



ASI to Remove 18 'Untraceable' Monuments From its List

Why in News?

Recently, the [Archaeological Survey of India \(ASI\)](#) has put out a list of 18 centrally protected monuments which it wants to delist as they no longer hold national importance.

Key Points

- The monuments facing delisting include:
 - Kos Minar No.13 at Mujessar village in Haryana
 - BaraKhamba Cemetery in Delhi
 - Gunner Burkill's Tomb at Rangoon in Jhansi
 - Cemetery at Gaughat in Lucknow
 - Telia Nala Buddhist ruins, which form part of a deserted village in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh.
- Delisting of the monuments effectively means the central agency won't have any obligation to protect them, and activities related to construction and urbanisation in the area can be carried out in a regular manner.
- According to an official gazette notification, the ASI has invoked **Section 35 of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958 (AMASR Act)** to delist the 18 monuments.
- In 2023, the Ministry of Culture had told Parliament that 50 of India's 3,693 centrally protected monuments have gone missing.
 - This submission was made as part of a report titled '**Issues relating to Untraceable Monuments and Protection of Monuments in India**' submitted to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture.
 - The missing monuments included **11 in Uttar Pradesh**, as well as **two each in Delhi and Haryana**. It also included monuments in Assam, West Bengal, Arunachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand.
- According to the ASI, which is under the Ministry of Culture, **14 of these 50 monuments were lost to rapid urbanisation, 12 submerged by reservoirs or dams, and 24 remain untraceable.**
 - The move to delist the 18 monuments comes after the parliamentary panel observed that the list of ASI-protected sites includes a large number of "minor monuments" and recommended that it should be "**rationalised and categorised**" on the basis of their **national significance, unique architectural value and specific heritage content**.

Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act (AMASR Act), 1958

- It is one of the landmark laws for the –
 - **Preservation** of ancient and historical monuments and archaeological sites and remains of national importance (over 100 years old).
 - **Regulation** of archaeological excavations and
 - **Protection** of sculptures, carvings and other like objects.
- ASI functions under the provisions of this act.
- India has a total of 3,693 Centrally Protected Monuments or Sites in the country, under the

protection of the ASI.

- The monuments are regularly inspected by the ASI officials to assess their present condition and the necessary conservation and preservation works are taken up as per the requirement.
- **Section 35:** If the Central Government is of opinion that any ancient and historical monument or archaeological site and remains declared to be of national importance by or under this Act has ceased to be of national importance, it may, by notification in the Official Gazette, declare that the ancient and historical monument or archaeological site and remains, as the case may be, has ceased to be of national importance for the purposes of this Act.

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