

Chapter 7: Monuments Management

Monuments and archaeological sites are finite and our non-renewable cultural resource. India's rich repository of heritage include world heritage sites and monuments declared as of national importance. The conservation work of these centrally protected monuments/sites is a continuous process and the prime responsibility of ASI.

7.1 Management of Centrally Protected Monuments

Audit examined issues related with management of World Heritage Sites, *Adarsh Smarak*, Ticketed monuments, Living Monuments, etc. In this regard, joint physical inspection of 184 selected monuments was carried out to assess availability of public amenities and other service related issues. Results of these assessments are discussed in succeeding paragraphs.

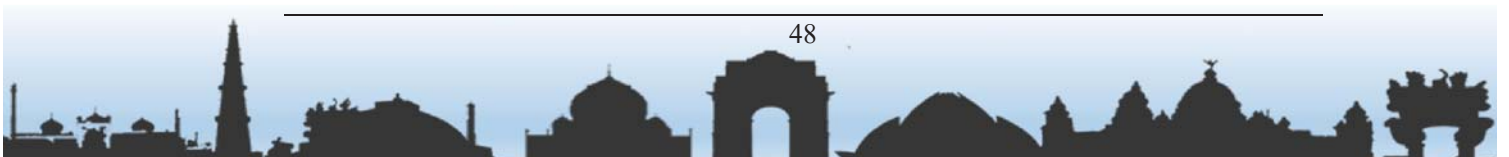
7.1.1 World Heritage Sites

The UNESCO designates a specific monument as a World Heritage Site (WHS). The citation is prestigious for any country and gives a boost to its tourism. India has 40 WHS (32 cultural, seven natural and one mixed) of which 24 were under the jurisdiction of ASI (June 2021).

In the previous Report, after joint physical inspection, it was reported that WHS faced many issues related to security, public amenities, encroachment, etc. A similar exercise conducted during the follow-up audit revealed that in 12 WHS, some public facilities were still not available. As detailed at **Annexe 7.1**, apart from public facilities, interpreter/guide or audio guide services were also not available.

In response to recommendation made by the Standing Committee of Parliament (March 2021) regarding development of a mobile application to provide informative content about the monuments and site-museums, ASI stated (December 2021) that the same was under development.

Though audit recommendation made in the previous Report for developing a separate mechanism to assess the fund, security and conservation requirements of WHS was accepted by the Ministry, no such procedure was found in existence.



World Heritage Site-Red Fort, Delhi

The concerns raised in the previous Report, with regard to Red Fort, Delhi were yet to be resolved by ASI, as given below:

- Parts of the monument viz. Mumtaz Mahal, Shah Burj have been closed for the general public without approval of the competent authority.
- Parts of the monument were still being used by CISF, private security agency for their office/residence.
- The Publication Division store of ASI was still functional from the monument in the colonial era building.
- Temple, Majar constructed inside the monument were still not included in the list of monuments reported for encroachment.
- There was still no system for security check of vehicles entering/leaving the premises of Red fort.

World Heritage Site-Sun Temple, Konark, Odisha

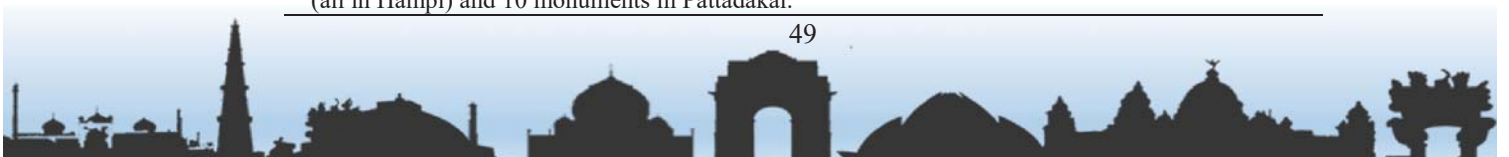
During the follow-up audit, a visit to Sun Temple, Konark revealed following:

