

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CULTURE
RAJYA SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO-68
ANSWERED ON- 08/02/2024

REDUCING ILLICIT TRAFFICKING OF CULTURAL PROPERTY

68. Shri K.R. Suresh Reddy:

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:-

- (a) whether Government has taken necessary steps to reduce illicit trafficking of cultural property by 2030, regulate online trading platforms and raise public awareness about restitution laws and conventions;
- (b) if so, the details thereof, and if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (c) the efforts made/being made by Government to protect and restore cultural property?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE, TOURISM AND DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION

(SHRI G. KISHAN REDDY)

- (a) to (c): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement referred to in reply to parts (a) to (c) in respect of Rajya Sabha Starred Question No. 68 for reply on 08.02.2024 regarding Reducing Illicit Trafficking Of Cultural Property asked by Shri K.R. Suresh Reddy:

(a) & (b): Yes, Sir. Government is committed to reduce illicit trafficking of antiquities. Whenever theft of an antiquity is reported, FIR is lodged in concerned police station and 'Look Out Notice' is issued to law enforcement agencies including Custom Exit Channels to keep vigil to trace stolen antiquity and prevent its illegal export. In case, antiquity is traced, case is pursued by concerned law enforcement agency in coordination with the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) for its recovery. Section 3 of the Antiquities and Art Treasure Act, 1972 prevents export of antiquities outside India.

Licensing Officers have been appointed/ deputed by Archaeological Survey of India, as per provisions of AAT, Act, 1972 to regulate the business of antiquities within the country. Government organizes awareness programmes, workshops, seminar and exhibitions on specific occasions, to create awareness about conventions and retrieval of antiquities.

(c): Government is committed to bring back the antiquities of Indian origin which were taken away from India. For retrieval of antiquities Archaeological Survey of India takes up the matter with the Indian Embassies/Missions abroad through MEA. Archaeological Survey of India has retrieved 357 antiquities from foreign countries from the year 1976 to till date, of which 344 have been retrieved since 2014.
