F.No. 09-01/NMA–NOC/2022-23 (C. No-529)
Government of India
Ministry of Culture
National Monuments Authority

24, Tilak Marg, New Delhi
Dated 13.05.2026

To,
All Competent Authorities

Subject: Advisory regarding pendency of applications and compliance with procedural requirements under the AMASR Act and Rules

Sir/Madam,

It has been observed by the Authority that, in several cases, undue delay is occurring at the field level in the processing and disposal of applications under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958 (as amended in 2010) and the Rules framed thereunder. The timelines prescribed under Section 20D(1) of the AMASR Act, 1958 and Rule 10 of the AMASR Rules, 2011 are statutory in nature and are required to be adhered to strictly.

2. During interactions with Competent Authorities, it has emerged that delays are frequently caused due to deferment in scheduling of site inspections and submission of inspection reports. Such delays result in avoidable pendency, adversely affect timely disposal of applications, and have a negative bearing on Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) and Ease of Living initiatives. It may be noted that the received applications are to be processed by the Competent Authority within 15 days and forwarded to NMA, New Delhi

3. Notwithstanding, all Competent Authorities are, requested to undertake an in-house review to identify the causes of such delays and evolve suitable remedial measures. The findings and specific constraints, wherever applicable, may also be shared with the National Monuments Authority (NMA) for facilitating appropriate support and coordination. It is emphasised that delays in processing applications ultimately cause hardship to applicants, who may become exposed to avoidable enforcement actions and procedural complications. Competent Authorities are, therefore, expected to ensure timely processing of applications in the interest of applicants and effective implementation of the statutory framework.

In cases where delays arise due to logistical or administrative constraints, such as non-availability of vehicles, surveyors, or other resources, the same shall be specifically communicated to the undersigned so that appropriate solutions may be explored. By way of illustration, in certain jurisdictions where pendency had increased due to similar constraints, services of retired/ex-ASI surveyors with relevant experience and integrity were engaged on consultancy basis and outstation visits were reimbursed, which substantially facilitated site inspections and expedited disposal of applications.

4. It has also been observed that applications are frequently being submitted with avoidable deficiencies and errors in Form-II and accompanying

documents, despite issuance of a comprehensive checklist and advisories by the Authority from time to time. The same deficiencies continue to recur repeatedly. Attention is invited to the requirement that signatures and seals of architects on site plans and related documents must be original ink signatures. Scanned, digitally pasted, or cut-and-paste signatures/seals on site plans and other documents are not permissible. Accordingly, during scrutiny of applications, it shall be ensured that all such documents are duly ink-signed. In cases where any irregularity or aberration is detected, the application shall be returned to the applicant for rectification in accordance with Rule 9(8) of the CA Rules, 2011.

5. Attention is further invited to proposals involving a total built-up area exceeding 5,000 square metres (existing plus proposed), for which submission of a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) Report by a Notified Expert Heritage Body (NEHB) is mandatory as per the prescribed parameters. It has, however, been observed that HIA Reports are being submitted by entities which are not recognised NEHBs and do not possess demonstrable expertise in archaeology, heritage conservation, conservation architecture, town and country planning, or allied disciplines. In this regard, reference is invited to this office directions dated 27.02.2026 concerning submission and consideration of Heritage Impact Assessment Reports under the NMA Rules, 2011. All Competent Authorities shall, therefore, ensure careful scrutiny and verification of such reports before processing the cases further for consideration by the Authority.

6. It has come to the notice of the Authority that cases pertaining to Repair and Renovation in Prohibited Areas, which are required to be disposed of by the Competent Authority under Section 20C(1) read with Rule 6(VI) and Rule 8 of the Competent Authority Rules, 2011, are being unnecessarily forwarded to the Authority. This results in avoidable delay and hardship to applicants, besides increasing pendency at the Authority level. It has also been observed that Form-IV is being issued in such cases instead of the prescribed Form-III. All Competent Authorities are, therefore, directed to familiarise themselves with the relevant provisions of the AMASR Act, 1958 (as amended in 2010) and the Rules framed thereunder, and ensure that such cases are disposed of at their own level using the correct statutory form.

7. All Competent Authorities shall ensure strict compliance with the timelines, procedures, and statutory requirements prescribed under the AMASR Act, 1958 and the Rules framed thereunder, so as to ensure timely disposal of applications and avoidance of procedural irregularities.

Yours faithfully

(Bhaskar Verma)
Member Secretary, NMA

Copy to for information:-

1. DG, ASI
2. SA, ASI (All Circles)
3. Guard File