

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3368  
ANSWERED ON:25.04.2012  
PROMOTION OF INDIAN CULTURE  
Choudhary Shri Bhudeo

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

- (a) whether the interest for knowing and studying Indian culture is developing at large in the universities of various countries including European countries;
- (b) if so, the steps being taken by the Union Government to further promote development of interest of foreign countries towards our country's culture;
- (c) the funds allocated for promotion and dissemination of Indian culture in the universities of other countries, during the last two years and till date; and
- (d) the details of the future plans to encourage the persons well acquainted and versed with Indian culture for upliftment and maintaining the dignity of Indian culture?

**Answer**

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

(a) Yes, there is increasing interest in universities in foreign countries in studying and understanding Indian culture, history and philosophy. This is reflected in growing number of requests from universities across Europe, Africa, Asia, the North America as well as the Latin America for Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) to establish Chairs for Indian studies in those universities. Compared to 43 Chairs which ICCR supported in 2009-10, the number has gone up to 93 in the year 2011-12 and there are 62 new proposals seeking ICCR's support.

(b) ICCR uses a number of mechanisms to promote interest in foreign countries towards Indian culture. These include, apart from Chairs, festivals of India abroad, performances by Indian cultural groups abroad even outside the festivals, Indian exhibitions both archival and contemporary on a large variety of subjects including religious diversity; archeological richness; modern India; contemporary paintings, installations etc.; seminars and conferences on India related civilizational themes; support to organizations abroad to promote Indian culture; encourage senior academics from abroad to undertake research in India on culture related subjects; and inviting prominent scholars from other countries to visit India for interactions with academics and universities in India. Expansion phase over the years 2009-10 and 2010-11 announced in the budget speech in the Parliament in 2008 had mandated ICCR to broaden India's cultural diplomacy through these activities.

(c) Expenditure on chairs, seminars, academic visitors, and fellowship programmes for last two years and till date is given below:

i Financial Year 2010-11 Rs. 12.21 Crores

ii Financial Year 2011-12 Rs. 16.54 Crores

iii Financial Year 2012-13 Rs. 14.54 Crores  
(Allocated Budget)

It may, however, be noted that universities are also involved in various other activities of ICCR such as Festivals, Performances and Exhibitions and therefore, total budget of ICCR would more broadly reflect the extent of ICCR's engagement with the Universities.

(d) To promote the dignity of Indian culture, ICCR proposes to further consolidate the achievements of expansion phase and establish more Chairs abroad for studies on India, invite established academics from other countries to visit India; organize more cultural events abroad and cultural collaborations with other countries; encourage high level research on Indian cultural themes etc.