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Gallery of Confiscated and Retrieved Antiquities

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Recently, the Ministry of State for Culture & Tourism has inaugurated '**Gallery of Confiscated and Retrieved Antiquities**' at **Purana Qila**, New Delhi.

- This Gallery is a part of **Central Antiquity Collection (CAC)**, located in Purana Qila.
 - CAC was created to house the antiquities explored and excavated by the **Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)** and also those antiquities which were retrieved and confiscated with the help of Ministry of External Affairs and various law enforcing agencies.
 - According to the government, **the highest number of antiquities are recovered in the last five years.**
- In the past, many of valuable antiquities, artefacts and sculptures have been stolen from India and are sold in foreign countries.
- As per the **Antiquity and Art Treasures Act, 1972 and rules 1973**, it is the duty of the Archaeological Survey of India to stop theft, illegal export and regulates domestic trade of antiquities.
- So far, ASI has retrieved 44 stolen antiquities from USA, Australia, Singapore, Germany, Canada and England and 119 more antiquities are in the process of retrieval.

Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)

- ASI is the premier organization for the archaeological **research, scientific analysis, excavation of archaeological sites, conservation and preservation of protected monuments.**
- It is an attached office under the **Department of Culture (Ministry of Culture).**
- **ASI was founded in 1861** by Alexander Cunningham who became its first Director-General.

Source: PIB