

Science Express - Biodiversity Special

Brief Note

Science Express is an innovative mobile exhibition mounted on a specially designed 16 coach AC train, traveling across India since October 2007. After the successful tour across India in four phases, this iconic train is now running as 'Science Express - Biodiversity Special (SEBS)' - a unique collaborative initiative of Department of Science & Technology and Ministry of Environment & Forests, Government of India (GoI). It was flagged off on 5 June 2012, World Environment Day, from Delhi Safdarjung by Hon'ble Chief Minister of Delhi and Hon'ble Minister of Environment & Forests, GoI.

Since its launch in October 2007, the Science Express exhibition train has traveled over 80,000 km across the country. With over 80 lakh (8.0 million) visitors at its 254 halts and 930 exhibition days till date, *Science Express* is the largest, longest and most visited mobile science exhibition in India and has created several records. In the current phase, in just last four months, since 5 June 2012, it has been visited by over 16 .50 lakh (1.65 million) people, mostly students.

The current decade (2011-2020) has been declared as the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity and United Nations Decade for Deserts and the Fight against Desertification. With India hosting the eleventh meeting of the Conference of Parties (COP 11) to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), during 8-19 October 2012 in Hyderabad, it is an opportune time to showcase to the world the wide array of biodiversity in India and the conservation measures adopted thereof. The SEBS, therefore, primarily addresses the theme 'Biodiversity'.

The state-of-the-art exhibition aboard the SEBS aims to create awareness on biodiversity of India, climate change and similar issues among various sections of the society, especially the students. The exhibition, thus, targets a wide range of audience including school and college students as well as teachers.

In its ongoing phase from 5 June 2012 to 13 January 2013, SEBS is scheduled to travel to around 57 locations across India. At each location, it usually halts for 3-4 days during which the exhibition remains open for visitors. SEBS is scheduled to halt at Secunderabad from 9 to 19 October 2012 to coincide with the COP 11 meeting. The delegates and dignitaries from over 180 countries participating in this meeting will have the opportunity to visit the exhibition and experience the rich biodiversity of India.

Of the 16 coaches of the SEBS, eight supported by MoEF, are solely dedicated to showcasing the myriad biodiversity spread across the bio-geographical zones of India. These include Trans-Himalaya & the Himalayas, the Gangetic Plain, North East India, the Desert & Semi-Arid Zone, the Western Ghats, the Deccan Peninsula, the Coasts & Islands. The exhibition also covers various other facets like marine, coastal, forest, microbial, agro biodiversity and their linkage with livelihoods besides challenges of conservation.

In rest of the rake, one coach has an exhibition on Climate Change, Biodiversity & Water, supported by HSBC while more exhibits on Climate Change, developed and supported by Swiss Embassy and Nestle, have been put up in another coach. Yet another coach presents an exhibition on Energy Conservation, supported by PCRA while the *Legacy of Science Express*, showcasing the most popular exhibits from the previous four phases is displayed in one coach.

Further, the popular VASCSC Joy of Science (JOS) lab, now supported by Indus Towers, is put up in a dedicated coach. In this hands-on lab, students can perform various experiments and activities to understand concepts in biodiversity, climate change, environment, science and mathematics in an interesting manner. A Discussion Centre-cum-training facility is provided in the same coach for capacity building of teachers in different aspects of environment, science and mathematics.

At each halt of SEBS, activities are planned in advance to engage visitors across different ages to reinforce the message of SEBS and these include the exciting and much sought-after Outreach Programme conducted in local schools / institutions along with interesting activities on the railway platforms. Specific outreach activities are also conducted in local schools and institutions associated with the MoEF's National Environment Awareness Programme (NEAC) and National Green Corps (NGC). In addition, informative take-away material is made available for wider distribution amongst schools and visitors.

The exhibition reflects the wisdom and the hard-work of the knowledge partners who have contributed to bring forth this exhibition. MoEF has partnered with the DST for putting up the exhibition on biodiversity. Centre for Environment Education (CEE), Ahmedabad along with the knowledge partners and Vikram A Sarabhai Community Science Centre (VASCSC), Ahmedabad have developed and put up this unique exhibition-on-wheels. HSBC, Swiss Embassy, Nestle, PCRA and Indus Towers have supported part of the exhibitions and complementary activities.

