

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HOME AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:285
ANSWERED ON:21.02.2006
PROTECTION OF MAHAL LANGUAGE
Koya Dr. P. Pookunhi

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the language (Mother tongue) commonly spoken by the people of Minicoy Island in the UT of Lakshadweep;
- (b) the steps taken/being taken by the Government to ensure the protection and growth of Mahal language which is a minority language in this country;
- (c) whether the Government has any proposal to establish a center for research and development of this language;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI S. REGUPATHY)

- (a): The language commonly spoken by the people of Minicoy Island in the Union Territory of Lakshadweep is Mahal.
- (b): The steps taken/being taken by the Government for protection and growth of Mahal language are as under:
 - (i) It is taught as first language upto standard IV in Government schools of Minicoy;
 - (ii) Mahal Translators are appointed under the Lakshadweep Administration;
 - (iii) Mahal Programmes are relayed through All India Radio at Kavaratti and Calicut;
 - (iv) Lakshadweep Times, the Official Newspaper of Lakshadweep, is printed in Mahal for Minicoy;
 - (v) A book on Mahal language throwing light on history, language and literature has been planned;
 - (vi) Mahal television channel from Maldives is made available in Minicoy; and
 - (vii) Mahal cultural dance forms like Bandhiya and Lava are taught to school children and are also encouraged in other Islands
- (c) to (e): There is no proposal to establish a center for research and development of this language. The above mentioned steps to protect and promote the language are considered adequate for the present.