



## Amendments to Ancient Monuments Act

### Why in news?

\n\n

Central government is planning to introduce amendments to "Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958".

\n\n

### What are prohibited zones?

\n\n

\n

- Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Rules of 1959 for the first time noted a prohibited and a regulated zone around protected sites and monuments.

\n

- In 2010, the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (Amendment and Validation) Act was passed.

\n

- This legislation brought the prohibited and regulated zones around monuments within the ambit of the Act itself.

\n

- A designated prohibited area means that at least within a 100-m radius of the monument, no new construction is allowed.

\n

- The National Monuments Authority was set up.

\n

\n\n

### What are the existing problems?

\n\n

\n

- The records with the government show that there are around 5,00,000

unprotected and endangered monuments.

\n

- But only 3,650 monuments are nationally protected in a country.
- There are encroachments around monuments by government agencies and individuals.
- e.g The 2013 CAG report noted that of the 1,655 monuments, 546 of them were encroached.
- It is mainly due to the severe lack of basic manpower in the form of monument attendants.
- More than two-thirds of India's monuments that the Central government is supposed to protect were poorly guarded.
- There are also numerous instances where politicians have protected those who have illegally occupied the prohibited zone around monuments.
- Heritage bye-laws for nationally protected monuments are yet to be prepared even after 6 years of passing the law.

\n

\n\n

### **What is the new amendment?**

\n\n

\n

- The government is planning to dilute the 100m prohibited area around nationally protected monuments.
- The proposed amendment aims to allow the Central government to construct within that area all kinds of structures.

\n

\n\n

### **What is the importance of prohibited zones?**

\n\n

\n

- The above mentioned problems reveal that, at present, only solid protection to monuments comes from courts of law.

\n

- Courts prevent constructions mainly using the legal provisions of prohibited zone around monuments.  
\n
- India's monuments form an irreplaceable archive of our civilizational heritage.  
\n
- So it is essential to continue with the 100 m protected area in order to prevent monuments from defacement and to prevent the present constructions from displacing the past aesthetics.  
\n

\n\n

\n\n

**Source: The Hindu**

\n



**IAS PARLIAMENT**  
*Information is Empowering*  
A Shankar IAS Academy Initiative