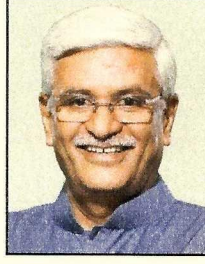


गजेन्द्र सिंह शेखावत  
Gajendra Singh Shekhawat



संस्कृति मंत्री एवं  
पर्यटन मंत्री  
भारत सरकार  
Minister of Culture and  
Minister of Tourism  
Government of India

### MESSAGE

I am delighted to convey my warm congratulations to Dr Mehool H Sanghrajka and to the Institute of Jainology on the landmark agreement for the restitution of more than 2,000 historic Jain manuscripts from the Wellcome Collection.

These manuscripts are an invaluable part of India's civilization and spiritual heritage. Preserved across centuries, they bear witness not only to the richness of Jain philosophy, literature and learning, but also to India's enduring traditions of scholarship, tolerance and reverence for knowledge.

I particularly commend the thoughtful and constructive manner in which the Institute of Jainology, under Dr Sanghrajka's leadership as Managing Trustee, has pursued this important initiative. The agreement demonstrates that restitution need not be concerned with the past alone. When undertaken in a spirit of mutual respect and partnership, it can create new opportunities for preservation, scholarship, education and engagement for generations to come.

The decision that the manuscripts should be held at the University of Birmingham, while ownership is restored to the Jain community through the Institute of Jainology, represents an innovative model of custodianship. It ensures that this precious heritage will be professionally conserved, made accessible to scholars and the wider community, and placed at the heart of a growing international centre for Jain Studies.

It is also fitting that this endeavour has been guided by the Jain values of **Ahimsa** and **Anekantavada** — approaching difficult questions of history without antagonism, recognising different perspectives, and seeking through dialogue an outcome that serves the common good. Such an approach carries a message extending well beyond this particular collection.

I congratulate the Wellcome Collection for its constructive engagement, the University of Birmingham for its commitment to the future care and study of these manuscripts, and the Institute of Jainology for representing the Jain community with distinction throughout this process.

India takes great pride in the preservation and global appreciation of its ancient knowledge traditions. I am confident that this historic initiative will contribute significantly to the study and understanding of Jain heritage internationally and will serve as an example of what can be achieved through dialogue, scholarship and cooperation.

Please accept my warmest congratulations on this significant achievement, together with my best wishes to the Institute of Jainology for its continued work in preserving and promoting India's Jain heritage.

(Gajendra Singh Shekhawat)

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