

INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE PRESERVATION

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To protect, promote and preserve various forms of folk art & culture throughout the country, the Government of India has set up seven Zonal Cultural Centres (ZCCs) with headquarters at Patiala, Nagpur, Udaipur, Prayagraj, Kolkata, Dimapur and Thanjavur. These ZCCs organize various cultural activities and programmes on regular basis in their member States.

These ZCCs also undertake documentation of vanishing art forms, folklores, oral traditions and practices in the form of audio, video and written materials. Documentation and digitization are ongoing processes.

Guru Shishya Parampara Scheme run by ZCCs is one such initiative where traditional masters train young disciples to ensure continuity of cultural knowledge which helps artistes, researchers and community bearers of traditions.

Number of folk art forms/ oral traditions have been identified by the ZCCs viz. Lori & Kayan singing, Dandi, Angigar, Pradhani, Bhadam & Shaitam dances, Burra Katha, Veeranatyam, Butta Bommalu, Dappu, Tappeta Gollu, Kolannalu, Garagalu, Vilasini Natyam, Puliveshalu, Pagati Veshalu, Dollu & Pooja Kunitha, Veergase, Yakshagana, Karadi Majalu, Lambani Kunitha, Nandi Dwaja Kunitha, Karadi Gombe, Ummathata, Suggi Kunitha, Soman Kunitha, Kaniyarkali, Kolkali, Kummatti Kali, Thumbi Thullal, Margam Kali, Kathakali, Oppana, Thiruvathirakali, Theyyam, Padayani, Poothan and Thira, Mudiyyetu, Arjuna Nirthiyam, Chakayar Koothu, Ottan Thullal, Pulikali, Karagattam, Oyilattam, Paraiattam (Thappattam), Puliyattam, Puraviattam, Kavadi Attam, Devarattam, Jumla Melam, Kaniyan Koothu, Kaaliattam, Thudumbattam, Kolkaliattam, Bommalattam, Tholpavaikoothu, Therukoothu, Chekkabajana, Bonalu, Pothiraju, Chiruthalabajana, Oggu Katha, Chindu Yakshagana, Kaaliattam, Garadi Dance, Karagattam, Nicobari Dance, Oraon, Munda & Kharia of Ranchi Community Dance, Lava Dance, Kolkali, Parichakali, Duffumuttu, Oppana.

No separate funds are allocated for preservation of these art forms. However, the grant-in-aid released to the ZCCs to protect, promote and preserve various forms of folk art & culture during the last five years is as under:

(Rs. in lakh)

Sl. No.	Year	Amount released
1.	2020-21	4721.88
2.	2021-22	6838.08
3.	2022-23	6572.07

4.	2023-24	11967.59
5.	2024-25	11121.66

(ZCCs are actively engaging youth by organising a wide range of programmes aimed at bringing India's artistic and cultural heritage closer to younger generations. These include Guru Shishya Parampara Scheme which facilitates structured mentorship by master artists in traditional art forms to young learners, thereby enhancing enrolment and sustained training in indigenous arts.

Further, Shilpgram Festivals organised by ZCCs create live cultural villages showcasing crafts, folk arts and performances, provide young participants and audiences immersive exposure to traditional practices. In addition, ZCCs conduct extensive outreach activities in far-flung and rural areas across the country to generate awareness and encourage participation of youth in diverse art forms of India.

ZCCs also regularly organise youth-centric festivals, workshops and competitions with interactive components such as hands-on training in folk dance, music, painting and allied disciplines. Through these sustained interventions, the ZCCs are witnessing increased participation of younger generations in enrolment, skill development and outreach activities, while simultaneously fostering cultural pride and nurturing artistic talent among youth.

ZCCs are actively documenting vanishing art forms and oral traditions and are converting legacy materials into digital formats, particularly where older records are not digitally accessible. Further, collaborations with academic institutions, cultural organisations and subject experts are being undertaken to improve the quality, coverage and accuracy of documentation. All such initiatives are ongoing in nature, reflecting that the identified gaps in documentation, digital archiving and transmission of traditional knowledge are being progressively addressed through sustained and long-term archival and knowledge-transmission efforts by the Centres.

ZCCs are implementing long-term measures such as sustained training under Guru Shishya Parampara, documentation of endangered art forms, support to traditional artists, youth encouragement and regular cultural programmes in collaboration with State Governments and local communities to prevent irreversible cultural loss.

In addition, Ministry of Culture, Government of India through its Zonal Cultural Centres (autonomous organization under Ministry of Culture), organizes Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsavs (RSMs) to celebrate the spirit of tradition, culture, heritage and the rich diversity of our incredible country. The broader objective of this Mahotsav is to preserve, promote and popularize India's cultural heritage, reconnect the younger generation with our traditions and showcase to the nation and the world our soft power through unity in diversity. Since 2015, Ministry has organized 14 RSMs and 4 Zonal Level RSMs through its seven ZCCs. A total of 12543 artists have participated in these RSMs/ Zonal RSMs. These artists were paid honorarium, TA/DA, local transportation, boarding & lodging etc. to enable them to earn their livelihood.

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

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