

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CULTURE
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 5806
ANSWERED ON 30/03/2026

**INITIATIVES FOR STRENGTHENING CULTURAL AND CIVILIZATIONAL TIES
WITH COUNTRIES**

5806. SHRI ARUN BHARTI:
SMT. SHAMBHAVI:
SHRI RAJESH VERMA:
DR. LATA WANKHEDE

Will the Minister of Culture be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has taken steps to strengthen cultural and civilizational ties through institutional and diplomatic initiatives with other countries and if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (b) the details of measures undertaken to promote preservation, digitization and dissemination of shared manuscripts, texts and heritage and if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether collaborative research, academic exchanges and cultural programmes are being promoted between the two countries and if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (d) the role of initiatives such as heritage documentation and international cooperation in promoting shared heritage; and
- (e) the expected impact of these initiatives on cultural diplomacy and global cultural engagement?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF CULTURE AND TOURISM
(SHRI GAJENDRA SINGH SHEKHAWAT)

(a) Ministry of Culture promotes Indian Arts and Culture globally for strengthening cultural ties with foreign countries through signing of Cultural Agreements, Cultural Exchange Programme, Memorandum of Understanding on Cultural Cooperation etc., Organization and participation in multilateral Cultural fora like G20, BRICS, SCO, SAARC etc. This Ministry also administered

Global Engagement Scheme under which Festivals of India abroad are organized and Grants in aid is given to Indo-Foreign Friendship Cultural Societies abroad through Indian Missions.

Further, Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), an organization under Ministry of external Affairs (MEA) also promotes Indian Culture worldwide through its Cultural Centres abroad.

(b) The Ministry of Culture, Government of India has launched “Gyan Bharatam” a national movement to rediscover, conserve, digitize, and share manuscripts in the National Digital Repository as living sources of knowledge for generations to come. The vision of this initiative is to safeguard and revitalize India’s Manuscript Heritage through systematic survey and documentation, scientific conservation, digitization, and publication, along with the creation of a national digital repository (NDR), ensuring its accessibility for research, education, and public engagement.

(c) ICCR undertake collaborative programmes with other countries. It deploys Chairs of Indian studies at the foreign universities in consultation with the Missions/ Posts abroad. These Chairs of Indian Studies promotes the study of Indian Civilization among foreign youth and foster a deeper appreciation of India’s cultural heritage while also forging global academic, intellectual and cultural links. During the last 3 years, ICCR has sponsored 210 cultural troupes in different art forms to various countries. ICCR grants more than 4000 scholarships under 21 different schemes to foreign students from 192 countries every year for Under-Graduate, Post-Graduate and Ph.D. level studies in India, including in Yoga and Ayurveda.

(d) The UNESCO Memory of the World Programme aims to preserve and promote documentary heritage of global significance, including manuscripts, archives, rare books, audio-visual materials and other records of historical value. It also encourages international cooperation and shared efforts in safeguarding such heritage, as reflected in recent India’s inscriptions such as the Bhagavad Gita and Natyashastra.

(e) The initiatives undertaken by Ministry of Culture and ICCR helps to promote mutual understanding strengthen bilateral ties with other countries and deepen global cultural engagement.
