bring monuments back into the lifestyle and culture of local communities.
- (c) Promotional activities in the form of organized concerts, theatre, cultural shows, location shoots for films T.V., lectures, community festivals, etc. be permitted wherever feasible as per ASI regulations.
- (d) Environmental development in and around the heritage sites.
- (e) Structural conservation, chemical preservation and refurbishment of the monuments.
- (f) Display of cultural notice boards, direction boards, signage, etc.
- (g) Providing visitor friendly amenities.
- (h) Providing popular authentic historical literature.
- (i) Improvement and upgradation of existing museums and commissioning of new ones in the vicinity of existing cultural property.
- (j) Illumination of monuments.
- (k) Facility for tourists such as cafeterias, parking lots, landscaping, setting up of information centers, kiosks, cyber cafes, souvenir shops etc.

Benefits of NCF

5.27 On being asked about the benefit of NCF, the Ministry stated as follows:-

- (a) 100 percent tax rebate under Section 80G(2) of the Income Tax Act.
- (b) Plaques will be put up at each site to advertise donation.

- (c) All activity at the adopted site will be donor-specific.
- (d) NCF will be responsible for giving receipt of Income Tax exemption and accounts of utilization of the donations.
- (e) Guaranteed mileage for corporate houses as they can project their donations in their advertisements.
- (f) Flexibility in project management through a MoU.
- (g) A forum for public visibility and accountability will be set up.
- (h) Revenue from events held at site and monuments will be credited in an account jointly operated by ASI and NCF.
- (i) Foreign donations can be received as the clearance under the Foreign Contributions Regulations Act has been obtained.
- (j) NCF will help propagate and inform people around the world about the heritage of India.

Salient features of the MoU

5.28 On asking about the salient features of this MoU for flexibility in project management, the Ministry in their written reply stated that the NCF will be accountable to each donor in respect of funds donated. A separate dedicated account for each project to be opened by the NCF. Donors can appoint and monitor the executive agencies to carry out the project work except for conservation of the monuments subject to the predefined technical aesthetic conditions laid down by the ASI. A Project Implementation Committee will be set up with experts and representatives of the concerned institutions to monitor and implement the project. A Project Advisory Committee consisting of nominees of donors NCF and representatives of the civic authorities and other

interested groups will oversee the project. NCF will facilitate all necessary clearances and permissions for the project. ASI will specify in general terms activities permissible within the protected sites, and in addition there will be a set of clear local rules applicable to each individual site. These will be published and made available.

5.29 The centrally protected monuments, which were covered under these projects are:-

- Taj Mahal (Agra), Agra
- Jantar Mantar, New Delhi
- Monuments at Lodi Garden, New Delhi
- Jaisalmer Fort, Jaisalmer (Rajasthan)
- Konark Sun Temple (Konark), Orissa
- Kanheri Caves, Mumbai
- Khajuraho Temples, Khajuraho
- Monuments at Hampi, Karnataka
- Warangal Fort, Warangal
- Qutab Minar at Delhi
- Humayun's Tomb, Delhi

5.30 The Committee further asked as to why this initiative is not considered to be successful, the Ministry of Culture in their reply stated that the Archaeological Survey of India and National Culture Fund are in the process of consultations with the representatives of trade and industry organisations like the FICCI, CII etc. for promotion of the public-private partnerships. The Archaeological Survey of India is also bringing out a publication detailing with the monuments where such projects can be taken up.

Tourist Facilities

5.31 On being asked by the Committee, whether there is any arrangement, institutional or otherwise with State Governments and other Central departments/agencies for development of infrastructure at the historical sites, structure, monuments, etc. protected by ASI, the Ministry of Culture in their written reply stated that tourism department of State Governments and Central Government, use the surroundings of the archaeological area for developing tourism related infrastructure, such as toilets, cafeteria, flood light, light and sound programme, tourist information center etc.

5.32 In this regard, the Ministry further stated that many of the centrally protected monuments and sites have been provided with the basic amenities for the visitors. However, there is always scope to improve/upgrade such existing amenities. ASI is making its best efforts to improve the basic amenities by way of providing drinking water facility, toilet block, approach pathway, signages, ramps for disabled persons, wheel chairs, visitors benches, publication for information, etc where these facilities are not available. Respective State Governments are being approached from time to time to construct link metal road connecting the monument to the nearest airport/railway station to promote the cultural tourism in the country. Co-ordination with the Ministry of Tourism is maintained for continuously promoting cultural tourism in ASI monuments and sites.

5.33 On being asked about the minimum facilities and amenities available at different sites and monuments, the Secretary, Ministry of Culture during oral evidence stated as follows: -

“....tourist facilities to the minimum extent are also provided by the ASI. Facilities like the small kiosks, or toilets or canteen facilities which will not hamper conservation efforts are certainly provided by the ASI. Smaller monuments in some cities like Bangalore and Chennai have taken up. You are right that all of them, that is about 5000, do not have such facilities.”

5.34 When asked about the steps taken by the Ministry/ASI to provide facilities and amenities in and around the monuments, the Secretary Ministry of Culture during oral evidence stated as follows:-

“In the last two years, we have told the officers concerned that they should prepare such plans for those monuments that have a large number of visitors. Even though they are small monuments we should give minimum facilities of toilets etc. in such monuments. I am sure that within the next three to five years, we will see a difference in most of the monuments.

