

What is the National Mission for Manuscripts (NMM)?

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Why in News:

- **Presently, NMM** is a **part of the Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts**.
- The **new body**, likely to be named the National Manuscripts Authority, **will be an autonomous entity** under the Ministry of Tourism and Culture.

About National Mission for Manuscripts (NMM):

- It was established in February 2003, by the **Ministry of Tourism and Culture**, Government of India.
- **Mandate: Documenting, conserving and disseminating the knowledge preserved in the manuscripts.**
- Motto: 'Conserving the past for the future'

- A unique project in its programme and mandate, the NMM seeks to **unearth and preserve the vast manuscript wealth of India.**
 - **India possesses** an estimate of **ten million manuscripts**, probably the **largest collection in the world.**
 - These cover a variety of themes, textures, and aesthetics, scripts, languages, calligraphies, illuminations, and illustrations.
 - While **75%** of the existing manuscripts **are in Sanskrit**, 25% are in regional languages, according to the NMM.
- **Objectives:**
 - **Locate manuscripts** through a national-level survey and post-survey.
 - **Document** each and **every manuscript** and manuscript repository, **for a National Electronic Database** that **currently contains** information on **four million manuscripts** making this the **largest database on Indian manuscripts** in the world.
 - Conserve manuscripts **incorporating both modern and indigenous methods** of conservation and training a new generation of manuscript conservators.
 - To **train the next generation of scholars in various aspects of Manuscript Studies** like languages, scripts and critical editing and cataloguing of texts and conservation of manuscripts.
 - To promote access to manuscripts by **digitizing the rarest and most endangered manuscripts.**
 - To promote **access to manuscripts through the publication** of critical editions of unpublished manuscripts and catalogues.
 - To **facilitate public's engagement with manuscripts** through lectures, seminars, publications and other outreach programmes.
- To achieve this mandate, the mission has **established** more than **100 Manuscripts Resource Centres** and **Manuscripts Conservation Centres** all over India.

What is a Manuscript?

- A manuscript is a **handwritten composition on paper, bark, cloth, metal, palm leaf, or any other material dating back** at least **seventy-five years** that **has significant scientific, historical, or aesthetic value.**
- Lithographs and printed volumes are not manuscripts.
- Manuscripts are found in hundreds of **different languages and scripts.**
 - **Often, one language is written in a number of different scripts.** For example, Sanskrit is written in Oriya script, Grantha script, Devanagari script, and many other scripts.
- Manuscripts are **distinct from historical records such as epigraphs on rocks, firm ans, and revenue records**, which provide direct information on events or processes in history.
- Manuscripts **have knowledge content.**

Q1: What is Lithography?

A lithograph is a print that's made using a stone or metal plate. Lithographs are etched into the plate using a chemical reaction.

News: Government seeks to relaunch National Manuscript Mission, set up autonomous body

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