VASCSC has been entrusted by DST with the task of coordinating the SEBS across India. VASCSC's team of well-qualified, trained and highly motivated Science Communicators travelling with the train explain and interpret the exhibition, answers queries, facilitate the visitors and conduct complementary activities.

The exhibition is open to all but primarily targets students and teachers. More information is available on the website www.scienceexpress.in.

For visit to the exhibition or any queries, please send an email to scienceexpress@gmail.com or contact the Project Manager aboard the train (mobile: 09428405407). School students can participate in the Joy of Science (JOS) Lab in small batches of up to 25 students, by prior registration. For participating in the JOS Lab, please send an email to vascsc.ios@gmail.com or contact the Lab in-charge (mobile: 09428405408).

Team Science Express solicits cooperation from all the concerned departments, media, institutions and individuals in giving wider publicity to this prestigious exhibition-on-wheels, so that a large number of visitors are benefited and to make the programme a grand success.

Please Note

- The exhibition is open to all.
- There is no entry fee for the exhibition.
- Not allowed on the Science Express: Items like mobiles, cameras, bags, match-boxes, cigarettes, beedis, tobacco, water bottles, any liquid, and any sharp pointed objects.
- Venue: Railway station of the respective city
- Timing: 10:00 am to 5:00 pm
- Refer schedule for the dates at respective halts.

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Schedule

(5 June 2012 – 22 December 2012)

Sr. No.	Station	Exhibition Dates	Sr. No.	Station	Exhibition Dates
1	Delhi Safdurjung	05 - 07 June 12	28	Khadki (Pune)	12 – 15 Sep 12
2	Patna	09 – 10 June 12	29	Mumbai CST	16 – 19 Sep 12
3	Rangia	12 – 13 June 12	30	Habibganj (Bhopal)	21 – 24 Sep 12
4	Mariani (Jorhat)	14 – 16 June 12	31	Madanmahal (Jabalpur)	25 – 28 Sep 12
5	Dibrugarh	17 – 20 June 12	32	Nagpur	30 Sep - 01 & 03 Oct 12
6	Dimapur	21 – 22 June 12	33	Kazipet	04 – 07 Oct 12
7	Kamakhya (Guwahati)	23 – 26 June 12	34	Secunderabad	09 – 19 Oct 12
8	Siliguri	27 – 29 June 12	35	Sewagram (Wardha)	20 – 22 Oct 12
9	Malda Town	30 June–03 July 12	36	Durg	23 – 25 Oct 12
10	Howrah	04 – 05 July 12	37	Bilaspur	26 – 29 Oct 12
11	Dhanbad	06 – 09 July 12	38	Gaya	31 Oct – 02 Nov 12
12	Ranchi	10 – 13 July 12	39	Gorakhpur Cantt	03 – 06 Nov 12
13	Rourkela	14 – 17 July 12	40	Lucknow	07 – 10 Nov 12
14	Sambalpur	18 – 21 July 12	41	Haridwar	11 – 12 & 14 Nov 12*
15	Cuttack	22 – 25 July 12	42	Chandigarh	15 – 18 Nov 12
16	Berhampur	26 – 29 July 12	43	Ambala Cantt.	19 – 21 Nov 12
17	Visakhapatnam	30 July – 02 Aug 12	44	Udhampur	22 – 25 Nov 12
18	Vijayawada	03 – 06 Aug 12	45	Ferozpur City	26 – 28 Nov 12
19	Nellore	07 – 10 Aug 12	46	Bhatinda	29 Nov – 01 Dec 12
20	Chennai Central	11 – 14 Aug 12	47	Delhi Cantt.	02 – 05 Dec 12
21	Kudal Nagar (Madurai)	16 – 19 Aug 12	48	Durgapura Jaipur	06 – 09 Dec 12
22	Kanyakumari	20 – 23 Aug 12	49	Bhagat Ki Kothi (Jodhpur)	10 – 13 Dec 12
23	Ernakulam (Cochin)	24 Aug 12	50	Barmer	14 – 17 Dec 12
24	Kozhikode	25 – 28 Aug 12	51	Ahmedabad	19 – 21 Dec 12
25	Madgaon	30 Aug – 02 Sep 12	52	Stations to be decided	27 Dec 12 – 13 Jan 13
26	Hubli	03 – 06 Sep 12	* 13 Nov: Holiday – Diwali The schedule is subject to change.		
27	Bellary	07 – 10 Sep 12			

For more details, please write to:

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