



## Sengol to be Installed in New Parliament Building

**For Prelims:** [Central Vista redevelopment project](#), [Parliament](#), Sengol, [Chola Empire](#), [Governor-General of India](#), [Union Budget 2022-23](#).

**For Mains:** Historical Significance of Sengol.

### Why in News?

On **May 28<sup>th</sup> 2023**, the Prime Minister will inaugurate the **new Parliament building**, which is part of the [Central Vista redevelopment project](#).

- One of the highlights of the event will be the installation of a **historic golden sceptre, called Sengol, near the Speaker's seat**.
- The Sengol is a **symbol of India's independence and sovereignty**, as well as its [cultural heritage](#) and diversity.

### What is the Historical Significance of Sengol?

- The **Sengol** is profound in meaning, derived from the Tamil word "**Semmai**", it means "**Righteousness**". It was made of **gold or silver** and was often decorated with precious stones.
  - A Sengol sceptre was carried by **emperors on ceremonial occasions, and used to represent their authority**.
- It is **associated with the Chola Empire**, one of the longest-ruling and **most influential dynasties in South India**.
  - The Cholas ruled over parts of **Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Odisha, and Sri Lanka** from the 9<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> century CE.
  - They were known for their **military prowess, maritime trade, administrative efficiency, cultural patronage, and temple architecture**.
- The Cholas had a tradition of **handing over the Sengol sceptre from one king to another as a mark of succession and legitimacy**.
  - The ceremony was usually performed by a **high priest or a guru who blessed the new king and conferred him with the Sengol**.

### How did Sengol Become a Part of India's Independence?

- **Before independence from the British rule in 1947**, the then Viceroy - Lord Mountbatten posed a question to the to-be Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru: "**What is the ceremony that should be followed to symbolise the transfer of power from British to Indian hands?**"
  - PM Nehru then consulted **C. Rajagopalachari**, commonly known as Rajaji, who went on to **become the last Governor-General of India**.
    - Rajaji suggested that the **Chola model of handing over the Sengol sceptre could be adopted as a suitable ceremony for India's independence**.
    - He said that it would reflect **India's ancient civilisation and culture**, as well as its **unity in diversity**.

- The Sengol sceptre was presented to **PM Nehru by Thiruvavaduthurai Adheenam (a 500-year-old Saivaite monastery) on August 14, 1947.**
- A golden sceptre was crafted by **Vummidi Bangaru Chetty**, a famous jeweller in Madras (now Chennai).
  - The **Nandi**, with its unyielding gaze as the beholder of **“Nyaya”**, is **hand-carved at the top.**



## Where is Sengol Now and Why is it Being Installed in the New Parliament Building?

- After receiving the **Sengol sceptre in 1947**, Nehru kept it at his residence in Delhi for some time.
  - He then decided to donate it to **Anand Bhavan Museum in Allahabad (now Prayagraj)**, his ancestral home.
    - The museum was established by his **father Motilal Nehru in 1930** to preserve the history and legacy of India's freedom movement.
    - The Sengol sceptre **remained at Anand Bhavan Museum for over seven decades.**
- In **2021-22**, when the **Central Vista redevelopment project was underway**, the government decided to **revive this historical event and install the Sengol sceptre in the new Parliament building.**
  - It will be placed near the Speaker's seat in the new Parliament building and will be accompanied by a **plaque that will explain its history and meaning.**
- The installation of Sengol in the new Parliament building is not just a **symbolic gesture but also a meaningful message.**
  - It signifies that **India's democracy is rooted in its ancient traditions and values** and that it is **inclusive and respectful of its diversity and plurality.**

## What is the Central Vista Redevelopment Project?

- The **Central Vista Redevelopment Project** is a project that aims to revamp the Central Vista, India's central administrative area located near Raisina Hill, New Delhi.
  - The area was originally designed by **Sir Edwin Lutyens and Sir Herbert Baker** during British colonial rule and was retained by Government of India after independence.
- In **Union Budget 2022-23**, the **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs** was allocated an amount of **Rs 2,600 crore for the construction of non-residential office buildings of the ambitious Central Vista project, including the Parliament as well as the Supreme Court of India.**

**Source: PIB**

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