

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CULTURE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3339
ANSWERED ON:09.12.2009
ACCESS TO CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS
Kalmadi Shri Suresh

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether national and foreign researchers have been allowed access to cultural institutions for independent studies;
- (b) if so, the details thereof, and the objectives behind allowing access to the said scholars;
- (c) whether any fellowships and facilities have been awarded to these scholars alongwith the terms under which they will carry out their research work;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether their research work will be confined only to manuscripts, documents, artifacts and paintings or allowed access to museums, libraries and other centres hitherto inaccessible to outsiders; and
- (f) if so, the criteria laid down in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR PLANNING & PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY)

a) & (b) Yes, Sir. A new scheme namely the "Scheme for Visiting Fellows in Art, Culture & Heritage" has been introduced from the current year under which Fellowships are to be awarded to Indian as well as foreign scholars, for undertaking research projects in the field of art, culture and heritage. The Scheme has been introduced with the objective of invigorating and revitalizing the various institutions supported by or under the Ministry of Culture. The scheme presently covers 17 institutions listed at Annexure. Each 'Fellow' selected under the Scheme will be attached to the institution concerned, as the objective of the Scheme is to provide such institutions with academic expertise, to induce academic orientation in their activities and to provide interaction with visiting academics from other institutions.

c) & (d) All possible infrastructural support would be provided to the Fellows by the institutions of their affiliation and they will have the benefit of access to national cultural institutions for study and research material. The scheme offers the best terms, emoluments and facilities in order to draw the best talent available from academic and research institutes, as well as to attract researchers with domain knowledge. Professors, for example, who come on 2 years' lien, would be fully compensated with pay allowances, HRA, etc. and would also be entitled to Rs.3.5 lakhs each year (for 2 years) by way of project assistance, in addition to the assistance that the cultural institutions would be extending to them. Retired academics or researchers, with established credentials, would be entitled to an honorarium of Rs.80,000 per month, in addition to other financial and logistic supports. Outstation Fellows would also be entitled to a 'settling-in allowance'.

e) & f) Yes, Sir. One important advantage of this scheme is that the selected 'Fellows' will have access to national institutions for study and research material for academic purposes. It is meant to encourage serious researches into our cultural resources so that the nation stands to benefit from the results. Museums, for instance, can hardly display more than a small percentage of their entire holdings and schemes like the one that has been introduced would encourage research, scholarship and analysis of the objects that are not usually available for public viewing or use. The scheme at present covers 17 of the 49 institutions or organizations under or supported by the Ministry and more can be covered subsequently. Scholars and researchers, who have sound academic or professional credentials, and have made significant contribution to knowledge in their respective field, or are persons with published creative work in any field of art or culture, are eligible.