Ayodhya Case Verdict

Why in news?

- The Supreme Court (SC) delivered the verdict in the politically-sensitive Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid land dispute case.

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What primarily is the dispute?

- The Hindus had maintained that the mosque was built atop a temple that Mughal emperor Babar's men had demolished.
- They claimed the site was the birthplace of Ram, the most worshipped deity of the Hindus.
- The three main litigants in the case are the Nirmohi Akhara sect, the Sunni Wakf Board and the Ramlalla Virajman.
- The Nirmohi Akhara is a religious denomination that had sought directions to construct a Ram temple on the disputed land in Ayodhya.
- It wanted the management rights of the premises to be given to it.
- Ram Lalla (or the infant Ram) is represented by the Hindu Mahasabha.
- It wanted the entire land to be handed over to them, with no part going to Muslim parties or the Nirmohi Akhara.
- The Sunni Wakf Board is that which looks after religious properties.
- It had demanded that the Babri Masjid be restored to the form that existed before it was demolished by the Hindu groups.
- [The 16th century Babri Masjid was demolished by a Hindu mob on December 6, 1992.]
- Fourteen appeals had been filed before the Supreme Court against a 2010 Allahabad high court judgment.
- The HC had said that the disputed 2.77 acres should be equally divided among the three litigants.

What are the key observations of the Supreme Court?

- SC says it will be inappropriate for it to play the role of theologian and interpret Hadees.
- [Hadees/Hadith is a record of the traditions or sayings of the Prophet

Muhammad.

- It is revered and received as a major source of religious law and moral guidance, second only to the authority of the Quran]
- SC holds that Nirmohi Akhara is not the shebait [Shebait is that person who serves the deity, consecrated in the temple as a Devata]
- SC also says Ramjanmabhoomi is not a juristic person.
- SC says that the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) report leads to conclusion that Babri mosque was not constructed on vacant land.
- [There was underlying structure and it was not Islamic in nature. Artefacts recovered have a distinct non-Islamic nature.]
- With this, Supreme Court upholds the view that there was a 12th-century structure.
- The SC observed that faith was a matter of individual believer.
- It thus held that the faith of the Hindus in Lord Ram could not be disputed.
- However, a judgement cannot be decided on faith and beliefs, and it is decided on evidence.
- In this case, no evidence has come on record to rule out the belief of Hindus in the place.
- SC notes that there were places of birth identified in close proximity to the disputed land.
- The existence of Sita Rasoi, Ram Chabutra and Bhandar Grih are the testimony of the religious fact of the place.
- Extensive nature of Hindus worshipping at outer courtyard at site has also been there.
- Balance of probabilities show Hindus continued to worship uninterrupted in outer courtyard despite putting up brick wall at site.
- Nevertheless, SC accepts the HC view that Hindu idols were placed inside the central dome of Babri Masjid on Dec 22-23, 1949 night.

What is the ruling?

- SC gave a unanimous judgment on the Ayodhya dispute.
- It granted the entire 2.77 acre of disputed land in Ayodhya to deity Ram Lalla.
- The Centre will have to frame scheme under which it will constitute a trust within 3 months and hand over inner and outer court to trust.
- Nirmohi Akhara should be granted representation in trust to be constituted by Government.
- Muslims were unable to prove that they were in exclusive possession of inner courtyard.
- SC says there should be alternate land given to Muslims to make good their loss of a mosque.

- Sunni Wakf Board is to be granted 5 acres land in “suitable, prominent place in Ayodhya”.

Source: Indian Express, Livemint

