

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 862
TO BE ANSWERED ON 24.07.2025

PRESERVING TRIBAL CULTURAL HERITAGE

862. ADV GOWAAL KAGADA PADAVI:

Will the Minister of **TRIBAL AFFAIRS** be pleased to state:

- (a) whether any new initiatives are underway to document and preserve intangible tribal cultural heritage and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) the number of tribal communities whose musical, oral or craft traditions have been recorded under the NISHTHA programme;
- (c) whether these cultural elements are being integrated into museum exhibits or digital platforms and if so, the details thereof;
- (d) the details of financial support provided to tribal artists for the preservation and performance of their heritage; and
- (e) whether any national-level consultation has been held with tribal communities regarding monetising their heritage through tourism and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRIBAL AFFAIRS
(SHRI DURGADAS UIKEY)

(a): Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India under the Centrally Sponsored scheme 'Support to Tribal Research Institutes (TRIs)' extends financial support to 29 Tribal Research Institutes (TRIs) in States/Union Territories (UTs) on the basis of the Annual Action Plan submitted by the States/UTs subject to the approval of the Apex Committee chaired by the Secretary, Ministry of Tribal Affairs. Under the scheme, proposals relating to, inter-alia research & documentation activities and training & capacity building programmes, organization of tribal festivals, yatras for promotion of unique cultural heritage and tourism and organisation of exchange visits by tribals are organised so that their cultural practices, languages and ritual are preserved and disseminated. TRIs are primarily institutions under the administrative control of the State Government/UT Administration. Under the scheme, some of the initiatives to document and preserve intangible tribal cultural are as under:

1. Research studies/documentation including audio visual documentaries for promotion of rich tribal cultural heritage which includes preservation of tribal languages.
2. Research and documentation of Indigenous practices by tribal healers and medicinal plants, Adivasi Languages, agriculture system, dances and paintings, organization of literary festivals, publication of books written by tribal writers/ authors, translation works and literature competitions, etc. Preparing Bilingual Dictionaries, Trilingual Proficiency Modules, Primers for students of Class I to V in tribal languages under Multi-Lingual Education (MLE) Intervention in the line of New Education Policy 2020.

Publishing Varnamala, local rhymes, and stories in tribal languages. Publishing books, journals on different tribal languages to promote tribal literature. Documenting folklore, and folktales of different tribes for preservation and promotion of tribal folk tradition. Collecting oral literature (songs, riddles, ballads etc.)

3. Government of India has also declared 15th November as Janjatiya Gaurav Divas to honour all the tribal freedom fighters to remember and acknowledge their contribution to the freedom struggle and cultural heritage, and to re-energize the efforts for the socio-economic development of the tribal regions. The Ministry of Tribal Affairs along with other central ministries, state governments, and other institutions are celebrating the glorious history of its tribal people, culture, and achievements since 2021. Further, the Government of India is commemorating Jan Jatiya Gaurav Varsh (JJGV) on the occasion of the 150th birth anniversary of Bhagwan Birsa Munda, with the objective of celebrating the contributions, culture, and heritage of tribal communities across the nation.

(b) & (c): Ministry of Tribal Affairs does not run the NISHTHA programme. However, cultural elements are being integrated into tribal museum exhibits or digital platforms, wherever provisioned.

(d): Ministry of Tribal Affairs per se does not provide financial support directly to tribal artists for the preservation and performance of their heritage. However, under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme “Support to Tribal Research Institute(s)”, the Ministry extends financial support to Tribal Research Institute(s) of the States / UTs, Tribal Research Institutes in organizing different cultural events like National Tribal Craft Mela, National/State Tribal Festivals, Art Competition, Workshop – cum – Exhibition on Tribal paintings, State-level tribal poet and writers meet etc., with an objective to promoting and preserving the cultural heritage of the tribals. Tribal artists participate in these events and showcase their rich cultural heritage through varied cultural performances.

(e): No. However, states manage the Tribal Museums and interact with the tribal communities to promote their culture and heritage.
