

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:338
ANSWERED ON:13.08.2003
INDIA'S CULTURAL RELATIONS
ABDUL RASHID SHAHEEN;ANANTRAO GUDHE

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government have formulated any policy pertaining to India`s external cultural relations;
- (b) if so, the salient features of the said policy;
- (c) whether the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) has done outstanding work abroad;
- (d) if so, the details of the works undertaken during each of the last two years;
- (e) the details of the amount spent on the Council during the said period;
- (f) whether the Government have reviewed the expenses incurred by the Council; and
- (g) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH)

(a) to (d) A statement is placed on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN PARTS (a) to (g) OF THE REPLY TO LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.338 TO ANSWERED ON 30.07.2003 REGARDING INDIA`S CULTURAL RELATIONS.

India`s external cultural relations policy aims to depict the rich and diverse cultural heritage of India and strengthen cultural relations and mutual understanding with other countries. The Indian Council for Cultural Relations is the primary agency for implementing this policy for which it undertakes a wide range of activities such as exchange of cultural delegations and distinguished visitors, organisation of exhibitions, granting scholarships to foreign students, organising seminars and conferences of cultural significance etc.

Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) has been successful in implementing India`s external cultural relations policy. During 2001-2002 and 2002-2003, the Council sponsored the visit of 63 and 78 Indian performing artists/groups respectively to various countries. Many of these artists/groups also participated in major international events/festivals. To promote intellectual exchanges, the Council sponsored in 2001-2002 and 2002-2003 respectively the visit of 38 and 45 eminent Indians abroad so that they could give lectures and interact with their counterparts in other countries. Apart from mounting four major exhibitions in different countries, the Council also commissioned and sent busts/life size statues of important national leaders for installation at prominent places in different countries. To further its objectives, the Council also maintained fifteen cultural centres abroad.

The Council has spent an amount of Rs. 39.74 crores during 2001-2002 and Rs. 44.80 crores during 2002-2003.

The expenses of the Council are periodically reviewed by its Finance Committee, which includes the Finance Adviser of the Ministry of External Affairs. The expenses of the Council are also audited by the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India. Based on periodic reviews, the budgetary allocation for the ICCR has been increased to Rs. 54.50 crores for the year 2003-2004 from Rs. 42.00 crores in the year 2002-2003.