



Chapter - 27 Culture and Tourism

The Ministry of Culture performs functions like preservation and conservation of ancient cultural heritage and promotion of art and culture both tangible and intangible in the country.

- It is also responsible for the implementation of various UNESCO conventions in the field of culture and for entering into cultural exchange agreements with partnering countries.
- India was elected to the UNESCO World Heritage Committee for 2021-25, and Durga Puja was added to UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.
- In Sept 2023, Santiniketan and the Sacred Ensembles of the Hoysala became the 41st and 42nd UNESCO World Heritage Sites in India, respectively.

Sangeet Natak Akademi

- **Establishment and Purpose:**
 - Founded in 1945 as India's national academy of music, dance, and drama.
 - Originated from a proposal by the Asiatic Society of Bengal for a National Cultural Trust consisting of three academies.
 - First of the three national academies established post-Independence.
- **Reconstitution and Registration:**
 - Reconstituted in 1961 by the Government as a society under the Societies Registration Act, 1860.
- **Sangeet Natak Akademi Awards:**
 - Annual awards conferred on distinguished artists and scholars, highly esteemed in the performing arts community.
- **Institutions and Projects:**
 - Establishes and oversees institutions and projects of national significance in performing arts.
 - Notable institutions include the Jawaharlal Nehru Manipur Dance Academy, National School of Drama, and Kathak Kendra.
- **Key Projects:**
 - Establishment of the National School of Drama and the Asian Theatre Institute in 1959.
 - Initiation of the Kutiyattam project in 1991, recognized by UNESCO as a masterpiece of oral and intangible heritage.
 - Commencement of the Chhau dance project in 1994, leading to the establishment of Chhau Kendra in Jharkhand in 2018.
 - Support to Sattriya music, dance, and allied arts of Assam since 2002.

Sahitya Akademi

- Sahitya Akademi, India's National Academy of Letters promotes literature in 24 languages of India recognized by it. It organises programmes, confers Awards and Fellowships on writers in Indian languages and publishes books throughout the year.
- The Akademi publishes original works and also works in translation - fiction, poetry, drama and criticism - covering classical, mediaeval, pre-modern and contemporary literature. Sahitya Akademi publishes three journals, Indian Literature (bi-monthly in English), Samkaleen Bharatiya Sahitya (bi-monthly in Hindi) and Sanskrit Pratibha (quarterly in Sanskrit). The Akademi is also involved in promoting quality children's literature.

▪ **Akademi Awards are the most prestigious literary awards in India.**

- **Sahitya Akademi Award:** Recognizes outstanding books of literary merit published in the 24 Indian languages recognized by the Akademi. Prize money: ₹1 lakh and citation.
- **Bhasha Samman:** Awarded to individuals contributing significantly to languages not recognized by the Akademi, as well as research into classical and mediaeval literature. Prize money: ₹1 lakh and citation.
- **Translation Prize:** Acknowledges exceptional translations in the 24 languages recognized by the Akademi. Prize money: ₹50,000 and citation.
- **Bal Sahitya Puraskar:** Honours outstanding contributions to children's literature in 24 languages. Prize money: ₹50,000 and citation.
- **Yuva Puraskar:** Recognizes young Indian writers in 24 languages. Prize money: ₹50,000 and citation.
- **Festival of Letters:** Annual event celebrating Indian writing organised by Sahitya Akademi.
- **Promotion of Tribal and Oral Literature:** Sahitya Akademi fosters tribal and oral literature through its centres in Delhi and Imphal.
- **Sahitya Akademi Library:** Multilingual library in New Delhi dedicated solely to literature.
- **Fellowships:** Awarded to eminent writers, Indian and non-Indians, including the Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy Fellowship and Premchand Fellowship.

Centre for Cultural Resources and Training (CCRT)

- Established in 1979 by the Government of India to link education with culture.
- Aims to create awareness about India's regional cultures and integrate cultural knowledge into education.
- Administers the **Scheme for Award of Scholarships to Young Artistes (SYA)**, offering scholarships to individuals aged 18 to 25 in various cultural disciplines.
- **Manages Project Sanskriti**, an initiative to establish interpretation centres in educational institutions in Varanasi.
- Awards Teachers' Award to recognize outstanding educators in education and culture, including a citation, plaque, and cash prize of ₹25,000.

Cultural Heritage of the Himalayas

- **Buddhist Tibetan Institutions (BTI)** aim to preserve, promote, and propagate the intangible cultural heritage of the Himalayas.
- Revised scheme since 2011 supports activities such as research, preservation of manuscripts and art, documentation of cultural events, and training in traditional and folk arts.
- Grants provided for institutions, colleges, and universities, with **increased funding of ₹10 lakhs per year per organisation.**

Archaeological Survey of India

- Established in 1861, the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) functions as an attached office of the Ministry of Culture.
- The ASI conducts various activities including:
 - Surveying archaeological remains and conducting excavations.
 - Maintaining and conserving centrally protected monuments, sites, and remains.
 - Chemical preservation of monuments and antiquarian remains.
 - Architectural survey of monuments.
 - Developing epigraphical research and numismatic studies.
 - Establishing and reorganising site museums.
 - Conducting expeditions abroad.
 - Providing training in archaeology.
 - Publishing technical reports and research works.

Tourism

The Ministry of Tourism is the nodal agency to formulate national policies and programmes for the development and promotion of tourism. It has the main objective of increasing and facilitating tourism in India, augmenting tourism infrastructure, easing of visa regime, assurance of quality standards in services of tourism service providers, etc.

- As per IBEF's report on Growth of Tourism and Hospitality Industry, Travel and tourism are two of the largest industries in India, with a total contribution of about US\$ 178 billion to the country's GDP.
- The travel market in India is projected to reach US \$125 Billion by Financial Year 2027.
- The Ministry of Tourism also designated the Year 2023 as the 'Visit India' year, an invitation to the world to witness the splendour and magnificence that our nation has to offer.
- The Govt of India approves 100% Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the tourism industry under the automatic route.
 - Additionally, 100% FDI is permitted for tourism construction projects, including the development of exquisite hotels, resorts, and unparalleled recreational facilities.

Major Schemes:

- **North East Promotion:**
 - Ministry promoting North East region through media campaigns.
 - Partnership with Discovery Channel for 'Go North East' documentary series.
 - Focus on tourism infrastructure via Swadesh Darshan and PRASAD schemes.
- **Dekho Apna Desh Initiative:**
 - Launched in January 2020 to raise awareness about India's heritage and culture.
 - Series of webinars showcasing diverse cultures and destinations.
 - Online pledge and quiz to encourage domestic travel.
- **Swadesh Darshan Scheme:**
 - Develops theme-based tourist circuits for enhanced tourist experience.
 - 13 thematic circuits identified including North-East India Circuit.
- **PRASAD Scheme:**
 - Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Augmentation Drive launched in 2014-15.
 - Focuses on developing pilgrimage sites across India.
 - 61 sites identified in 29 states/UTs for development.
- **Incredible India Mobile App:**
 - Launched in 2018 to showcase India as a holistic destination.
 - Features spirituality, heritage, adventure, culture, yoga, wellness, etc.
 - Designed for modern travellers with international standards and assistance features.