

Gyan Bharatam Mission and Preservation of Manuscript Heritage

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Gyan Bharatam Mission (GBM), announced during Union Budget 2025-26, is an initiative of the Ministry of Culture (MoC), Government of India to undertake manuscripts related activities. The objectives of this initiative are as follows:

- I. To leverage advanced technology to significantly enhance the pace of digitization and documentation of manuscripts.
- II. Conducting survey and registration of manuscripts.
- III. To document and catalogue Indian manuscripts, wherever they may be, maintain accurate and up-to-date information about them and the conditions under which they may be conserved.
- IV. To facilitate usage of manuscripts and promote ready access to these manuscripts through publications, both in book form as well as machine readable form.
- V. To facilitate conservation and preservation of manuscripts through training awareness and financial support.
- VI. To boost scholarship and research in the study of Indian languages and manuscriptology.
- VII. To build up a National Digital Repository (NDR).

To support the initiative, the Standing Finance Committee (SFC) has sanctioned Rs.491.66 crore for the period 2025-2031. National Manuscript Survey was launched in March, 2026 across all States and Union Territories (UTs) of the country to identify and document manuscript holdings, repositories and custodians representing diverse languages and scripts. During the survey, more than 1.19 crore manuscripts have been reported. The total number of digitized manuscripts available across the country is over 8 lakh, out of which, more than 4.40 lakh manuscripts are available on Gyan Bharatam portal at present for public access, in view mode which is accessible state-wise.

The mission has established an institutional mechanism through Cluster Centres and Independent Centres which include universities, research institutions, libraries, archives, private custodians, religious institutions, and other stakeholders to undertake manuscript related activities. States / Union Territories (UTs) have also been engaged to act as Nodal Coordinating Authority for Gyan Bharatam implementation within the State / UT concerned.

Access to digitized copies of manuscript is facilitated in accordance with the rights of custodians and rights holders. Wherever permissible, manuscripts and associated metadata may be made available for public and scholarly research through the National Digital Repository, while sensitive, restricted or rights-protected materials may be subject to appropriate access conditions.

GBM is a pan-India initiative aimed at preserving India's manuscript heritage, irrespective of script, language, knowledge tradition, region, or the custodial traditions of communities. Institutions located in Bihar namely (i) Nava Nalanda Mahavihar, Nalanda (ii) Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Public Library,

Patna and (iii) Shri Bodh Gaya Math, Bodh Gaya have onboarded with GBM to undertake manuscript related activities.

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

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