

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CULTURE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4806
ANSWERED ON:08.12.2010
SURVEY OF ANTHROPOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA
Jaiswal Dr. Sanjay

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether a team of scientists from Anthropological Survey of India has recently analysed the mitochondrial –DNA based phylogeny of Indian population to discover that many tribes and castes across the country have a Most Recent Common Ancestor (MRCA);
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the plan of the Government to substantiate the findings with a larger set of data and further analyses; and
- (c) the steps being taken by the Government to publicize those findings and use it to promote wider community peace and harmony, particularly in the conflict regions of the country?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR PLANNING AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI V.NARAYANSWAMY)

- (a) Yes, sir. Scientists in the Anthropological Survey of India (AnSI) have been studying mitochondrial DNA of various tribal communities in India for the past five years. In humans, mitochondrial DNA has 16569 base pairs which is always inherited maternally. Most of the tribal communities in India have mitochondrial DNA lineage "M" and its sub-lineages which are more specific to the Indian sub-continent, indicative of common ancestry.
- (b) The Survey has studied and analysed mitochondrial DNA from a total of 2,783 individuals, collected from Scheduled Tribe populations across the country. The Survey has an ongoing National Project "DNA Polymorphism of the Contemporary Indian Populations Phylogeny Studies" to study a larger set of tribal and caste populations across the country to construct the maternal phylogeny and prehistoric population movements of human beings in the Indian sub-continent.
- (c) The survey has already published the results of these findings in the National and International Journals of India and abroad. Besides, the results have been disseminated through Exhibitions and Popular lectures organized in different parts of the country from time to time. An exhibition on " Human Origins Genome and people of India" was first organized at Delhi in March 2004 and since then it has been moved to different parts of the country. These ongoing activities of An.SI have provided scientific information regarding people of India for the general public as well as for the academic community