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Title: Need to demarcate Sisupalgarh site near Bhubaneswar and protect it from encroachment.

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SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB (CUTTACK): The issue of demarcation of Sisupalgarh situated near Bhubaneswar has been lying pending since long. The Sisupalgarh was declared a Centrally Protected Area by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) while the agricultural land situated within this area was converted for residential purposes surreptitiously. Accordingly, a number of residential houses have been constructed therein. The ASI has issued only a notification during 2001 restricting construction in this area and termed such constructions as illegal/unauthorised and has left it at that. Thereafter, the demarcation of Sisupalgarh has not been completed by the joint Committee comprising officials of the ASI, Bhubaneswar Development Authority and Revenue Department so far. There is a 16 Pillars Hall (Solah Khamba) inside the fort complex that precedes the Parthenon Temple that was constructed in 432 BC on the Athenian Acropolis, Greece. This Solah Khamba Hall was constructed before the famous Kalinga War of Ashoka. Dhauli has been developed to a Buddhist Pilgrim Centre but Sisupalgarh has been neglected. I, therefore, urge the Government to take urgent steps to protect such an important heritage site from encroachment by land sharks.