

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1667
ANSWERED ON:03.12.2014
SCIENCE EXPRESS SPECIAL TRAIN
Chaudhary Shri P.P.

Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Science Express Biodiversity Special Train has been introduced in the country;
- (b) if so, the details and the objectives thereof along with the name of the cities being covered by the said train;
- (c) whether there is any proposal to cover the desert area in Rajasthan e.g. Jodhpur and Pali by the said train; and
- (d) if so, the details and the present status thereof?

Answer

MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER FOR EARTH SCIENCES (DR. HARSH VARDHAN)

(a) Yes, Madam.

(b) Madam, Science Express - Biodiversity Special (SEBS) is an innovative mobile exhibition mounted on a specially designed 16 coach AC train, travelling across India since June 5 2012. SEBS is a unique collaborative initiative of Department of Science & Technology (DST) and Ministry of Environment & Forests (MoEF), Government of India and Indian Railways.

Objective: Madam, the state-of-the-art exhibition aboard the SEBS aims to create awareness on biodiversity of India, climate change and similar issues among various sections of the society including school and college students, teachers as well as common man.

Of the 16 coaches of the SEBS, eight are solely dedicated to showcasing the myriad biodiversity spread across the bio-geographical zones of India. These include Trans- Himalaya and the Himalayas, the Gangetic Plain, North East India, the Desert and the Semi-Arid Zone, the Western Ghats, the Deccan Peninsula, the Coasts and the Islands. The exhibition also covers various other facets like marine, coastal, forest, microbial, agro-biodiversity and their linkage with livelihoods besides challenges of conservation. In rest of the rake, there is an exhibition on themes like Climate Change, Water, Sustainable Environment and Energy Conservation. In one coach, a Kids Zone has been created for kids, to indulge in fun-filled activities, games and puzzles in science, mathematics and environment. Further, the popular Joy of Science (JOS) Hands-on Lab is put up in another dedicated coach. In this mobile lab, students can perform various experiments and activities to understand concepts in environment and science in an interesting manner. SEBS halts at each station for 3-4 days and the team of well-qualified, trained and highly motivated Science Communicators travelling with the train explains and interprets the exhibition, answer queries, facilitate the visitors and conduct complementary activities. There is no entry fee and the exhibition is open to all. SEBS has been visited by over 60 lakh visitors at 148 halts till date, since its launch on 5 June 2012. More information is available on the website www.scienceexpress.in.

Madam, Science Express Biodiversity Special has covered the following cities during its run in all the three phases:-

SEBS Phase – I (5 June 2012 – 22 Dec 2012):

Delhi Safdarjung , Patna, Rangiya, Mariani, Dibrugarh, Dimapur, Kamakhya, Siliguri, Malda Town, Howrah, Dhanbad, Ranchi, Rourkela, Sambalpur, Cuttack, Berhampur, Visakhapatnam, Vijayawada, Nellore, Chennai Central, Kudal Nagar, Kanyakumari, Ernakulam, Kozhikode, Madgaon, Hubli, Bellary, Khadki, Mumbai CST, Habibganj, MadanMahal, Nagpur, Kazipet, Secunderabad, Sewagram, Durg, Bilaspur, Gaya, Gorakhpur Cantt., Lucknow, Haridwar, Chandigarh, Ambala Cantt., Udhampur, Ferozpur City, Bhatinda, Delhi Cantt., Durgapura Jaipur, Bhagat Ki kothi (Jodhpur), Barmer, Ahmedabad, Gandhinagar.

SEBS Phase – II (9 April 2013 – 28 Oct 2013)

Delhi Safdarjung, Pragati Maidan, Patiala, Jalandhar City, Verka, Pathankot, Bajalata (J&K), Amb Andura, Ambala Cantt., Haridwar, Bareilly, Azamgarh, Mughal Sarai, Bhagalpur, Katihar, Purnea, Bagdogra, Alipur Duar, Lumbding, New Tinsukia, Dimapur, New Bongaigaon, New Coochbehar, New Farrakka, Raniganj, Joichandi Pahar, Sini, Kharagpur, Balasore, Cuttack, Balangir, Kakinada, Tirupati, Chennai Central, Cuddalore Port, Tiruchirappally, Kudalnar, Trivendrum, Alapuzha, Coimbatore, Kozikhode, Kannur, Madgaon, Miraj, Maltekdi, Aurangabad, Valsad, Navsari, Vadodara, Ujjain, Kota, Daurai (Ajmer), Marwar, Abu Road, Linch

(Nr. Mehsana), Bhaktinagar (Rajkot), Junagadh, Bhavnagar, Adraj Moti (Nr. Gandhinagar), Gandhinagar Capital.

SEBS Phase – III (28 July 2014 – 6 Feb 2015)

Delhi Safdarjung, Kurukshetra, Ludhiana, Ramnagar (J&K), Bajalta, Tarn Taran, Roorkee, Meerut Cant., Najibabad, Lalkuan, Shahjahanpur, Unnao, Basti, Ghazipur City, Sonpur, Thakurganj, Fakiragram, Lumding, New Mal, Eklakhi, Barasat (Nr. Kolkata), Chakradharpur, Bilaspur, Katni Murwara, Saugor, Amravati, Kumhari, Titlagarh, Guntur, Dharmawaram, Whitefield, Jolapettai, Salem Town, Thanjavur, Erode, Thrissur, Kollam, Shoranur, Kasaragod, Dharwad, Karad, Khadki (Pune), Nasik Road, Ratlam, Chittorgarh, Sawai Madhopur, Hisar, Ratangarh, Lalgarh (Nr. Bikaner), Degana, Samdari, Ghandhidham, Wankaner, Dhrangadhra, Viramgam, Gandhinagar Capital.

(c) Yes Madam, the desert areas (including Jodhpur) are extensively covered by the Science Express Biodiversity Special exhibition train. However, Pali has not been touched so far.

(d) SEBS has so far visited the following cities in Rajasthan:-

Durgapura (Jaipur) :06 – 09 Dec 2012
Bhagat Ki Kothi (Jodhpur) :10 – 13 Dec 2012
Barmer :14 – 17 Dec 2012
Kota :03 – 06 Oct 2013
Daurai (Nr. Ajmer) :07 – 09 Oct 2013
Marwar :10 – 12 Oct 2013
Abu Road :13 – 16 Oct 2013

SEBS is scheduled to cover following cities in Rajasthan in the current phase:-

Chittourgarh :29 Dec 2014 to 1 Jan 2015
Sawai Madhopur :02 – 05 Jan 2015
Ratangarh :10 – 12 Jan 2015
Lalgarh (Nr. Bikaner) :13 & 15 Jan 2015
Degana :16 – 19 Jan 2015
Samdari :20 – 22 Jan 2015