

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2061
ANSWERED ON:10.03.2010
EXTINCTION OF TRIBAL LANGUAGES IN A & N ISLANDS
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Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether several tribal languages in Andaman & Nicobar (A&N) Islands have already become extinct/are in the process of being extinction;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and
- (c) the steps being taken by the Government to protect tribals and their languages in A&N Islands?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SMT. D. PURANDESWARI)

(a) & (b) The languages spoken in A&N Islands are: - The Great Andamanese, Onge, Jarawas, Sentenelese, Shompen and Nicobarese. All the languages except the Great Andamanese are not endangered. The Great Andamanese is a composite community of remnant population of ten groups which lived in the same area. The population which was 625 in 1901 is reduced to 50 today and the depletion is attributed to the epidemics and involvement of the settlers with the tribes of the Islands before India attained independence.

(c) In order to preserve the tribal people and their languages from extinction, 'Andaman Commissioned Project' is being implemented by UT administration of A&N Islands in collaboration with the Central Institute of Indian Languages at Mysore. As part of this collaborative efforts; Primers, Pictorial Glossaries, handbook, teaching learning aids etc have been prepared in various languages of A&N Islands. Moreover, orientation courses for the benefit of teachers and social functionaries regarding the use of these publications have been conducted.