



# Dr Mahesh Sharma participates in 'Second Meeting of BRICS Culture Ministers' in Tianjin, China

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Dr. Mahesh Sharma, Minister of State (Independent charge) for Culture and Tourism has said that India attaches importance to its engagements with BRICS which has emerged as a valuable forum for consultation, coordination and cooperation on contemporary global issues of mutual interest and has helped promote mutual understanding. Addressing at the "Second Meeting of BRICS Culture Ministers" in Tianjin, China today, he said that India held the BRICS Chairmanship in 2016 and hosted the 8th BRICS Summit on 15-16 October, 2016 in Goa under the theme 'Building Responsive, Inclusive and Collective Solutions'. Each of the BRICS country possesses rich cultural heritage and traditions and we share goodwill, understanding, respect and interest for each other's cultural heritage. This respect and interest will in times to come contribute towards developing even stronger bonds of friendship, empathy and cooperation.

Dr Sharma said that India will work with China and other BRICS countries on Chair's priority areas, viz Global economic partnership, global governance, people-to-people exchanges, macroeconomic coordination, Agenda 2030, International peace and stability, open world economy, IMF reform, media, sports, education, traditional medicines, and exchanges among students and scholars and culture. India has bilateral cultural agreements and specific cultural exchange programmes with each of the BRICS countries. We have been showcasing our rich cultural heritage through Festivals of India organized in China and South Africa already. Preparations are afoot to organize a similar festival in Brazil in September this year and in Russia in the early next year.

The Minister said that today we are in the midst of a tremendous shift in the way of growth and modernization, but Libraries continue to play a central role in providing open and free access to information and ideas. As gateways to knowledge and culture, libraries play a fundamental role in society. The resources and services they offer, create opportunities for learning, support literacy and education, and help shape the new ideas and perspectives that are central to a creative and innovative society.

He said that the museum, as an institution tells the story of man the world over and how humanity has survived in its environment over the years. It houses things created by nature and by man and in our modern society, it houses the cultural soul of the nation. It holds the cultural wealth of the nation in trust for all generations and by its function and unique position, it has become the cultural conscience of the nation. The National Museum of India has since been organizing exhibitions overseas. Presently, an exhibition on "Across the Silk Road: Gupta Sculptures and their Chinese Counterparts during 400-700 AD" is on show in various Museums of China since September, 2016.

Dr Sharma said that under Cultural Mapping of India Scheme, a web portal has been developed for collection of online data from artistes for cultural mapping, which will serve as an artist repository. A sub scheme as a National Mission on Cultural Mapping and Roadmap with a Financial Outlay of Rs 469.40 crore for 2017-2018, 2018-2019 & 2019-2020 has been approved under the umbrella of "Kala Sanskriti! Vikas Yojna".

He said that he looks forward to ideas and initiatives to take forward cultural cooperation among BRICS countries through the BRICS Alliances and believes that today's meeting will be a game changer.

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**Sanjay Kumar/jk/Culture-01/06-07-2017**

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