



# Survey on Jama Masjid in Uttar Pradesh

## Why in News?

Recently, the Court ordered a survey on the **16<sup>th</sup> century Mughal era Jama Masjid** in **Sambhal** district of Uttar Pradesh. The order is followed by a petition filed by a senior advocate.

## Key Points

- **Claims on Historical Conversion:**
  - The petition alleges that the **Jama Masjid** in Sambhal was **originally a Hari Har temple** located in mohalla Kot Purvi and was **converted into a mosque in 1529**.
  - It asserts that the [Archaeological Survey of India \(ASI\)](#) is responsible for managing and controlling the disputed site.
- **Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind:**
  - Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind, highlighted the importance of [the Places of Worship \(Special Provisions\) Act 1991](#), which preserves the **religious character of all places of worship** as they **existed on August 15, 1947**.
  - They expressed concerns over the disregard for this legislation in recent judicial actions and emphasized [the Supreme Court's](#) endorsement of the Act in the [Ayodhya verdict](#).
- **Historical Context of the Jama Masjid:**
  - The Jama Masjid in Sambhal is one of three mosques **constructed during Babur's reign (1526-1530)**. The others include the mosque at Panipat and the now-demolished Babri Masjid.
    - **Historian Howard Crane** described the mosque's architectural features in his work, **The Patronage of Babur and the Origins of Mughal Architecture**.
    - Crane noted a **Persian inscription stating that Babur ordered the mosque's construction in December 1526** through his subedar, **Jahangir Quli Khan**.

## Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)

- ASI, under the **Ministry of Culture**, is the premier organisation for the archaeological research and protection of the cultural heritage of the nation.
  - **Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (AMASR) Act, 1958** governs the functioning of ASI.
- It administers **more than 3650** ancient monuments, archaeological sites and remains of national importance.
- Its activities include carrying out surveys of antiquarian remains, exploration and excavation of archaeological sites, conservation and maintenance of protected monuments etc.
- It was founded in **1861 by Alexander Cunningham- the first Director-General of ASI**. Alexander Cunningham is also known as the "Father of Indian Archaeology".

