

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CULTURE
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3233
TO BE ANSWERED ON 21.08.2025
PROMOTION OF INDIAN MUSIC

3233. Smt. Mausam B Noor:

Will the Minister of Culture be pleased to state:

- (a) whether any initiatives are undertaken to promote Indian Music in international forums, festivals or exchanges under Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), World Audio Visual and Entertainment Summit (WAVES) or other platforms;
- (b) if so, details of the support extended to independent and emerging musicians participating in such programmes; and
- (c) whether any efforts are being made to include Indian Music?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF CULTURE AND TOURISM
(SHRI GAJENDRA SINGH SHEKHAWAT)

(a) to (c) : The Ministry of Culture implements the Global Engagement Scheme to promote India's rich cultural heritage internationally and to enhance India's image abroad. Under the Scheme, Festivals of India (FoI) are organized in different countries to foster people-to-people contact and strengthen bilateral cultural relations. These festivals showcase a wide range of Indian art forms including Classical and Semi-Classical Music, Folk Music, Folk Dance, Folk Theatre and Puppetry, Classical and Traditional Dance, Contemporary/Experimental Dance, and Theatre.

During the period 2013–14 to 2023–24, a total of 62 Festivals of India were held in different countries with the participation of 2,348 artists, including folk artists. The Ministry has empaneled 627 artists/groups across various art forms, from which selections are made for

deputation to FoI events abroad. Under the Scheme, folk artists are paid performance fees at the rate of ₹35,000/- for the leader/main artist and ₹7,000/- for accompanying artists. In addition, the Ministry extends grant-in-aid to Indo-Foreign Friendship Cultural Societies, enabling them to organize cultural programmes and activities abroad for promoting Indian culture.

The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), an autonomous organization under the Ministry of External Affairs, also deputes cultural groups and artists, including musicians, to perform abroad. Such requests, received from Indian Embassies/Missions overseas, are met by ICCR from its panel of empaneled artists. Selections are made in consultation with the concerned Embassies, host organizations and Governments.

Further, under the WAVES initiative of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, the Create in India Challenge (CIC) has been instituted to identify, mentor and showcase emerging musical talent. Under CIC – Season 1, initiatives such as *Battle of the Bands*, *Symphony of India*, *Wah Ustaad* and *Resonate: The EDM Challenge* were undertaken, providing opportunities for emerging artists to perform on global platforms. These efforts were complemented by the WAVES Cultural Concerts organized in Mumbai in 2025, which featured Indian music alongside international acts, highlighting India's classical, folk, contemporary and fusion traditions.

Independent and emerging musicians have also been supported through mentorship and performance opportunities on platforms such as WAVES and Doordarshan. The South Central Zone Cultural Centre (SCZCC), Nagpur, an autonomous organization under the Ministry of Culture, participated in WAVES 2025 by deputing 569 folk artists for a choreographed performance. An expenditure of ₹129.28 lakh was incurred on this participation.

Through these sustained initiatives, the Ministry of Culture, in collaboration with partner institutions, continues to project India's cultural heritage and musical traditions globally, thereby strengthening cultural diplomacy and contributing to the growth of India's creative economy.
