

Bhojshala Dispute

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In news– The Madhya Pradesh High Court has issued notices to the Centre, state government of Madhya Pradesh and Archaeological Survey of India over the disputed site of the Bhojshala-Kamal Maula mosque recently.

What is the issue?

- On 2nd May 2022, a public interest litigation (PIL) was filed by an organisation Hindu Front for Justice, challenging the ASI order of April 7, 2003, imposing restriction on Hindus to worship at Bhojshala daily.
- Finding the PIL “comprehensive”, a division bench of justices Vivek Rusia and Amarnath Keshwarwani issued notices to the ASI, Centre and the state government seeking response on the plea, said Harishankar Jain, the lawyer representing the petitioner.
- The Indore bench of the high court also issued notices to Maulana Kamaluddin Welfare Society, which is associated with a mosque situated in the Bhojshala premises.
- The petition has claimed “ Only the members of the Hindu community have a fundamental right under Article 25 of the Constitution of India to perform puja (prayers) and rituals at the place of Goddess Vagdevi/ Saraswati within the premises of ‘Saraswati Sadan’, commonly known as ‘Bhojshala’ situated in Dhar,”
- The PIL also urged the court to direct the Centre to bring back the idol of Goddess Saraswati from the London Museum in the United Kingdom and re-establish the same within the Bhojshala complex.

About Bhojshala-

- It is an historic building located in Dhar, Madhya Pradesh, India.

- **Its name is derived from the celebrated king Bhoja of the Paramāra** dynasty of central India.
- It is **an ASI protected 11th century monument**, which **Hindus claim is a temple of Vagdevi (Goddess Saraswati)**, while the **Muslim community treats it as Kamal Maula Mosque**.
- The term *Bhojashala* became linked to the building in the early 20th century; the architectural parts of the structure itself date mainly to the 12th century, with the Islamic tombs in the campus added between the 14th and 15th century
- As per the arrangement made by the ASI on April 7, 2003, Hindus perform puja in the premises every Tuesday, while Muslims offer namaz in the complex on Fridays.
- According to a petition filed in the High Court the then rulers of Dhar had installed the holy statue at Bhojshala in 1034 AD and it was taken to London in 1857 by the British.

King Bhoja-

- Bhoja popularly known as Raja Bhoj Parmar (reigned c. 1010–1055 CE) was an Indian King from the Paramara dynasty.
- His kingdom was centered around the Malwa region in central India, where his capital Dhara-nagara (modern Dhar) was located.
- His empire extended from Chittor in the north to upper Konkan in the south, and from the Sabarmati River in the west to Vidisha in the east.
- Bhoja is best known as a patron of arts, literature, and sciences. He hailed from the present-day Uttar Pradesh.
- The establishment of the Bhoj Shala, a centre for Sanskrit studies, is attributed to him.
- He is also said to have constructed a large number of Shiva temples, although Bhojeshwar Temple in Bhojpur (a city founded by him) is the only surviving temple that

can be ascribed to him with certainty.