

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
(MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS)
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 5524
TO BE ANSWERED ON 02.04.2018

TRADITIONAL WISDOM OF TRIBALS

5524: DR. A. SAMPATH:
SHRI J.J.T. NATTERJEE:

Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government acknowledges the traditional wisdom such as handicrafting or other such skills, sports, indigenous knowledge of herbal medicines etc., prevailing among the tribal communities in India and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government has any proposal to integrate traditional wisdom with educational methods to empower tribal students of the country and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether for the progress of the tribal community, there is a dire need of educational bodies that blend well with the tribal background and lifestyle and if so, the details thereof, and
- (d) if so, the initiatives taken/proposed to be taken by the Government in this direction?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS
(SHRI JASWANTSINH BHABHOR)

(a) to (d): The traditional wisdom is an integral part of tribal cultural heritage. Ministry of Tribal Affairs is committed to preserve, protect and promote the rich tribal heritage including art & artefacts, handicraft, sports, tribal medicines, traditional medicinal practices etc. Government supports Tribal Research Institutes (TRIs) established in State, to work as a body of knowledge & research more or less as a think tank for tribal development and to work towards preservation and dissemination of distinctiveness / uniqueness of tribal culture and their traditional knowledge. Funds are provided to TRIs under the Scheme 'Support to TRI' for various activities including construction of museum, library, language primers, research works, seminar/workshop, publication of books, development of documentaries, organisation of tribal festivals etc.

Funds are also provided to private institutions for carrying out research work on various tribal issue under the Scheme 'Tribal Festival, Research Information and Mass Education'. National level tribal festival / carnival is organized by the Ministry to showcase glimpses of rich cultural heritage of tribal people across the country through unique forms of folk dances, songs, cuisine, exhibition and demonstration of traditional skill in painting, art and craft, medicinal practices etc. Ministry of Tribal Affairs, in association with Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India Ltd.(TRIFED), organized a National Tribal Festival i.e 'Aadi Mahotsav' from 16th November, 2017 to 30th November, 2017. Almost 800 Artisans and Artists from 27 States participated in the Mahotsav and sold their products and displayed their crafts and skill.

The Ministry has developed a central digital tribal repository capturing the diverse socio-cultural characteristics of the entire spectrum of Scheduled Tribes. The repository contains digital photos, videos and literature related to tribal rituals, festivals, cloths, ornaments, music, dance forms, arts and crafts. The repository is available to the people across the world through a digital platform.

Even though there is no formal proposal to integrate traditional wisdom with educational methods with the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, this is being followed in tribal institutions of learning through emphasis on traditional cultural heritage. Ministry of Tribal Affairs has asked the State Governments to develop bilingual primers containing text both in regional and local tribal languages through Tribal Research Institutes (TRIs), which would help to integrate traditional wisdom with educational methods to empower tribal students. Further, advisories have been issued to the States for synchronizing school vacations with local tribal festival and harvest seasons.
