

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.90
TO BE ANSWERED ON 24.02.2016**

ICCR

90. SHRI RAYAPATI SAMBASIVA RAO:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the functions of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR);**
- (b) the initiatives taken to improve cultural relations with neighbouring countries during the last three years, country-wise; and**
- (c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to encourage cultural programmes among these countries?**

ANSWER

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
[GEN. (DR) V. K. SINGH (RETD)]**

(a) Objective of ICCR is establishing, reviving and strengthening cultural relations and mutual understanding between India and other countries. Its functions include:

- Administering of scholarship schemes for overseas; Grant of scholarships to foreign students to learn Indian dance and music, Exchange of Exhibitions,**
- Organizing of and participation in international conferences and seminars,**
- Participating in major cultural festivals abroad, Organizing 'Festivals of India' abroad; Exchange of groups of performing artistes,**
- Maintain Distinguished Visitors Programme, under which eminent personalities from abroad are invited to India and Indian experts are sent abroad to deliver lectures on issues of mutual interest,**

- **Establish and maintain Chairs for Indian Studies in Universities abroad;**
- **Maintenance of Indian Cultural Centres abroad,**
- **Maintenance of a well-stocked library and the old Manuscripts; Awarding of Library Fellowships, Digitization of rare manuscripts,**
- **Presentation of books, audio-visual material, art objects and musical instruments to institutions abroad, and**
- **Execute MEA's projects and administer scholarships of behalf of MEA and Ministry of Ayush.**

(b) Several initiatives have been taken to improve cultural relations with neighbouring countries during the last three years. ICCR has its Culture Centres active in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, Myanmar, Nepal and Sri Lanka through which it executes cultural activities with these countries. India has signed Cultural Exchange Programmes (CEPs) with Bangladesh, China, Maldives and Myanmar. Under the CEPs both the countries have to jointly share the cost for activities related to culture promotion. In case of the neighbouring countries, ICCR has extended additional assistance in terms of providing local hospitality for outgoing cultural groups to these countries. Country-wise activities undertaken in last three years are annexed.

(c) The Indian Council for Cultural Relations endeavours to focus more on the neighbouring countries by way of enhancing its activities. More academic interactions with the prominent academic institutions and renowned scholars are proposed to be organized in the coming years. Special focus would be given to neighbouring countries during the celebration of International Day of Yoga 2016 and through programmes such as artists in residence and SAARC literature festival etc., subject to availability of funds.

ANNEXURE

Name of Country	Activities with neighbouring country	Year 2013-14	Year 2014-15	Year 2015-16
Afghanistan	Scholarship slots offered	1000	1000	1000
	Incoming Cultural Delegations	One group visited India	Three groups visited India	One group visited India
	Yoga related activities			International Day of Yoga 2015 was celebrated.
Bangladesh	Scholarship slots offered	232	232	232
	Incoming Cultural Delegations	Three groups visited India	Three groups visited India	One group visited India
	Exhibitions	One Exhibition display in Bhutan	Nil	Nil
	Chairs abroad	Two	Two	Two
	Indian Culture Centre	Continued regular teaching and other cultural activities in the field of Indian Music, Dance and Yoga by the Centre which was established in 2010	Continued regular teaching and other cultural activities in the field of Indian Music, Dance and Yoga by the Centre which was established in 2010	Continued regular teaching and other cultural activities in the field of Indian Music, Dance and Yoga by the Centre which was established in 2010. Celebration of International Day of Yoga 2015.
	Conferences & Seminars	One Conference organized in India	Nil	Nil
	Outgoing Cultural Delegations	Nil	Send Two groups for performance	
Bhutan	Scholarships	20	25	20
	Incoming Cultural Delegations	One group visited India	Three groups visited India	One group visited India
	Exhibitions	One Exhibition display in Bhutan	One Exhibition display in Bhutan	Nil
	Distinguished Visitors Programme	Two groups of Distinguished Visitor visited India	Nil	One group of Distinguished Visitor visited India
	Indian Culture Centre	Continued regular teaching and other cultural activities in the field of Indian Music, Dance and Yoga by the Centre which was established in 2010	Continued regular teaching and other cultural activities in the field of Indian Music, Dance and Yoga by the Centre which was established in 2010	Continued regular teaching and other cultural activities in the field of Indian Music, Dance and Yoga by the Centre which was established in 2010. Celebration of International Day of Yoga 2015.
	Conferences & Seminars	One Bhutan Festival organized in India	Nil	Two Bhutan Festival organized in India
	Outgoing Cultural Delegations	Send One group for performance	Send Six groups for performance	
China	Incoming Cultural Delegations	One group visited India	Nil	Two groups visited India
	Exhibitions	One Exhibition organized in India	One Exhibition organized in India	One Exhibition display in China
	Chairs abroad	Two	Five	Four

