

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CULTURE
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 3480
TO BE ANSWERED ON 11.08.2025

INTERNATIONAL MANUSCRIPT HERITAGE CONFERENCE

3480. **Smt. D K Aruna:**
Shri Chamala Kiran Kumar Reddy:
Shri Eatala Rajender:
Smt. Poonamben Hematbhai Maadam:

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government proposes to host first-ever international Manuscript Heritage Conference titled 'Reclaiming India's Knowledge Legacy Through Manuscript Heritage' in September, 2025 to commemorate Swami Vivekananda's Chicago address (September 11, 1893) as a part of Gyan Bharatam Mission;
- (b) if so, the details thereof, including the key themes and focus areas of the conference;
- (c) whether the Government has taken measures to preserve and promote India's rich manuscript heritage; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof, including the total number of manuscripts digitized and the total number of Manuscript Resource Centres and Manuscript Conservation Centres set up?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF CULTURE AND TOURISM
(SHRI GAJENDRA SINGH SHEKHAWAT)

- (a) Yes, the Government proposes to host the first-ever international Manuscript Heritage Conference titled 'Reclaiming India's Knowledge Legacy Through Manuscript Heritage' in September 2025. This event is planned to commemorate the 132nd Anniversary of Swami Vivekananda's historic address at the Parliament of the World's Religions held in Chicago on September 11, 1893.
- (b) The conference aims to bring together scholars, historians, manuscript experts, and cultural practitioners from across the world to explore, preserve, and promote India's vast and diverse Manuscript Heritage. Key themes and focus areas of the conference include:
 - 1. Decipherment of Ancient Scripts: Indus, Gilgit and Sankha
 - 2. Survey, Documentation, Metadata Standards and Digital Archiving

3. Manuscriptology and Paleography, Codicology
4. Digitization Tools, Platforms, and Protocols (HTR, AI, IIF)
5. Conservation and Restoration of Manuscripts
6. Decoding Manuscripts: Pathways to the Indian Knowledge System
7. Manuscripts as Tools of Cultural Diplomacy
8. Legal and Ethical Frameworks for Manuscript Preservation and Access

(c) Yes, the Government has taken several measures to preserve and promote India's rich manuscript heritage. Such as:

1. Establishing and supporting institutions like the 'Gyan Bharatam' that works towards the Documentation, Conservation, Digitization, and Publication of rare and Unpublished Manuscripts across the country.
2. Organizing seminars, workshops, and conferences to raise awareness about the importance of manuscript heritage and to encourage research and collaboration.
3. Supporting regional and local efforts to document and preserve manuscripts in various languages and scripts.
4. National and International MoUs with Vietnam, Thailand, and Japan
These initiatives aim to safeguard India's invaluable manuscript legacy and ensure it continues to contribute to the nation's cultural and intellectual heritage.

(d) Since 2003, a total of 3.50 lakh Manuscripts have been digitized. There are 92 Manuscript Conservation Centres established so far, of which 42 are presently active. Additionally, there are 93 Manuscript Resource Centres, with 37 currently active.