- Some public amenities like toilet blocks, facilities for physically challenged, parking, cloak room facility and interpreter services were not available.
- There were unauthorised constructions and encroachments on the entrance of the monument which were later reported by ASI (January 2022) as having been removed.
- Fungal/vegetation growth and stains have occurred on the structure requiring chemical treatment. ASI reported (January 2022) that cleaning of the monument was a regular process and had been undertaken by its Science Branch.
- *Garbhagriha* of Sun Temple was closed for general public prior to its taking over by ASI in 1939.
- The CCTVs installed at the monument were not functional.

During the previous audit, in respect of WHS at Hampi and Pattadakal in Karnataka, various observations relating to incomplete conservation works, encroachments, absence of basic amenities for the visitors, etc. were made. Joint physical verification of these sites revealed that despite incurring expenditure on conservation, shortcomings at these monuments⁵² remained unaddressed.

Ministry/ASI stated (January 2022) that some of WHS have also been considered as *Adarsh Smarak* and providing/ upgrading visitors facilities at these monuments is a regular phenomenon. It also informed that for some WHS it had entered into agreement under Adopt-a-Heritage scheme of Ministry of Tourism and a separate mechanism for fund, security and conservation requirements of WHS was being developed.

⁵² Krishna Temple Complex, Old Shiva Temple, Saraswathi Temple, Underground Shiva Temple, Octagonal Bath, Virupaksha Temple, Vitthala Temple Complex Ananthashayana Temple, Patabhi Rama Temple, Raghunatha Temple, Lotus Mahal, Chandrasekhara Temple, Hazara Ram Temple (all in Hampi) and 10 monuments in Pattadakal.



7.1.2 Adarsh Smarak and Ticketed Monuments

The PAC had recommended that all monuments and sites maintained by ASI must have clean and modern toilets, eateries, medical shops and other conveniences in and around their precincts for the benefit of visitors.

The ASI had declared 100 monuments as *Adarsh Smarak* in March 2018 (including WHS, ticketed⁵³ and non-ticketed monuments) for providing amenities and facilities like toilets, clean drinking water, Wi-Fi services, cafeteria, facilities for physically challenged, signage, cloak rooms, interpretation centre, etc.⁵⁴. Joint physical inspection of 36 *Adarsh Smarak* and other ticketed monuments revealed absence of various public amenities and facilities viz. drinking water, toilet blocks, parking, Wi-Fi, cloak rooms, facilities for physically challenged, guide services, etc. The Circle/State-wise details are given in **Annexe 7.1**.

Ministry/ASI stated (January 2022) that it has undertaken various initiatives to provide facilities such as approach pathway, signage, toilets, drinking water and first aid at *Adarsh Smarak* and were available in over 82 per cent such monuments undertaken. However, wheel chairs, toilets for *Divyang*, baby care rooms, vehicle parking were available in less than 56 per cent of such monuments.

Ticketed Monument-Sultan Garhi, Delhi

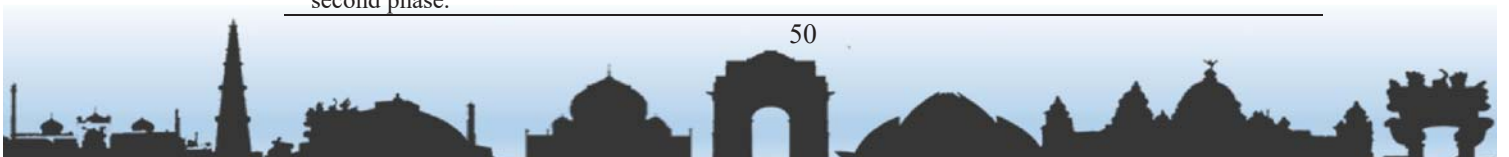
Sultan Garhi, Delhi had been notified by ASI as a ticketed monument. During a visit, it was noticed that the monument had no facilities for visitors such as drinking water, toilet, cultural signage, cloakroom, Wi-Fi and electricity. There was no pathway, vehicle parking or facilities for physically challenged. The monument area was being used for defecation. It had multiple entry/exit points, and with its boundary wall broken, the monument was not secure. The staff was unaware of the demarcation of the monument area. No horticulture activity was found to have been carried out at the monument. In a study conducted for NITI Aayog (2020), the monument was termed as the worst ticketed monument. Being a ticketed monument, ASI need to enhance the visitors' facilities at *Sultan Garhi*.

