

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF CULTURE  
**RAJYA SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 17**  
ANSWERED ON 20/07/2023

**FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO RAVANA CHHAYA ARTISTS OF ODISHA**

17. SMT. SULATA DEO

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether there is any scheme to promote the Ravana Chhaya performers of Odisha, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (b) whether the veteran Ravana Chhaya performers can be provided financial assistance?

**ANSWER**

MINISTER OF CULTURE, TOURISM AND DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION

(SHRI G. KISHAN REDDY)

(a) To protect and preserve various forms of folk art & culture and to promote folk artists in all the States/UTs, the Government of India has set up seven Zonal Cultural Centres (ZCCs) across the country with headquarters at Patiala, Nagpur, Udaipur, Allahabad, Kolkata, Dimapur and Thanjavur. Eastern Zonal Cultural Centre (EZCC), Kolkata is instrumental in promoting and celebrating the rich folk and tribal intangible cultural heritage of the member state of Odisha. Guru Khageswar Sahoo, a Ravana Chhaya performer, was granted financial assistance under Guru Shishya Parampara Scheme by EZCC, Kolkata during the year 2012-13. They have also organized a seminar on Ravana Chhaya at EZCC, Kolkata on 10<sup>th</sup> July, 2022 where Puppet (Ravana Chhaya) and Odissi dance were presented in the programme.

Ravana Chhaya is a rare form of shadow theatre of Odisha where singing blends the folk and classical Odissi traditions followed by traditional style in singing the lyrics from Vichitra Ramayana. This performing art form is being promoted by the Sangeet Natak Akademi (SNA), an autonomous organization under Ministry of Culture, by way of inviting the Ravana Chhaya performers in its various festivals/ events etc. The SNA has also published a book on Ravana Chhaya by Shri Jiwan Pani. The Akademi has recently presented the Ravana Chhaya (Shadow Puppetry style of Odisha) by Priyabrata Pradhan, Odisha in its Amrit Yuva Kalotsav held in June, 2023 at Raipur. Further, the following Ravana Chhaya artists were conferred with Sangeet Natak Akademi Award:

- i. Kathinanda Das (Ravana Chhaya, Orissa) 1978
- ii. Kolhacharan Sahu (Ravana Chhaya, Orissa) 1998

(b) Yes, Sir. Ministry of Culture administers a financial grant scheme by the name of 'Scheme for Financial Assistance for Veteran Artistes'. The objective of the scheme is to improve financial and socio economic status of old age artistes and scholars who have contributed significantly in their specialized fields of arts, letters etc. but are in penury condition. An amount of Rs. 6000/- per month is being given to eligible beneficiaries (both

professional and non-professional artistes) who are above 60 years and whose annual income is less than Rs. 48,000/-. The veteran Ravana Chhaya performers can also avail financial assistance by way of applying against the said Scheme.

Further, SNA through its scheme 'Financial Assistance to Cultural Institutions' has given financial assistance to the following institution for the promotion of Ravana Chhaya:

<b>Name of Institution</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Amount (Rs.)</b>
Ravana Chhaya Natya Sansada, Odisha	2018-19	Production of a New Shadow Puppet Play	70,000/-
	2019-20	Production of a New Shadow Puppet Play	70,000/-
	2021-22	Production of a New Shadow Puppet Play	70,000/-
	2022-23	Shadow puppet play "Ravana Chhaya"	70,000/-

\*\*\*\*\*