



SC Ruling on Puri Jagannath Temple

Why in news?

\n\n

The Supreme Court recently gave directions on the administration of the Puri Jagannath Temple.

\n\n

What is the case about?

\n\n

\n

- A petition was filed on harassment and exploitation faced by visitors in the temple.

\n

- This was said to be due to the commercialisation of rituals.

\n

- Concerns were also raised on issues of hygiene, encroachments and management of the temple.

\n

\n\n

What are the court's directions?

\n\n

\n

- The SC gave some specific directions to the Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA).

\n

- SJTA is to ensure that no direct collection of the offerings is made by any Sevaks.

\n

- All the offerings should be through either hundi or deposited and accounted for and properly utilized.

\n

- They should not be individual pockets by the Sevaks/attendants.
\n
- As, these would be given their due remuneration as per rules.
\n
- To ensure this, the SJTA has to review the arrangement of CCTV cameras and install more.
\n
- An independent panel must view the footage at suitable intervals and submit a report to the District Judge.
\n
- The court has directed the Puri District Judge to file a report on exploitative practices.
\n

\n\n

What are the concerns?

\n\n

- \n
- The Servitors of the Temple are largely dependent on the temple for their livelihood.
\n
- Given this, the SC's directive may force them into penury/poverty.
\n
- The order does not distinguish between dakshina and daan.
\n
- The former is a fee paid voluntarily by devotees to servitors for performing their desired rituals.
\n
- On the other hand, daan is the donation to the temple.
\n
- Many devotees are under the impression that the SC has banned dakshina.
\n

\n\n

What is SJTA's stance?

\n\n

- \n
- There is said to be coercive collection of large amounts in the form of dakshina.
\n
- The Shri Jagannath Temple Act, 1954, provides for the welfare of servitors.
\n

- Under this, the Shri Jagannath Temple Foundation Fund receives all donations exceeding Rs 500.
\n
- The collections are invested in long-term fixed deposits in banks and the interest returns to the Fund.
\n
- A portion of it is used to run a sebayat (servitors') hospital, give scholarships to their children, and for old age and widow pensions.
\n
- Given this support system, servitors should not expect any part of the temple's offerings.
\n

\n\n

\n\n

Source: Indian Express

\n\n

\n\n

Quick Fact

\n\n

Puri Jagannath Temple

\n\n

- \n
- The Shree Jagannath Temple is located in Puri, Odisha.
\n
- It is an important Hindu temple dedicated to Lord Jagannath, a form of lord Vishnu.
\n
- It is well known for its annual Ratha Jatra, or chariot festival.
\n
- The temple is one of the four great 'Char Dham' pilgrimage sites.
\n
- Char Dhams are the pilgrimage sites found at India's four cardinal points.
\n
- The other three are Badrinath (Uttarakhand), Dwarka (Gujarat), and Rameswaram (Tamil Nadu).

\n

\n



IAS PARLIAMENT

Information is Empowering

A Shankar IAS Academy Initiative