



Cultural Institutions and Constitutional Safeguards

Key Topics

- Cultural Institutions
- Constitutional Safeguards and Legal Provisions

Cultural Institutions

Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav



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AKAM is an initiative by the Indian Government to celebrate and honour 75 years of India's progress and illustrious history. The Mahotsav pays tribute to the Indian people who have played a crucial role in India's journey so far. AKAM embodies the progressive aspects of India's socio-cultural, political, and economic identity. The initiative officially began in March 2021 and will continue for 75 weeks, culminating on August 15, 2023. AKAM is being commemorated globally with participation from all sectors, including businesses, NGOs, students, and volunteers. Five themes are guiding the events and activities—Freedom Struggle, Ideas 75, Achievement@75, Resolve@75, and Actions@75 – all of which showcase India's history, ideas, progress, commitments, and policies.

Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat



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The initiative Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat was introduced in 2015 on the occasion of the 140th birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. The initiative aims to achieve a set of broad objectives, which include:

- We gather to maintain and strengthen the deep emotional bonds among our country's inhabitants. Additionally, we aim to pay homage to and commemorate the diversity that brings us together.
- An intended meeting involving all states and union territories throughout the year is designed to promote the essence of national unity through comprehensive and organized participation.
- The aim is to increase comprehension and admiration for India's varied heritage, culture, customs, and traditions, which will result in the development of a shared identity and the building of lasting relationships.
- States can promote a favourable learning environment by sharing their best practices and experiences.

Lalit Kala Akademi

The Lalit Kala Akademi, which is also known as the National Academy of Art, was founded in 1954. It is a self-governing cultural organization of the government and has a significant standing in the realm of visual arts in India. This institution is fully financed by the Ministry of Culture.

The arts domain in India has been served by The Akademi for a long time, even before the world recognized the global significance of Indian art. The Akademi has maintained, curated, and documented a permanent collection that showcases modern and contemporary art in India with all its vitality, complexity, and evolving patterns. It presents exhibitions and educational programs of exceptional value, maintains a library, archives, art collection, and conservation laboratory throughout the year. The Akademi also supports scholars and publications of preeminent intellectual merit throughout the country.

The Akademi strives to encourage the appreciation of modern and contemporary art among a wide range of viewers, locally, nationally, and globally. Its endeavors, such as the National Exhibition of Art and the International Triennale - India, demonstrate this dedication to promoting art.

The Akademi is committed to promoting Indian art and artists through various programs and strategic partnerships. Its headquarters are located in New Delhi, with additional centers situated in Bhubaneshwar, Chennai, Kolkata, Lucknow, Garhi (New Delhi), and sub-centers in Shimla and Patna. These national and

international programs are organized with the aim of developing art and reflect the Akademi's unwavering dedication to this goal.

The Akademi offers studios to artists who work in various art forms, such as sculpture, graphics, ceramics, and painting. This is a noteworthy effort on the part of the Akademi towards promoting art.

Sangeet Natak Akademi

The Sangeet Natak Akademi is an Indian national academy that focuses on music, dance, and drama, and it has played a significant role in the development of modern India. In order to preserve the arts, a democratic system was introduced, allowing people from all walks of life to learn, practice, and promote the arts. The formation of a National Cultural Trust consisting of three academies, namely an academy of dance, drama and music, an academy of letters, and an academy of art and architecture, was proposed by the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1945. After India gained independence, three national academies were created, with Sangeet Natak Akademi being the first one established by a resolution from the Ministry of Education. In 1961, the government reconstituted Sangeet Natak Akademi as a society and registered it under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 (as amended in 1957).

The aim of the Akademi is to establish a united system of support for the performance of music, dance, and drama in India, covering both conventional and contemporary forms, and serving both urban and rural regions. The Akademi arranges nationwide festivals of music, dance, and drama, either by showcasing or endorsing them.

The Akademi is a distinguished organization focused on the performing arts, providing guidance and support to the Indian Government in creating and executing programs and policies related to the performing arts. Additionally, it promotes cultural exchange initiatives both nationally and internationally.

National School of Drama

The National School of Drama (NSD) is a prestigious theatre institution that is unique to India and renowned worldwide. It was established in 1959 by the Sangeet Natak Akademi and became an independent organization in 1975, with complete funding from the Department of Culture. The NSD's main objective is to provide students with comprehensive training in all aspects of theatre, including theatre history, production, scene and costume design, lighting, make-up, and more. The NSD offers a three-year training course.

