

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CULTURE

RAJYA SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 349
TO BE ANSWERED ON 06.02.2025

RECOGNITION OF CHHAU DANCE AS A CLASSICAL DANCE FORM

349. SHRI SAMIK BHATTACHARYA:

Will the Minister of Culture be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is aware that Chhau dance, a traditional and unique art form of Bengal, has not yet been accorded the status of a classical dance by the Ministry;
- (b) whether Chhau dance meets all the criteria to be accorded the status of a classical dance;
- (c) the reasons for excluding Chhau dance from the list of classical dances, despite its rich cultural and historical significance; and
- (d) whether any proposals have been received or discussions held regarding granting 'classical dance' recognition to Chhau dance and if so, the current status of such proposals?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF CULTURE AND TOURISM

(GAJENDRA SINGH SHEKHAWAT)

- (a) to (d) The Government of India is committed to promotion and preservation of traditional performing arts including Chhau Nritya.

The Sangeet Natak Akademi (SNA), an autonomous body under the Ministry of Culture, preserves, promotes, and documents India's diverse performing arts, including music, dance, drama, and folk & tribal traditions including Chhau Dance. SNA does not declare any dance form as classical. In 2010, Chhau dance was inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

The Akademi has taken several steps to support and promote Chhau dance. In 2018, it established the Sangeet Natak Akademi's Chhau Kendra at Chandankiyari, District Bokaro, Jharkhand, with the objective of preserving and imparting training in Chhau dance.

Under the Training and Preservation of Traditional, Folk & Tribal Performing Arts Scheme, the Akademi provides support to ensure continuity of traditional art forms through the Guru-Shishya Parampara.

Under the Kala Deeksha initiative, the Sangeet Natak Akademi has started training programmes of the Chhau dance under the Guru Shishya Parampara, as enclosed in Annexure.

ANNEXURE

Details of the Training programmes for the Chhau Nritya under the Guru Shishya Parampara is given below:

- **Seraikella Chhau**
 - Shri Malay Sahoo, Seraikella, Jharkhand
 - Smt Kusmi Pattayanayak, Seraikella, Jharkhand
- **Purulia Chhau**
 - Shri Sadhucharan Mahato (Mahila Group), Kushaldih, Purulia, West Bengal
 - Shri Bhuban Kumar, Jhalda-II, Purulia, West Bengal
- **Manbhum Chhau**
 - Shri Ramchand Mahato, Andhartelia, Bokaro, Jharkhand
- **Seraikella Chhau Mask Making**
 - Shri Sushanta Kumar Mahapatra, Seraikella, Jharkhand
- **Mayurbhanj Chhau**
 - Shri Laltu Mohanta, Mayurbhanj, Odisha
 - Shri Sachindra Dhara, Mayurbhanj, Odisha
 - Shri Narendra Tipiria, Mayurbhanj, Odisha
 - Shri Akshay Kumar Mohanta, Mayurbhanj, Odisha
 - Shri Foren Narayan Dhara, Baripada, Mayurbhanj, Odisha
 - Shri Maheswar Munda, Dalima, Tiring, Mayurbhanj, Odisha
 - Shri Srishtidhar Mohanta, Rairangpur, Odisha
 - Shri Shib Charan Mohanta, Karanjia, Mayurbhanj, Odisha