

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CULTURE
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:285

ANSWERED ON:11.02.2014

HISTORICAL SITES

Gandhi Shri Feroze Varun;Vijayan Shri A.K.S.

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether certain sites of historical importance were found during the excavation work carried out in the country in the recent past;
- (b) if so, the details thereof, State/UT-wise;
- (c) whether several important historical sites/monuments are being destroyed/have disappeared in the country due to the rapid increase in human habitation /urbanisation/ commercialisation;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto; and
- (e) whether the Government proposes to conduct a survey to identify such sites/monuments and if so, the details thereof and the remedial measures taken/being taken by the Government for revival and protection of these sites/monuments?

Answer

MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI CHANDRESH KUMARI KATOCH)

(a)to(e) A statement is laid on the table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (a) TO (e) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 285 FOR 11.2.2014.

(a)&(b) Yes, Madam. Details are at Annexure – I

(c)to(e) A few sites have been buried due to developmental activities and expanding human habitation. Whenever such instances come to notice, the Archaeological Survey of India undertakes salvage archaeological operations or gives permission to other institutions in order to document the site for future references as per the recommendations of Standing Committee of Central Advisory Board of Archaeology (CABA), which meets every year to discuss various issues related to archaeology in India. In case of a centrally protected site under threat, action is taken as per provisions of Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act 1958. Details of salvage operations undertaken are at Annexure-II

As per Performance Audit Report of Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG), 92 monuments/sites were reported to be missing / untraceable. A detailed survey and field verification was carried out which is at Annexure-III.

Archaeological Survey of India conserves and maintains monuments and sites of national importance on regular basis, depending upon their special needs, within the available manpower and financial resources by way of taking structural repairs in addition to chemical treatment and preservation. Further, horticultural operations are also taken up on regular basis in and around protected monuments to enhance environmental ambience for its better presentation.

The detailed inspection of all the monuments/sites reported as missing by CAG have been carried out by the respective field offices of Archaeological Survey of India. After the field survey, the status of the 92 monument/sites is as below:

1. Number of monuments/sites which physically exist: 42
2. Number of monuments/sites affected due to rapid urbanization: 14
3. Number of monuments/sites submerged under reservoir/dam: 12
4. Number of monuments/sites which are untraceable: 24

The Archaeological Survey of India is making its best efforts to maintain the authenticity of the monuments/ sites which physically exist by way of proper conservation and preservation. Regarding the monuments/sites which are affected due to urbanization/commercialization/habitation these are examined on case to case basis and appropriate measures are taken after examining the actual situation for their revival and protection.