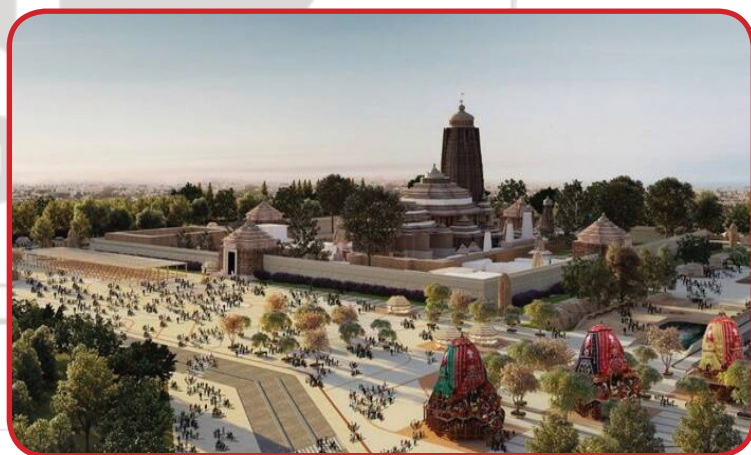


ASI writes to Odisha govt, warns of threats to Puri Heritage Project.

The letter came days after ASI director general V Vidyavathi visited the temple in the last week of February to monitor the ongoing project work. The ASI is the custodian of the Puri Jagannath Temple.

The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has written to the Odisha government earlier this month warning it of potential threats of the Puri Heritage Corridor project to the structural safety of the Puri Jagannath Temple. The letter came days after ASI director general V Vidyavathi visited the temple in the last week of February to monitor the ongoing project work. The ASI is the custodian of the Puri Jagannath Temple.

“During the visit, we found discrepancies. There were giant earth-moving machines and excavators, which are being used for digging activities close to the temple. The scale at which the process is underway, can pose potential threats to the temple’s structure. We have written to the Puri District Collector and the Odisha Bridge and Construction Corporation Ltd (OBCC) and have sought their replies,” Arun



Malik, superintending archaeologist, ASI Bhubaneswar circle, told The Indian Express on Thursday.

The work on the project started soon after Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik laid the foundation stone in January this year. The project is being undertaken at an estimated cost of Rs 3,200 crore. A total of 22 projects will be executed in a phased manner.

Under the The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (AMASR) Act, any new construction within 100 metres of a temple are prohibited. But for the Puri Heritage Corridor project, the National Monument Authority has issued a No Objection Certificate (NOC) to the state government for the construction of a cloakroom, a shelter pavilion, three toilets, an electrical room and a pavement within the prohibited 75-metre zone.

The ASI has, however, contended that it has not issued an NOC to the Odisha government allowing construction work within 100 meter of the shrine. “We can issue an NOC only after the government provides us with a heritage impact assessment report,” an ASI official said.

Puri District Collector Samarth Verma said there is no violation of norms and all the construction will be carried out in coordination with the ASI.

Expected Question (Prelims Exams)

Q. Consider the following statements regarding Puri Jagannath Temple.

1. The Jagannath Temple in Puri was called the “White Pagoda”.
2. The temple is famous for its annual Ratha Yatra .

which of the above statements is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) None

Expected Question (Mains Exams)

Q. What is puri heritage corridor? Discuss the structure and function of archaeological survey of india. (250 Words)

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Note: - The question of the main examination given for practice is designed keeping in mind the upcoming UPSC main examination. Therefore, to get an answer to this question, you can take the help of this source as well as other sources related to this topic.