

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CULTURE
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO- 928
TO BE ANSWERED ON 02.12.2024

INDIAN CONSERVATION FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME (ICFP)

928. DR. SHRIKANT EKNATH SHINDE:
SHRI NARESH GANPAT MHASKE:
SMT. SHAMBHAVI:

- a) whether the Government has undertaken any measures for the promotion of cultural tradition and literature in the rural and traditional areas, if so, the details thereof;
- b) the details of the Indian Conservation Fellowship Programme (ICFP);
- c) the details of the linguistic and cultural significance of each of the languages, now recognized as Classical; and
- d) the details of the specific measures being taken to ensure the documentation and digitization of ancient texts in these languages?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF CULTURE & TOURISM
(GAJENDRA SINGH SHEKHAWAT)

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

- a) The Government of India actively promotes Indian culture and literature across the country.

The Ministry of Culture, through its autonomous bodies has undertaken various measures for the promotion of cultural tradition and literature in the rural and traditional areas which are given as follows:

Sahitya Akademi (SA) plays a vital role in fostering Indian literature in 24 recognized languages.

In addition to its regular programs and publications, SA has initiated several projects and schemes to enhance literary awareness and talent, particularly in rural and traditional areas. Notable among these are the *Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat* and *Gramalok* series.

Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) focuses on cultural preservation and documentation, promotion of regional languages, promotion of performing arts and development of traditional art forms.

Centre for Cultural Resources and Training (CCRT) implements the scholarships and fellowship scheme like Cultural Talent Search Scholarship Scheme, Scheme for “Award of Scholarships to Young Artists (SYA) in different cultural fields”, fellowship scheme for the award of fellowships to outstanding persons in the field of culture for the promotion of cultural tradition and literature in the rural and traditional areas.

- b) The Indian Conservation Fellowship Pilot Program (ICFPP) was undertaken by the Ministry of Culture in collaboration with the Metropolitan Museum of Art (MMA) in New York and the Stichting Restauratie Atelier Limburg (SRAL), the Netherlands. A Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) was signed between Ministry of Culture, Government of India and the Metropolitan Museum of Art (MMA), New York on 19.03.2013 for a period of two years.

Thereafter, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Ministry of Culture and Metropolitan Museum of Art (MMA), New York was signed on 27.06.2016 for launching of the Indian Conservation Fellowship Program (ICFP) for a period from 2016 to 2021 and was to be undertaken by the Ministry of Culture in collaboration with the Metropolitan Museum of Art (MMA), New York, the Stichting Restauratie Atelier Limburg (SRAL), the Netherlands, the Royal Institute for Cultural Heritage, Brussels (“KIK-IRPA”), and the Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, The Smithsonian Museums of Asian Art, Washington, DC (“FG”) with support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation (the “Mellon Foundation”).

The aim of this fellowship was to equip the participants with skills to better care for collections at their home institutions and to establish a larger and stronger conservation community in India with international links to professionals in the field. So far, 36 conservators from India have received fellowship under ICFP (17 conservators during Pilot Program and 19 conservators during Main Program).

- c) The Government of India has recognized the following 11 languages as Classical Languages: Tamil, Telugu, Sanskrit, Kannada, Malayalam, Odia, Marathi, Pali, Prakrit, Assamese, and Bengali. Each of these languages has a history spanning at least 1500 years, representing a rich cultural and literary heritage. They reflect the uniqueness of their respective communities and regions. These languages encompass a vast corpus of ancient literature and texts, regarded as invaluable heritage by generations of speakers. They include knowledge texts, particularly prose, alongside poetry, epigraphical, and inscriptional evidence, showcasing their historical and cultural significance.
- d) Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) has created Digital Archives for regional languages, traditional art forms, and performing arts. Digital Museums have been created for showcasing regional art and culture, and various activities are carried out through National Cultural Audiovisual Archives (NCAA) of Cultural Informatics Lab (CIL) Division of the IGNCA. National Mission for Manuscripts (NMM) under Ministry of Culture is also engaged in documentation and digitization of ancient texts in these languages.
