

International Cultural Relations

The Ministry of Culture aims at disseminating Indian art and culture in new territories and developing cultural relations between India and other countries of the world through signing of bilateral Cultural Agreements (CA)/Cultural Exchange Programmes (CEP), cultural cooperation on multilateral platforms through BRICS, SCO, G20, BIMSTEC, SAARC, ASEAN etc. The Ministry also administers a Global Engagement Scheme to organize Festival of India abroad and provide Grant-in-aid to Indo-Foreign Friendship Cultural Societies.

Global Engagement Scheme

(i) Festival of India Abroad: Festivals of India (Fol) abroad seek to promote India's rich cultural heritage and enhance India's image in the global arena in a concerted manner. The Festivals of India are organized with the aim of having a lasting impact on the people of the host country. Thus, they are tools of cultural diplomacy that project the soft power of India. The events included in Fols are Music, Dance, Theatre, Film Festival, Food Festival, Literary Festival, Folk Arts such as Mehendi Puppetry etc., Exhibitions of various disciplines, Lecture Demonstrations and Workshops etc. The main focus of Fol is to connect and enhance the perception of India in the minds of locals which should ultimately lead to more tangible results in terms of trade and commerce, tourism, medical tourism, Ayush, etc".

(ii) Grant-in aid to Indo-Foreign Friendship Cultural Societies: Indian culture is also promoted and strengthened in foreign countries through grant in aid. The aim is to promote Indian culture abroad, fostering closer friendship and cultural contacts between India and foreign country concerned. The grant supports Indo-Foreign Friendship Societies for holding programmes and activities such as discussions on Indian culture, history, civilization, holding of seminars on topics of intellectual pursuits, and great personalities, arranging performances of Indian troupes exhibition of books, classes/courses in yoga, Indian music/dance etc. The grant released is considered by the Expert Committee on the basis of availability of funds and nature of events to be organized by the Societies.

In financial year 2021-22, an amount of Rs. 707.52 lakhs (approx.) has been sanctioned to 34 Indian Missions abroad for 261 Cultural Societies as Grant in Aid under this component.

Significant Activities undertaken during 2022-23:

- A. Cultural Exchange Programmes have been signed in year 2022 with Turkmenistan, Panama, Denmark, Senegal, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Romania in the month of April, June and July, 2022 to strengthen bilateral cultural cooperation
- B. 7th BRICS Culture Ministers Meeting 2022 was hosted by China on 24th May, 2022 and the BRICS Senior Officials Meeting on 20th May, 2022 in virtual mode. The 7th BRICS Culture Ministers' Meeting was attended by Ms. Meenakshi Lekhi, the Hon'ble Minister of State for Culture and External Affairs.

The delegates from Culture Ministries of the Federative Republic of Brazil, the Russian Federation, the People's Republic of China and the Republic of South Africa participated in both meetings. The Ministers undertook discussion on the advancement and expansion of cultural activities amongst BRICS countries under the theme "Establishing a Cultural Paternership Featuring Inclusiveness and Mutual Learning among BRICS".





C. Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal, Hon'ble Minister of State for Culture participated in the 18th Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Culture Ministers Meeting held virtually on 18 August, 2021 under Chairship of Tajikistan.





D. Smt. Meenakshi Lekhi, Hon'ble Minister of State for Culture participated in G20 Culture Ministers Meeting on 30th July, 2021 hosted by Italian Republic through virtual mode.



