GYAN BHARATAM MISSION

2704. Shri Ravindra Dattaram Waikar:
  Shri Shrirang Appa Chandu Barne:
  Smt. Bharti Pardhi:
  Dr. Shrikant Eknath Shinde:
  Dr. D. Purandeswari:

Will the Minister of CULTURE
be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has operationalized the "Gyan Bharatam Mission" to identify the documents and digitize ancient Indian manuscripts to prevent the loss of indigenous knowledge systems and if so, details thereof;

(b) the details of the recent budgetary increase for the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) in 2026-27 and the deployment of advanced technologies like LiDAR and drones for excavation and surveillance;

(c) whether the Government is taking strict legal measures to remove encroachments from centrally protected monuments to reclaim heritage spaces for the public across the country, particularly in Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh;

(d) the details of the mechanism established to involve private sector participation through "Monument Mitras" without compromising the historical integrity of the sites; and

(e) the manner in which the said digital and structural reforms contributed to the vision of making India a "Knowledge Superpower" by democratizing access to historical archives?

ANSWER
MINISTER OF CULTURE AND TOURISM
(SHRI GAJENDRA SINGH SHEKHAWAT)

(a) Yes Sir. Gyan Bharatam, announced during Union Budget 2025-26, is a flagship initiative of the Ministry of Culture (MoC), Government of India aimed at unearthing, safeguarding and preserving India's vast manuscript heritage.

To support the initiative, the Standing Finance Committee (SFC) has sanctioned Rs.491.66 crore for the period 2025-2031 to undertake manuscripts related activities under various components including survey and registration of manuscripts, building

robust technology infrastructure and partnership, documentation, conservation, digitization and publication of manuscripts and capacity building & research.

(b) So far as budgetary increase for the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) in 2026-27 is concerned, Appropriation Bill (2026-27) is yet to be approved by the Parliament and assented to by the President.

During exploration and excavations, the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) uses advanced technologies such as LiDAR, GPR and Drone survey. At some archaeological sites like Rajgir (Bihar), Rakhigarhi (Haryana), Bhismaknagar (Arunachal Pradesh) and Warangal Fort (Telangana). LiDAR, GPR and Drone surveys were conducted before excavation.

These advanced technologies are used according to the requirements before excavation.

(c) Strict legal and administrative measures are taken to remove encroachments from Centrally Protected Monuments across the country, including in Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh. ASI conducts regular inspections and issues notices to stop unauthorized construction or encroachment. Action is taken under the provisions of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958 and the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Rules, 1959 along with eviction proceedings under the Public Premises (Eviction of Unauthorized Occupants) Act, 1971.

(d) The Adopt A Heritage 2.0 program, exclusively for protected monuments of national importance, was launched in September 2023 to create a framework for engagement with private/public sector companies and NGOs/ Trusts/ Societies, etc., to develop/provide a group of amenities at protected monuments to enhance visitors' experience and make them visitor-friendly.

The role of stakeholders or partnered entities is limited to only being permitted to be engaged for non-conservational aspects viz., cleaning of monument premises, besides providing and maintaining basic tourist amenities like washrooms, drinking water, childcare room, benches, pathways, garbage bins, signage, SeL shows, illumination, etc. under the guidance and due consultation with ASI.

The work related to archaeological conservation and ASI experts exclusively attend to the preservation of protected monuments/sites as per existing framework.

(e) The National Archives of India (NAI) through the online portal Abhilekh-Patal, has undertaken a major digitization initiative to preserve and democratize access to the nation's documentary heritage by making archival records globally accessible. As of February 2026, the portal hosts 0.73 crore reference media, 0.38 crore digitized records and over 18.23 crore pages with 1,87,961 unique visitors and 35,167 registered users.

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