

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CULTURE

LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 181
TO BE ANSWERED ON 21.07.2025

PARUVETA FESTIVAL AT SRI NARASIMHA SWAMY TEMPLE IN AHOBILAM

181. DR. GUMMA THANUJA RANI:

Will the Minister of Culture be pleased to state:

- a) the details of the steps taken by the Government for the preservation and popularization of intangible cultural heritage as declared by UNESCO;
- b) whether the Government is making efforts to get the annual "Paruveta" festival celebrated at the Sri Narasimha Swamy Temple in Ahobilam as an intangible cultural heritage by UNESCO;
- c) whether the Government intends to conduct a survey of all the intangible cultural heritage practices in the country and if so, the details thereof;
- d) whether the Government intends to create a separate nodal agency for promotion and preservation of intangible cultural heritage practices in the country; and
- e) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF CULTURE AND TOURISM
(SHRI GAJENDRA SINGH SHEKHAWAT)

a) In line with UNESCO's 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH), India has made significant contributions towards the preservation and promotion of its living cultural traditions. As of July 2025, a total of fifteen elements from India have been inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (List at **Annexure**) I)The latest inscription from India is Garba of Gujarat, inscribed in December 2023. As per UNESCO's latest Operational Directives, each member state is permitted to nominate only one element every two years for possible inscription. In this context, India has nominated the 'Deepavali' Festival for the 2024–25 cycle. The nomination will be considered during the 20th session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, scheduled to be held in New Delhi in December 2025.

To further strengthen efforts for the preservation, promotion, and dissemination of India's cultural legacy, the Ministry of Culture, Government of India, has launched the Brihattar Bharat (Greater India) Project. This flagship initiative, primarily implemented through the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), focuses on presenting India's civilization continuity through a comprehensive narrative connecting mythology, history, science, archaeology, literature, and contemporary relevance. The project emphasizes mapping, curating, and digitally integrating tangible and intangible cultural heritage, fostering public engagement through exhibitions, digital platforms, and capacity-building initiatives. It particularly seeks to strengthen India's cultural linkages with the global community, especially in regions with historical and cultural connections to India, while promoting a deeper understanding of the country's rich intangible cultural heritage.

As a key component of these national efforts, Sangeet Natak Akademi (SNA) has been designated by the Ministry of Culture as the nodal agency for coordinating India's nominations to various UNESCO ICH lists. SNA is also responsible for developing and maintaining the National Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage of India, adding elements to the list with the approval of its Advisory Body. The Akademi undertakes regular documentation and digital archiving of performing arts and other ICH elements, particularly those classified as "Work in Progress," ensuring systematic preservation. SNA also conducts capacity-building workshops across India to train and raise awareness among local communities, cultural practitioners, stakeholders, and students. These initiatives have resulted in a notable increase in requests from various regions for the inclusion of elements in the National Inventory. In addition, SNA confers awards upon distinguished artists as a means of promoting and recognizing contributions towards safeguarding ICH and contributes to academic and public understanding through its extensive publication programme comprising journals, books, and monographs. Furthermore, under the "Scheme for Safeguarding the Intangible Heritage and Diverse Cultural Traditions of India," operational from 2013 to 2016, financial assistance was provided to various organizations, civil society groups, local communities, and individuals engaged in preserving and promoting ICH elements. Through these comprehensive and coordinated measures, India continues to reaffirm its commitment to safeguarding and popularizing its diverse intangible cultural heritage in accordance with UNESCO's global objectives.

b) No such proposal under consideration in the Ministry of Culture.

c) No such proposal under consideration in the Ministry of Culture.

d) & (e) The Ministry of Culture, Government of India, has designated Sangeet Natak Akademi as the nodal agency for coordinating India's nominations to various UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) lists, as well as for undertaking related responsibilities such as the development and maintenance of the National Inventory of ICH.

Indian ICH heritage inscribed on UNESCO's Representative List of the ICH of Humanity

<u>S. No.</u>	<u>ICH Heritage</u>	<u>Year of Inscription</u>
1.	Tradition of Vedic chanting	2008
2.	Ramlila, the traditional performance of the Ramayana	2008
3.	Kutiyattam, Sanskrit theatre	2008
4.	Ramman, religious festival and ritual theatre of the Garhwal Himalayas, India	2009
5.	Mudiyettu, ritual theatre and dance drama of Kerala	2010
6.	Kalbelia folk songs and dances of Rajasthan	2010
7.	Chhau dance	2010
8.	Buddhist chanting of Ladakh: recitation of sacred Buddhist texts in the trans-Himalayan Ladakh region, Jammu and Kashmir, India	2012
9.	Sankirtana, ritual singing, drumming and dancing of Manipur	2013
10.	Traditional brass and copper craft of utensil making among the Thatheras of Jandiala Guru, Punjab, India	2014
11.	Yoga	2016
12.	Nawrouz, Novruz, Nowrouz, Nowrouz, Nawrouz, Nauryz, Nooruz, Nowruz, Navruz, Nevruz, Nowruz, Navruz	2016
13.	Kumbh Mela	2017
14.	Durga Puja in Kolkata	2021
15.	Garba of Gujarat	2023

Furthermore, “Deepavali” has been nominated from India for inscription on the list in 2024-25 cycle.