5.35 Secretary, Ministry of Culture further stated as follows:-

“If we talk of larger infrastructure like small hotels or guest houses, that is with the Ministry of Tourism. Ministry of Tourism has prepared plans and they have already started the work. They have identified, if I remember the number right, about 80 rural tourist hubs within the country which are in remote parts. We have coordination meetings with Secretary, Tourism which he chairs. Every six weeks or every two months we hold these meetings. We have requested the Ministry that these hubs could be situated near monuments so that tourists could visit them. That is one initiative which has been taken. If this continues, maybe in the next three to five years, large number of such smaller monuments can be taken up for providing infrastructure facilities. ”

5.36 To a query about giving some incentives to the private sector to construct hotels, etc., near the monument, Secretary, Ministry of Culture stated as follows:-

“I would like to respond very positively to what you have said. The time has come. In the past 25 years or so, the economic opportunities that were there in this sector, have not been fully realized; in the last few years only, the realization has come that if you spend money in this sector, you will get returns. That has now to be planned. It is true that except for the main sites which are there in the country, which could probably be 25 or 30, we have not gone beyond that, to be able to create a concerted effort and a planned programme. But now we should plan.”

Complaints /Suggestions

5.37 The Committee asked about the system put in place for eliciting suggestions and complaints from tourist/visitors at each of the sites, the Ministry of Culture in their written reply stated that the Archaeological Survey of India receives a large number of complaints/suggestions at the circle office as well as Headquarters. Besides, suggestions/complaints are recorded in the visitors/suggestions books maintained in various locations and follow up action is taken on the suggestions/complaints

Observations/Recommendations

1. The Committee took up the subject 'Maintenance of Monuments by ASI' for examination and had detailed interactions with the representatives of Ministry of Culture and ASI. The Committee note that ASI was set up in 1861 with the objectives of conserving and preserving the monuments of the country, taking up archeological excavations, epigraphical survey, maintenance of sites, museums and imparting training in archeology. ASI regulates all archaeological activities in the country as per the provisions of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958. It also implements Antiquities and Art Treasure Act, 1972. There are 24 Circles, 6 Excavation Branches, 2 Temple Survey Projects, 1 Building Survey Project, 1 Pre-history Branch, 1 Science Branch, 2 Epigraphy Branch and 1 Horticulture Branch through which ASI performs its functions. As on date ASI is maintaining 3667 monuments. After going into activities of ASI, the Committee are of the view that there is sufficient scope for improvement in several spheres of functioning of ASI in regard to

maintenance of monuments and archaeological sites and remains of national importance. These aspects have been dealt with in detail by the Committee in the succeeding paragraphs.

- 2. The Committee note that there is no institutional mechanism for State Archaeology Departments to keep the ASI apprised about the activities of State Archaeology Departments except periodical meetings with Secretaries of State Culture Departments. No regular reporting system is maintained. DG, ASI during oral evidence informed the Committee that there is an informal relation between State Archaeology Departments and the ASI. But the Committee is of the view that there should be a formal arrangement between ASI and State Archaeology Departments. The Committee, therefore, recommend that Ministry of Culture should devise an institutional mechanism to be followed by ASI and State Archaeology Departments so that ASI can get the information regarding the activities of State Archaeology Departments on regular basis. It is essential that regular reporting system**

should also be followed so that ASI is apprised of the activities of State Archaeology Departments.

3. ASI operates Antiquities and Art Treasure Act, 1972 and Rules 1973. This Act provides (i) compulsory registration of notified categories of antiquities; (ii) regulating the export trade in antiquities and art treasures; (iii) prevention of smuggling and fraudulent dealings in antiquities; (iv) compulsory acquisition of antiquities and art treasures for preservation in public places; and (v) certain other matters connected therewith or incidental or ancillary thereof. The Committee note that in the present scenario, Antiquities and Art Treasure Act, 1972 is not being effectively implemented and has certain lacunae such as there is no provision for verification of registered antiquities, assessing the damage or loss on account of defacement, the movement of the antiquity in the country, its documentation, etc. The entire responsibility for investigating the theft or prevention of theft is that of the law enforcing agency.

The Committee note that Cabinet Note and Draft Bill are being finalized and therefore recommend that amendments should

be proposed for strengthening the Act further with a view to effectively checking the illegal trade and smuggling of the antiquities and conferring greater powers on the enforcing authorities and making punishment deterrent by enhancing the limit of imprisonment on violation of the provisions of the Act. The Committee also recommend that local panchayats, patwaris and municipalities should also be involved in taking care of the heritage.

4. The Committee note that with such a rich cultural heritage and a large number of built monuments all over the country, it may not be possible for any single organization, like ASI to take care of the entire built heritage. Many monuments which are under State List are in a bad shape. State Governments neither have technically qualified staff nor have financial resources. The Committee, therefore, very strongly recommend that National Heritage Site Commission should be constituted as early as possible with statutory powers to issue directions to all State Governments. The Committee are also of the view that the process of 'listing the buildings as list 'A' list 'B' and list 'C' which has been adopted in almost all

the countries in the world should also be adopted in our country. The Committee was informed that the cities like Mumbai, Hyderabad and Chennai have already initiated the process on these lines. The Committee also recommend that all over the country, Government must list the heritage buildings, classify them and put restrictions on any one tampering with these built heritage buildings/sites.