The NSD Publication Unit has the responsibility of publishing theatre textbooks, aiding in the translation of important theatre books from English to Hindi, and releasing other noteworthy theatre books.

Kalakshetra Foundation

The Kalakshetra Foundation was established in 1936 by Smt. Rukmini Arundale, a renowned artist, social reformer, and visionary. Its objective was to initiate a cultural renaissance and emphasize the importance of deep cultural roots for a stable society in independent India. Smt. Rukmini Arundale's contribution was enormous and remains relevant even today. The institution's significance has been recognized by the Indian government, which has deemed it of 'National Importance,' leading to its takeover by the government through the "Kalakshetra Foundation Act" passed in Parliament. The Kalakshetra Foundation is made up of five units:

- i. Rukmini Devi College of Fine Arts offers courses in Bharatanatyam, Carnatic music, and Visual Arts. The college teaches students the skills and knowledge required to excel in these art forms.
- ii. The Besant Theosophical Higher Secondary School is affiliated with the Tamil Nadu State Board.
- iii. The school named Besant Arundale Senior Secondary School is affiliated with CBSE.
- iv. Crafts Education and Research Centre
- v. Besant Cultural Hostel Centre

Sahitya Akademi

Sahitya Akademi, also known as India's National Academy of Letters, came into being in 1954 with the objective of fostering literature in 24 Indian languages.

The Sahitya Akademi, an autonomous body under the Ministry of Culture, is responsible for promoting and coordinating literary activities in India while maintaining high literary standards. The organization conducts various programs, grants awards and fellowships to writers who produce work in Indian languages, and publishes books throughout the year in all 24 recognized languages. Over the past 60 years, Sahitya Akademi has published more than 7,000 books in 24 languages, including original works and translations of fiction, poetry, drama, and criticism spanning classical, medieval, pre-modern, and contemporary literature. In addition to this, Sahitya Akademi produces three literary journals: Indian Literature (published bi-monthly in English), Samkaleena Bhartiya Sahitya (published bi-monthly in Hindi), and Sanskrit Pratibha (published quarterly in Sanskrit).

The literary awards held in India, called the Akademi Awards, are widely regarded as the most prestigious. These awards recognize exceptional books of literary merit published in any of the 24 Indian languages recognized by the Akademi. The Sahitya

Akademi Award is given to the most outstanding works and carries a prize of Rs.1 lakh and a citation. The Bhasha Samman is another award that is bestowed upon writers, scholars, editors, collectors, performers, and translators. This award recognizes their significant contribution to the propagation and enrichment of languages not recognized by the Akademi. Additionally, it recognizes stellar contributions to research into classical and medieval literature of the country. The Bhasha Samman also carries a prize of Rs.1 lakh and a citation.

Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts

The Government of India established the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) in 1987, which is located in New Delhi and functions under the Ministry of Culture. The centre is dedicated to promoting cultural revitalization and convergence of all art forms, while keeping in mind the natural and human environment of mutual interdependence, social structure, and cosmology. IGNCA serves as a platform for socio-cultural dialogue, knowledge, and research. It takes a multi-disciplinary approach towards all its programmes, which include research, publications, exhibitions, and performances. IGNCA has a vast collection covering a wide range of disciplines such as archaeology, anthropology, history, philosophy, language and literature, art and craft of India, South Asia, South East Asia, and West Asia.

IGNCA has seven functional units –

- i. Kalanidhi is a library and cultural archives that has multiple forms.
- ii. Kalakosa's primary focus is on the examination and dissemination of essential Indian language texts.
- iii. The group called **Jana pada Sampada** is responsible for conducting lifestyle studies.
- iv. The IGNCA produces research and studies, which are then transformed into visible forms through exhibitions and performances by **Kaladarsana**, the executive unit.
- v. The **Cultural Informatics Lab** utilizes technology tools to preserve and spread culture.
- vi. There is an administrative unit called **Sutradhara** that serves as a backbone for supporting and coordinating all the activities.
- vii. **The National Mission of Manuscripts**, which has established resource and conservation centers throughout India to preserve and digitize valuable manuscripts, has been included as a division of the IGNCA.

The Media Centre at IGNCA has been equipped with advanced technology to aid the production and archiving of audio-visual materials. The conservation laboratory at IGNCA has undertaken projects for many renowned organizations. The Rock Art Unit at IGNCA is dedicated to the study of rock-art heritage in India and neighboring countries. IGNCA has established regional centers in Bengaluru, Goa, Guwahati, Jammu, Puducherry, Ranchi, Thrissur, Vadodara, and Varanasi. IGNCA is actively involved in the necessary preparation for establishing the India Institute of Heritage.

