

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2499  
ANSWERED ON:24.11.2010  
CULTURAL RELATIONS WITH SOUTH EAST ASIAN COUNTRIES  
Adityanath Shri Yogi

**Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether the Government understands the need of strengthening cultural relations with South East Asian countries;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has taken steps for the preservation of cultural remains scattered across the South East Asian countries; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SMT. PRENEET KAUR)

(a) & (b): Yes. Government lays priority and emphasis to strengthen India's cultural relations with South East Asian countries. These include (i) Award of scholarships for nationals from these countries to pursue undergraduate, post-graduate, doctoral programmes etc. at Indian Universities/Institutions; (ii) sponsoring of incoming and outgoing performing delegations;(iii) organizing exhibitions in these countries; (iv) organizing conferences and seminars; (v) maintaining Indian Cultural Centres at Bangkok (Thailand), Jakarta, Bali (Sub- Centre) (Indonesia) and Kuala Lumpur.

Countries of South East Asia have deep and age old Cultural and Historical links with India. In order to further enhance this shared historical and cultural links, Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) has organized recently and has plans to organize more international conferences on Indology and Budhism.

ICCR also provides Scholarships to many students from South East Asian countries. Scholarship slots provided by ICCR to South East Asian countries are more than 140.

In order to enhance academic exchanges and people to people interaction. ICCR establishes India Chair abroad on India related subjects in prestigious and prominent universities abroad.

The ICCR has recently sponsored 21 cultural groups from folk and traditional/classical art forms of India to different South East Asian countries.

ICCR has also been organsing several exhibitions in South East Asian countries showcasing Indian art and cultural heritage and traditions through Photo and Painting Exhibitions.

(c) & (d): Yes. The Government of India through Archaeological Survey of India has undertaken the conservation works at Ta Prohm temple and Angkor Vat temple at Siem Reap, Cambodia and Wat Phou temple at Laos. Besides this, a team of experts have also visited Cham temples recently for assessing the scope of work in Vietnam. A team of experts will visit Myanmar later this year in connection with the Project on Conservation and restoration of Anand Temple, Bagan. Under financing from Ministry of External Affairs ICCR is also currently implementing a project in Cambodia to build Mekong Ganga Cooperation, Museum of Asian Traditional Textile.