

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**  
**MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS**  
**RAJYA SABHA**  
**QUESTION NO 16.03.2011**  
**ANSWERED ON**  
**BOMB BLASTS IN VARANASI**

293

Shri Satyavrat Chaturvedi

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether it is a fact that terrorists carried out serial blasts at Sheetla Ghat, Varanasi on 7 December, 2010, which left 27 injured;
- (b) whether it is also a fact that in the year 2006 the Ministry had asked Uttar Pradesh Government to ensure fool-proof security arrangements, including CCTV, at Ganga Ghat and other Ghats of Varanasi;
- (c) whether it is also a fact that metal detector was not functional there and three live bombs were also found; and
- (d) if so, steps being taken by Government to provide appropriate security to countrymen?

**ANSWER**

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS

(SHRI GURUDAS KAMAT)

(a) to (d):A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (d) OF THE RAJYA SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 293 FOR 16.03.2011

(a) :Yes Sir, It is a fact that a low intensity bomb explosion took place at Sheetla Ghat, Varanasi on 07.12.2010, in which two persons died (a girl and a women) and thirty seven were injured.

(b) :As Law and Order is a State subject, the security of religious places etc. is the responsibility of the State Governments. The Government of India, issues advisories to State Governments/UT Administrations from time to time, conveying the threat inputs received from Central Security Agencies. Advisories were issued on March 8, April 3 and August 4, 2006 (besides others) to the State Government of Uttar Pradesh to maintain a strict vigil in all the sensitive/hyper sensitive districts and to ensure adequate Police deployment for security. In particular, on 11.09.2006, MHA had written to the State Government of Uttar Pradesh requesting them to strengthen the security arrangements for religious places in Uttar Pradesh including installation of more CCTVs for effective crowd monitoring in places like Kashi Vishwanath Temple-Gyanvapi Mosque Complex in Varanasi. Further, intelligence alerts were also issued sensitizing UP Police about the plan of Indian Mujahideen/LeT to inter alia target religious congregation, busy markets, railway stations, shopping malls and places of entertainment. In particular, alerts of 15.2.2010 & 25.2.2010 drew the attention of State Government to religious Ghats being targetted. A fresh advisory was issued on 05.12.2010 alerting the State Government to the possibility of acts of terror being attempted on 06.12.2010 by disruptive/terrorist elements in public places that attract large gatherings. All the State Governments have been asked to play a proactive role to ensure fool-proof security of religious places/places of pilgrimage/holy destinations to prevent any violent attack which has the potential to snowball into country-wide large break down of Law and Order on communal lines. The State Governments have also been requested to set-up State Level Security Committees (SLSCs) to draft and implement security plan, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) etc. for places of religious importance. They have also been asked to submit half-yearly report on the implementation of the recommendation of the SLSCs.

(c) :As reported by the State Government, the metal detector was functioning and no live bombs were found.

(d) : The measures which have been taken in order to strengthen the counter terrorism capabilities of the States include establishment of NSG Hubs at Chennai, Hyderabad and Mumbai, tighter immigration control etc. Most of the States / UTs have also set up Quick Response Team (QRT). Further, the multi-Agency Centre has been strengthened and reorganized to enable it to function 24X7 basis for real time collation and sharing of intelligence with other intelligence agencies. Security intelligence inputs are also shared with the concerned States/UTs through the established mechanism, which ensures close coordination and sharing of

intelligence and seamless flow of information between the States and the Central Security and law enforcement agency. This has resulted in busting of terrorist modules and a number of possible terrorism attacks have been averted. In addition, the Central Government is supplementing the efforts of States through various measures such as deployment of additional Central Security Forces for carrying out intensive counter insurgency operations and providing security for vulnerable installations and projects, based on threat assessment, sharing of intelligence, financial assistance for strengthening of the local Police Forces and intelligence under the Police modernization scheme, assistance for strengthening various aspects of security apparatus and other aspects of anti-militancy operations by way of reimbursement of Security Related Expenditure, raising of additional Forces in the form of India Reserve Battalions, etc. The Central Government is maintaining close and continuous coordination with the State Government on security related matters.