

India's Manuscript Wealth Takes Centre Stage as Ministry of Culture Announces First Ever Global Conference on India's Manuscript Heritage

International Conference on 'Reclaiming India's Knowledge Legacy Through Manuscript Heritage'

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The Ministry of Culture, Government of India, is pleased to announce on the auspicious occasion of Guru Purnima, reaffirming the nation's commitment to honouring the guru-śiṣya tradition and revitalising the civilisational continuum embedded within its manuscript wealth the International Conference on 'Reclaiming India's Knowledge Legacy Through Manuscript Heritage', to be held from 11th to 13th September 2025 at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi. This first-ever conference on Manuscript Heritage, to be held over three days in hybrid mode, is being organized in respectful commemoration of Swami Vivekananda's historic address at the Parliament of the World's Religions on 11th September 1893 an occasion that continues to inspire India's unwavering commitment to knowledge, peace, and universal harmony, and stands as an affirmation to its enduring intellectual and spiritual vision. The conference will be attended by distinguished dignitaries from India and will include keynote addresses and participation by renowned scholars, thought leaders, and cultural custodians from around the world. Designed in a hybrid format, it will facilitate both in-person and virtual engagement, ensuring broad national and international involvement.

India holds an unparalleled treasure of more than 10 million manuscripts covering philosophy, science, medicine, mathematics, literature, rituals, and the arts. These manuscripts are far more than historical records; they represent the living essence of Bhāratīya Jñāna Paramparā (Indian Knowledge Systems) and serve as a vital link in preserving the rich and continuous flow of India's intellectual and cultural heritage. Over the course of three days, the conference will bring together more than 500 delegates, including 75 eminent scholars and cultural custodians from India and abroad. Thematic sessions will explore a wide range of concerns from conservation, digitisation, and metadata standards to palaeographic studies, AI-integrated archival practices, ethical custodianship, and curricular integration of manuscript knowledge. A number of side events, including exhibitions of rare manuscripts (some inscribed in the UNESCO Memory of the World register), live demonstrations of conservation techniques, workshops, cultural performances, and dedicated spaces for manuscript-focused startups, will further enrich the experience.

Among the significant outcomes envisaged is the adoption of the New Delhi Declaration on Manuscript Heritage, the formation of expert working groups for decipherment, conservation, translation, and digital archiving, and long-term institutional linkages for national and international collaboration. The Manuscript Research Partner (MRP) programme will also be introduced to engage young scholars through hands-on training, script labs, and digital content development.

Original research papers and case studies are invited in Hindi or English on themes such as conservation, codicology, legal frameworks, education, cultural diplomacy, and technological innovations in manuscript studies. Abstracts must be submitted by 10 August 2025 through the official conference website: <https://gbm-moc.in>. Full papers and related queries may be sent to the conference email: [gbmconference\[at\]gmail\[dot\]com](mailto:gbmconference[at]gmail[dot]com)

This international conference is poised to not only rejuvenate India's manuscript legacy but also catalyse a larger civilisational movement reconnecting generations with the wisdom embedded in ancient texts, and positioning India once again as a global thought leader in knowledge traditions.

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