

## **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**

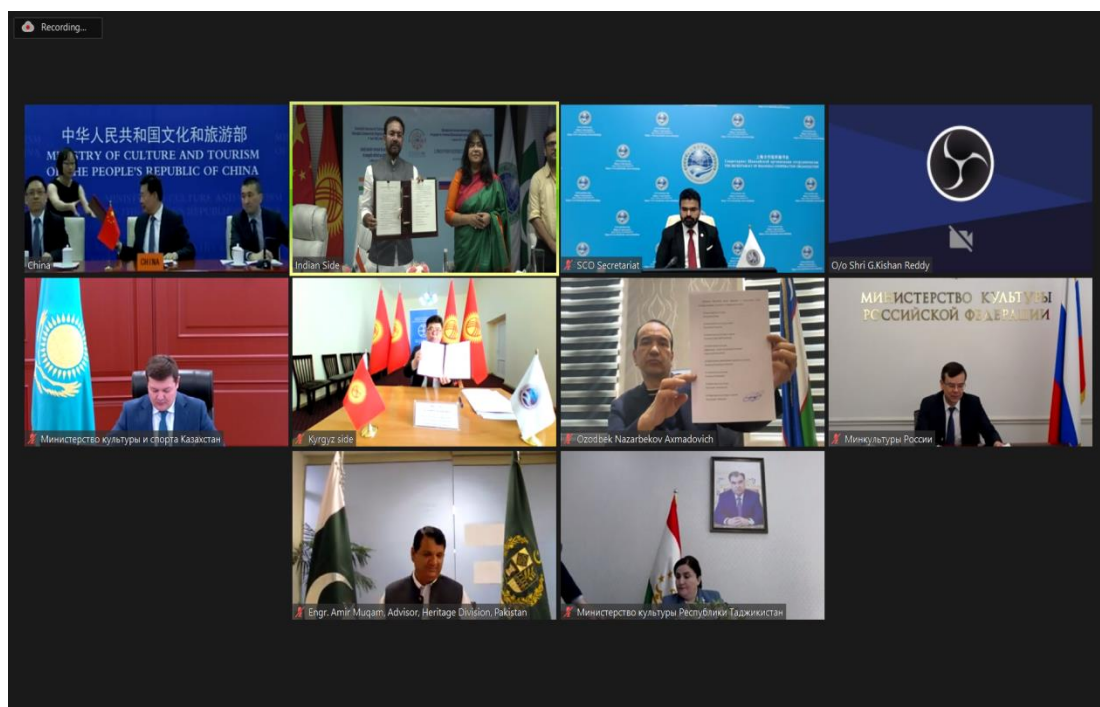
**(i) Festival of India Abroad:** Festivals of India (Fol) abroad seek to promote India's rich cultural heritage and enhance India's image in the global arena in a concerted manner. The Festivals of India are organized with the aim of having a lasting impact on the people of the host country. Thus, they 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 Mehandi 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.

## Significant Activities undertaken during 2023-24:

### Shanghai Cooperation Organization(SCO)

- During India's ongoing Chairship of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), Ministry of Culture hosted:
  - Culture Ministers' meeting under Chairmanship of Shri G. Kishan Reddy, Hon'ble Culture Minister on 3<sup>rd</sup> April, 2023 in virtual mode.



### G-20

- During India's ongoing G20 presidency, M/o Culture hosted:
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> G20 Culture Working Group meeting in Bhubanewar, Odisha from 15-17 May, 2023.  
<https://youtu.be/9TwpWGjG2Sw>
  - During India's ongoing G20 Presidency, M/o Culture in collaboration with Knowledge Partner, UNESCO hosted four (4) Global thematic webinars:
    - (i) "Protection and Restitution of Cultural Property" on 28<sup>th</sup> March, 2023
    - (ii) "Harnessing Living Heritage for a Sustainable Future" on 13<sup>th</sup> April, 2023.

- (iii) “Promotion of Cultural and Creative Industries and Creative Economy” on 19<sup>th</sup> April, 2023.
- (iv) “Leveraging Digital Technologies for the Protection and Promotion of Culture” on 20<sup>th</sup> April, 2023.

### **Cultural Exchange Programme**

- A Cultural Exchange Programme between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Colombia for the years 2023-2026 was signed on 26 April, 2023.
- A Cultural Exchange Programme between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt for a period of five years ( 2023-2027).

### **Other**

- India-Central Asia Culture Ministers’ Meeting (ICA-CMM) was hosted by M/o Culture under Chairmanship of Shri G. Kishan Reddy, Hon'ble Culture Minister on 3rd April 2023 in virtual mode.



- 25th Meeting of the India-Russia Joint Working Group on Culture was hosted by M/o Culture on 22.05.2023 in New Delhi. The meeting was Co-Chaired by Ms. Lily Pandeya, Joint Secretary (ICR) on Indian side and Mr. Pavel Kartashev, Acting Director of the Department of State Support of Art and Folk Art of the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation. After conclusion of discussions, the Protocol was signed by the Co-Chairs.

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