

WEST BENGAL HERITAGE OLYMPIAD 2024



Invites you to participate from
19 November, 2024 to 31 January, 2025

Organised by



Registration Link : www.worldheritageolympiad.org

Last Date of Registration : 26 December, 2024

Introduction

West Bengal Heritage Olympiad is an ambitious initiative aimed at raising awareness about our rich cultural heritage among school students all across West Bengal. This annual event, spearheaded by the Heritage Society, Heritage India Olympiad Development Federation and World Heritage Olympiad have garnered increasing acclaim and participation, emblematic of its growing significance in fostering a deeper appreciation for the rich tapestry of West Bengal's heritage among the younger generation.

As the West Bengal Heritage Olympiad gears up for its upcoming edition, the anticipation and momentum surrounding the event have reached unprecedented heights. With the active participation and collaboration of over 100 schools spanning different districts of West Bengal, the stage is set for an even more expansive and impactful iteration of the Olympiad. It is projected that the event will attract an estimated 10,000 students from across the state, reflecting the growing resonance and reach of this transformative initiative.

In addition to the annual test conducted across schools in West Bengal, the West Bengal Heritage Olympiad stands as a bold initiative aimed at nurturing a profound sense of pride and responsibility towards West Bengal's cultural heritage among its young populace. This multifaceted endeavour goes beyond mere academic assessments, seeking to create an environment where students actively engage with and embrace the rich tapestry of West Bengal's cultural legacy.

Through its immersive and interactive approach, the Olympiad transcends conventional educational paradigms, providing students with a vibrant platform to explore and West Bengal's diverse heritage. Rather than confining learning within the confines of textbooks, the Olympiad encourages experiential learning through a myriad of activities organized throughout the year. From stimulating quizzes and thought-provoking debates to captivating cultural performances and enlightening heritage walks, participants are immersed in a tapestry of experiences that deepen their connection to their local and national heritage.

Beyond its immediate educational objectives, the West Bengal Heritage Olympiad serves as a catalyst for broader social and cultural transformation. By nurturing a generation of culturally literate and engaged citizens, the Olympiad lays the foundation for a more inclusive and sustainable future, wherein the preservation and promotion of heritage are regarded as shared responsibilities. As participants embark on their journey of discovery and exploration, they not only enrich their own lives but also contribute towards the collective endeavour of safeguarding local, regional, and national cultural heritage for generations to come.



Dr. Anantashutosh Dwivedi, Director, Bharat Heritage Olympiad receiving the award from senior IPS officer Sri Vikas Vaibhav

West Bengal Heritage Olympiad serves as a unique platform to celebrate, preserve, and promote the rich cultural heritage of the region. Unlike traditional academic Olympiads that primarily focus on subjects such as mathematics or science, the West Bengal Heritage Olympiad distinguishes itself by embracing an interdisciplinary approach that spans a vast array of subjects, ranging from built heritage to intangible heritage, and from scientific heritage to educational heritage. This holistic framework acknowledges the interconnectedness of various facets of West Bengal's cultural legacy, recognizing that a comprehensive understanding of heritage requires exploration beyond traditional academic boundaries.

West Bengal Heritage Olympiad represents a concerted effort to foster cultural awareness and appreciation among students, educators, and communities alike. Through a diverse range of activities and engagements, participants are encouraged to explore the rich historical, artistic, scientific, and educational dimensions of their local, regional and national cultural heritage. By providing a platform for interdisciplinary learning and exploration, the Olympiad enriches both academic understanding and cultivates a sense of cultural identity and pride among participants.

One of the defining features of the West Bengal Heritage Olympiad is its inclusive and all-encompassing approach towards heritage education. Recognizing the importance of grassroots heritage preservation, the Olympiad places a particular emphasis on highlighting the cultural significance of villages and native heritage identities. By celebrating the unique heritage of each village and community, the Olympiad aims to empower local stakeholders and instil a sense of ownership in the preservation of their cultural heritage. This grassroots approach not only ensures the preservation of local heritage but also contributes to the broader narrative of national cultural identity.

Focusing on village heritage holds paramount importance within the broader context of cultural preservation and societal identity. The adage "My village, My heritage" (Mera Gaon, Meri Dharohar) encapsulates the intrinsic connection between individuals and their ancestral roots, highlighting the profound significance of village heritage in shaping personal identities and collective consciousness. Mahatma Gandhi, one of the foremost proponents of village-centric development, underscored the pivotal role of village heritage in the fabric of Indian society. He regarded villages as the soul of India, embodying the essence of its culture, traditions, and values.

India's status as a land of villages underscores the foundational role these rural settlements play in nurturing cultural, social, and civilizational ethos. Villages serve as repositories of traditional knowledge systems, oral histories, and indigenous practices that have been passed down through generations. These rural enclaves harbour a rich tapestry of customs, rituals, and artisanal skills that are integral to India's cultural heritage. Apart from that, village heritage serves as a manifestation of local identity, reflecting the unique socio-cultural fabric of each community.



