

SAMHiTA Project

Prelims: Current events of national and international importance | International relations

Why in news?

India and Sri Lanka are strengthening their cultural cooperation through the preservation of their shared Buddhist heritage, with the launch of the SAMHiTA Project at Colombo's Gangaramaya Temple.

- **SAMHiTA** - South Asian Manuscript Histories and Textual Archive Project.
- **Aim** -
 - To digitise ancient manuscripts and preserve their historical, religious and cultural knowledge for future generations.
 - Seeks to safeguard these historical records in digital form while improving their preservation and accessibility.
 - To encourage more institutions across Sri Lanka to participate in the initiative.
- **Nodal Institution** - Undertaken by the India International Centre in New Delhi, with grant assistance from the Government of India.
- **Partner** - Gangaramaya Temple has become the first institution in Sri Lanka to partner with the project.
 - **Gangaramaya Temple** - Located in the heart of Colombo near Beira Lake, is one of Sri Lanka's most iconic and culturally significant Buddhist temples.
 - Established in the late 19th century by the scholar-monk Hikkaduwe Sri Sumangala Nayaka Thera, it functions as both a bustling place of worship and an eclectic cultural hub.
- **Feature** - Under a Memorandum of Understanding signed in July this year, a team of local experts is ***digitising 100 ancient manuscripts*** preserved at the temple.
- The work is expected to be completed by the end of November, with India extending support to the initiative.
- The manuscripts contain valuable knowledge relating to religious traditions, philosophy, languages and cultural practices, offering insights into the region's intellectual and spiritual heritage.
- **Timeline** - The first phase of digitization at the temple is scheduled for completion by the end of November 2026.
- **Expansion Plans** - Gangaramaya Temple is the first partner in Sri Lanka, but the project aims to scale up by encouraging more historical and religious institutions across the country to secure their archives digitally.
- **Significance** - The SAMHiTA Project reflects the longstanding Buddhist and civilisational links between India and Sri Lanka and underscores the role of cultural

cooperation in preserving South Asia's shared heritage.



Reference

[DD News | SAMHiTA Project : Strengthening India-Sri Lanka Cultural Ties](#)