7.1.3 Other Monuments

The Ministry had intimated the PAC that there was no specific policy for preservation/conservation of different category/types of monuments. It informed that the protection work of monuments was taken up on the basis of studies carried out by field officers. Different types of monuments viz. living monuments, *Baolis*, Rock-Edicts discussed in the previous Report and relevant recommendations made by PAC were revisited during the follow-up audit. Findings in this regard are discussed below and also detailed at **Annexe 7.1**.

⁵³ Out of 143 ticketing monuments, 54 have been included in the list of *Adarsh Smarak*.

⁵⁴ Scheme was launched in December 2014 with 25 monuments and 75 monuments were added in its second phase.



7.1.3.1 Living Monuments: According to John Marshall’s Manual of Conservation, structures still in use for the purpose for which they were originally designed at the time of notification are living monuments. AMASR Act, 1958 also requires the Government to enter into an agreement with the owner of these living monuments for their maintenance and restriction on their destroying, removing, altering or defacing.

The PAC, while considering the need for protection and conservation of these living monuments, felt the requirement of:

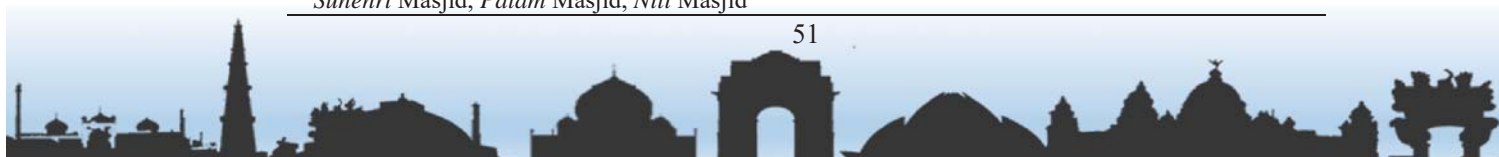
- *evolving guidelines on the use of living monuments to ensure their safeguard and preservation;*
- *laid down policy for notification of sites with contested ownership or encroachments; and*
- *ensure signing of MoUs with users/occupants based on the said guidelines for retaining integrity of the monument.*



Despite recommendations of PAC, no guidelines or policy document on living monuments was prepared by ASI. ASI had identified 955 monuments being used for worship and prayers. However, as pointed out in the previous Report, ASI did not have the details of those monuments where prayers/worships were started before/after the issue of notification. Further, ASI/Ministry did not provide details of efforts made by it in signing MoU with the users/occupants of living monuments during the period 2013-20.

In Delhi Circle, all three monuments reported as living monuments⁵⁵ were found encroached upon. In Kolkata Circle, one living monument (St. John’s Church) was controlled/maintained by the Church authorities and not handed over to ASI. Further, in Delhi, Aurangabad, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Dharwad and Kolkata Circles, significant changes in the structure of the monuments used for religious activities viz. construction of toilets, rooms, modern fittings, paints, etc. were found to have been made. A few of these changes made in the monuments are depicted below:



⁵⁵ Sunehri Masjid, Palam Masjid, Nili Masjid



	
<p align="center">Paints used on the walls of Ghrishneshwar Temple, Ellora</p>	<p align="center">Monument painted in white and green at Jod Gumbaz, Vijayapura</p>

