

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CULTURE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1816
ANSWERED ON:04.08.2005
IDOL OF NATRAJ
Ahir Shri Hansraj Gangaram

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether ancient idol of Natraj stolen from Baadoli Temple of Chhittorgarh, Rajasthan has been found in London;
- (b) if so, the steps taken by the Government to bring back this antique; and
- (c) the measures being taken by the Government to check the increasing incidents of theft of ancient heritage idols ?

Answer

MINISTER FOR INFORMATION & BROADCASTING AND CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY)

- (a) Yes Sir, as reported by Rajasthan Police, ancient idol of Natraj stolen from Baadoli Temple of Chhittorgarh, Rajasthan has been found in London.
- (b) The present owner of the idol has been requested to hand over the idol to the Indian Embassy. The Indian High Commissioner has also been requested to take over possession of the same and arrange its transportation to India.
- (c) In order to ensure the security and protection of the ancient sculptures, idols and artifacts, watch and ward staff have been deployed at centrally protected monuments, archaeological sites and museums. The security has been further supplemented by engagement of private security guards and the state police. The Government is also considering the amendment of the Antiquities and Art Treasures Act 1972 to firmly deal with illicit traffic in antiquities.