

Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat Scheme - Significance & Highlights [UPSC GS-II]

The “Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat” scheme launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Ekta Diwas (31st October 2015) on the occasion of birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel draws inspiration from the life of India’s freedom fighter.

The scheme was launched to celebrate the cultural vibrancy of India while establishing a strong mechanism to inculcate nationalism and cultural awareness among the citizens of our nation.

About Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat

- The scheme was launched to celebrate the cultural vibrancy of India while establishing a strong mechanism to inculcate nationalism and cultural awareness among the citizens of our nation
- Its primary objective is to strengthen cultural relations of various regions in the country and to encourage mutual connection between people residing in different states
- The scheme aims at celebrating unity in the diverse culture of the nation and to bolstering sentimental bonds among the people of different states
- Under it rich culture, heritage, customs and traditions of either State will be showcased for enabling people to understand and appreciate the diversity that is prevalent in India, thus fostering a sense of common identity among the citizens
- It aims at conducting various activities throughout the year under this campaign to strengthen sentiments for National Unity between the citizens of states and states governed by the union government

Background and Need of Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat Programme

India is a culturally rich country and identity by a rich history of cultural evolution. In an era of technology which has reduced geographical boundaries, it is important to establish cultural exchanges between people of different regions, as a means to further human bonding and a common approach to nation-building.

Thus, under the administration of Ministry of Human Resource Development, the Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat scheme has been introduced to encourage the people of India to learn about the culture of different states and Union Territories and promote a stronger and united India.

Objectives of Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat Scheme

Given below are the objectives of the “Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat” programme launched by the Government of India in 2015:

- The key aim is to promote the Indian ideology of “Unity in Diversity” in India. It aims to build the interest of people in their neighbouring states and UTs, also encourage them to promote their culture

- To foster a sense of common identity among the people of the country, rich heritage and culture, customs and traditions of the states must be encouraged
- Through this programme, the Government aims at establishing long term engagements and promote learning between the states
- Promoting the national spirit of national integration
- The cross-cultural interactions will help in building the feeling of 'One Nation' among all the citizens of the country

Mission & Vision of Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat Programme

The mission is as follows –

1. To celebrate the Unity in Diversity of our Nation and to maintain and strengthen the fabric of traditionally existing emotional bonds between the people of our Country
2. To promote the spirit of national integration through a deep and structured engagement between all Indian States and Union Territories through a year-long planned engagement between States;
3. To showcase the rich heritage and culture, customs, and traditions of either State for enabling people to understand and appreciate the diversity that is India, thus fostering a sense of common identity
4. To establish long-term engagements
5. To create an environment that promotes learning between States by sharing best practices and experiences.

The vision of Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat is as mentioned below –

1. To celebrate the idea of India as a nation wherein different cultural units across varied geographies coalesce and interact with each other. This glorious manifestation of diverse languages, cuisine, music, dance, theatre, movies & films, handicrafts, sports, literature, festivals, painting, sculpture, etc., will enable people to imbibe the innate chord of binding and brotherhood.
2. To make our people aware of the seamless integral hull of the Modern Indian State spread across a vast landmass on whose firm foundations, the geo-political strength of the country is ensured to benefit one and all.
3. To impress upon people at large about the increasing inter-connectedness between the constituents of various cultures and traditions, which is so vital for the spirit of nation-building.
4. To ease out the feeling of 'stranger in a strange land' among the people of different states, cultures and traditions living in various states of India.
5. To induce a sense of responsibility & ownership for the nation as a whole through these close cross-cultural interactions as it intends to build up the inter-dependence matrix unequivocally.
6. To celebrate the diversity as well as the unity of the Nation at the same time.
7. To generate the vibrance of understanding & appreciation amongst the people and forge mutual bonding to securing an enriched value system of unity in the nation.

Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat – Initiatives & Activities

Till date, multiple initiatives have been taken up under the Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat program.

Discussed below are the same:

- 5 Award-winning books and poetry, popular folk songs have been translated from one language to the language of the partner state
- Culinary events have been organised to learn culinary practices of partner states
- Homestay for visitors coming from partner states
- Rajya Darshan for Tourists
- Accepting the traditional attire of other states and Union Territories
- Exchange of information like traditional agricultural practices with partner states

Some important facts

- The government of Madhya Pradesh has partnered with the governments of Nagaland and Manipur under the Ek Bharat, Shreshth Bharat Yojana to strenghten the cultural relations.
- The higher Education Department has been made the nodal department for the implementation of this scheme, by the Madhya Pradesh government.
- MP will participate in Sangai Mahotsav that is being organized by Manipur in the state
- The teams from Nagaland and Manipur will take part in Lok Rang and Bal Rang programmes of MP to present their cultural programmes.