

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1248
TO BE ANSWERED ON 11.02.2019**

EK BHARAT SHRESHTHA BHARAT

1248.SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI:

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

- (a) the date on which the 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat' scheme was launched by the Government;
- (b) the main idea behind launching the said scheme;
- (c) whether all the stake holders like Union Government/States educational institutions and general public are part of the scheme;
- (d) if so, whether all the States have shown interest and are participating actively in the scheme;
- (e) if so, the nature and number of activities held so far under the scheme in different States and total fund made available by the Union Government to States, educational institutions in conducting events; and
- (f) the steps taken/being taken by the Government in consultation with all the stakeholders to make the scheme widely acceptable?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

(Dr. SATYA PAL SINGH)

(a) to (f) 'The Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat (EBSB)' programme was announced by the Prime Minister on 31st October, 2015 during the RashtriyaEkta Divas on the occasion of birth anniversary of SardarVallabhbbhai Patel to promote engagement amongst the people of State/ UTs in the country so as to enhance mutual understanding and bonding between people of diverse cultures, thereby securing stronger unity & integrity of India. The Government of India had launched the Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat (EBSB) Scheme 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.

Nodal officers have been appointed in each participating Ministry/Department of Government of India as well as the States and Union Territories. States have responded keenly to the EBSB scheme. The States/Union Territories(UTs) have been grouped into 16 pairs and have signed MoUs with their

paired States/ UTs and have been conducting various events in the educational, cultural, geographical, social, tourism, sports, youth-related gamut of activities in an exchange mode. They also share best practices, encompassing a wide range of subjects under the programme with an integrative content relating to their paired States/UTs. Various States/UTs have organized more than a hundred Cultural and Literal Exchange programmes involving people and artistes of the paired States, organized a large number of Food Festivals, programmes such as National Integration Day, Run for Unity, Hornbill Festival, Kabir Festival, Gir Monsoon Festival, BastarMahotsav, Tawang Festival, Cherry Blossom Festival, Bathkamma festival and several joint celebrations of the festivals of their paired States. The joint activities by States and UTs have witnessed the participation of more than 3 lakh persons across the country.

The Department of Higher Education, through NFDC, got a video clip prepared where noted sand artist Padma Sri SudarsanPattnaik created the Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat theme through his sand art. More than 200 Higher Educational Institutions, above 250 schools under CBSE, more than 100 JawaharNavodayaVidyalayas and 40 plus Sainik schools and schools under KendriyaVidyalayaSangathan have organized more than 1000 or more programmes under EBSB where more than 2 lakh children participated. An important feature of the programme has been that students have been learning to speak the languages of their paired States in an interested manner, which promoted much mutual understanding. Numerous students exchanges have taken place between States of diverse cultures like J&K, Tamil Nadu, Punjab and Andhra Pradesh where groups of students mingled and learnt the language, folk arts, music and culinary aspects of the paired States.

Department of School Education & Literacy has initiated BhashaSangam, 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. Ministry of Tourism has organized Bharat Parv and ParyatanParv 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 Railways have also been conducting a large number of programmes. Ministry of I&B has been telecasting translated versions of films of one State in their paired States and also translation of several literary works. Details of the activities are available at www.ekbharat.gov.in. No separate budget allocation has been made for the Scheme. States/ UTs as well as Ministries/Departments concerned expend funds from their own budget.

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 make the Scheme widely acceptable by bridging the cultural gap in the country and enhancing interaction between people in different States.
