

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CULTURE

RAJYA SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION No.2117
TO BE ANSWERED ON 06.08.2026

NATIONAL PROGRAMME ON LIBRARIES

2117. **SHRI CONSTANDINE RAVINDRAN:**

Will the **Minister of CULTURE** be pleased to state:

- a) whether Government has formulated a national programme to strengthen public libraries as centres for cultural engagement, film appreciation, literature and lifelong learning;
- b) the assistance extended to States for modernising libraries with facilities for screening educational and world cinema, digital archives and community learning activities;
- c) whether best practices adopted by successful public libraries are being documented for wider replication; and
- d) the initiatives taken to transform public libraries into vibrant knowledge and cultural resource centres across the country?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF CULTURE AND TOURISM
(SHRI GAJENDRA SINGH SHEKHAWAT)

(a) to (d) Library is a State subject as per the Seventh schedule of Constitution of India, and public libraries function under the administrative control of the respective State/Union Territory Authorities.

However, Raja Rammohun Roy Library Foundation (RRRLF), an autonomous organisation under the Ministry of Culture, Government of India, has been implementing schemes for the promotion and development of public libraries across the country. RRRLF supports their strengthening by providing financial assistance for infrastructure development, library services, reading resources and capacity building. RRRLF extends financial assistance for development of public libraries under its various Matching and Non-matching schemes for construction/renovation of library buildings, procurement of books and reading materials, purchase of furniture and equipment, and improvement of library infrastructure. Assistance

is also provided for strengthening ICT-enabled library services, and for the digitisation of copyright-free manuscripts, rare documents and other heritage materials, wherever admissible under the scheme guidelines. Through these interventions, public libraries are encouraged to function as inclusive centres for reading, cultural engagement, lifelong learning and community participation.

RRRLF also promotes the sharing and dissemination of best practices through interactions with State Library Authorities, workshops, seminars, conferences and meetings of State Library Planning Committees with a view to improving the quality of library services across the country.

The Ministry of Culture also implements the National Mission on Libraries (NML) Scheme, under which financial assistance is provided through the *Setting up of NML Model Library* component to one State Central Library and one District Library in each State /UT, as recommended by the concerned State Authorities, along with six libraries identified by the Ministry of Culture.

Ministry of Culture has implemented a National Virtual Library of India (NVLI) through the Indian Culture Portal, www.indianculture.gov.in under NML Scheme. The objective of NVLI is to provide a platform for the digital preservation of diverse cultural artefacts and to create awareness and a sense of collective ownership among citizens about their shared heritage.

The National Archives of India (NAI) under Ministry of Culture has digitized approximately 19.7 crore pages and the digital repository currently hosts around 74.7 lakh reference media files accessible through the Abhilekh Patal portal (<https://www.abhilekh-patal.in>).
