

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF MINORITY AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 333
ANSWERED ON 18.12.2024

INITIATIVES TO PROMOTE JAINISM AND BUDDHISM

*333. SHRI CHANDRA PRAKASH JOSHI:

SHRI HARENDRA SINGH MALIK:

Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has taken initiatives to promote the values of Jainism and Bhuddhism across the country; and
- (b) if so, the details thereof along with the achievements made in this regard, particularly in Rajasthan?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF MINORITY AFFAIRS

(SHRI KIREN RIJJU)

(a) & (b) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT AS REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. *333 FOR ANSWER ON 18.12.2024 REGARDING 'INITIATIVES TO PROMOTE JAINISM AND BUDDHISM' ASKED BY SHRI CHANDRA PRAKASH JOSHI AND SHRI HARENDRA SINGH MALIK

(a) & (b): To promote the values of Jainism and Buddhism, various initiatives are being undertaken by the Government of India, which are as under:

I. Initiatives to promote the Jainism:-

- The Central Government granted the status of minority religion to the Jains during the year 2014 placing them in equal footing with other minorities.
- Programme to commemorate 2550th Bhagwan Mahaveer Nirvan Mahotsav on 21.04.2024 was organized in New Delhi.
- The Ministry of Minority Affairs approved project under PMJVK Scheme for 'Establishment of Centre for Jain Studies in Devi Ahilya Vishwa Vidyalaya (DAVV), Indore Campus to undertake preservation and promotion of Jain Heritage, fostering inter-disciplinary research in the field. The total estimated cost of the project is Rs. 25 crore for the preservation and conservation of Jain culture, including the digitization of Jain manuscripts, widespread knowledge sharing of Jain traditions and customs, promoting interdisciplinary research on Jain literature, preserving the language through digitization of manuscripts, and community outreach through hubs, among other activities.
- Jain Agams are the Holy books for Jains. They are originally in Prakrit language which is supposed to be language of Teerthankara's. The Central Government has recognized Prakrit language as one of the Classical languages of India on 04.10.2024.
- The Rajasthan Government allocated Rs. 100 crore for the development of religious places and to connect various religious sites, including those of Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, and Parsi communities. This initiative reflects the Rajasthan Government's commitment to the principle of **Sarv Dharam Sambhav** (equal respect for all religions). In 2023, fulfilling a long-pending demand of the Jain community, the 'Jain Shraman Sanskruti Board' was constituted in Rajasthan, which was widely appreciated by the Jain community. It is also important to note that the teachings, royal patronage, and efforts of Jain Munis (ascetics) have played a significant role in the development of Jainism in Rajasthan. The **Jinalaya** at Ranakpur in Rajasthan stands as one of the finest examples of the development of Jainism in the region.

II. Initiatives to promote the Buddhism:

- In the month of March, 2024, the M/o Minority Affairs laid the foundation stone for 38 projects with a total estimated cost of Rs. 225.00 crore under Buddhist Development Plan under the aegis of Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakaram (PMJVK) in the States of Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, and the Union Territory of Ladakh. The project aims to promote Buddhism and the secularization of traditional theological education. Out of the total projected amount, an allocation of Rs. 85.00 crore has been made to the Central Institute of

Buddhist Studies (CIBS), Leh, U.T. Ladakh, for the construction of school buildings, a new academic building for traditional courses, and souvenir shops. An amount of Rs. 14.50 crore has been earmarked for the construction of Training-cum-Examination Centres for Leh and Kargil. Rs. 30.00 crore has been allocated for strengthening the Centre for Advanced Studies in Buddhist Studies at the University of Delhi, to promote academic collaboration, research, language preservation, and skill upgradation of the Buddhist population. Rs. 40.00 crore has been allocated for the Central Institute of Himalayan Culture Studies (CIHCS).

- In addition, Government had sanctioned projects worth Rs.361.97 crore under the Buddhist Circuit of Swadesh Darshan Scheme. The Ministry of Tourism provides financial assistance to the State Government and Union Territory for the development of these circuits.
- Government of India has declared “Pali” as a classical language on 04.10.2024, which has several benefits for the Buddhist Community and India’s cultural heritage. Pali, the sacred language of Theravada Buddhism, is the language of the Buddha’s sermons. This declaration will enhance the study of Pali in educational institutions, fostering greater understanding and preservation of Buddhist traditions.
- Rajasthan Government has allocated Rs.100 crore for the development of religious places including Buddhism. Ministry of Tourism, Government of India provides funds under Swadesh Darshan Scheme for the development of Buddhist heritage sites viz. the Viratnagar Stupa , Bairat in Rajasthan. The Rajasthan Government allocated Rs.2.00 lacs per year for the research project on Buddhist/Tibetan Art & Culture. The Govt. provides a maximum of Rs.5.00 Lacs per year for scholarship to monks and nunnery students.

