

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CULTURE**

**RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 1472
ANSWERED ON 12.02.2026**

ARTISTS' WELFARE AND SOCIAL SECURITY

1472. SHRI RAGHAV CHADHA:

Will the MINISTER OF CULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether there is any comprehensive social security system for artists, performers and cultural workers, including its legal basis, coverage and key features;
- (b) the extent of coverage under existing artist welfare schemes, along with year-wise details of enrolment, benefits given and gaps in implementation;
- (c) whether it is a fact that most cultural workers continue to work in the informal sector with low income and little social security, despite the growth of creative economy, and if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the steps taken to formalise the cultural sector and improve incomes and livelihood security of artists?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF CULTURE AND TOURISM
(SHRI GAJENDRA SINGH SHEKHAWAT)**

- (a) Apart from the various social security schemes operated by various Ministries of Government of India for citizens of various age groups, the Government recognizes the invaluable contribution of artists, performers and cultural workers to the rich cultural heritage of India. While there is no single, all-encompassing social security or benefit for all categories of artists and cultural workers, the Government has instituted several schemes to provide social and financial support to vulnerable sections within the artists community. 'Scheme for Financial Assistance for Veteran Artists' administered by the Ministry of Culture is one of such initiative under which financial assistance upto Rs 6000/- per month is provided to the eligible veteran artists aged 60 years and above who have contributed significantly in the fields of arts, letters etc. in their active age or are still contributing. Following are the eligibility criteria for providing financial assistance under the scheme:
 - i. The applicant artist should have contributed significantly in their specialized fields of arts, letters etc. in their active age or are still contributing;
 - ii. The applicant artist should not be less than 60 years of age;
 - iii. Annual income of the applicant (including income of the spouse) must not exceed Rs. 72,000/-;

- iv. The applicant artist should be a recipient of artists pension of at least Rs. 500/- per month from the concerned State Government/UT Administration, or the artistic credentials of the applicant is verified and recommended by the concerned Zonal Cultural Centre (ZCC), Ministry of Culture;
- v. The applicant artist should not be getting financial assistance under any other scheme of the Ministry of Culture.
- (b) A year-wise details of artists selected, artists benefitted and amount of financial assistance disbursed under the scheme during last five years are given below:

Financial Year	Artists provisionally Selected*	Artists Benefitted (including existing beneficiaries)	Amount Disbursed (Rs. in Cr.)
2020-21	1821	2000	8.71
2021-22	2251	3029	15.42
2022-23	1150	3651	18.59
2023-24	355	3811	28.96
2024-25	Under Process	4636	26.09

*Artists approval is provisional subject to their submitting supporting documents, yearly Digital Life Certificate (DLC) etc. for assistance to be disbursed to them.

- (c) A large portion of workers in cultural and creative sectors in India are engaged in the informal economy, characterized by irregular income, absence of formal contracts, and limited social security.

In the context of the creative economy, many practitioners such as folk artists, local artisans, performers, craft and cultural workers often work on a casual or self-employed basis and are typically not covered under formal labour and social security frameworks.

- (d) To mitigate the hardships faced by the artists selected under the scheme, the following steps have been taken by the Ministry in the recent years:
- (i) The quantum of financial assistance under the scheme has been enhanced from Rs. 4000/- per month to Rs. 6000/- per month w.e.f. June, 2022;
- (ii) The requirement of submitting income certificate every year has now been done away and instead it is now required to be submitted once in five years;
- (iii) Earlier, the applicant artist applying under the scheme should have been mandatorily be a recipient of artists pension of atleast Rs. 500/- per month from the concerned State Government/UT Administration. This condition has been relaxed and now also provides for verification and recommendation of the artistic credentials by the concerned Zonal Cultural Centre (ZCC), Ministry of Culture in case the applicant is not a recipient of artists pension from the State Govt./UT Administration;