5. The Committee note that a project on National Mission on Monument and Antiquities has been prepared and launched for a period of five years i.e. 2007-2012 with the objective to prepare National Register and set up State level data base of Built Heritage sites and antiquities; promote awareness programme concerning the benefits of preserving built heritage sites and antiquities; extend training facility and capacity building to the concerned State Departments, local bodies, NGO's universities, etc, help in developing synergy between institutions like ASI, State Governments, concerned institutions and NGO's for ensuring close interaction. The Committee desire that Ministry of Culture should plan the

project properly and ensure strict compliance in the fixed term of five years i.e. 2007-2012.

The Committee further recommend that personnel who are to be hired for the Mission should be professional and should have sufficient experience in archaeology. These personnel can also be retired efficient personnel of ASI.

6. The Committee note that the Ministry have tentatively estimated in the context of preparation of the Eleventh Five Year Plan proposals that the annual allocation for conservation of all monuments should be Rs.300 crores. The estimation was not vetted technically before its projection. The reasons put forth in support of the estimation was that Rs.100 crore are being spent on 1000 monuments so the estimation for 3667 monuments was Rs.300 crore. The Committee consider this projection hypothetical and abysmally low because the cost of maintenance of monument will definitely vary depending on the size and condition of the monument and therefore recommend that Ministry should ensure that the estimates of projects are based on realistic assessment of requirement of funds and all technical aspects

should be considered before projection of estimates. A separate fund should be allocated for excavation work.

7. India is an active member of World Heritage from 1977. UNESCO has declared 27 sites as World Heritage Sites in India. UNESCO provide no direct financial support to these world heritage sites, though it helps ASI in the form of capacity building i.e. for training. It provides a marginal financial support only to a site which is declared as a World Heritage Site in danger. During evidence the Committee was informed that a special provision is made in the budget allocation of ASI for World Heritage Sites. The Committee note that there are two world heritage sites in danger in India namely Hampi in Karnataka and Manas in Assam and only limited funds are available under the UNESCO for these sites. The Committee are of the view that protection of these sites which are of exceptional interest and universal value is the concern of the nation and therefore recommend that sufficient budget allocation should be made in ASI budget and all efforts should be made to invite national and international organisations for providing financial support for

the protection/conservation of World Heritage Sites at Hampi and Manas.

8. The Committee are perturbed to note that ASI could generate only Rs.43.59, Rs.52.89 and Rs.58.07 crore as revenue during the years 2003-04, 2004-05 and 2005-06 respectively. It is too meager in comparison to the number of monuments. It seems ASI as well as Ministry of Culture are not making efforts to increase their revenue. The Committee are of the view that economic potential of this sector has not been realized either by ASI or by the Ministry of Culture. If monuments have something different in the manner of presentation of its history as well as its indoor activities, it will not only attract domestic tourists but will definitely attract international tourists. The Committee, therefore, recommend that Ministry of Culture as well as ASI should take concrete steps for increasing their revenue by publicizing more effectively through electronic media or by organizing more cultural programmes, light and sound programme, puppet shows, screening documentaries, etc. at these sites with a lead taken by Ministry of Tourism and State Tourism Departments. In

this way, two purposes will be served, revenue generation will be more and our invaluable culture will also get a boost.

9. The Committee note that all the revenue earned by ASI is remitted to the Consolidated Fund of India and ASI do not get any share of this revenue. The Committee was informed that ASI has formulated a proposal for creation of “Non-Lapsable fund for National Monuments of ASI by earmarking part of the income generated by sale of entry tickets for a separate fund for conservation and preservation as well as for development of tourist amenities in those monuments. Moreover, the Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission has also agreed in principle with the proposal.

The Committee are of the view that if ASI gets some percentage from the revenue, definitely they will make earnest efforts to increase their revenue. Moreover, they will spend it on maintaining the monuments, which will automatically curtail ASI’s budget. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the matter should be pursued vigorously at the highest level with the Ministry of Finance with a request that a part of the ticketed revenue should accrue to ASI.

10. The Committee is distressed to note that the post of DG, ASI is being occupied by an administrative officer and not by a professional archaeologist since 1993. As per recruitment rules, if there are eligible archaeologists, they could be posted as DG. In the absence of eligible archaeologist, Government can post anyone from the administrative services as DG of ASI. The Committee is not satisfied with Ministry's view, that this does not hamper the functioning of ASI, because ASI has so many archaeologists, scientists, historians, engineers and architects. It is very strange that on the one hand Ministry is of the view that ASI is a multidisciplinary agency consisting of archaeologists, scientists, historians, engineers, etc. and on the other hand, Ministry could not find one eligible person amongst them to post him as DG, ASI since 1993. It is very strange that Ministry compromises to appoint a person, who does not have any experience in archaeology but has not sought to amend recruitment rules to appoint a suitable professional to the post of DG. It seems the Government is not serious about maintaining country's valuable heritage. No doubt,

administrative officers are qualified and competent, but their appointment is for a short period i.e. two-three years. ASI, which deals with scientific and technical aspects needs a professional who understands the technicalities of the archaeology. The Committee is not convinced by the argument put forth by the representatives of the Ministry that since 1993 there have been no eligible officers available in the organization. The Committee also find that recruitment rules of the ASI were notified in the year 2002 and amendments could have been made accordingly before issuing the notification.

The Committee, therefore, recommend that DG, ASI should be a professional and not just an administrative officer, so that ASI can work efficiently and effectively with inspired leadership. If need arises, necessary amendment in the Recruitment Rules can be made accordingly because a person heading ASI with some experience in archaeology is better than a person who does not have any experience in archaeology.

