

(d) whether Government has received any objections from concerned citizens, if so, details thereof and its response to the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE (DR. MAHESH SHARMA): (a) and (b) The proposal for amendment has been approved by the Cabinet and the pertaining Bill has been moved to Lok Sabha.

The proposal is to allow public works or projects essential for public in prohibited area within 100 meter from protected monument but not having substantial impact on preservation, safety, security or access to the monument or its immediate surrounding including visual ambience. The proposal is aimed to harmonize the existing conflict between provision of sub-section (3) and sub-section (4) of Section 20A of the Act.

(c) and (d) The draft amendment was published in the ASI website for inviting comments from the public. Concern from the public regarding indiscriminate constructions, vibrations due to construction, gradual erosion of sanctity of protected monument, and others have been received. The Government of India has assured that only public works, essential for public safety or security of public at large will be allowed, that too if no reasonable possibility of any other viable alternative for such construction beyond the limit of prohibited area is available.

Digitization of impressions of inscriptions on paper

1151. SHRI SAMBHAJI CHHATRAPATI: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that invaluable impressions of inscriptions on paper so painstakingly taken from different regions of the country are lying with ASI;

(b) if so, the number of each of such impression in Sanskrit, Prakrit, Dravidian, Arabic and Persian languages;

(c) whether it is a fact that many of these are getting damaged due to improper care and maintenance; and

(d) whether there is any plan to digitize such Impressions and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE (DR. MAHESH SHARMA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The language-wise details of the impressions are as under:—

Sanskrit	14800
Prakrit	2640
Dravidian	59600
Arabic & Persian etc.	13875

(c) No, Sir. Utmost care is taken to preserve them in conventional method from the beginning. Some of these are very old impressions which are in brittle or bad condition. They are taken care of by mending them as and when required.

(d) Yes, Sir. ASI has plans to digitize all impressions in a systematic way. As a prelude to this, steps have been taken to mend all the impressions for safety and legibility of each letter on them. Once process of mending of all the impressions is completed, action will be initiated to digitize all impressions and preserve them in a better manner for posterity.

Artefacts unearthed in Keeladi, Tamil Nadu for Carbon Dating

1152. SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government had sent the artefacts unearthed in Keeladi, Tamil Nadu for Carbon Dating;

(b) if so, details thereof and the report of carbon dating of those artefacts; and

(c) if not, reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE (DR. MAHESH SHARMA): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) had sent two carbon samples but not artefacts for carbon dating to Beta Analytic Inc, Florida, USA. The report received from Beta Analytic Inc on the dates of carbon samples of Keeladi are as under:

Sample No. and Locus	Measured Radio Carbon Age
Beta 454596 Trench NO. YF1/1	2160 \pm 30 BP
Beta 454597 Trench No YF4/2	2200 \pm 30 BP

Radio Carbon date suggest that the samples go back to 2160 \pm 30 years and 2200 \pm 30 years.