

**CHDM filed an RTI request
at the Dept. of Archaeology
regarding stolen/missing
artefacts at the President's
House, the Presidential
Secretariat, and
Temple Trees**



CHDM requested the following information:



- 1. Who is the legal custodian of the artefacts/items at each of the aforementioned properties?**
- 2. What records do the Department of Archaeology hold about each artefact/item at the aforementioned properties?**
- 3. When was an inventory/listing of artefacts/items of significant value at the aforementioned properties first drawn up?**
- 4. Was the provenance, acquisition, condition, custodial history and other relevant descriptive elements of each artefact/item recorded in the inventory/listing?**

5. Which international standards do the Department of Archaeology adhere to with respect to documenting 'object information' in its inventories/listings?

6. Between 1978 and the present day, how many times and on which dates has the Department of Archaeology inspected the artefacts/items located at the aforementioned properties and (re)confirmed the inventory/listing?

7. If the current inventory/listing is out-of-date or incomplete, how will the Department of Archaeology be able to accurately confirm the loss or theft of artefacts/items?

8. Prior to July 9, 2022, have any instances of theft and/or loss of artefacts/items been reported at the aforementioned properties and if so, when did they occur?

9. Please provide CHDM with a copy of the latest version of the inventory/listing of artefacts/items of significant value at the aforementioned properties.

10. If the Department of Archaeology was allegedly obstructed from carrying out its duties in relation to the management of the artefacts/items of significant value, please release all correspondence with the relevant authorities who took the decision, intentionally or unintentionally, to obstruct the Department of Archaeology.

11. If no correspondence is available in relation to request number 10 (above), please identify the relevant authorities (institution, position and name) at the aforementioned properties liaising with the Department of Archaeology on the management of the artefacts/items of significant value.

12. Please provide CHDM with a copy of the Department of Archaeology's preservation policy in relation to artefacts/items of significant value.

13. Please provide CHDM with a copy of the Department of Archaeology's security policy in relation to artefacts/items of significant value.

14. Please provide CHDM with a copy of the Department of Archaeology's disaster management policy in relation to artefacts/items of significant value.

15. Please provide CHDM with any information on insurance policies taken out in relation to artefacts/items of significant value at the aforementioned properties.

16. Please provide CHDM with any information on previous appraisals of artefacts/items of significant value at the aforementioned properties.

17. Please provide CHDM a copy of the guidelines or standard operating procedures for investigations conducted by the Department of Archaeology in relation to the loss, theft or malicious destruction of artefacts/items of significant value.

18. Given the response of the security forces to protect each of the aforementioned properties, did the officers of the Department of Archaeology attempt to intervene to protect artefacts/items of significant value either prior to or after July 9, 2022?

19. If the officers of the Department of Archaeology attempted to intervene to protect artefacts/items of significant value either prior to or after July 9, 2022, please release any information directly pertaining to the decisions made and actions taken.

20. Did the Department of Archaeology direct and ask for assistance from the Police and/or relevant security agencies to protect and secure artefacts/items of significant value at the aforementioned properties prior to or after July 9, 2022? If so, please provide CHDM with a copy of all relevant correspondence regarding this matter.

The Ministry of Cultural Affairs,
copied in the RTI request, has
responded by directing the Dept. of
Archaeology to respond to CHDM's
request



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புத்தஸாஸன மத மற்றும் கலாஸ்சார அலுவல்கள் அமைஸ்சு
Ministry of Buddhasasana Religious and Cultural Affairs
காஸ்திரிக ஶுஸ்திரி அஸ்திராஸு தேஸிய மரபுரிஸைகள் பரிஸு National Heritage Division

ஸுஸ்திரி அஸ்திராஸு) BRC/MH/DEV/GENARAL/03
எஸ்திராஸு இஸ)
My No.)

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உஸ்திராஸு இஸ)
Your No.)

தேஸ) 10.08.2022
திரகதி)
Date)

Director General
Department of Archaeology
Colombo 07

Request for information on the management of artifacts/items located at the president's house, presidential secretariat, and temple trees

This refers to the letter No CHDM/CORR/RTI/01 dated 03.08.2022 regarding the above Subject.

Therefore, I kindly request you to respond to the above matter and send the information to Anoja P.Guruge, Additional Secretary of the Ministry of Buddhasasana, Religious and Cultural Affairs. (8th floor, Sethsiripaya Battaramulla)

Your prompt response will be highly appreciated.

As an institution that works across the archives, museum and education spaces, CHDM takes an interventionary approach to issues of public interest that impact the 'heritage', memory and information landscapes in Sri Lanka.