Archaeological Survey of India

Context

Union Minister for Culture & Tourism (I/C) Shri Prahlad Singh Patel announced that Culture Ministry has approved opening of 820 centrally protected monuments under the Archeological Survey of India which have places of worship from 8th June, 2020. Shri Patel also said that all the protocols issued by the MHA and the Health ministry will be followed in these monuments.

About ASI

- The Archaeological Survey of India is an attached office of the Ministry of Culture.
- Under the provisions of the AMASR Act of 1958 (The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act (or AMASR Act)), the ASI administers more than 3650 ancient monuments, archaeological sites and remains of national importance.
- These can include everything from temples, mosques, churches, tombs, and cemeteries to palaces, forts, step-wells, and rock-cut caves.
- The Survey also maintains ancient mounds and other similar sites which represent the remains of ancient habitation.
- It was founded in 1861 by Alexander Cunningham who also became its first Director-General.
- The rules stipulate that area in the vicinity of the monument, within 100 metres is prohibited area.
- The area within 200 meters of the monument is regulated category.
- Any repair or modifications of buildings in this area requires prior permission.

Definition of Ancient Monument under AMASR Act,1958

Ancient Monument means any structure, erection or monument, or any tumulus or place of interment, or any cave, rock-sculpture, inscription or monolith which is of historical, archaeological or artistic interest and which has been in existence for not less than 100 years.

Monument of National Importance

A "Monument of National Importance" is designated by the Archaeological Survey of India and includes the following:

1. The remains of an ancient monument
2. The site of an ancient monument
3. The land on which there are fences or protective covering structures for preserving the monument
4. Land by means of which people can freely access the monument