

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): (a) to (d) All the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) protected monuments in Maharashtra are in a good state of preservation. However, the ancient Laxmi Narayan Temple at village Chas, Taluka Khed, District Pune, in Maharashtra is not a centrally protected monument.

Archaeological Survey of India is not aware of any complaints received and action taken by the State Administration.

Development of Museums

4492. DR. JANARDHAN WAGHMARE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the fact that Museums have cultural and educational import and importance; and

(b) if so, steps taken to develop them by providing funds and facilities to scholars and researchers of history, sculpture, arts and cultural anthropology?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Ministry of Culture has an ongoing scheme for award of fellowships to outstanding persons in the field of culture, in the fields of performing, literary, plastic arts and new areas related to culture. Besides, the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has entered into agreements in the fields of epigraphy and excavations with reputed universities and institutes of repute like IIT, CBRI etc. to foster exchange of scholarship in the relevant fields. In addition, the Ministry of Culture has introduced a new scheme namely the "Scheme for Visiting Fellows in Art, Culture and Heritage" with the objective to invigorate and revitalize the various institutions under this Ministry or supported by it, including Museums. This is sought to be achieved by encouraging scholars/researchers/academicians to affiliate themselves with these institutions.

Protection of ancient monuments

4493. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the policy initiative of Government to preserve and protect the ancient monuments and heritage of India;

(b) the total number of such sites and structures to be preserved and protected;

(c) the number out of them, that have been destroyed or disappeared for want of maintenance and Protection; and

(d) the new additions made during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): (a) The ancient monuments, archaeological sites and remains as defined under section 2(a) and (d) of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958 are declared as of monuments/sites of national importance under the provisions of section (4) of the above said Act.