

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CULTURE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3316
ANSWERED ON:09.12.2009
SMUGGLING OF INDIAN ARTIFACTS
Adhalrao Patil Shri Shivaji

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has proposed to amend the Antiquities and Art Treasures Act, 1972;
- (b) if so the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (c) the steps taken by the Government in this regard;
- (d) whether the Government has taken up the matter with other countries where the Indian artifacts have been smuggled;
- (e) if so, the outcome thereof; and
- (f) the steps taken by the Government to impose ban on sale/purchase of items of archaeological importance in private sector?

Answer

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

(a) to (c) Yes, Sir. With the growth of International market of art and artifacts, the global problem of the smuggling of antiquities has increased over the years. Consequently the task of law enforcing agency in preventing illicit trafficking in such objects has become much more difficult. To overcome these inadequacies and to make AAT ACT, 1972 more effective/stringent in preventing the illicit trafficking of cultural properties some amendments have been proposed.

To formulate the amendments, an Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) was constituted in 1997 under the chairmanship of DG, ASI, which included members from the concerned ministries and departments, of Revenue Intelligence, Customs, Central Bureau of Investigation.

A Bill incorporating the proposed amendments by the IMC was considered and approved by the Cabinet on 18-12-2003 but before it could be introduced in Parliament, the Lok Sabha got dissolved, A new Bill is now under preparation taking into consideration some latest suggestions and inputs received.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

(f) License is granted under section 5 of AAT ACT, 1972 by the designated license officer of ASI. In order to streamline the genuine sale and purchase of antiquity it is restricted to licensee dealers. Whenever auction take place the auctioneer has to provide the details of antiquities sold to individual and also register the antiquities falling under the purview of the Act.