Ashoka Inscription and Two other Sites in Bihar under Consideration for ASI Notification

Why In News?

- On September 19, 2022, archaeological survey of India (ASI) officials said that two monuments from Bihar — the Ashoka inscription and two ancient mounds — are currently under consideration as per the status of the centrally-protected monuments, which will be decided soon.

Key Points

- The Patna circle of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) had sent these recommendations for notification over a period of 14 years.
- The Ashoka inscription site is in Rohtas district and the recommendation for its ASI notification was sent in 2008, followed by recommendations in 2010 and 2021, as well as listing of two ancient mounds in Bihar as centrally-protected monuments.
- The recommendation for a mound in the Jangalistan region near the Vikramshila site in Bhagalpur district was sent in 2010. It was sent in 2021 to list Raniwas mound in a different part of Bihar.
- At present, 70 sites in Bihar are with the ASI, which works under its Patna circle. It is one of the oldest regional circles in India.
- Sources at the ASI headquarters in Delhi said these recommendations sent by Patna circle are under process. Proposals or recommendations sent in the form of careful documents by the regional circles are examined by a team at the ASI headquarters before taking a final decision. First a provisional notification is issued and then a final gazette notification is issued.
- There are a total of 3,693 heritage sites in India protected by the ASI. Many of these are UNESCO World Heritage Sites, such as the Taj Mahal of Agra, the Red Fort of Delhi, the Qutub Minar and the Tomb of Humayun and the ruins of the ancient Nalanda University in Bihar.
- Officials said the Shiva temple in Gaya was notified by the ASI in 1996, since then no new site in Bihar has been brought under the ASI's purview.

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