11. The Committee are surprised to note that the post of ADG (Arch) remained vacant since 1991 because at that time, none of the Archaeological Survey of India's officer fulfilled the criteria as laid down in the recruitment rules for the post of ADG. DG, Archaeological Survey of India during oral evidence stated that according to Ministry of Finance's guidelines, if a post remains vacant for one year, it is deemed to have been abolished. Accordingly, the Ministry of Finance abolished the post of ADG. The Committee are of the view that Archaeological Survey of India should have reconsidered the qualification for the post of ADG, as they were very well aware of the guidelines issued by Ministry of Finance. The Committee are further informed that only in 2006 the post of ADG (Arch.) has been revived after a lot of correspondence at the highest level.

The Committee is astonished to note that the post of ADG was abolished in the absence of having any officer fulfilling the criteria. In the present circumstances as DG, ASI is an administrative officer, it was imperative to have the post of ADG (Arch.). The Ministry of Finance should have preferred

to reconsider the qualification for filling up the post of ADG instead of abolishing the post.

In view of this the Committee recommend that Ministry of Finance should be considerate if such a situation arises in future and they should reconsider the recruitment rules instead of abolishing a technical post. The Ministry of Culture should also take expeditious steps and apprise the Ministry of Finance about the facts in time.

12. The Committee note that ASI is not able to keep pace with the changing requirements due to shortage of manpower. ASI was primarily formed for survey and conservation of monuments but now they are looking after the maintenance of monuments also. DG, ASI during oral evidence informed the Committee that ASI do not have any engineering unit, conservation architects etc. and due to shortage of staff, they are unable to take up more monuments which are of outstanding universal value and importance. The Committee is astonished to note that on one hand ASI is facing shortage of staff and on the other hand, 49 posts in Gr A, 87 posts in Gr B and 93 post in Gr C are lying vacant for many years.

Moreover, ASI has not sent any proposal to the Ministry of Culture and Ministry of Finance for increase in manpower. The Committee therefore, stress that appropriate steps should be immediately taken to strengthen the staff position, especially at technical levels viz. architect, engineers etc. and all the posts which are lying vacant for many years should be filled up expeditiously.

13. The Committee note that there are various institutes like National Museum Institute, training institute in the archives, institute of archaeology. The review Committee headed by RN Mirdha, MP have suggested that it may grow as the seat of higher learning and research, it may be upgraded as National Institute of Archaeology and art history with the status of a deemed university with five major schools of Indian Archaeology, World Archaeology, History of Art, Conservation and Heritage Management and Archaeological Science. The Committee are also of the opinion and have recommended that Ministry of Culture should take all sincere efforts to take a decision to declare it National Institute of Archaeology and Art History.

As regards in-take of students, the Committee are informed that at present 300 students have applied but after written test and interview only 15 students are taken. The Committee are of the view that number of seats in the institute should be increased and recommend that the curriculum should be made more attractive, job oriented so as to compete with international standard so that bright students get themselves enrolled to study archaeology and subsequently get an avenue to serve and in turn ASI and State Archaeology Departments may also get trained personnel.

14. Conservation and Preservation is the prime task of ASI and the policy of conservation should primarily be aimed at ensuring structural stability of the monuments without affecting any change in original features of monuments. The Committee note that ASI is giving emphasis on just renovating the monuments rather than conserving and preserving the monuments with original characteristics and they are of the view that ASI should not betray the nation by tampering with the monuments of national importance. ASI

should not do just cosmetic work. By this, the very purpose of constituting ASI will be defeated. The Committee, therefore, recommend that ASI with the collaboration of other Ministries, agencies, institutes, etc. should devise new methods/techniques for conserving and preserving the monuments without losing their originality. ASI should also seek advice of experts of international agencies in this regard. The Committee find that ASI takes a considerable amount of time to repair and renovate a monument. The Committee, therefore, recommend that a definite time frame should be fixed for conservation and preservation of monuments.

15. The Committee note that according to Section 4 of Ancient Monuments and Archaeology Sites and Remains Act, 1958, whenever an ancient monument or archaeological site and remain is found worthy of central protection keeping in view its historical, archaeological and artistic importance, two months notice is issued through an official gazette notification expressing its intention to declare the monuments, archaeological site to be of national importance.

Any private individual, State Governments, voluntary organizations having any objection, can file it. After disposing of all the objections, ASI declare the particular monument/archaeological site as a monument/site of national importance. The Committee note that in all this process, there is no role of State Government where the particular archaeological/monument site exists. Though DG, ASI during oral evidence admitted that ASI generally consult State Government before declaration of monument/site as a monument/site of national importance. But there is no such provision in the Act. Moreover DG, ASI himself agreed with the view of the Committee that it is better to consult the State Governments before a decision is taken to declare a monument as centrally protected. Cooperation of the State Governments should also be sought in acquisition of land for declaring a monument/archaeological site to be of national importance. Local bodies such as municipalities etc. may also be involved in the process.

In view of this, the Committee recommend that a provision should be included in the Act accordingly and State

Governments should invariably be consulted before taking a decision to declare a monument as centrally protected.

- 16. The Committee appreciate that ASI has done a lot in the field of excavation and exploration. But there are still many sites which need to be explored. Exploration and excavation are very important to fill up the gap in the cultural sequence of Indian Archaeology, throwing more light on lesser-known cultures and protecting an area which is threatened by submergence owing to construction of dams, being destroyed or damaged due to absolutely necessary developmental works, natural calamities, etc. So the onus lies with the ASI and Ministry to take concrete steps in this direction. The Committee recommend that since it is a computer era, ASI should employ modern technologies such as GIS (Geographical Information System), GPR (Ground Penetrating Radar System) etc. for accurate documentation of site features and their quick analysis.**

The Ministry should also review the methods or systems adopted by other countries for exploration and excavation

work for bringing ASI's existing methodology for excavation and exploration at par with international standards.

