

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CULTURE
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3713
TO BE ANSWERED ON 03.04.2025

**CULTURAL DIPLOMACY FOR GLOBAL BRANDING AS PART OF VIKSHIT
BHARAT**

3713. Smt. Sangeeta Yadav:

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) the initiatives undertaken by the Government to position India as a global cultural and spiritual hub in line with the Viksit Bharat 2047 goal;
- (b) whether the Government is working on branding India's heritage and soft power through cultural diplomacy; and
- (c) if so, the details of partnerships with foreign institutions and organizations in this regard?
- (d) Whether the Ministry is actively collaborating with other Ministries in areas such as tourism, external affairs, etc. towards achieving the same and
- (e) if so the Ministry-wise details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF CULTURE AND TOURISM
(SHRI GAJENDRA SINGH SHEKHAWAT)

(a) to (b) Ministry of Culture implements "Global Engagement Scheme" to promote India's rich cultural heritage internationally and enhance India's global image.

The key Scheme objective include strengthening cultural ties with foreign nations, promoting bilateral cultural contacts, projecting India's cultural identity on the world stage and encouraging inbound tourism.

The Global Engagement Scheme is administered through Indian Missions abroad to achieve its objective through following components:

I) Festival of India:

The artists practicing Indian art forms, are given opportunity to perform abroad under the banner of 'Festival of India'. The artists from diverse cultural fields such as Folk Art including Folk Music, Folk Dance, Folk Theatre & Puppetry, Classical and Traditional

Dance, Experimental/Contemporary Dance, Classical/Semi Classical Music, Theatre etc. perform in the 'Festivals of India' abroad.

II) Grant in aid to Indo Foreign Friendship Cultural Societies:

Grant in aid is released to Indo Foreign Friendship Cultural Societies actively functioning in foreign countries through our Indian Missions with the object of fostering closer friendship and cultural contacts between India and foreign country concerned.

The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), an autonomous organization under Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), promotes Indian culture worldwide through Missions / Posts and its Cultural Centres abroad. Activities conducted by them include *inter-alia*, teaching of Yoga, Dance, Music (vocal and instrumental), Sanskrit and Hindi; organising/supporting Conferences/ Seminars/ Workshops in different fields of Indian culture; supporting Chairs of Indian Studies in foreign universities; gifting of busts/statues of Mahatma Gandhi and other national icons, exchanging visual arts exhibitions, celebrating International Day of Yoga and Indian festivals, hosting visitors under various Visitors Programmes (Academic/ Distinguished / Important/ Gen.Next Democracy Network); and sponsoring scholarships to foreign students under different scholarship schemes. ICCR has also concluded MoUs with various State Governments to promote their culture abroad and to facilitate cultural exchanges with foreign countries. ICCR also hosts incoming foreign cultural troupes to enable Indians to discover various foreign cultures.

In addition to this, India actively engages in multilateral platforms all over the world to collaborate with other nations on a range of global issues and strengthen its position on the world stage. Since 2020 India engaged in following activities to showcase and promote Indian culture.

- During India's BRICS Presidency Ministry of Culture hosted BRICS Culture Senior Officers' Meeting and VI BRICS Culture Ministers' Meeting virtually in July 2021;
- During India's Presidency of Shanghai Cooperation Organization(SCO) Ministry of Culture hosted the Conference on Shared Buddhist Heritage of SCO Member States under India's presidency in March, 2023.

- Ministry of Culture hosted the 20th SCO Culture Ministers' Meeting under India's presidency in April, 2023.
- Ministry of Culture hosted the 1st India-Central Asia Culture Ministers Meeting (CMM) in April 2023 to enhance bilateral cultural relations;
- During India's G20 Presidency, Ministry of Culture hosted G20 Culture Working Group Meeting (CWG) & Culture Minister's Meeting (CMM) in 2023 in Khajuraho, Bhubaneswar, Hampi and Varanasi;

The G20 Culture Working Group came out with an Outcome Document titled the 'Kashi Culture Pathway' which advocated for advancing "culture as a standalone goal" in the post-2030 development agenda. This was further unanimously endorsed in the New Delhi Leaders' Declaration marked a historic milestone.

Various collaborative international cultural projects were undertaken by Ministry of Culture to showcase Indian culture to the participants from G20 countries- Four Global Thematic Webinars; Exhibitions - Re(ad)dress: Return of Treasures in Khajuraho; Sustain: The Craft Idiom, in Bhubaneswar; Woven Narratives, in Hampi; G20 Art Project - Together We Art; G20 Anthology of Poetry - Under the Same Sky and Culture Unites All Campaign; G20 Orchestra- Sur Vasudha. The Exhibitions G20 Digital Museum (Culture Corridor) and Exhibition- Routes and Roots were organized on the sidelines of G20 Leaders Summit in New Delhi.

(c) India is member state of United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and is a part of several important cultural conventions of UNESCO such as 1972 Convention on World Heritage, 2003 Convention for Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN), Memory of the World (MOW) Programme. India is also a member of Inter Governmental Organizations like International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM), World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) among others.

(d) and (e) The Ministry of Culture interacts with the Ministry of Tourism and Ministry of External Affairs to leverage the power of India's Culture and Heritage as a driver of tourism, economic development and soft power.