IGNCA has introduced eight post-graduate diploma programs to provide specialized training in heritage conservation and management. Additionally, the organization has launched Bharat Vidya Pariyojana and Nari Samvaad Prakalp to offer more programs.

Centre for Cultural Resources and Training

The primary objective of the CCRT is to connect education and culture in order to increase students' awareness of the importance of culture in all development initiatives. It offers training programs to teachers from all over India, with the aim of assisting them in incorporating a cultural component into their curriculum. The training focuses not only on the philosophy, aesthetics, and beauty that are inherent in Indian art and culture, but also emphasizes the significance of culture in various fields, including science and technology, housing, agriculture, and sports among others. This training helps to promote understanding among students and teachers of their role in addressing environmental issues and preserving and safeguarding natural and cultural heritage.

The CCRT hosts workshops that focus on different forms of art, including drama, music, and narrative art. The organization encourages educators to create educational programs that incorporate these art forms to facilitate effective learning of the curriculum. Additionally, the CCRT conducts educational excursions to places such as museums, monuments, zoological parks, craft centers, and art galleries. The organization also arranges camps that aim to preserve natural and cultural heritage and teach crafts using inexpensive local resources. Lectures and demonstrations by artists and experts on various art forms, as well as demonstrations by artists and craft persons in schools, are also organized by the CCRT. The main goal of the organization is to promote the intellectual and aesthetic development of students.

The CCRT has been gathering color slides, scripts, movies, audio and video recordings, and photographs. The primary aim of this yearly scheme is to revive and propagate the rural art and craft forms of India. Moreover, it releases publications that help in understanding and appreciating Indian art and culture. CCRT oversees the

implementation of the Cultural Talent Search Scholarship Scheme, which grants scholarships to exceptionally talented children aged between 10 and 14 years, who either study in recognized schools or come from families engaged in traditional performing or other art forms. These scholarships provide opportunities to the children to develop their talents in various cultural fields, particularly in rare art forms. The scholarships remain available until the age of 20 years or the first year of a university degree. Additionally, the “Award of Scholarships to Young Artistes (SYA) in Different Cultural Fields” program gives up to 400 scholarships to individuals aged between 18 to 25 years in the fields of Indian classical music, classical dances, light classical music, theatre, visual arts, folk/traditional, and indigenous arts.

The Ministry of Culture has initiated a program called Project Sanskriti. Its objective is to establish interpretation centers in educational institutions situated in Varanasi. In addition to this, the CCRT has introduced a Teachers’ Award to acknowledge the outstanding contributions of selected teachers in the fields of education and culture. The award includes a citation, a plaque, and a cash prize of Rs. 25,000.

Archaeological Survey of India

The ASI, or Archaeological Survey of India, was established in 1861 and functions as a department attached to the Ministry of Culture. Its primary responsibility is to conduct surveys on the remains of archaeological sites and carry out excavations. Additionally, the ASI is responsible for the maintenance, conservation, and protection of centrally protected monuments, sites, and remains. The ASI engages in the chemical preservation of monuments and antiquarian remains, conducts architectural surveys of monuments, promotes the development of epigraphical research and numismatic studies, establishes and reorganizes site museums, conducts expeditions abroad, provides training in archaeology, and publishes technical reports and research works. The work of preservation and conservation of monuments under the protection of the Archaeological Survey of India is managed through 29 circles, three mini circles, and five regional directorates.

The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958 has led to the declaration of 3,686 national importance sites and monuments in India by the ASI. This list includes 22 properties that have been recognized by UNESCO and inscribed on the World Heritage List. Some of the sites that have been recognized by UNESCO are the Champaner-Pavagarh Archaeological Park in Gujarat, Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus in Mumbai, and the Great Living Chola Temples which include Brihadeswara temple at Gangaikondcholanapuram and the Airavateswara temple complex. The nomination dossiers for the Victorian and Art Deco Ensemble of Mumbai have been submitted to the World Heritage Centre of UNESCO for inscription on the

World Heritage List. The ASI takes care of more than 5,000 individual structures. The Underwater Archaeology Wing of ASI is responsible for the exploration, research, and preservation of cultural heritage that lies submerged in inland or territorial waters.