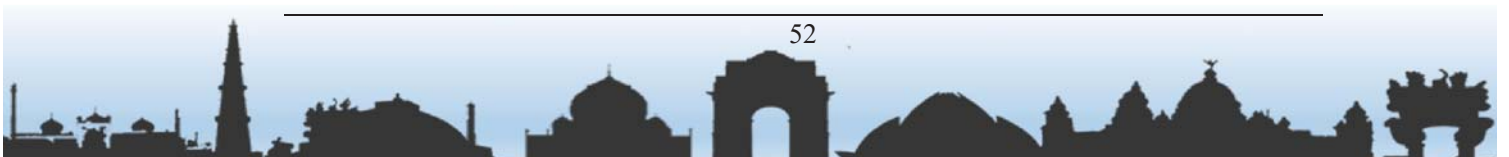
In respect of Dubdi Monastery, Sikkim, Circle office stated that the Monk Committee for the respective monument did not co-operate and carried out the works on their own without expert advice. Though the NPC-AMASR accepts the role of local communities in conservation of living monuments, it also prohibits any change in the structure/fabric of the monument.

Ministry/ASI stated (January 2022) that except forceful attempts, the religious worship was not allowed in any monument where it was not in practice at the time of its central protection or if it was discontinued since long. ASI however did not respond to audit comments regarding (a) absence of details of monuments where prayers/worships were started before/after the issue of notification (b) non-preparation of guidelines or policy document for living monuments (c) absence of efforts for entering into MoU with users/occupants of living monuments and (d) changes made in these monuments.

7.1.3.2 Baolis: The ASI in a reply to Parliament (August 2010) had intimated that in Delhi Circle, fifteen water bodies (*Baolis*) were under its jurisdiction, of which two were dry and the other 13 were clean. These water bodies were being maintained by ASI as part of CPM for public viewing. *The PAC, while discussing the issue, had asked the Ministry/ASI to take care of Baolis, specifically in Delhi region.* During the follow-up audit, it was found that condition of these *Baolis* had deteriorated. ASI reported (January 2021) that out of 13 wet *Baolis*, ten had become dirty. Ministry/ASI stated (January 2022) that Covid19 lockdown had hampered conservation works which would be taken up from the forthcoming financial year.

Agarsen Ki Baoli

In the previous Audit Report, it was pointed out that ASI had signed MoU (in 2009) with Global Vaish Organisation (GVO) for the maintenance of *Agarsen Ki Baoli*, Delhi. In this respect, Project Implementation Committee (PIC) of ASI to define the scope and schedule of work was not constituted. Further, works agreed upon in MoU *viz.* maintenance of the monument, printing and distribution of publications, etc. was not carried out by GVO. Instead, an unauthorised Porta



Cabin in the protected area of the monument was set up by GVO for use as its office. The MoU was renewed by the ASI in January 2011 (for five years), November 2017 and November 2019 (for two years each).

During follow-up audit, it was noted that PIC had still not been constituted. Despite agreement, facilities viz. drinking water, toilet for ladies and gents, etc. were not provided by GVO. Further, in accordance with the terms of agreement, Porta Cabin was not converted into publication sale counter and cloak room and was still used by GVO as its office. Instead of removing the encroachment, ASI continued to extend the agreement with GVO.

7.1.3.3 Rock Edicts: These are inscriptions carved on stones containing messages of King Ashoka. *The PAC noted that there was no specific policy for preservation of Rock Edicts. It recommended ASI to make concerted efforts to ensure their conservation and preservation as they have pristine value and depict a definite era in historical evaluation of our national culture.* Joint physical verification of Ashoka Rock Edict at Udaegolam and Nittur (Hampi Circle) revealed that both the sites lacked proper approach roads and demarcated protected area. Further, translation of the rock inscriptions was also not available for the benefit of the visitors of these sites. Similarly, absence of public facilities and encroachment in the monument were noticed at the Ashoka Rock Edict in Delhi Circle.

