

- (viii) to be outstanding examples representing major stages of earth's history, including the record of life, significant on-going geological processes in the development of landforms, or significant geomorphic or physiographic features;
- (ix) to be outstanding examples representing significant on-going ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of terrestrial, fresh water, coastal and marine ecosystems and communities of plants and animals;
- (x) to contain the most important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation.

Conservation of Sun Temple, Konark

2262. SHRI NARENDRA KUMAR SWAIN: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state will the Ministry consider to take regular steps through the Archaeological Survey of India for solution on conservation of the world famous Sun Temple at Konark *viz.* saline action, water logging, mechanical erosion and vegetative intrusions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE AND TOURISM (DR. MAHESH SHARMA): (a) Yes, Sir. The essential conservation measures for Sun Temple Konark, have already been taken and repeated as per requirements. To check the saline action as well as vegetative intrusions, chemical cleaning, fungicidal treatment and preservation work is attended regularly as per the local site requirements. To prevent water logging, effective drainage system has been provided. Mass plantation around the Konark has been provided to guard against the mechanical erosion and also contribute to minimize saline action. The essential conservation work of the Temple is attended regularly and it is in a good State of preservation.

Project for discovering ancient human habitations in Puducherry

2263. SHRI N. GOKULAKRISHNAN: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that recent studies by the historians revealed a number of ancient burial sites indicating centuries old human habitations in and around Puducherry, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether Government will consider a special project for discovering the ancient glory of this area; and

(c) whether Government would recommend such a project to Archaeological Survey of India for considering the historical relevance along with the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE (DR. MAHESH SHARMA): (a) Yes, Sir. Excavation was conducted at Auroville, a site located about 12 kms North-West of Puduchery town, under the directorship of Shri P. Ravichandira, Assistant Professor, Department of Historical Studies, Tagore Art College, Government of Pondicherry and funded by Auroville foundation. Urn was unearthed from excavation. Iron, bronze, copper and stone objects were found in the excavations. The ceramic assemblage include black and red ware; red ware and black ware. Some fragments of terracotta sarcophagi also found from the disturbed burials.

Besides a cairn circle was also excavated. The cairn circle was highly damaged and fragments of sarcophagus legs and pebble mixture found throughout the excavation. Three grave pits with seven Urn were also exposed. Of these Two Urn burials were sealed with granite slab. The grave goods such as bronze, copper and Iron objects are found both in and around the Urns. The ceramic include lids, dishes of black ware, cups, the bowls are in Black-and-red ware, and the globular pots with high neck are in red.

(b) and (c) No, Sir. No such project is under consideration by the Archaeological Survey of India.

Introduction of e-ticketing facilities to visit monuments

2264. SHRI MAHESH PODDAR: Will be Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has introduced E-ticketing facilities for tourists visiting historical monuments in the country; and

(b) if so, the names of monuments where E-ticketing is presently being made available and the details of monuments where this facility will be provided in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE (DR. MAHESH SHARMA): (a) Yes Sir, the E-ticketing facilities have already been introduced at the ticketed monuments in ASI.

(b) The names of monuments where E-ticketing is presently made available and the details of monuments where this facility will be provided in future are given in the Statement-I and II.