Exploration and excavation activities are carried out by The Wing in the Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal. The Survey's Science Branch is headquartered in Dehradun and operates field laboratories in various regions of the country. Preservation of monuments, antiquities, manuscripts, paintings, etc. is carried out through chemical processes by this branch. The Horticulture Branch of ASI is responsible for the preservation of gardens in approximately 287 centrally protected monuments/sites across India. To ensure a prompt supply of plants for the gardens, base nurseries have been established by the branch in Delhi, Agra, Srirangapatnam, and Bhubaneswar. The Epigraphy Branch at Mysore focuses on research related to the Sanskrit and Dravidian languages, while the one at Nagpur is responsible for Arabic and Persian research.

The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has a total of 36 circles and one mini-circle located across different states and union territories. The organization also has six regional directorates, which are situated in Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Guwahati, and Bhopal. Each regional directorate is headed by a Regional Director. In addition to this, the ASI has six excavation branches, two temple survey projects, one building survey project, one prehistory branch, and one science branch. Furthermore, there are two epigraphy branches in Mysuru, one for Sanskrit and Dravidian, and the other for Arabic and Persian. The Pt. Deendayal Upadhyay Institute of Archaeology, located in Greater Noida, provides Archaeology training.

Indian Council for Cultural Relations

The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) was established in 1950. The council's objectives include actively participating in policy formulation and implementation related to India's external cultural relations, fostering cultural relations, and mutual understanding between India and other countries, promoting cultural exchanges, and developing relationships with other nations. As part of India's foreign policy initiatives, the ICCR plays a crucial role in promoting cultural diplomacy, with a focus on showcasing India's civilizational strengths through initiatives like ancient Indian literature, Yoga, Ayurveda, Hindi, Indian traditional knowledge system, and India's Buddhist heritage.

ICCR has two primary areas of operation, which are academic pursuits and the promotion of visual and performing arts. In terms of academics, ICCR establishes Chairs of Indian Studies that cover a wide range of subjects and holds conferences on various Indian themes, in addition to conferring international awards upon

foreign scholars. Moreover, it provides scholarships to foreign nationals, particularly those countries that require India's assistance in capacity-building and human capital development, to help them pursue courses in numerous fields. Lastly, ICCR promotes performing and fine arts.

ICCR enables a process of cultural exchange that works both ways. It sponsors Indian artists to showcase Indian culture abroad, while also organizing a variety of cultural events in India, such as the annual Ramayana Festival, Sufi Festival, International Folk Festival, and International Jazz Festival, which feature foreign artists. ICCR also promotes exchange programs for performing art groups, art exhibitions, and residencies with various countries around the world. The organization relies on its global network of 38 cultural centres and Indian missions abroad to carry out these activities. In executing its activities in India, ICCR collaborates actively with state governments, universities/institutions, and socio-cultural organizations.

Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture

The Institute was founded in 1938 and was associated with the Ramakrishna Mission. Swami Vivekananda originally formed the mission. The Institute's main goal was to propagate the teachings of Vedanta as taught by Sri Ramakrishna. This was done as a permanent memorial to Sri Ramakrishna on the occasion of his first birth centenary in 1836-86. The primary teachings of Sri Ramakrishna emphasized the importance and essence of Vedanta.

- i.** All religions, no matter their differences, should be treated with respect and consideration.
- ii.** Humans are believed to have the capacity to attain a state of divinity or ascend to a godly level. This belief is expressed through the phrase "The potential divinity of man."
- iii.** Devotion towards mankind is a form of expressing reverence to the Almighty – a novel faith for everyone.

National Mission on Monuments and Antiquities

The National Mission on Monuments and Antiquities (NMMA) was created in 2007 with the objective of developing a comprehensive National Database on Built Heritage and Sites (BH&S), as well as antiquities from various sources and museums, during the 11th five Year Plan. The main goal of this database was to provide planners, researchers, and others with information and dissemination tools to better manage these cultural resources. As the work involved was extensive, the NMMA has been

incorporated as a division of the Archaeological Survey of India based on the recommendations of the National Productivity Council's 3rd Party Evaluation Report.

NMMA has been directed to create two nationwide lists, specifically:

- i. National Register on Built Heritage and Sites.
- ii. Data on Built Heritages and Sites, amounting to about 2 lakh, has been documented in the National Register on Antiquities from various secondary sources. NMMA has documented approximately 15 lakh antiquities from different sources and continues to do so.

