

Preserving India's Intellectual Heritage

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The Union Minister for Culture and Tourism, in **Lok Sabha**, highlighted efforts to preserve India's **Ancient Knowledge Centres**, which once led advancements in **philosophy, mathematics, medicine, and literature**. Despite invasions, these traditions endured through **oral transmission, migration of scholars, and foreign translations**.

Ancient Knowledge Systems

- **Literature** - Vedas, Upanishads, Jataka tales, Panchatantra, Thirukkural, Vachanas.
 - **Philosophy** - Āstika (Vedanta, Yoga) and Nāstika (Buddhism, Jainism) schools.
 - **Sciences** - Mathematics (zero, decimal system), Ayurveda, Alchemy, Yoga.
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Ancient Knowledge Centres

- **Takshashila** (Pakistan) - 6th BCE - 5th CE, scholars like Chanakya, Charaka, Pāṇini.
 - **Nalanda** (Bihar) - Founded by Kumaragupta I, documented by Xuanzang.
 - **Vikramashila** (Bihar) - 8th-12th CE, Vajrayana Buddhism.
 - **Odantapuri** (Bihar) - Founded by Gopala I, 8th-12th CE.
 - **Vallabhi** (Gujarat) - 600-1200 CE, focused on Buddhist philosophy, medicine, law.
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Survival of Ancient Knowledge

- **Oral Tradition** - Guru-Shishya parampara.
 - **Migration of Scholars** - Knowledge spread to Tibet, China, Southeast Asia.
 - **Religious Institutions** - Monasteries preserved texts.
 - **Foreign Records** - Xuanzang, Al-Biruni translated texts.
 - **New Learning Hubs** - Varanasi, Kanchipuram.
 - **Global Integration** - Concepts in mathematics, Ayurveda influenced Islamic & European scholars.
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Government Initiatives

IGNCA (1987) - Research and restoration of Indian knowledge systems.

- **Vedic Heritage Portal (2023)** - Digital repository of Vedas, Upanishads.
- **Project 'Mausam'** - Reviving ancient maritime trade links.
- **Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) Initiative** - Integrating Vedic maths, Ayurveda, Yoga into education.
- **Divisions of IGNCA** - Kalanidhi (research), Kalakosa (publications), Janapada Sampada (folk arts), Kaladarsana (exhibitions), Cultural Informatics (digital archives).

Conclusion

Despite historical destruction, India's **intellectual traditions survived through adaptation and integration**. Government efforts, especially **IGNCA**, focus on **reviving and preserving** these traditions for future generations.



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