

Guj's famed garba may get heritage tag of Unesco

Centre, MSU Start Preparing Dossier

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Vadodara: Chances of Gujarat's famed garba getting the coveted Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (ICH) tag bestowed by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco) have brightened.

Efforts to get the nine-day long traditional folk revelry of Gujarat inscribed on Unesco's representative list have picked up.

Sources said the government of India's ministry of culture is preparing a dossier that will be submitted to Unesco by this month-end. The ministry, through the implemen-

- Navratri is central to cultural identity of Gujaratis and Indians at large
- Unesco's ICH tag will ensure better protection of this cultural heritage
- The tag will also demonstrate the diversity of this heritage and raise awareness globally

- Garba forms a centuries-old tradition going back to the time of Lord Krishna
- The word 'garba' is derived from the word 'garbh deep'
- The dance celebrates fertility and is performed as a tribute to femininity - Shakti

Garba is also known as 'garbha', 'garbha deep' and 'garbhi' varying with local dialects

ting agency of Sangeet Natak Akademi, has assigned the task to a project team of MS University. Ministry officials were in Gujarat's garba capital - Vadodara - last week whe-

re the process was discussed with the team at length.

"The team from Delhi was here for three days. The modalities of approaching Unesco, preparing a thorough dossier

along with recommendation letters were discussed at length with teachers, researchers, scholars at MS University's Faculty of Performing Arts," a source close to the development said on the condition of anonymity.

On December 15, 2021, Unesco had accorded ICH status to Kolkata's Durga puja festivities - making it Asia's first festival to receive the recognition.

As part of the exercise, letters of consent for nomination of garba of Gujarat for the possible inscription are being collected from all stakeholders from across the state.

If inscribed, 'garba' - the colourful festivities in which lakhs of revellers swirl to the tunes of 'dhol', music and folk songs in colourful 'chaniya cholis', ghagras and kediy-

as during the Navratri - will become the first intangible cultural heritage of Gujarat to be listed by Unesco.

Since 2008, 14 intangible cultural heritages from India have been listed by Unesco. These include Koodiyattam, a Sanskrit theatre of Kerala; Mudiya, a ritual theatre and dance drama of Kerala; vedic chanting; 'Ramlila'; 'Raman' (a religious festival and ritual theatre of Garhwal, Uttarakhand); Kalbelia folk songs and dances of Rajasthan; Chhau dance (a classical dance form of West Bengal and Odisha); Buddhist chanting of Ladakh; Sankirtana (a ritual singing, drumming and dancing of Manipur); traditional brass and copper craft of utensil making among the Thatheras of Jandiala Guru, Punjab; and yoga.