

Qutub Minar

May 26, 2022

In news- The Delhi court reserved its order for June 9 on pleas seeking to restore the right to worship for Hindus and Jains at the Quwwat-Ul-Islam mosque in the Qutub Minar's premises. However, the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has stated in the court that 'Qutub Minar was not a place of worship, nor could it be revived as one under the laws of the land'.

About Qutub Minar-

- The Qutub Minar is a minaret and "victory tower" that forms part of the Qutub complex, which **lies at the site of Delhi's oldest fortified city, Lal Kot**, founded by the Tomar Rajputs.
- It was begun after the Quwwat-ul-Islam Mosque, which was started around **1192 by Qutb-ud-din Aibak**, first ruler of the Delhi Sultanate **but got completed in around 1220 by his son-in-law Iltutmish**.
- It is the earliest extant – mosque built by the Delhi Sultans and consists of a rectangular courtyard enclosed by cloisters, erected with the carved columns and architectural members of 27 Jain and Hindu temples, which were demolished by Aibak as recorded in his inscription.
- The **mosque was enlarged by Iltutmish and Ala-ud-Din Khalji**.
- The Iron Pillar in the courtyard bears an inscription in Sanskrit in Brahmi script of fourth century A.D., according to which the pillar was set up as a Vishnu Dhvaj (standard of god Vishnu) on the hill known as Vishnupada in memory of a mighty king named Chandra.
- The Qutub Minar is **named after Khwaja Qutbuddin Bakhtiar Kaki a 13th-century sufi saint**, as Shamsuddin Iltutmish

was his devotee.

- This victory tower is a symbol of the synthesis of traditional Islamic architecture and Southwestern Asian design.
- The minaret is unique in that historically, these tower minarets were uncommon in South Asian-Islamic design until the 17th century.
- Persian-Arabic and Nagari in different sections of the Qutb Minar reveal the history of its construction and the **later restorations and repairs by Firoz Shah Tughluq (1351–88)**.
- In 1505, an earthquake damaged Qutub Minar and it was **repaired by Sikander Lodi**.
- The Qutb Minar consists of five stories of **red and grey sandstone**.
- On 1 September 1803, a major earthquake caused serious damage and **Major Robert Smith of the British Indian Army renovated the tower in 1828** and installed a pillared cupola over the fifth storey, creating a sixth.
- The height of Qutb Minar is 72.5 meters, making it the **tallest minaret in the world built of bricks**.
- The whole tower contains a spiral staircase of 379 steps.
- It was **added to the list of World Heritage Sites by UNESCO** in 1993.