National Mission for Manuscripts

In 2003, the National Mission for Manuscripts (NMM) was launched with the purpose of recovering India's abundant knowledge that is present in the manuscript collection. The Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) acts as the primary agency for this program. Manuscripts Resource Centres (MRC), Manuscripts Conservation Centres (MCC), Manuscripts Partner Centres (MPC), and Manuscripts Conservation Partner Centres (MCPC) have been established throughout the country to explore, record, maintain, and digitize India's physical heritage.

The National Manuscript Mission (NMM) carries out a variety of important tasks, which include conducting surveys to record manuscripts, implementing measures for the preservation of manuscripts, organizing training courses and workshops on the study of ancient scripts, and teaching palaeography. They also digitize manuscripts to make them more accessible for archival purposes, publish materials that spread the knowledge contained in manuscripts, and carry out an outreach programme to raise public awareness about the importance of manuscripts.

Gandhi Heritage Sites Mission

In 2006, the Government of India set up a panel of notable Gandhians, which was called the Gandhi Heritage Sites Panel. This panel made recommendations, which led to the creation of the Gandhi Heritage Sites Mission in 2013. The mission had a fixed term of 5 years and was allocated a budget of Rs. 42 crores.

The objective of the mission is to ensure the preservation of the 39 core sites and other significant sites from the master list, which includes 2,000 locations visited by Mahatma Gandhi. The mission also provides supervision, guidance, and assistance for conservation, maintenance, and preservation initiatives. Additionally, it aims to create a database of tangible, literary, and visual heritage associated with Mahatma Gandhi for future generations.

Constitutional Safeguards and Legal Provisions

Article 49 of the Constitution of India

Article 49 in the Indian Constitution states that it is the responsibility of every citizen of India to safeguard monuments, places, and objects that hold national importance. This constitutional provision highlights the significance of conserving the cultural heritage of the country and implementing measures that ensure its protection. It is the duty of each citizen to show respect and safeguard the historical sites and artifacts that represent India's vibrant cultural heritage.

Article 51 A(f) of the Indian Constitution

Every citizen has a duty to cherish and preserve the diverse heritage of India, as stated in Article 51A(f) of the Indian Constitution. This constitutional provision highlights the importance of protecting the rich cultural heritage of India and promoting unity amidst diversity. It is the responsibility of each individual to honor and safeguard the unique customs, languages, and traditions of different regions and communities across the country. By nurturing and safeguarding the composite culture of India, we can strengthen the unity and integrity of our nation.

Indian Treasure Trove Act, 1878

In 1878, the Indian Treasure Trove Act was established to create a legal framework for safeguarding and upholding the value of discovered assets. According to this law, individuals who discover such treasure must inform the government or their local senior officials. Failure to do so can result in serious consequences, including hefty fines and even imprisonment.

The entire country of India is subject to the Indian Treasure Trove Act of 1878, which was passed on February 13th of that year. There are a total of 21 Sections in the Act. According to Section 3(a) of the Act, anything of value that is buried in the ground or attached to the earth is considered treasure.

The law has the following two objectives:

- It is important to safeguard and maintain objects that have archaeological significance.
- To legally dispose of the treasure to its rightful owner.

Some important Provisions of the Act

If a treasure exceeding the amount of ten rupees is found, the Act states that the person who found it must inform the collector of the location, time, cost, and other relevant details, as well as deposit it if requested.

Notice is issued by the collector for individuals who wish to claim ownership of the treasure. The collector then divides the treasure or shares its value between the finder and the claimants based on their orders.

In case a person fails to provide notice regarding a treasure or attempts to modify it to conceal its identity, the share of such wealth, or the monetary equivalent, that he would otherwise be eligible for shall be transferred to the Government. If found guilty before a Magistrate, the person shall be subject to imprisonment for a maximum of one year, or a fine, or both.

The Ancient Monuments Preservation Act, 1904

The Preservation Act for Ancient Monuments was established in March 1904 by British India during Lord Curzon's reign. Its purpose was to safeguard and conserve historical monuments, as well as ancient artifacts of historical, artistic, or archaeological significance.

The preservation and protection of ancient monuments and archaeological sites of historical, artistic, archaeological, or cultural importance is the objective of the Act. The Ancient Monuments Preservation Committee is established by the Act, which is responsible for maintaining and preserving ancient monuments and archaeological sites. The Act prohibits any unauthorized alteration, removal, or demolition of ancient monuments and makes it illegal to export or sell any historical or archaeological artifact that has been discovered. The Act also provides for penalties in case of violation of its provisions.

