

PM Modi to Launch Gyan Bharatam Mission: Reviving India's Manuscript Legacy

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Gyan Bharatam Mission Latest News

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will launch the revamped National Manuscripts Mission, which was announced in the Union Budget earlier this year, on June 9.

Introduction

- India's rich heritage of ancient knowledge is on the verge of a transformative revival with the launch of the revamped National Manuscripts Mission.
- Scheduled to be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on June 9, 2025, the initiative, now named **Gyan Bharatam Mission**, seeks to digitise, conserve, and make accessible over one crore manuscripts scattered across the country.
- This mission is envisioned as a national endeavour to safeguard India's intellectual legacy and create a centralised, structured approach to knowledge preservation.

About the National Manuscripts Mission (NMM)

- The National Manuscripts Mission (NMM) was initially launched in 2003 as a programme under the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA).
- Despite the scale of its mandate, it did not scale up as expected due to institutional and operational constraints.
 - The NMM has so far prepared metadata for 52 lakh manuscripts.
 - About 3 lakh manuscripts have been digitised.
 - Only 1.3 lakh manuscripts have been uploaded online, and just 70,000 are currently accessible to the public.
- A key reason behind the limited public access is the lack of a clear access policy, particularly with private manuscript owners who control nearly 80% of India's manuscript collection.

Revamp into Gyan Bharatam Mission

- The Union Government, in its 2025 Budget, significantly increased the financial allocation for the manuscripts initiative, from ₹3.5 crore to ₹60 crore.
- This move aims to address the scale of the challenge and integrate modern technology into the preservation ecosystem.
- The **Gyan Bharatam Mission** will take a comprehensive approach by:
 - Surveying and documenting manuscripts lying with institutions, private collectors, museums, and libraries.
 - Digitising and conserving rare and fragile folios.
 - Setting up an autonomous institution to oversee the programme.
- The revamped mission will no longer be a subset of IGNCA but will have a standalone structure, allowing for greater efficiency and agility.

Addressing the Challenges

- Despite NMM's two-decade-long journey, several gaps remain:
 - A large number of manuscripts remain with private owners unwilling to share due to unclear policies.
 - Digitisation efforts have lagged behind, with only a fraction of manuscripts made available online.
 - There is also limited awareness of India's manuscript wealth among younger generations.
- The new mission aims to address these by creating:
 - Incentive frameworks for private collectors.
 - A robust access and copyright policy.
 - Centralised and open digital repositories.
 - Preventive conservation of fragile folios across repositories.
- Over the past 21 years, preventive and curative conservation has been conducted for over 9 crore folios.

Strategic and Cultural Significance

- The Gyan Bharatam Mission comes at a time when India is actively investing in civilisational narratives, language revitalisation, and heritage infrastructure.
- By focusing on manuscripts, this mission bridges cultural pride with contemporary digital access.
- It also supports the broader 'Viksit Bharat' vision by reclaiming and repurposing India's traditional knowledge systems for future generations.

Gyan Bharatam Mission FAQs

Q1. What is the Gyan Bharatam Mission?

Ans. It is a revamped initiative to conserve, digitise, and make accessible over one crore Indian manuscripts.

Q2. When will the Gyan Bharatam Mission be launched?

Ans. The mission will be launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on June 9, 2025.

Q3. How much budget has been allocated for the revamped mission?

Ans. The allocation has been increased from ₹3.5 crore to ₹60 crore in the Union Budget 2025.

Q4. Why are many manuscripts not accessible to the public?

Ans. Due to the lack of a clear access policy and limited participation from private owners, most manuscripts are not publicly available.

Q5. What is the long-term vision of the mission?

Ans. The mission aims to establish a national digital repository and promote access to India's traditional knowledge for scholars and citizens.

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