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## Centre Withdrew Draft Heritage Bylaws on Jagannath Temple

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### Why in News

The Centre has **withdrawn the draft heritage bylaws issued by the National Monuments Authority (NMA)** for Shree Jagannath Temple in Puri, Odisha.

The **Odisha Government is demanding withdrawal of the bylaws for temples in Ekamra Kshetra** area of Bhubaneswar as well.

### Key Points

- **Draft Heritage Bylaws:**
  - **Background:**

The **government in 2010 formed the National Monuments Authority** under the **Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (Amendment and Validation) Act, 2010**.  
NMA's **primary role was to prepare heritage bylaws** for the **Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) listed structures**.
  - **Meaning:**
    - The **Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (Amendment and Validation) Act 2010** mandates that **monument-specific heritage bylaws** be prepared to **regulate construction activity** near ASI-protected monuments.
    - The draft heritage bylaws **need to be approved by Parliament**.

- **The Case of Odisha:**

- The State government considered that the **byelaws would have hampered the grand infrastructure development planned** around 12<sup>th</sup> century Shree Jagannath Temple in Puri.
- Similar heritage bylaws have been **drafted for two temples** in Bhubaneswar - the **13<sup>th</sup> century Vaishnava temple of Ananta Basudev** and **Shiva temple of Brahmeswar**, both in the **Ekamra Kshetra area**.

In 2020, the state government **planned a beautification project** around the area spread across 1,126 acre and develop it into a major tourist attraction.



- **Jagannath Temple:**

- **Construction:**

It is believed to be constructed in the 12<sup>th</sup> century by **King Anatavarman Chodaganga Deva of the Eastern Ganga Dynasty**.

- **Mythology:**

Jagannath Puri temple is called '**Yamanika Tirtha**' where, according to the Hindu beliefs, the power of 'Yama', the god of death, has been nullified due to the presence of Lord Jagannath.

- **Architecture:**

- This temple was called the "**White Pagoda**" and is a **part of Char Dham** pilgrimages (Badrinath, Dwaraka, Puri, Rameswaram).
- There are **four gates to the temple**- Eastern 'Singhdwara' which is the main gate with two crouching lions, Southern 'Ashwadwara', Western 'Vyaghra Dwara and Northern 'Hastidwara'. There is a **carving of each form at each gate**.
- In front of the entrance **stands the Aruna stambha or sun pillar**, which was **originally at the Sun Temple in Konark**.

- **Festival:** The World famous **Rath Yatra (Car Festival)** & Bahuda Yatra.

- **Other Important Monuments in Odisha:**

- **Konark Sun Temple** (UNESCO World Heritage Site).
- **Tara Tarini Temple.**
- **Lingaraj Temple.**
- **Udaygiri and Khandagiri Caves.**

## The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (Amendment and Validation) Act, 2010

- **Objective:**

To preserve, conserve, protect and maintain all ancient monuments and archaeological sites and remains declared of national importance, and their surrounding areas up to a distance of 300 meters (or more as may be specified in certain cases) in all directions.

- **Provisions:**

- **No construction or reconstruction is permitted in the prohibited area** (an area up to a distance of 100 meters in all directions from the nearest protected limit of nearby protected monument or protected area declared as of national importance), but repair or renovation is considered.
- In the **regulated area** (an area up to a distance of 200 meters in all directions from the prohibited area of any protected monument and protected area declared as of national importance), **repair/renovation/construction/reconstruction are considered.**
- All **applications** for construction related work in the prohibited and regulated areas are to be **submitted to the Competent Authorities (CA)** and then to **National Monuments Authority (NMA)** for consideration.

NMA functions under the **Ministry of Culture.**

Source: TH