

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1029

TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 27TH DECEMBER, 2017/ PAUSHA 6, 1939 (SAKA)

POPULATION OF SENTINELESE IN THE ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS

1029. SHRI PARTAP SINGH BAJWA:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

- (a) the exact population of the Sentinelese people in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands;
- (b) whether there has been any incident in the last three years where there have been attacks on the Sentinelese people;
- (c) if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the steps taken by Government for the welfare of the Sentinelese community?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS
(SHRI HANSRAJ GANGARAM AHIR)

- (a) No survey of Sentinelese Tribe has been carried out in North Sentinel Island and therefore the exact population of Sentinelese People cannot be ascertained.
- (b) & (c) There has been no report of any incident of attack on Sentinelese people during the last three years.
- (d) The steps taken by the Government for the welfare of Sentinelese community are annexed.

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (d) OF RAJYA SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1029 ASKED BY SHRI PARTAP SINGH BAJWA FOR ANSWER ON 27.12.2017.

- (i)** The Andaman and Nicobar Islands (Protection of Aboriginal Tribes) Regulation, 1956 has been promulgated by the President of India by Clause (2) of Article 243 of the Constitution of India for providing protection of the interest of the socially and economically backward aboriginal tribes including the Sentinelese in Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- (ii)** The UT of Andaman & Nicobar Islands Administration has also notified the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Protection of Atrocities) Act, 1989 and the Rules made there under for protection of Scheduled Tribes including the Sentinelese against any atrocities from the outsiders.
- (iii)** The entire North Sentinel Island ad-measuring 59.67 Sq. Km including the coastal sea extending up to 5 Kms. from the high water mark has been declared as Tribal Reserve under the Andaman and Nicobar Islands (Protection of Aboriginal Tribes) Regulation, 1956.
- (iv)** The Sentinelese enjoys unfettered rights over the resources available in their reserve area for their sustenance and entry into Sentinelese Tribal Reserve by non tribals and others are strictly prohibited.
- (v)** The Sentinelese are still in the primordial stage of hunting and gathering and the land and sea based resources are adequate to sustain the small population inhabiting in the island.
- (vi)** The Sentinelese still professes active hostility towards outsiders and, therefore, the community is safe from alien diseases and other affects due to contact without any intervention of the Union Territory Administration.
- (vii)** To ensure the protection and wellbeing of the community, the UT Administration has put in place an institutional mechanism to keep a close watch over the territory through air/sea surveillance with the help of Indian Coast Guard/ Indian Navy/ Police Marine Force of A & N Police.
- (viii)** The UT Administration also undertakes periodical circumnavigation of Sentinel Island by a team of experts comprising of Anthropologists and personnel drawn from the Departments like Forest, Health, Andaman Adim Janjati Vikas Samiti (AAJVS), Tribal Welfare for overseeing the protection and wellbeing of the Sentinelese.
- (ix)** The Administration in the year 1976 has setup an autonomous body called AAJVS registered under Society Registration Act 1861, which is fully funded by the UT Administration and meant for the protection, development and wellbeing of the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) including Sentinelese. The Executive Council of AAJVS is headed by the Chief Secretary and the Governing Body by the Lt. Governor for implementation and overseeing the protection, development and wellbeing of the PVTGs of A&N Islands.