

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CULTURE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2341
ANSWERED ON:17.03.2005
THEFT FROM MUSEUMS
Patel Shri Kishanbhai Vestabhai

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether a standing Ganesha and Brahma with his consort were stolen from Open Sky Museum, Patan;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether any inquiry has been conducted by the Government in this regard;
- (d) if so, the outcome thereof and the action taken against the persons found involved therein;
- (e) whether such type of cases are increasing day by day in various parts of the country;
- (f) if so, the details of the cases reported during 2004-05; and
- (g) the steps taken by the Government to stop recurrence of such incidents ?

Answer

MINISTER FOR INFORMATION & BROADCASTING AND CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY)

(a) to (d): Yes, Sir. A four armed standing image of Ganesha made in sandstone and a four armed image of Bramha seated in a Lalitasan with his consort datable 11th Century were stolen from Sahastarlinga Talab, Open Sky Museum, Patan. The Monument attendants on duty were found guilty in the departmental inquiry and departmental action was taken. An FIR was lodged with the local police and enforcement authorities have been requested to take necessary steps to recover the stolen antiquities.

(e) to (g): One sculpture named 'Buddha Head (Sarnath)' was found missing from the Archaeological Gallery of Indian Museum, Kolkata on 29th December, 2004. The matter has been referred to the Kolkata Police for investigation. The Ministry has reviewed from time to time the security arrangements of all the museums and passed necessary directions. The Government has also constituted a Security Committee to look into the issues related to Museum Security, which has members from CISF and IB. The mandate of the committee is to review the existing policy, identify critical gaps, and to recommend minimum standard for Museum Security measures that are at par with International Standard.

A variety of factors which includes inadequate police cover in remote area, inability to provide watch and ward staff in each monument and poor communication facilities have resulted in such thefts. Armed guards, in addition to private security, have been deployed at selected centrally protected monuments and sites to avert the recurrence of such incidents.