

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF CULTURE

**LOK SABHA**

**UNSTARRED QUESTION NUMBER 1188**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 08.12.2025

**PROMOTION OF BANGLA LANGUAGE AND CULTURE**

**1188. SHRI AZAD KIRTI JHA:**

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of specific measures undertaken by the Government to promote Bangla language and culture across India, including digital, educational and cultural initiatives;
- (b) the manner in which Government is leveraging modern technologies such as AI platforms developed under the Digital India Bhashini Division to support and enhance the usage and preservation of Bangla;
- (c) the details of any ongoing or planned collaborations, programmes or frameworks aimed at preserving, propagating and promoting Bangla in educational curricula, official communication, cultural events, and digital media: and
- (d) the details of the strategies implemented for engaging the Bangla-speaking community and cultural experts to ensure relevance and effectiveness of these promotion efforts?

**ANSWER**

MINISTER OF CULTURE AND TOURISM  
(GAJENDRA SINGH SHEKHAWAT)

- (a) Bangla is one of the 14 languages included in scheduled languages initially when the Constitution was adopted in 1950. Subsequently, vide Gazette Notification dated 04.10.2025, Bangla/Bengali was also notified as one of the Classical Languages of India.

The Ministry of Culture has established seven Zonal Cultural Centres (ZCC) across the country. Eastern Zonal Cultural Centre is headquartered in Kolkata, West Bengal, functioning as a cultural nerve centre, between and among the numerous ethnic cultural centres/groups of excellence in the eastern part of the country including Bangla Culture.

The Ministry also organizes Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsavs (RSMs) through ZCCs where a large number of artists from all over India are engaged who showcase their talents during these programmes. The 2021 iteration of the Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsava was celebrated at multiple locations in West Bengal (Cooch Behar, Darjeeling and Murshidabad) with participation of artists including Bangla Artists.

Bangla is also fully supported in The National Language Translation Mission (Bhashini), Bangla across all core services and applications, such as Anuvaad (Translation) Web Services, Mobile applications, and Developer APIs and language technologies.

- (b) To ensure seamless access to comprehensive suite of state-of-the-art Natural Language Processing (NLP) capabilities, the Bhashini Division of Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology of India (MEITY) has developed the National Hub for Language Technology (NHLT), a unified platform through which these services are delivered at scale. For Bangla specifically, 20+ AI services are currently available. The platform has facilitated over 112 million inferences wrt Bangla.

Recognising the importance of open knowledge ecosystems, the Division has also made high-quality datasets for the Bangla language publicly accessible through both the BHASHINI platform and India's national AI dataset repository, AI Kosh.

To expand real-world adoption and bridge digital access gaps, the Division has deployed multiple user-centric applications and solutions. These include website translation tools, document translation systems, and voice-first interfaces designed to ensure that users can interact with digital services without needing any technical expertise. Through voice-based interaction, citizens can now speak in Bangla, receive information in Bangla, and navigate digital platforms without reliance on typing or complex interfaces thereby effectively reducing barriers related to literacy, language, and digital familiarity.

- (c) & (d) The Ministry of Culture, through its various schemes, extends support to a number of organizations/ artists engaged in the promotion and preservation of culture across the country, including Bangla culture. Details of funds disbursed to beneficiaries in West Bengal under different schemes of the Ministry are enclosed at **Annexure I**.

Sahitya Akademi, an autonomous body under the Ministry working on promotion and preservation of literary culture of the country recognizes literary compositions in 24 languages including Bangla and provides awards and recognition to Bangla in all its award categories.

The recent prominent activities organized in West Bengal by Sahitya Akademi is enclosed in **Annexure II**.

In addition to the specific events, Sahitya Akademi also organizes various umbrella festivals such as UNMESHA, Festival of Letters, and Sahityotsava. These events function as a melting pot of number of different languages and culture of India witnessing an enthusiastic participation of writers, thinkers, playwrights, creators, and readers of various languages including Bangla.

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**ANNEXURE I**

**DETAILS OF FUNDS DISBURSED AND NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES (INDIVIDUALS / ORGANIZATIONS) IN  
WEST BENGAL UNDER VARIOUS SCHEMES ADMINISTERED**