Salimgarh Fort is another monument in the vicinity of the Red Fort complex. The Fort built in 1546 (before Red Fort) was turned into a prison during the period of Aurangzeb (capturing his brother *Murad Baksh* and daughter *Zebunissa*). During the revolt of 1857, Salimgarh Fort was used to imprison freedom fighters. Further, during India's freedom struggle, it was used as a prison to confine Indian National Army soldiers including Major General *Shah Nawaz Khan*, Major *Gurbaksh Singh Dhillon* and Captain *Prem Kumar Sehgal*.



During visit of Salimgarh Fort it was noted that the Jail built inside the monument was lying in a neglected state. There were cracks and seepage on the walls and it was not receiving much deserved care and protection for its heritage value. Ministry/ASI stated (January 2022) that the monument was included in the Annual Conservation Plan (2021-22) and the work will be carried out.

Source: Publicity material on Salimgarh Fort published by ASI



7.1.3.4 Kos-Minar: *Kos-Minars*⁵⁶ are medieval infrastructure (pillars) constructed across the highways as an important part of travel and communication. In the previous Report, it was mentioned that ASI had never researched and analysed *Kos-Minars* as a specific category of monuments. During joint physical inspection of *Kos-Minars* (in Delhi and Haryana Circles) it was noted that there was no specific plan for preservation of the *Kos-Minars*. In respect of *Kos-Minar* at Gharunda, (South Karnal), Haryana, since the period covered in the previous audit (2007), no expenditure was incurred on the repair of the monument. During visits, ASI officials also acknowledged that these monuments were in need of chemical treatment for preservation.

The joint physical inspection of selected monuments revealed several shortcomings in providing facilities to the visitors. In some monuments, newly constructed toilet blocks were found non-functional (January 2021) due to non-availability of water. Further, some of the monuments were either fully encroached upon or were in a neglected state or some of their parts were closed for visitors without the approval of the competent authority *i.e.* Director General, ASI (*refer Annexe 7.1*).

7.2 Preservation and Conservation works at Monuments

One of the prime mandates of ASI is to ensure the conservation and maintenance of all protected monuments throughout the country⁵⁷. The issues connected with conservation work of these monuments/sites are discussed here.

7.2.1 Implementing the National Policy for Conservation

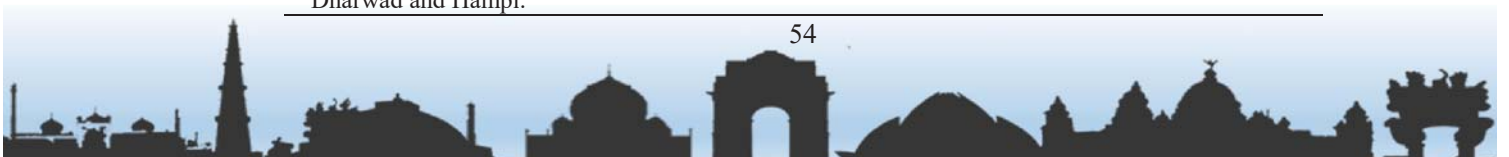
The ASI had intimated the PAC about release (February 2014) of a National Policy for Conservation of the Ancient Monuments, Archaeological Sites and Remains (NPC-AMASR). During follow-up audit, it was noted that in 11 Circles⁵⁸, one or more important instructions of NPC-AMASR, as mentioned below, were not being followed properly:

- a. preparation of short-term (up to two years), mid-term (two to five years) and long-term (five years and above) monitoring and maintenance plans;
- b. regular inspection by the archaeological officers, at least once a year;
- c. preparation of Site Management Plans (SMPs);
- d. peer review of conservation work undertaken;
- e. documentation of entire conservation process through maps, drawings, photographs, digital records, field notes;
- f. identification of craftsman for conservation works; and

⁵⁶ Mile pillars constructed at a distance of 3.2 kilometres *i.e.* one Kos.

