



Trial Essential to Define 'Religious Character of Place of Worship': Allahabad HC

Why in News?

The Allahabad High Court's recent stance in the [Gyanvapi case](#) suggests that the [Places of Worship Act, 1991](#) **does not clarify “religious character of any place of worship”** and can only be determined in a trial, based on documentary and oral evidence, on a case-to-case basis.

Key Points

- The Places of Worship Act, 1991 **bars the conversion of religious sites into places of worship for a different religion or sect.**
 - It also **mandates preserving the religious identity of any place of worship** as it stood on 15th August, 1947.
- The Gyanvapi case is a **legal battle concerning the ownership and religious identity of Varanasi's Gyanvapi complex**, housing both a mosque and a temple.
 - Hindu plaintiffs **argue that the entire area, including the mosque site, was originally a temple** dedicated to Swayambhu Lord Adi Vishweshwar.
 - They claim that this temple, once on the Gyanvapi plot, was **demolished by Emperor Aurangzeb in 1669.**
- **Neither the government nor the Supreme Court has presented a clear stance on this issue to date.**

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