17. The Committee feel that there is a great need to update the old maps. It is very distressing to note that neither ASI nor Ministry of Culture has felt the need to update the maps which are 20 to 30 year old. As every year, many sites are excavated and explored, it has become imperative to update the old maps.

The Committee also note that a scheme was started to have an Atlas of 50 years in which the situation of India, at a given point of time, was to be depicted. But it could not materialize. The Committee recommend that for carrying out updation of maps of ASI, Ministry should fix a time limit and earnest efforts should be made to start the scheme to have an Atlas of 50 years and ensure its earliest completion.

18. The Committee are astonished to note that there are so many excavation reports pending for the last ten to fifteen years and even PMO has taken note of the lacuna. DG, ASI during oral evidence stated that the main problem for not submitting

these reports is transfer or retirement of concerned officials. The Committee views this seriously and recommend that the official concerned with the excavation report should not be transferred during the period of preparing the report and a time frame for submitting the excavation reports should be fixed. On non-submission of report in the prescribed time, strict action should be taken against all concerned.

The Committee also strongly recommend that the Ministry should take expeditious steps to get all pending reports completed and no fresh licence for excavation be considered in favour of the defaulter in the absence of previous excavation report. For completion of such reports services of retired officials can also be obtained. The Committee also desire that the steps taken in this regard and status of pending reports may be communicated to the Committee within 6 months after the presentation of the Report.

19. The Committee note that use of relevant and appropriate technology for the presentation and maintenance of monuments and rare artifacts is important to achieve good

and lasting results. Though ASI has a full fledged laboratory in Dehradun and small laboratories in various places, yet ASI take support from CSIR, SRI Chennai, IIT Kanpur, Central Building Research Institute at Roorkee and they are unable to create full in-house laboratories. The Committee therefore, strongly recommend that ASI should strengthen their own laboratories and all efforts should be made to establish full in house laboratories so that research and development activities may not hamper.

The Committee also note that ASI is not having facility of Carbon Dating Machine. ASI sends its samples for carbon dating to Birbal Research Sahani Institute, Lucknow and Physical Research Laboratory, Ahmedabad. Dating is not being maintained and ascertained properly. For dating, ASI has to depend on other institutes and these institutes are more interested in dealing with geological samples not archaeological samples. These institutes do not give much importance to determine the time. It is very astonishing to note that in PRL, the samples of ASI are pending for results for more than two decades.

The Committee, therefore, recommend that the Ministry of Culture should provide Carbon Dating Machine to ASI as dating is very important aspect. If date is not properly ascertained or maintained, it will be very difficult to frame up the history in terms of culture or archaeology of sites. Moreover, this will also cater to the requirements of the State Departments of Archaeology and universities which are also in the state of uncertainty about the agency to approach for time determination.

20. The Committee note that due to present phenomenon of terrorism it has become very necessary to provide stringent security to our national heritage. ASI is having a tremendous shortfall of monument attendants. An expert group on archaeology constituted in 1984 by the Government of India under the Chairmanship of Shri R.N. Mirdha, MP recommended that ASI should have atleast 9000 monument attendants to provide security to all important monuments in the country. But ASI has 4000 monument attendants. In order to cope with this shortfall, ASI which has engaged State Police, CISF, private security guards and temporary staff, is

incurring a huge financial burden on this account. CISF alone is incurring Rs.9.25 crore expenditure per year on ASI. The Committee is not averse to engaging other security agencies for security of monuments but is of the opinion and recommend that instead of investing so much money on other agencies, ASI should strengthen its own watch and ward staff. It should give more stress on appointing its own monument attendants. Their watch and ward staff should be given training periodically in order to bring them at par with other national level security guards. They should be laced with new gadgets and scanners, CCTV should be installed at the sites of national importance and surprise checks should be conducted in order to ensure the promptness of security staff deputed there.

21. The Committee note that museums play a pivotal role in representing the history as small and movable antiquities recovered from ancient sites are kept here with the remains to which they belong so that they may be studied amid their natural surroundings. ASI is maintaining 41 site museums and is initiating steps for upgradation/modernization of the

selected site museums in a phased manner. ASI in collaboration with the National Museum of India has empanelled architects and designers after inviting applications through Expression of Interest and due screening. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the Ministry should provide sufficient funds to enable ASI to upgrade/modernize the site museums as they are an integral part of monuments. ASI should take expeditious efforts to upgrade and modernize all site museums in collaboration with National Museum of India in time bound manner to attract more visitors/tourists.

The brochures/pamphlets are distributed free of cost to the visitors. The Committee note that very few copies of brochures/pamphlets are being distributed to visitors. The level of cultural consciousness in India has risen tremendously and common man wants to know more about the history. Therefore, the Committee recommend that adequate copies of literature in the form of brochures/pamphlets and guide books should be made available at these museums to keep the visitors apprised of the relevant facts of antiquities, etc.