Sl. No.	Name of the scheme										
		2020-2021		2021-2022		2022-2023		2023-2024		2024-25	
		Number of Beneficiaries	Amount (Rs. In lakh.)	Number of Beneficiaries	Amount (Rs. In lakh)	Number of Beneficiaries	Amount (Rs. In lakh.)	Number of Beneficiaries	Amount (Rs. In lakh.)	Number of Beneficiaries	Amount (Rs. In lakh)
1.	Financial Assistance for Promotion of Guru Shishya Parampara (Repertory Grant)	112	821.76	333	2060.8	418	2288.48	208	1432.21	112	821.76
2.	Financial Assistance to Cultural Organizations with National Presence (including R.K. Mission, West Bengal)	0	0.00	2	6.75	0	0.00	2	37.50	3	31.25
3.	Cultural Function and Production Grant	229	216.09	310	364.14	410	544.44	357	206.86	302	435.61
4.	Scheme For the Award of Fellowship to Outstanding Persons in The Field Of Culture	67	59.40	81	115.00	87	118.20	100	93.00	102	116.40
5.	Scheme for Scholarships to Young Artistes in Different Cultural Fields	161	48.30	195	58.50	67	20.10	278	83.70	219	65.70
6.	Financial Assistance for Veteran Artists	37	5.09	32	12.31	27	11.71	35	28.53	39	20.37
7.	Financial Assistance for the Development of Buddhist / Tibetan Culture and Art	29	99.25	12	40.22	72	168	92	175.51	70	82.75

**ANNEXURE II****LIST OF ACTIVITIES BY SAHITYA AKADEMI FOR PROMOTION OF BANGLA**

<b>S.No</b>	<b>Programme Title</b>	<b>Date &amp; Time</b>	<b>Venue / Collaboration</b>	<b>Location</b>
1	Literary Forum: Poetry Readings by Bengali Poets	18 Sept 2025, 5:00 PM	Sahitya Akademi Regional Office, Kolkata Auditorium	Kolkata
2	Literary Forum: Readings of Bengali Poetry & Short Stories	30 Aug 2025, 11:00 AM	Durgapur Govt. College & Tristoop Magazine	Durgapur, Paschim Bardhaman, West Bengal
3	Gramalok: Readings & Discussion by Bengali Writers	29 Aug 2025, 11:00 AM	Rajganj College	Jalpaiguri, West Bengal
4	Bal Sahiti: Readings & Discussion on Bengali Children's Literature	27 Aug 2025, 2:00 PM	University of North Bengal & Mallar Magazine	Darjeeling, West Bengal
5	Kathasandhi with Nalini Bera	26 Aug 2025, 5:30 PM	Sahitya Akademi Eastern Regional Office Auditorium	Kolkata
6	Yuva Sahiti: Readings & Discussion with Young Bengali Writers	26 Aug 2025, 4:00 PM	Sahitya Akademi Eastern Regional Office Auditorium	Kolkata
7	Symposium: Bengali Literature, Theatre & Cinema Relationship	25 Aug 2025, 11:00 AM	IQAC & St. Xavier's College (Autonomous), Father Depelchin Auditorium	Kolkata
8	Symposium: Tribal Voice in Bengali Literature	13 Aug 2025, 11:00 AM	Bankura University, Purandarpur	Bankura, West Bengal
9	Kavi-Anuvadak with Aditya Mandi	31 Jul 2025, 5:45 PM	Sahitya Akademi Regional Office, Kolkata Auditorium	Kolkata
10	Contemporary Bengali Dalit Literature (Literary Forum)	31 Jul 2025, 4:00 PM	Sahitya Akademi Regional Office, Kolkata Auditorium	Kolkata
11	Literary Forum: Influence of Technology on Bengali Literature	31 Jul 2025, 11:00 AM	Sadhu Ramchand Murmu University of Jhargram, Jitusol	Jhargram, West Bengal
12	Mulakat: Readings &	30 Jul 2025,	Baneswar Sarathibala	Cooch Behar,

	Discussion by Young Bengali Writers	12:00 PM	Mahavidyalaya	West Bengal
13	Kathasandhi with Nirmal Halder	4 Jul 2025, 11:30 AM	Seminar Hall, Kashipur Michael Madhusudan Mahavidyalaya	Purulia, West Bengal
14	Literary Forum: Mahabharata Studies	25 Jun 2025, 11:00 AM	Vidyasagar Sabhagriha, University of Kalyani	Nadia, West Bengal
15	Literary Forum: 125th Birth Anniversary of Sailajananda Mukhopadhyay	25 Jun 2025, 11:00 AM	Mankar College	Purba Bardhaman, West Bengal
16	Seminar: Depiction of the Marginalized in Bengali Literature	24 Jun 2025, 11:00 AM	Presidency University	Kolkata
17	Asmita: Readings by Bengali Women Writers	23 Jun 2025, 11:00 AM	Saltora Netaji Centenary College	Bankura, West Bengal
18	Symposium: Bengali Novels in the 21st Century	30 May 2025, 10:00 AM	Vidyasagar University, Dept. of Bengali	Paschim Medinipur, West Bengal
19	Kathasandhi with Abhijit Tarafdar	(Date not specified; paired with next entry)	—	—
20	Literary Forum: Readings by Bengali Writers	28 Feb 2025, 2:30 PM	Bidhannagar College	Salt Lake, Kolkata