

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3006
TO BE ANSWERED ON 31.12.2018
EK BHARAT SHRESHTHA BHARAT

3006. DR. NARAMALLI SIVA PRASAD:

SHRI ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has launched 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat' scheme to promote cultural traditions, national integrity and cultural awareness among the citizens of the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof, including guidelines, objectives, salient features and budget allocated for the scheme;
- (c) whether States have expressed their interest in being part of the 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat' scheme;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the steps taken/being taken by the Government to bridge the cultural gap in the country and enhance interaction between people living in different States?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
(DR. SATYA PAL SINGH)

(a) to (e): Yes, Madam. The Government of India has launched an initiative Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat (EBSB) to foster national integration by a co-ordinated mutual engagement process between States, Union Territories, Central Ministries, Educational Institutions and general public through linguistic, literary, cultural, sports, tourism and other forms of people-to-people exchanges. The States/Union Territories have been grouped in 16 pairs. Detailed background of the scheme, its objectives, implementation strategy / methodology and the pairing

of the States/Union Territories are available in www.ekbharat.gov.in. No separate budget allocation has been made for this scheme.

States have expressed their keen interest in being part of the Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat scheme. They have signed MoUs with their paired States/ Union Territories and have been conducting various events covering a gamut of activities in the educational, cultural, geographical, social , tourism, sports, youth-related activities and sharing of best practices, encompassing a wide range of subjects under the programme with an integrative content relating to their paired States/Union Territories. Various States/UTs have organized more than hundred Cultural and Literal Exchange programmes involving the people and artists of the paired States, organized a large number of Food Festivals, programmes such as National Integration Day, Run for Unity, Hornbill Festival, Deepotsav Festival, Geeta Utsav, Bharat Parv, Art Yatra, Sadkal Gujarat, Kabir Festival, Gir Monsoon Festival, Bastar Mahotsav, Tawang Festival, Cherry Blossom Festival etc. More than 200 Higher Educational Institutions, more than 250 schools under CBSE, more than 100 Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas, more than 40 Sainik schools and schools under Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan have organized more than 1000 programmes under Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat. Ministry of Tourism has been organizing various Food festivals through Institutes of Hotel Management. It has also organized Bharat Parv and Paryatan Parv involving the various State Governments. Other Ministries like Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Ministry of Culture and Ministry of Railway have also been conducting a large number of programmes. Department of School Education & Literacy has initiated Bhasha Sangam, a celebration of Linguistic Diversity which marks the appreciation of the unique symphony of languages of our country from 20th November to 21st December, 2018.

A Group of Ministers headed by Minister of Human Resource Development periodically reviews the steps taken by the States/UTs and concerned Ministries/Departments to bridge the cultural gap in the country and enhance interaction between people living in different States.