

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1669
ANSWERED ON:10.08.2011
CULTURAL RELATIONS
Reddy Shri K. Jayasurya Prakash

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is improving the relations with each country with nomadic fairs and festivals and e-museums;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the allocations made and spent for this purpose during the last three years and the current year, year-wise and country-wise?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMED)

(a) & (b) Government arranges cultural festivals in various countries through the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), an autonomous cultural organization under the Ministry of External Affairs. While the ICCR does not specifically organize Nomadic fairs or festivals abroad, in last few years, an attempt has been made to include nomadic and tribal events as a part of Festivals/Years of India. During the last three years, the ICCR has sponsored the following nomadic type groups to perform during Indian Festivals abroad:

- (i) 13 Member Tribal Dance group led by Ms. Mallika Sarabhai performed in France during the Namaste France Festival in 2010.
- (ii) 12 Member Chhau group from Royal Chhau Akademi from West Bengal led by Shri Pranoy Singh Sardar to China in 2010.
- (iii) 10-member Mayur Bhanj Chhau Dance group "Dakshina Sahi Chhau Nritya Mandir", led by Shri Kartikeshwer Rana, Orissa to Trinidad and Tobago from 14 – 24 March, 2011.
- (iv) The ICCR sponsored Chhau Component in a Composite group led by Ms. Ranjana Gauhar to South Korea as part of the Festival of India in South Korea from 27th June – 4 July, 2011.
- (v) 18 Member Chinh group led by Ms. Meenakshi Rai to Canada for the participation in the Festival of India in 2011.

As regards e-museums, it is stated that although the museums under Ministry of Culture have their own websites, no such proposal of a collaborative e-museum with any other country has been undertaken so far.

- (c) The ICCR spent an amount of Rupees 50 lakhs (approximately) on the above groups in the financial year 2010-11.