

National Monuments Authority fully functional in Goa, clear framework in place for heritage protection and development, clarifies Union Culture Minister

प्रविष्टि तिथि: 15 DEC 2025 6:51PM by PIB Mumbai

Panaji: 15 December 2025

Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Union Minister of Culture and Tourism, has clarified in the Lok Sabha that the National Monuments Authority (NMA) is fully constituted and actively functioning in Goa, ensuring systematic regulation of construction, repair and developmental activities around protected monuments and heritage sites in the State.

Responding to a question raised by Captain Viriato Fernandes, Member of Parliament from South Goa, the minister informed the House that the NMA has been constituted under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (AMASR) Act, 1958, as amended in 2010. The Authority is mandated to regulate activities in prohibited and regulated areas surrounding monuments and sites protected by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI).

The minister said that the NMA processes applications from across the country, including Goa, for repair, renovation, reconstruction and other developmental works near protected monuments. Applications are examined through a well-defined mechanism involving submission of site plans, ownership documents, structural details and project proposals. These are assessed at the field level by notified Competent Authorities, whose recommendations are then evaluated by the NMA to ensure that proposed activities do not adversely affect the preservation, safety, security, visual integrity or access to protected monuments.

The minister further clarified that a robust statutory framework is in place to ensure compliance with heritage protection laws. Under Section 20E of the AMASR Act, the NMA approves Heritage Bye-laws for protected monuments and sites. These bye-laws are prepared by the Competent Authorities in consultation with expert heritage bodies notified by the Central Government.

These Heritage Bye-laws provide clear building and planning guidelines for prohibited and regulated areas around ASI-protected monuments and sites, guiding physical, social and economic interventions while safeguarding heritage value, the minister said and added that the mechanism ensures transparency, consistency and adherence to the provisions of the AMASR Act.

PIB-Panaji | Riyas Babu / Priti Malandkar

(रिलीज़ आईडी: 2204262) आगंतुक पटल : 54
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