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India and UK sign MOU to step up Cultural Cooperation over the next five years

ShShripadNaik highlights priorities of the new government including Conservation, digitisation and people to people contact among others

The Minister of State for Culture (Independent Charge) Shri ShripadNaik met Mr. SajidJaved, Secretary, Department of Culture, Media and Sport of United Kingdom(UK) in New Delhi today. The talks were cordial and constructive. The two Ministers signed a Memorandum of Understanding(MOU) on Cultural Cooperation which will form the bulwark of the India-UK cultural relations for the period 2014 to 2019. The agreement envisages collaboration in the field of museums, libraries, archaeology, performing arts, capacity building programs, skill development, joint publications, archives, cinematography and literature.

Shri ShripadNaik briefed Mr. SajidJaved on the priorities of the new Government. These include enhanced efforts for preservation of monuments, preservation of Buddhist heritage, infrastructure development at archaeological sites, enhanced people to people contact through Festivals of India abroad for projection of India's soft power diplomacy and promotion of tourism, improved records management in Government and the National Missions on Libraries and Manuscripts.

Shri ShripadNaik and Mr. SajidJaved identified future areas of collaboration between India and the UK. These include collaboration between Indian National Museum and British Museum, development of a conservation policy and applied conservation techniques & training, digitization and improved records management practices and conservation of built heritage. They agreed to work together for achievement of these common objectives in the coming months.

Mr. SajidJaved invited Shri ShripadNaik to visit London to take the collaboration forward. Prior to the Ministerial level meeting, senior officials of

India and UK met to firm up the roadmap for future collaboration. The Indian side was led by Secretary, M/o Culture, Shri Ravindra Singh and the UK side was led by Mr. Keith Nicol, Head of International Cultural Diplomacy in the Department of Culture,UK.

NB/PS