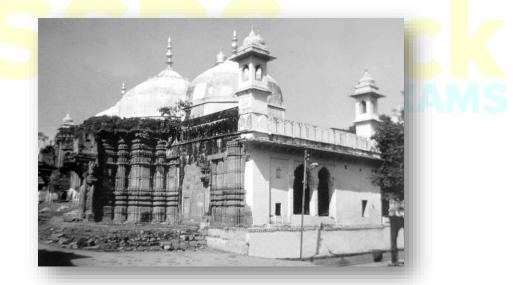


Temple Existed At The Site Of Gyanvapi Mosque Says ASI Reports

Why In The News?

- The Archaeological Survey Of India (ASI) In Its Scientific Survey Report On The Gyanvapi Mosque Complex Has Concluded That "There Existed A Hindu Temple Prior To The Construction Of The Existing Structure" At The Site.
- The Report Was Submitted To The Court Last Month In A Sealed Cover. Its Copies Were Given On January 25 By The Court To **Hindu And Muslim Litigants** In Matters Related To The Dispute Over The Site.
- The ASI Was Tasked By The Varanasi District Court In July 2023 To Conduct A Scientific Survey Of The Mosque And Ascertain If It Was "Constructed Over A Pre-existing Structure Of A Hindu Temple".



Key Takeaways

 The Pre-existing Structure Was Probably Destroyed In The 17th Century, During The Reign Of Aurangzeb. The Report Mentions A Loose Stone With An Inscription Engraved On It Which Recorded The Construction Of The Mosque During Between The Years 1676 And 1677.

- As Per Report During The Survey, A Total Of **34 Inscriptions Were Recorded**, Inscriptions In **Devanagari, Grantha, Telugu And Kannada Scripts** With Names Of Deities Found.
- Parts Of The Pre-existing Temple Were Reused For The Expansion Of The Mosque And Construction Of Sahan. The Survey Included An Examination Of Pillars And Pilasters (Rectangular Columns) In The Corridor Which Indicated That They Were Part Of The Pre-existing Temple.
- The **Central Chamber And Main Entrance** Of The Pre-existing Structure Are Part Of The Existing Structure. According To The Report, The Pre-existing Temple Had One Big Central Chamber And At Least One Chamber To The North, South, East, And West, Respectively.
- The Report Noted That Pillars From The Pre-existing Temple Were Reused To Make Cellars In The Eastern Part Of The Platform Cellars And The Platform Were Constructed In Front Of The Mosque To Accommodating A Large Number Of People For Prayers.