22. The Committee are informed that regular inspections of monuments are carried out by Circle/Branch officers/officials and officers from DG's office. Though the ASI has upgraded three mini-circles to full fledged circles for effective monitoring and supervisions of the monuments and sites. But Committee are not satisfied with this arrangement and in view of this, they recommend that instead of having circles for large number of monuments, small circles should be formed so that effective monitoring of monuments can be done. The Committee also suggest that middle level supervision should also be strengthened. The Committee may be apprised of the action taken in this regard at the earliest.
23. The Committee take serious note of illegal construction/encroachment taking place near most of the historical monuments. Such encroachments/illegal constructions lend a bad view to the monuments and it also affects tourism potentiality of the monuments. Encroachment should be removed from the vicinity of heritage sites as it creates an adverse image in the mind of visitors. ASI should

deal with this problem firmly. The Committee also note that in Delhi, a Committee was constituted and periodical evictions are carried out in Delhi. The Committee appreciate the action taken by ASI and Delhi Government and recommend that such type of Committees should be constituted in other States also for getting the encroachment in nearby areas of monuments evicted.

The Committee are of the view that ASI should be vigilant so that encroachment does not take place. Once there is encroachment, it becomes very difficult to remove it. ASI is involved in legal actions for eviction, which is a very lengthy process. Therefore, the Committee suggest that Ministry should take stringent steps in this regard such as fencing of all the monuments, tightening the security, stringent punishment to guilty, fixing the responsibility of concerned authority to take care, so that no new case of illegal construction/encroachment occurs in near future. The Committee also note that under the provisions of the Ancient Monuments Act, no construction is allowed in the first 100 metres from the protected limits of a monument and they recommend that construction should not be allowed in the

first 200 metres from the protected limit of a monument instead of 100 metres. Effective provisions should be incorporated in the Ancient Monuments Act to safeguard the monuments from encroachment. The provisions should include stringent punishment and eviction by law enforcing agencies in case of encroachment.

The Committee also suggest that a Notice Board should be placed near the monuments giving a warning to people that illegal construction and encroachment is not permitted nearby monuments and the guilty will be liable to stringent punishment.

24. The Committee are perturbed to note that only 14 cases out of 44 cases of the theft of idols, statues which have been reported are solved during last five years. The Committee note that ASI has huge shortage of monument attendants. To cope with this shortage, ASI has deployed private security guards, CISF and local police at centrally protected monuments, archaeological sites and museums. To keep a check on theft and smuggling, an Act was brought into force (Antiquities and Treasures Act, 1972) but this Act has many

lacunae and amendments are required to be proposed in this regard to make it more stringent. A Draft Bill has been finalized. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the Ministry of Culture should take concrete steps to get the Act amended to curb the cases of rampant theft and smuggling and provision for stringent punishment for the culprit be included in the amending Bill.

The Committee is also of the view that as in India we have a very powerful Panchayati Raj system, the Ministry should avail benefit of it. The Ministry should devise such a mechanism in which Gram Panchayat, Patwaris, etc. could be involved to take care of heritage, in the process of checking illicit trafficking of antiquities, etc. The Committee recommend that Ministry of Culture should also take immediate steps to get back the idols, statues recovered by police or security agencies in their possession.

25. The Committee are aggrieved to note that 35 centrally protected monuments/sites in the country are untraceable. The major causes for the disappearance of the ancient monuments and sites are rapid urbanization, construction of

multistoried residential and commercial buildings, implementation of development projects, etc. The Committee was informed by ASI that as on date, it may not be possible to fix responsibility. The Committee view this as casual approach of ASI in this regard. It is highly deplorable on the part of ASI as well as Ministry of Culture that no expeditious steps have been taken to trace the centrally protected monuments. Only instructions were issued to circle offices to personally verify the status of such monuments/sites, falling under their respective jurisdiction. No other State except Delhi has bothered to sent a detailed report in this regard. The Committee, therefore, recommend that Ministry should pursue vigorously with all the concerned circle offices to give detailed report within a specified time period and expeditious and concrete action should be initiated to trace out the missing monuments. The Ministry should also fix the responsibility in this regard.

The Committee also recommend that the Ministry of Culture in consultation with other authorities should devise such a mechanism that before starting any new

developmental work, it should be ascertained that in that particular area, there are no hidden remains.

26. The Committee note that India's rich culture and historic heritage is embodied in its ancient monuments and this priceless heritage is being preserved with limited resources. It is neither wise nor prudent to get ASI alone to shoulder the responsibility of conservation, excavation of all the monuments and they therefore strongly recommend that the Ministry of Culture and ASI should make all sincere efforts to bring public and private sectors to come forward to perform their rightful role in promoting and preserving India's cultural heritage. ASI should periodically bring out a publication detailing the monuments where such projects can be taken up. The Committee are also informed that in order to facilitate the infusion of private and public sector funds into the field of heritage presentation, National culture fund was established in 1996. The Committee recommend that modalities of NCF should be discussed with FICCI, CII and other corporate houses. Benefits of the contribution made in NCF for promotion of public private partnership and salient features

of MOU i.e. NCF will be accountable to each donor in respect of funds donated and donors can appoint and monitor the executive agencies etc. should invariably be advertised. The Committee are also of the opinion that public/private partnership should be accepted and availed without any undue benefits for private partners.

27. The Committee note that most of the monuments do not have basic tourist facilities/amenities like drinking water, toilet, kiosks etc. Even they do not have the proper approach road connecting the monument to the nearest airport/railway station. The Committee are also constrained to note that even after the lapse of many decades, Ministry is still planning to give instructions to its officers to prepare plans for providing such amenities. The Committee deprecate the attitude of the Ministry/ASI and very strongly recommend that they should make available to visitors all the basic facilities like drinking water, toilets, kiosks approach pathways, signage's, ramps for disabled persons, visitor benches etc. Ministry of Culture and ASI should approach and co-ordinate with respective State Governments, tourism Departments and local

governments. The Ministry of Culture/ASI should also give incentives to the private sector to construct hotels etc near the monument in order to attract more and more tourists/visitors.

