

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1589
ANSWERED ON:30.11.2011
PLAY STAGED ON LORD GANESHA
Patil Shri A.T. Nana

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Lord Ganesha has been depicted in a objectionable manner in a play staged in Australia;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has registered its concern with the Government of Australia keeping in view the faith of crores of Hindus in the country; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS(SMT. PRENEET KAUR)

(a) & (b) The play "Ganesh versus The Third Reich" was staged in the Melbourne Festival starting from 29 September 2011. Certain aspects of the depiction of Lord Ganesha in the promotional material and descriptions of the play had raised concern and apprehensions within the community in Australia.

(c) & (d) Prior to the staging of the play, the Consul General of India in Melbourne (Australia) had a meeting with the producer of the play to convey these concerns. Thereafter, a meeting was also held on September 28, 2011 with participation of the representatives from the community, the organizers of the play and relevant representatives of Australian Government agencies. At the meeting, 'Back to Back' Theatre company, which developed the work expressed regret at the inadvertent harm or offence caused through the perceived depiction of Lord Ganesh in the play. The producer thereafter addressed the concerns of the community. A joint statement was issued after the meeting by the Victoria Multicultural Commission.