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**Government to establish cross cultural linkages with 39 Indian Ocean Countries
under Project Mausam**

The Government has proposed to establish cross cultural linkages and to revive historic maritime cultural and economic ties under 'Project Mausam' with 39 Indian Ocean countries. The 39 countries include Bahrain, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Egypt, Iraq, Mauritius, Singapore, Thailand, Yemen, South Africa, Philippines, Pakistan among others.

Project 'Mausam' was launched in the 30th Session of World Heritage Committee meeting which was held at Doha, Qatar in June, 2014 and since then it has received positive response from countries such as China, UAE, Qatar, Myanmar, Iran and Vietnam. Archaeological Survey of India in collaboration with State Govt. of Kerala organized a National Conference on Project 'Mausam' in Kochi in November 2014. Indira Gandhi National Centre for Art (IGNCA) has constituted an Academic Committee and a temporary research unit in this regard.

The Government has formulated action plan for achieving a World Heritage transnational nomination for 'Indian Ocean Maritime Routes'. The Plan envisages joint initiative of India and various member states for implementation of UNESCO Cultural Conventions of World Heritage and Intangible culture. It further promotes joint research and selection of appropriate sites to prepare application of trans-national nomination of Maritime Routes & Coastal Cultural Landscape sites. The Standing Financial Committee (SFC) memorandum is under consideration.

This information was given by the Union Minister of State for Culture (Independent Charge), Tourism (Independent Charge), & Civil Aviation, Dr. Mahesh Sharma in reply to a question in the Parliament today.

NB/NK/PS