

Title: The Minister of Home Affairs laid a statement on 'Bhandara Rape Incident in Maharashtra'.

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SHINDE): I am deeply shocked at the despicable, ghastly and brutal manner in which three minor girls from the same family were brutally raped and murdered and then thrown into an abandoned well near Murwadi village, Lakhani Police Station, Bhandara District of Maharashtra. I am sure that the collective conscience of all the members of the House would be equally revolted to know about this horrendous incident.

2. We have since received a report from the Maharashtra State Government. From the report, it appears that the grandfather of the victims had complained that his three grand-daughters aged 11 years, 9 years and 6 years respectively were not traceable since they left school on the morning of 14th February. A missing person case was registered at Lakhani Police Station, Bhandara District at 22:25 hours. The police officers and men intensified patrolling in the police station area on the 15th and 16th February to trace the missing girls. On the 16th February, at 17:20 hours, a local farmer nearby called the police station and informed that bodies of three girls were found floating in the well in his farm. After an inquest by the Taluka Magistrate, Lakhani a post-mortem was conducted by a team of five doctors and is reported that all three deceased girls had been subjected to sexual abuse and murdered before throwing them into the well.

3. The police have registered an FIR, vide CR No. 40/2013 u/s 302, 376, 201 IPC (Criminal Law Amendment Ordinance 2013) read with u/s 4, 6 of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012. The SP Bhandara, Dr. Arati Singh and Senior Officers visited the area and the investigation is ongoing. The State Government has reported that the in-charge of the police station was suspended on 19th February as he did not deal with the complainant promptly and professionally. Teams from Maharashtra Police have been formed to pursue different lines of investigation and to track the offenders.