28. The Committee note that follow up action on complaints/suggestions received at the circle offices as well as headquarters of ASI and recorded in the visitors/suggestion book is taken by ASI. The Committee recommend that redressal system should further be strengthened and visitors suggestions book/complaint box should be kept at all historical monuments of national importance. One higher official should be made responsible for attending and taking the remedial steps on the complaints/suggestions received from the visitors of monuments under his circle/branch.

NEW DELHI;
February 29, 2008
Phalguna 10, 1929(S)

C. KUPPUSAMI,
Chairman,
Committee on Estimates.

APPENDIX-I

MINUTES OF SITTING OF THE ESTIMATES COMMITTEE (2005-2006)

FIFTH SITTING

The Committee sat on Friday, the 17th June, 2005 from 1255 hrs. to 1400 hours.

Present

Shri C. Kuppusami - Chairman

Members

2. Shri Sartaj Singh Chhatwal
3. Shri V. Kishore Chandra S. Deo
4. Shri Anant Gudhe
5. Shri Jai Prakash
6. Shri P. Karunakaran
7. Shri Vijoy Krishna
8. Shri B. Vinod Kumar
9. Prof. Chander Kumar
10. Shri Samik Lahiri
11. Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab
12. Shri Sanat Kumar Mandal
13. Shri Prabodh Panda
14. Shri Sukhdeo Paswan
15. Shri K.S. Rao
16. Shri Arjun Charan Sethi
17. Shri M.A. Kharabela Swain

Secretariat

1. Shri A.K. Singh - PCPI
2. Shri B.D.Swan - Deputy Secretary
3. Shri Cyril John - Under Secretary

Witnesses

Ministry of Culture

1. Shri K. Jayakumar, Joint Secretary

Archeological Survey of India(ASI)

1. Shri C. Babu Rajeev, Director General
2. Shri R. C. Misra, Additional Director General
2. The Committee was briefed by the representatives of Ministry of Culture and Archaeological Survey of India on the subject 'Maintenance of Monuments by Archaeological Survey of India'. The briefing was concluded.
3. A verbatim record of the proceedings was kept.

The Committee then adjourned.

APPENDIX II

MINUTES OF SITTING OF THE ESTIMATES COMMITTEE

(2005-2006)

TWELFTH SITTING

**The Committee sat on Wednesday, the 9th November, 2005
from 1100 to 1230 hours.**

Present

Shri C. Kuppusami - Chairman

Members

2. Shri Sartaj Singh Chhatwal
3. Shri Lal Muni Choubey
4. Shri Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury
5. Shri V. Kishore Chandra S. Deo
6. Shri Samik Lahiri
7. Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab
8. Shri Sanat Kumar Mandal
9. Shri Zora Singh Mann
10. Shri Prabodh Panda
11. Shri K.S. Rao
12. Shri Iqbal Ahmed Saradgi
13. Shri Jyotiraditya Madhavrao Scindia
14. Shri Arjun Charan Sethi
15. Shri Lakshman Singh
16. Shri Chandra Pal Singh Yadav

Secretariat

1. Shri B.D.Swan - Deputy Secretary
2. Shri Cyril John - Under Secretary

Non-official Witness

Shri R.S. Bisht - Former Joint Director General,
Archaeological Survey of India(ASI)

2. The Committee took oral evidence of non-official witness on the subject `Maintenance of Monuments by ASI'. The evidence was concluded.
3. A verbatim record of the proceedings was kept.

The Committee then adjourned

APPENDIX III

MINUTES OF SITTING OF THE ESTIMATES COMMITTEE

(2005-2006)

THIRTEENTH SITTING

**The Committee sat on Wednesday, the 9th November, 2005
from 1500 to 1550 hours.**

Present

Shri C. Kuppusami - Chairman

Members

2. Shri B.Vinod kumar
3. Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab
4. Shri Sanat Kumar Mandal
5. Shri Iqbal Ahmed Saradgi
6. Shri Arjun Charan Sethi
7. Shri M.A. Kharabela Swain

Secretariat

1. Shri B.D.Swan - Deputy Secretary
2. Shri Cyril John - Under Secretary

Witnesses

Ministry of Culture

1. Smt. Neena Ranjan, Secretary
2. Shri K. Jayakumar, Joint Secretary
3. Shri L. Rvniah, Joint Secretary

Archaeological Survey of India(ASI)

1. Shri R. C. Misra, Additional Director General
2. Dr. R.K. Sharma, Joint Director General
3. Prof. R.C. Agrawal, Joint Director General

2. The Committee took oral evidence of the representatives of Ministry of Culture and Archaeological Survey of India(ASI) on the subject `Maintenance of Monuments by ASI'. The evidence was not concluded. The Committee decided to take further evidence of the representatives of Ministry of Culture and ASI on the subject on 17th November, 2005.

3. A verbatim record of the proceedings was kept.

The Committee then adjourned

APPENDIX IV

MINUTES OF SITTING OF THE ESTIMATES COMMITTEE **(2005-2006)**

FOURTEENTH SITTING

The Committee sat on Thursday, the 17th November, 2005
from 1100 to 1305 hours.