⁵⁷ ASI also undertake conservation projects for State Governments and other countries.

⁵⁸ Delhi, Aurangabad, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chandigarh, Bhopal, Jabalpur, Bhubaneswar, Bengaluru, Dharwad and Hampi.



g. trainings to Monument in-Charge for disaster management.

NITI Aayog in its Report had also mentioned that NPC-AMASR, 2014, despite being a well-structured document covering significant aspects of conservation, was not being followed by ASI. Further, in Aurangabad, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Dharwad, Hampi and Kolkata Circles, irregularities in planning of conservation works⁵⁹ and non-preparation of Annual Conservation Plan⁶⁰ were also noticed. Any deviation from the prescribed conservation procedure in NPC-AMASR may affect the heritage conservation process. Ministry/ASI only responded (January 2022) to sub-paragraph 'c' and 'g' and stated that the process of preparing SMPs had been initiated for selected WHS and assured that respective officials will be asked to contact the concerned agencies for necessary training on disaster management.

7.2.2 Improper Preservation Works at Monuments

NPC-AMASR, 2014, contains detailed instructions regarding maintaining the original structure and fabric of the monument. Joint physical inspection of monuments in all the selected States revealed instances of improper conservation works, monuments requiring chemical conservation, changes made in the structure and neglected state of monuments of national importance. Instances of these improper conservation works carried out by ASI are illustrated in [Annexe 7.2](#).

7.2.3 Management of Heritage Gardens

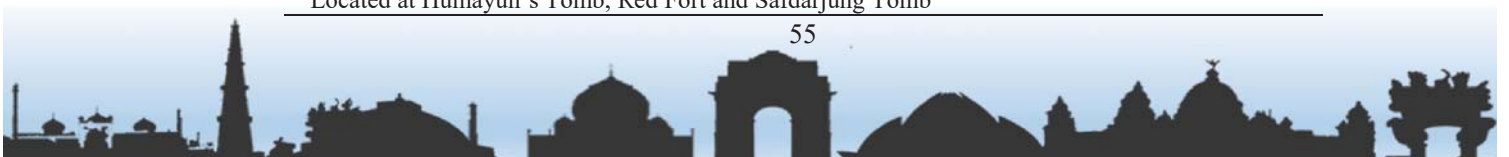
During joint physical inspection, cases of growth of excess vegetation were noticed at 51 monuments in the States of Delhi (11), Haryana (5), Karnataka (18), Madhya Pradesh (3), Maharashtra (7), Odisha (2) and West Bengal (5). Instances of improper garden management/excess growth of vegetation at the monuments are illustrated in [Annexe 7.3](#).

Further, out of 25 heritage gardens under the jurisdiction of Horticulture Branch of ASI, three are located in Delhi. It was noticed that information on landscape of these heritage gardens⁶¹ was not available with the concerned Horticulture Division. ASI had undertaken work to revive the ancient water channel at *Mehtab Bagh*, Red Fort, Delhi. Though *Mehtab Bagh* was identified by ASI as its archaeological garden, concerned Horticulture Division (Delhi Circle) was unaware of any such activity being undertaken and was not involved in the process. It was also noticed that there was absence of co-ordination between the Horticulture Branch and Circle office, as the works of horticulture nature *viz.* uprooting of vegetation, jungle cleaning, etc. in other parts of monuments were being executed by Circle office. Similarly, in Horticulture Division, Mysuru, instances were noticed where Circle offices were maintaining/ developing gardens without the assistance of the Horticulture Branch.

⁵⁹ Selection of monuments for annual maintenance/special report, delay in submission of Revised Conservation Programme, approved works not undertaken, non-maintenance of log books, etc.

⁶⁰ Preparation of plan without prior information, non-preparation of estimates for approval, over estimations by Sub-Circles.