In addition, four autonomous organizations are working under the administrative control of Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India:

- i. Central Institute of Buddhist Studies, Leh (Deemed To Be University)
- ii. Nava Nalanda Mahavihara, Nalanda, Bihar (Deemed To Be University)
- iii. Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies (CIHTS), Sarnath (Deemed To Be University)
- iv. Central Institute of Himalayan Culture Studies (CIHCS), Dahung, Arunachal Pradesh

The details of funds disbursed to the said Autonomous organizations in the last 5 years including the current Financial Year is at **Annexure-I**.

Ministry of Culture also provides annual grants-in-aid for the upkeep and maintenance of the following six Grantee Bodies for promoting Buddhist/Tibetan Culture and Art:

- i. Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, Dharamshala
- ii. Tibet House, New Delhi
- iii. Centre for Buddhist Cultural Studies, Tawang Monastery, Arunachal Pradesh
- iv. Namgyal Institute of Tibetology, Sikkim
- v. International Buddhist Confederation, Delhi
- vi. GRL Monastic School, Bomdila, Arunachal Pradesh

The details of funds disbursed to the said Grantee Bodies in the last 5 years including the current Financial Year is at **Annexure-II**.

Besides, two financial grant schemes are also being implemented by the Ministry of Culture for the propagation and scientific development of Buddhist/Tibetan Culture and tradition as well as the preservation of cultural heritage of Himalayas:

- I. **Scheme of Financial Assistance for the Development of Buddhist/Tibetan Culture & Art:** Under this scheme, Buddhist/Tibetan organizations including Monasteries and NGOs engaged in the propagation and scientific development of Buddhist/Tibetan Culture and tradition, located anywhere in the country, are given financial assistance.
- II. **Scheme of Financial Assistance for the Preservation & Development of Cultural Heritage of the Himalayas:** The objective of the scheme is to promote, protect and preserve the cultural heritage of the Himalayan region including Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttrakhand, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh through research, documentation, and dissemination. Financial assistance is provided to institutions & voluntary organizations working for this purpose.

Moreover, National Commission for Minorities, a statutory body under Ministry of Minority Affairs conducts 'Sarv Dharam Samvad' with representatives of minority communities to discuss issues faced by the communities and promote communal harmony. Since December 2021, 38 such meetings have been conducted with representatives of minority communities, including Jain and Buddhist communities. Five of these meetings have specifically focused on the Jain and Buddhist communities (two with the Jain community and three with the Buddhist community). Issues concerning the Jain community, such as Samed Shikharji, Girnar Parvat, and the safety and security of Jain monks during *Viharas*, were discussed in the meetings. Further, issues concerning the Buddhist community, such as the management of the Bodh Gaya temple, the promotion of the Pali language, and the provision of amenities such as schools and community halls for Buddhists living in remote areas, were also discussed. A total of 102 visits were conducted by concerned Jain and Buddhist members to various locations, including Karnataka, Leh- Ladakh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Goa, Delhi, Punjab, Chandigarh, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand, Rajasthan, and others.

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. *333 FOR ANSWER ON 18.12.2024 REGARDING 'INITIATIVES TO PROMOTE JAINISM AND BUDDHISM' ASKED BY SHRI CHANDRA PRAKASH JOSHI AND SHRI HARENDRA SINGH MALIK (Rs. in Crore)

Autonomous Bodies	Years				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25 (As on date)
Central Institute of Buddhist Studies (CIBS),Leh	22.56	27.03	33.27	35.45	25.76
Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies (CIHTS), Sarnath	37.88	61.29	35.00	40.32	22.03
Nava Nalanda Mahavihara (NNM), Nalanda	11.33	22.86	26.27	38.04	17.97
Central Institute of Himalayan Culture Studies (CIHCS), Dahung	3.44	11.45	12.06	13.52	10.51

Annexure-II**ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. *333 FOR ANSWER ON 18.12.2024 REGARDING 'INITIATIVES TO PROMOTE JAINISM AND BUDDHISM' ASKED BY SHRI CHANDRA PRAKASH JOSHI AND SHRI HARENDRA SINGH MALIK (Rs. in Crore)**

Grantee Bodies	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2023-24 (As on date)
Tibet House, New Delhi	1.22	1.75	1.75	1.75	115.80
Centre for Buddhist Cultural Studies, Tawang Monastery, Arunachal Pradesh	2.09	3.00	3.00	3.00	202.50
Library of Tibetan Works & Archives, Dharamshala, Himachal Pradesh	1.26	1.80	1.80	2.00	1.33
GRL Monastic School, Bomdila, Arunachal Pradesh	1.18	1.68	1.68	1.68	1.12
International Buddhist Confederation (IBC, New Delhi)	4.20	21.00	57.00	36.00	4.42
Namghyal Institute of Tibetology, Sikkim	3.10	2.00	3.30	3.30	2.20