Present

Shri C. Kuppusami - Chairman

Members

2. Shri Sartaj Singh Chhatwal
3. Shri Lal Muni Choubey
4. Shri Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury
5. Shri Samik Lahiri
6. Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab
7. Shri Sanat Kumar Mandal
8. Shri K.S. Rao
9. Shri Jyotiraditya Madhavrao Scindia
10. Shri Lakshman Singh
11. Shri Sukhdeo Paswan

Secretariat

1. Shri P.K. Bhandari - Joint Secretary
2. Shri Cyril John - Under Secretary

Witnesses

Ministry of Culture

1. Smt. Neena Ranjan, Secretary
2. Shri K. Jayakumar, Joint Secretary
3. Shri L. Rynjah, Joint Secretary

Archaeological Survey of India(ASI)

1. Shri C. Babu Rajeev, Director General
2. Shri R. C. Misra, Additional Director General
3. Dr. R.K. Sharma, Joint Director General
4. Prof. R.C. Agrawal, Joint Director General

2. The Committee took oral evidence of the representatives of Ministry of Culture and Archaeological Survey of India(ASI) on the subject `Maintenance of Monuments by ASI'. The evidence was concluded.

3. A verbatim record of the proceedings was kept.

The Committee then adjourned

APPENDIX V

MINUTES OF SITTING OF THE ESTIMATES COMMITTEE **(2006-07)**

NINTH SITTING

The Committee sat on Monday, the 6th November, 2006 from 1100 hours to 1235 hours.

Present

Shri C. Kuppusami - Chairman

Members

2. Shri Lal Muni Choubey
3. Shri Bikram Keshari Deo
4. Shri Anant Gudhe
5. Shri Jai Prakash
6. Shri B. Vinod Kumar
7. Shri Samik Lahiri
8. Shri Sanat Kumar Mandal
9. Shri Mahendra Prasad Nishad
10. Shri Prabodh Panda
11. Shri K.S. Rao
12. Prof. Rasa Singh Rawat
13. Shri Jyotiraditya M. Scindia
14. Dr. Ramlakhan Singh
15. Shri Madhu Goud Yaskhi

Secretariat

1. Shri Rajeev Sharma - Deputy Secretary
2. Shri A.K. Srivastava - Assistant Director

Witnesses

Ministry of Culture

- (I) Shri R. C. Mishra, Joint Secretary
- (II) Shri Ganji Kamala Vardhana Rao, Director

Archaeological Survey of India(ASI)

- (I) Shri C. Babu Rajeev, Director General
- (II) Shri R.C. Misra, Addl. Director General

2. At the outset, the Chairman welcomed the officials of the Department of Culture and Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) to the Sitting and informed them about the work done by the Committee in respect of examination of the subject 'Maintenance of Monuments by Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)'.

3. The Committee then took oral evidence of the representatives of Ministry of Tourism and Culture (Department of Culture) and Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) on the subject 'Maintenance of Monuments by ASI'.

4. A verbatim record of the proceedings was kept.

The Committee then adjourned

APPENDIX VI

MINUTES OF SITTING OF THE ESTIMATES COMMITTEE **(2007- 08)**

TENTH SITTING

**The Committee sat on Thursday, the 20th December, 2007
from 1500 hours to 1530 hours.**

PRESENT

1. Shri C. Kuppusami, MP - Chairman

MEMBERS

2. Shri Lal Muni Choubey
3. Shri Bikram Keshari Deo
4. Shri Anant Gudhe
5. Shri P. Karunakaran
6. Shri Vijoy Krishna
7. Shri B. Vinod Kumar
8. Shri Samik Lahiri
9. Shri Sanat Kumar Mandal
10. Shri D. Narbula
11. Shri Prabodh Panda
12. Shri Sukdeo Paswan
13. Shri Tufani Saroj
14. Shri Brijbhushan Sharan Singh
15. Dr. Ramlakhan Singh

SECRETARIAT

Shri C.V. Gadgil - Director

2. The Committee considered the draft Report on Ministry of Culture on the subject, 'Maintenance of Monuments by Archaeological Survey of India' and adopted the same with some modifications/additions as given in the Annexure.

3. The Committee authorized the Chairman to finalise the Report in the light of modifications/additions and also to make verbal and other consequential changes, if any, arising out of factual verification by the concerned Ministry and present the same to the House.

The Committee then adjourned.

Annexure

Modifications/additions made by the Estimates Committee in the Draft Report on Ministry of Culture on the subject, 'Maintenance of Monuments by Archaeological Survey of India'.

<u>Para No.</u>	<u>Page No.</u>	<u>Line</u>	<u>Modification</u>
6	76	Last	<p><u>After</u> : projection of estimates.</p> <p><u>Add</u> : A separate fund should be allocated for excavation work.</p>
14	87	Last	<p><u>After</u> : in this regard.</p> <p><u>Add</u> : The Committee find that ASI takes a considerable amount of time to repair and renovate a monument. The Committee, therefore, recommend that a definite time frame should be fixed for conservation and preservation of monuments.</p>
15	89	Last	<p><u>After</u> : centrally protected.</p> <p><u>Add</u> : Cooperation of the State Governments should also be sought in acquisition of land for declaring a monument/ archaeological site to be of national importance. Local bodies such as municipalities etc. may also be involved in the process.</p>
23	102	10	<p><u>After</u> : 100 metres.</p> <p><u>Add</u> : Effective provisions should be incorporated in the Ancient Monuments Act to safeguard the monuments from encroachment. The provisions should include stringent punishment and eviction by law enforcing agencies in case of encroachment.</p>