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Title: Reported physical assault on minor girls in Kanker and Balod districts of Chhattisgarh.

SHRIMATI INGRID MCLEOD (NOMINATED): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for giving me this opportunity to speak on an urgent issue of horrible and rampant sexual abuse of minor tribal girls in tribal ashrams of Chhattisgarh. The Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh had awarded Mrs. Anita Thakur, who was the Chief Warden of a tribal girls ashram in Amadula, Dondi in Balod District of Chhattisgarh. The same Government was compelled to arrest Mrs. Anita Thakur on charges of abetting sexual abuse of poor, hapless, minor girls in the ashram. In an earlier incident, the teachers of a Government-run school were visiting a girls ashram in Jhaliyamari village of Kanker District of Chhattisgarh. They were visiting the ashram during the night on the pretext of giving tuition. They along with a guard of the ashram sexually abused twenty minor girls in the ashram over the period of one year.

The Ashram has 43 minor girls packed in a space of 600 sq. ft. with no toilets. There are about 30-40 such reported incidents in the last one month alone in Chhattisgarh. No minor girl is safe in Chhattisgarh and because of the repeated sexual abuse on minor girls, the parents are now afraid of sending their children to any ashram or school. The Jhaliyamari incident is being hushed up by the Chhattisgarh Government; the Collector did not allow any female public representative to meet the minor girls; but according to the Media reports the male Ministers of the Chhattisgarh Government were meeting the minor girls and the parents, to terrifying them into hushing up the matter. I therefore request the hon. Minister of Home Affairs and the hon. Minister of Tribal Affairs to take immediate action and investigate the matter, since the ashrams are being run by the Central funds.