

Varanasi Court Allows Worship Of Hindu Deities In Gyanvapi Mosque Basement

Why In The News?

- District Judge Ajaya Krishna Vishvesha On Wednesday Allowed Regular Worship Of **Shringar Gauri** And Other **Hindu Deities** In The **Southern Cellar Of Varanasi's Gyanvapi Masjid** By A Family Of Priests That Used To Perform Rituals There Prior To 1993.
- The Judge Directed The District Magistrate To Make Proper Arrangements, Including Erecting An Iron Fence, **Within 7 Days** So That Temple Trust Can Resume Daily Worship. **Anjuman Intizamia Masajid (AIM)**, Custodian Of Gyanvapi, Said It Would Challenge The Order In Allahabad High Court.



What Do We Know?

- The Case Is Distinct From **The Shringar Gauri Litigation** Initiated By Five Hindu Women, Seeking The Right To Unhindered Daily Worship Of The Deity And Other Idols Within The Gyanvapi Compound.
- Shailendra Vyas's Plea States That His Maternal Grandfather, Somnath Vyas, Would Worship Shringar Gauri And Other Hindu Deities In The Southern Cellar Until Dec 1993, When The Then State Administration Barred Entry Into What Purportedly Used To Be Known As "**Vyasji Ka Tehkhana**".

- Vyasji Ka Tehkhana Is Located In The **Southern Area Of The Mosque's Barricaded Complex**, Facing The Nandi Statue Placed Inside The Kashi Vishwanath Complex Near The Sanctum Sanctorum. The Tehkhana Has A Height Of Around 7 Feet And Carpet Area Of Around 900 Square Feet.



- Subhash Chaturvedi, The Lawyer Of The Petitioner Shailendra Pathak Vyas, Said That The Vyas Family Had Been Conducting Prayers And Other Rituals Inside The Tehkhana For More Than 200 Years, But **The Practice Was Stopped In December 1993.**
- He Said That The **Tehkhana Is Located Between The Nandi Statue And The Wazukhana Of The Mosque**, Where Hindu Petitioners Have Alleged That A Shivling Was Found During A Court Mandated Video-graphic Survey In 2022.

Why Was Worship Barred Here?

- On December 4, 1993, **Mulayam Singh Yadav** Of The Samajwadi Party Formed The Government In Up, Ending One Year Of President's Rule, Imposed After The Kalyan Singh Government Was Dismissed In **The Wake Of The Babri Mosque Demolition In Ayodhya In 1992.**
- "The Mulayam Singh Yadav Government Prohibited Worship Inside The Vyasji Ka Tehkhana **In The Name Of Law And Order.** Before That, Pandit Somnath Vyas Had Carried Out Hindi Worship Rituals Here Regularly," Chaturvedi Said.