

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HOME AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:141

ANSWERED ON:13.03.2012

EXPLOITATION OF JARAWA TRIBALS

Ahir Shri Hansraj Gangaram;Bhagat Shri Sudarshan;Botcha Lakshmi Smt. Jhansi;Shekhar Shri Neeraj;Singh Shri Yashvir

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether incidents of taking obscene photographs and shooting film of semi-naked Jarawa tribal women in return for food and money by foreign tourists with the connivance of local authorities have been reported in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has conducted any inquiry in this regard;
- (d) if so, the details and outcome thereof alongwith the accused arrested and the action taken against them; and
- (e) the measures taken by the Government to check such activities in future?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN)

(a) & (b): Some footage of Jarawa tribal women appeared in the electronic media in the month of January, 2012 based on the report in the "Observer" newspaper of UK. Another such video footage appeared in the electronic media on 5th February, 2012. In these video clips the tribal women were seen in their traditional attire.

(c) & (d): On the basis of the first video footage of the Jarawa tribal women shown in the electronic media on 11.01.2012, an FIR has been filed by Andaman & Nicobar Administration under section 292 IPC read with section 67 IT act, 2000, section 3(1) (iii) of SC & ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 and section 7/8 of A&N Islands (Protection of Aboriginal Tribes) Regulation, 1956. After interrogation two persons were arrested and sent to judicial remand.

In connection with the second video telecast in the national and international media and news channels showing the Jarawa girls dancing on the Andaman Trunk road, a case vide crime No. 17/12 under section 292/34 IPC read with section 67 of IT Act, section 3(1) (iii) and (x) of SC & ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 and sections 7/8 of PAT Regulation, 1956 was registered on 6.2.2012. On close scrutiny of the video clipping, it was revealed that the person in the khaki uniform appearing in the video was a police constable. He has been arrested and placed under suspension for dereliction in the discharge of his duties. A departmental enquiry has also been initiated against him.

(e): Andaman and Nicobar Administration has taken following measures to check such activities in future:

i) The number of convoys has been reduced from 8 to 4 on each side on the Andaman Trunk road which passes through the Jarawa Reserve.

ii) An officer has been designated as Nodal Officer Incharge to monitor all the activities on day to day basis on the Andaman Trunk Road passing through the Jarawa Reserve.

iii) Notice has been issued to the general public and tour operators that immediate action will be taken against violators.

iv) The staff of Tribal Welfare Department and Andaman Adim Janjati Vikas Samiti (AAJVS) posted in the Jarawa Tribal Reserve has been asked to be extra cautious and keep vigil on the convoys passing through the Jarawa Reserve. Police has also provided better surveillance and escorts on the convoys to regulate any illegal activities.

v) To regulate the traffic on Andaman Trunk road passing through the Jarawa Reserve, UT Administration has issued an order that all Government vehicles proceeding to North & Middle Andaman from Port Blair and vice versa will cross through the Jarawa Reserved Area only if the vehicle is going for official visit alongwith the Officer and the movement of vehicles will be in the regular convoy.

vi) Provisions to book for photography/videography in the Tribal Reserve has been included in the proposed amendment to the A&N (PAT) Regulations 1956.

vii) Action has been initiated for opening an alternate sea route to Baratang.