⁶¹ Located at Humayun's Tomb, Red Fort and Safdarjung Tomb



Ministry/ASI attributed (February 2022) Covid19 and shortage of human resources as the reasons for the reported status of its gardens. ASI informed that in order to have more co-ordination, its horticulture offices have been integrated with the Circle offices. Further, in respect of conservation works at Mehtab Bagh, Red Fort, it submitted that its water channel was part of the conservation work carried out by the Circle office.

7.2.4 Preservation of Estampages

Estampages are paper impression of stone or copper plate inscriptions. Estampages are preserved by Epigraphy Branch in a controlled environment to stop their deterioration. During a visit to the Estampages store of the Epigraphy Branch, Mysuru, it was noticed that the Estampages were not preserved under temperature and humidity-controlled environment.

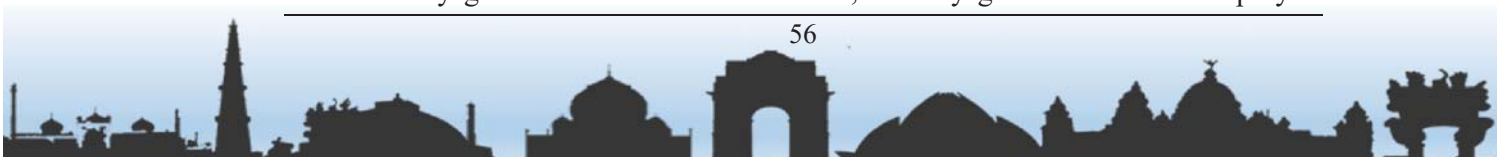
In this respect, Epigraphy Branch stated (January 2021) that action was underway in consultation with the experts to preserve estampages in a more scientific manner for increasing their longevity.

7.3 Security and Safeguard arrangements

The PAC had observed gaps in the management of security and safeguard around important monuments and museums. *It recommended the Ministry to develop a comprehensive security policy for all monuments and museums under its control by addressing the shortage of security personnel. The PAC had also asked the Ministry to explore the possibility of taking the help of ISRO for aerial survey and installation of satellite cameras and other agencies for IT based security.* The Ministry had submitted through ATN that use of ISRO maps or satellite camera for security may not be advantageous for security purpose. It was, however, noted that ASI had entered into MoU with ISRO for a web-based utility which allows users to explore map based content prepared by ISRO.

The Ministry had brought out (March 2016) a comprehensive security policy for museums under its control (*i.e.* other than site-museums). However, ASI intimated (March 2021) that archaeological museums under ASI are mostly located near CPM, and accordingly, security guidelines issued for monuments were being followed. Audit noted that there were no separate security guidelines or standards for manpower requirement for the CPM.

Issues related with security and safeguard arrangements noticed during joint physical verification of selected monuments are included in the **Annexe 7.1**. In Mumbai and Aurangabad Circles, ASI had not deployed security personnel in 173 out of 192 monuments. In Delhi Circle, due to deployment of insufficient number of security personnel, ASI was not able to control large number of public visiting certain ticketed monuments on specific days of the week. In Karnataka, out of 45 monuments selected in three Circles (Bengaluru, Dharwad and Hampi), 26 did not have security guards. In Bhubaneswar Circle, security guards have been deployed



only at three monuments and three site-museums. Similarly, in Chandigarh Circle, out of total 91 CPM under Haryana Sub-circle, security equipment was provided at only one CPM.

Further, while visiting the central store of Publication Division located at Red Fort, New Delhi, it was noted that there were no fire-safety arrangements for securing the published stocks.

Conclusions:

- *Based on recommendation of PAC, ASI had started Adarsh Smarak Initiative in its 100 monuments to provide amenities to the visitors of these monuments.*
- *Joint physical inspection of selected monuments, however, revealed that in most of the monuments, concerns regarding management of monuments including provision of visitors' facilities, conservation works, security etc. remained unaddressed.*
- *Provisions/ instructions contained in NPC-AMASR were not being followed*