	Indian Culture Centre.	Continued regular teaching and other cultural activities in the field of Indian Music, Dance and Yoga by the Centre which was established in 2008	Continued regular teaching and other cultural activities in the field of Indian Music, Dance and Yoga by the Centre which was established in 2010	Continued regular teaching and other cultural activities in the field of Indian Music, Dance and Yoga by the Centre which was established in 2010. Collaborated with Yunnan Minzu University, Kunming, China to established India-China Yoga College and deputed two Assistant Professors of Yoga at the College. Celebration of International Day of Yoga 2015.
	Conferences & Seminars	Two visitors sponsored to attend Conferences in China	Nil	One visitor sponsored to attend Conferences in India
Maldives	Scholarship slots offer per annum	37	37	37
	Incoming Cultural Delegations	One group visited India	One group visited India	One group visited India
	Exhibitions	Nil	One Exhibition displayed in Maldives	Nil
	Indian Culture Centre.	Continued regular teaching and other cultural activities in the field of Indian Music, Dance and Yoga by the Centre which was established in 2011.	Continued regular teaching and other cultural activities in the field of Indian Music, Dance and Yoga by the Centre which was established in 2010	Continued regular teaching and other cultural activities in the field of Indian Music, Dance and Yoga by the Centre which was established in 2010. Celebration of International Day of Yoga 2015.
	Outgoing Cultural Delegations	Send One group for performance	Send One group for performance	
Myanmar	Scholarship slots offered per annum.	16	16	16
	Indian Culture Centre	Continued regular teaching and other cultural activities in the field of Indian Music, Dance and Yoga by the Centre which was established in 2010	Continued regular teaching and other cultural activities in the field of Indian Music, Dance and Yoga by the Centre which was established in 2010	Continued regular teaching and other cultural activities in the field of Indian Music, Dance and Yoga by the Centre which was established in 2010. Celebration of International Day of Yoga 2015.
Nepal	Scholarships	124 scholarship slots offered	139 scholarship slots offered	135 scholarship slots offered
	Incoming Cultural Delegations	One group visited India	Two groups visited India	Nil
	Exhibitions	Nil	One Exhibition display in Nepal	Nil

	Distinguished Visitors Programme	Nil	Nil	One group of Distinguished Visitor visited India
	Chairs abroad	One	Two	Nil
	Indian Culture Centre	Continued regular teaching and other cultural activities in the field of Indian Music, Dance and Yoga by the Centre which was established in 2007	Continued regular teaching and other cultural activities in the field of Indian Music, Dance and Yoga by the Centre which was established in 2010	Continued regular teaching and other cultural activities in the field of Indian Music, Dance and Yoga by the Centre which was established in 2010. Deputed Yoga Teacher at Indian Consulate in Birgunj, Nepal. Celebration of International Day of Yoga 2015.
	Conferences & Seminars	Nil	Nil	Council awarded a fellowship
	Outgoing Cultural Delegations	Send Two groups for performance	Send Five groups for performance	
Pakistan	Incoming Cultural Delegations	One group visited India	Three groups visited India	Nil
	Exhibitions	One Exhibition organized in India	Nil	Nil
Sri Lanka	Scholarships	168 scholarship slots offered	161 scholarship slots offered	154 scholarship slots offered
	Incoming Cultural Delegations	One group visited India	Two groups visited India	One group visited India
	Chairs abroad	Two	Two	Three
	Indian Culture Centre	Continued regular teaching and other cultural activities in the field of Indian Music, Dance and Yoga by the Centre which was established in 1988	Continued regular teaching and other cultural activities in the field of Indian Music, Dance and Yoga by the Centre which was established in 2010	Continued regular teaching and other cultural activities in the field of Indian Music, Dance and Yoga by the Centre which was established in 2010. Celebration of International Day of Yoga 2015.
	Conferences & Seminars	Sponsored one visit to participate in Regional Seminar	Nil	Sponsored one visit to participate in International Seminar
	Outgoing Cultural Delegations	Send One group for performance	Send Two groups for performance	
