

Gyan Bharatam Initiative

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Gyan Bharatam, the flagship initiative of Ministry of Culture (MoC), Government of India announced in the Union Budget (Para 84) on 1st February, 2025, aimed at surveying, documenting, conserving, digitizing and disseminating India's manuscript heritage. The initiative envisages collaboration with academic institutions, museums, libraries and private collectors to cover more than one crore manuscripts, while establishing a National Digital Repository supported by advanced technology and Artificial Intelligence to ensure access and global reach. To support the initiative, the Standing Finance Committee (SFC) has sanctioned Rs.491.66 crore for the period 2025-2031.

The Gyan Bharatam Digital Web Portal has been launched by the Prime Minister of India. Memorandum of Understandings (MoU) have been signed with 31 institutions, of which 19 Centres will serve as Cluster Centres and 12 Centres as Independent Centres, working across Gyan Bharatam's five core verticals: Survey & Cataloguing; Conservation & Capacity Building; Technology & Digitization; Linguistics & Translation and Research, Publication & Outreach. Technology partners have been finalized to support Cluster Centres and Independent Centres across the country. Approximately 3.5 lakh Manuscripts have been digitized in Gyan Bharatam.

The **Delhi Declaration (Gyan Bharatam Sankalp Patra)** sets out a national commitment for preserving, digitizing and revitalizing India's vast manuscript heritage by uniting institutions, scholars, communities and private custodians. Emphasizing manuscripts as the living memory of India's civilization, it calls for modern conservation practices, large-scale digital access and renewed research to bring traditional knowledge into contemporary relevance. By transforming heritage preservation into a people's movement and promoting global collaboration, the Declaration plays a transformative role in safeguarding diverse scripts and knowledge traditions while positioning India as a global centre for manuscript-based learning.

Gyan Bharatam is a Pan India initiative and therefore, its scope is not confined to any specific State or region of the country. Accordingly, MoU has been signed with Dr. Harisingh Gour University, Sagar, Madhya Pradesh under the Gyan Bharatam initiative.

Sangeet Natak Akademi, an autonomous organization under MoC, organizes festivals, workshops, exhibitions, and other programmes to promote and preserve India's classical, traditional, tribal and folk performing arts, including Odissi Dance, Odissi Music and Sambalpuri Dance. It also holds music festivals, seminars and workshops and confers national honours such as the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award and the Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar to artists of Odissi Dance and Odissi Music.

The Eastern Zonal Cultural Centre (EZCC), Kolkata, an autonomous organization under MoC, promotes the folk art of its member states, including in Odisha and regularly showcases Sambalpuri Dance (a vibrant folk dance form) through cultural events and festivals.

This information was given by Union Minister for Culture and Tourism Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat in a written reply in Lok Sabha today.

Sunil Kumar Tiwari

pibculture[at]gmail[dot]com

(रिलीज़ आईडी: 2200364) आगंतुक पटल : 1721

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