Legislation has been passed that defines "ancient monument" as any structure, monument, or erection, as well as any tumulus or burial location, cave, rock carving, inscription, or monolith that has historical, artistic, or archaeological significance. This definition also includes any remains of such structures or locations. In addition, an ancient monument can refer to the site where such a structure once stood, the area of land that is adjacent to the site and necessary for its preservation, and the means of access that allows for convenient inspection of the site.

Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (AMASR) Act, 1958

A statute has been implemented to conserve the cultural legacy of the nation. The main objective of this statute is to ensure the protection of historic national monuments, archaeological sites, and remnants, as well as to manage archaeological excavations. The statute also safeguards sculptures, carvings, and other similar objects.

The Archaeological Survey of India functions in conformity with the provisions of this statute.

Some important definitions of this Act

This Act designates as an ancient monument any building, construction, monument, tumulus, or place of burial, cave, rock sculpture, inscription, or monolith that has been there for a hundred years or more and has artistic, historical, or archaeological significance. An ancient monument is defined as the remains of an ancient monument, the monument's location, any area of land adjacent to the monument site needed for fencing, covering, or other preservation, and the easiest way to access and view an ancient monument.

An "archaeological site and remains" is a location that has at least a century's worth of significant historical or archaeological value and is known or thought to include ancient ruins or artefacts. This region comprises the land on which the ruins are located and any nearby land needed for the site's fence, covering, or preservation. It includes easy access to the location and convenient area inspection as well.

Antiquities and Art Treasures Act (1972)

In compliance with the UNESCO 1970 Convention, the Antiquities and Art Treasures Act of 1972 was developed to govern domestic and international antiquities transactions in India. Its goal is to protect India's rich cultural heritage and stop its assets from being permanently exported.

According to the Antiquities and Art Treasures Act of 1972, an object or piece 100 years or older qualifies as an "antiquity". Anything that depicts the science, art, crafts, customs, religion, literature, or other aspects of a bygone era, or anything of historical significance, could be a coin, sculpture, artwork, epigraph, or any piece or article removed from a structure or cave. A manuscript or record that holds scientific, historical, literary, or artistic significance must be at least 75 years old.

Salient Features of this Act:

- **Export Regulation:** The Act forbids the export of art treasures and antiquities unless a legitimate license from the government is obtained.
- **Registration Procedure:** In line with AATA section 14(3), anybody possessing or owning any antiquity must register it with the registering officer and obtain a certificate verifying the registration.
- **Sales of Antiquities:** Only license holders are permitted to sell antiquities.

- **Penalties:** Selling antiques that are only authorized for sale by the Central government and neglecting to declare all antiques in one's possession when a license expires are examples of antiquities-related offenses. These offenses are punishable by confiscation of the antiques along with a six-month jail sentence, a fine, or both.

Public Records Act, 1993

The Public Records Act 1993 was passed by the Central Government to govern, manage, and protect the Central Government's public records and the administration of the Union Territory.

The Act entered into force on 1 March 1995. Its purpose is to govern, manage, and protect the public records of the Central Government, the Union Territory Administrations (UTAs), public sector undertakings (PSUs), statutory bodies (SCs), corporations (corporations), commissions (commissions), and committees (committees) set up by the Central Government (UTA) or by a Union Territory Administration (UTA). It also applies to matters related to or incidental to the above entities.

Some Salient Features of this Act:

- In this Act, by notification in the Official Gazette, the Central Government may constitute an Archival Advisory Board consisting of the Chairman, who will be the Secretary to the Government of India in the Ministry of Central Government dealing with Culture, the director general, and some other members.
- The Board's duties include (a) advising the Central Government and Union territory Administrations on issues of the management, administration, conservation, and use of public records; (b) creating standards for the training of archivists; (c) giving directions on how to obtain records from private custody; and (d) attending to any other matters that may be prescribed.
- Any document, manuscript, file, microfilm, microfiche, and facsimile copy of a document are all considered "public records" under the broad definition provided by this Act. Additional materials created by a computer or other device of any records-creating agency are also included in this definition.
- Under this Act, the Central Government is empowered to oversee, manage, and coordinate activities pertaining to public records administration, preservation, retirement, and selection.
- Without the Central Government's consent, it is illegal for anyone to take or cause any public records outside of India to be taken.

- In the event of unauthorised removal, destruction, defacement, or alteration, the records officer is accountable for taking the necessary steps to recover or restore any public records under his charge. The records officer must then submit a written report to the Director General, or in other cases, to the head of the Archives.
- The Central Government has the authority to establish rules to implement the provisions of this Act.

