

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS  
**LOK SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO- 1796**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON- 05/12/2024

**PROTECTION OF TRIBAL CULTURE, TRADITION AND CUSTOMS**

1796. SHRI CHINTAMANI MAHARAJ:

Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has formulated any policy for the protection of tribal culture, traditions and customs;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the cultural traditions and customs in the tribal areas are being destroyed permanently through religious conversion;

(d) whether the Government proposes to take any steps for the protection of tribal culture, traditions and customs by putting a ban upon such religious conversion;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, whether the Government is contemplating any steps in this direction and if so, the details thereof?

**ANSWER**

MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRIBAL AFFAIRS  
(SHRI DURGADAS UIKEY)

**(a) to (f):** Ministry of Tribal Affairs has taken various steps to conserve and protect the tribal culture, tradition and customs. Ministry is implementing the schemes of “Support to Tribal Research Institute” and “Tribal Research, Information, Education, Communication and Events” under which various activities are undertaken to conserve and promote tribal culture, archives, artifacts, customs and traditions of the tribal communities. There are 29 Tribal Research Institutes in States/UTs and National Tribal Research Institute in Delhi. Some of the initiatives worth mentioning are as under:

(i) To acknowledge the heroic and patriotic deeds of tribal people and to exhibit rich tribal cultural heritage of the region, Ministry has sanctioned 11 Tribal Freedom Fighters Museums.

(ii) Ministry has developed searchable digital repository where all research papers, books, reports and documents, folks songs, photos/videos are uploaded. The repository currently has more than 10,000 photographs, videos and publications which are mostly done by Tribal Research Institutes.

The repositories can be visited at <https://repository.tribal.gov.in/> (Tribal Digital Document Repository) and <https://tribal.nic.in/repository/> (Tribal Repository).

(iii) State level festivals like Hornbill festival of Nagaland, Medaram Jatra of Telangana are funded through TRI scheme. State Tribal festival, fair and cultural programmes are funded by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) to showcase glimpses of rich cultural heritage of tribal people across the country through unique forms of folk dances, songs, cuisine, exhibition and demonstration of traditional skill in painting, art and craft, medicinal practices etc.

(iv) TRIFED organizes Tribal Artisan Melas (TAMs) to identify new artisans and new products at the sourcing level in States/Districts/Villages for expanding the tribal producers base.

(v) The Ethnographic Museum of the states preserve and showcase rare artifacts related to life and culture of various tribes.

(vi) Under “Tribal Research, Information, Education, Communication and Events (TRI-ECE)”, reputed research institutes/organizations/universities have undertaken various research studies/publication of books/documentation including audio visual documentaries to fill the gap of research studies on tribal issues and Promotion of rich tribal cultural, traditions and customs as well as capacity building of tribal persons/institutions associated with tribal affairs, dissemination of information and creation of awareness.

(vii) The Ministry of Culture is the nodal Ministry for promotion of culture including tribal culture.

Further, there are adequate constitutional and statutory safeguards for protection, preservation, conservation and promotion of tribal culture, traditions and customs. Ministry of Culture, Government of India has set up seven Zonal Cultural Centres (ZCCs) with headquarters at Patiala, Nagpur, Udaipur, Prayagraj, Kolkata, Dimapur and Thanjavur to conserve and promote various forms of folk art and tribal culture throughout the country. The Fifth Schedule of the Constitution provides for the establishment of Tribal Advisory Councils in States with Scheduled Areas. Further, it provides for Special Powers of the Governor in such States. The Panchayat (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 similarly provides for extensive authority of the Gram Sabhas/Gram Panchayats to safeguard and preserve the traditions and customs and their cultural identity. The Sixth Schedule, applicable in the States of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram, empowers the District and Regional Councils in matters of social customs. The schemes of Support to TRI and TRI-ECE mentioned herein before and the activities taken up thereunder also contribute significantly toward the preservation and promotion of tribal culture, traditions and customs.

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