Senior IPS officer Sri Vinay Kumar, Director General, Bihar Police releasing the poster of the Olympiad

Through distinctive architectural styles, folk arts, music, and cuisine, villages convey a sense of belonging and rootedness that fosters a deep sense of pride and connection among residents. West Bengal Heritage Olympiad creatively adopts an inclusive approach to test the participants' awareness of their rural and local heritage.

Village heritage embodies the indigenous knowledge systems that form the bedrock of India's intellectual tradition. From sustainable agricultural practices to traditional healing methods, villages harbour a wealth of wisdom derived from centuries of lived experience and adaptation to local environments. By preserving and revitalizing these age-old practices, students can become aware of the rich reservoir of knowledge that offers solutions to contemporary challenges such as climate change, resource management, and sustainable development.

The villages of India have historically played a pivotal role in supporting and sustaining major institutions of the time, exemplified by the renowned Nalanda Mahavihara. The history of Nalanda Mahavihara, one of the world's oldest universities, reveals the symbiotic relationship between rural communities and educational institutions. Records indicate that Nalanda Mahavihara was supported by more than 200 villages located in its vicinity, which contributed resources, patronage, and manpower to ensure its flourishing. This historical precedent underscores the indispensable role villages have played in nurturing and sustaining centers of learning and cultural heritage across India.

The heritage sites and imageries scattered across these villages in modern times serve as tangible manifestations of the profound contributions rural communities have made to India's cultural landscape. From ancient temples and monuments to traditional art forms and folklore, these villages serve as living repositories of India's rich cultural heritage. Each village bears witness to centuries of history, tradition, and cultural exchange, reflecting the diverse influences that have shaped the region over millennia.

The West Bengal Heritage Olympiad serves as a catalyst for celebrating and preserving the cultural heritage of rural West Bengal, providing students and participants, the majority of whom hail from rural areas, with a platform to take pride in their rural roots and preserve their traditional cultural identity. By engaging with heritage-focused activities and educational initiatives, participants gain a deeper appreciation for the cultural heritage of their villages and communities. Through quizzes, debates, cultural performances, and heritage walks, the Olympiad organises a range of activities throughout the year for the participants to foster a sense of connection and pride among rural youth, empowering them to become custodians of their heritage.

West Bengal Heritage Olympiad, thus, serves as a catalyst for interdisciplinary learning, bridging the gap between academic disciplines and cultural studies. Participants are encouraged to draw connections between history, art, literature, and social dynamics, gaining a comprehensive perspective on West Bengal's cultural heritage. By integrating diverse strands of knowledge, the Olympiad nurtures critical thinking skills, creativity, and cultural literacy, empowering students to become active participants in shaping the future of their communities.

The annual event adopts an inclusive approach that transcends geographical and socio-economic barriers. It reaches out to schools across different districts of West Bengal, ensuring widespread participation and representation from diverse backgrounds. This inclusive ethos democratizes access to cultural education and fosters a sense of unity and shared identity among participants, regardless of their backgrounds.

Testing Process and Structured Evaluation

The West Bengal Heritage Olympiad, designed to foster an appreciation of West Bengal's rich cultural legacy among students, will be organized across three distinct levels: Beginners (Class 1 to 6), Intermediate (Class 7 to 8), and Advanced (Class 9 to 12). The testing process for this Olympiad is further structured into three successive stages to ensure a comprehensive evaluation of participants for each level.

In the first stage, the examination will be conducted in nearly 100 schools spread across various districts of West Bengal. This extensive reach ensures that students from diverse backgrounds and regions have the opportunity to participate and showcase their knowledge. Each school will select winners from the three designated levels, based on their performance in this initial examination. These winners will then proceed to the second stage.

The second stage of the Olympiad involves a more competitive examination at the district level. Winners from each school in a particular district will gather to compete in this round. This stage aims to identify the top students from each district, promoting a higher level of competition and encouraging students to deepen their understanding of West Bengal's heritage.

The final stage of the testing process is both prestigious and challenging. The winners from the district-level examinations will be invited to a grand reception in the capital of the state. Here, they will undergo the final round of testing, which will determine the state toppers for each of the three levels of the Olympiad. This ultimate examination is designed to rigorously assess the student's knowledge and passion for West Bengal's heritage, culminating in the selection of the most knowledgeable students in the state.

Throughout these stages, the West Bengal Heritage Olympiad aims to test students' knowledge and inspire them to explore and appreciate the historical and cultural richness of their state. The structured progression from school to district to state level ensures that the competition is fair and inclusive, while also providing a platform for students to achieve recognition and reward for their intellectual efforts.



Participation of the students of the selected school in the Olympiad.

Scheme of Examination

The West Bengal Heritage Olympiad is structured to comprehensively evaluate students' knowledge and appreciation of West Bengal's rich cultural heritage through a multi-stage examination process.

Stage 1 (School Level): This initial phase will take place at participating schools and is designed to assess a broad range of knowledge among students from Classes 1 to 12. The examination will last for one hour and consist of objective, multiple-choice questions or as per requirement. These questions will cover topics that test general awareness, exposure to heritage sites, and both conceptual and theoretical understanding of West Bengal's heritage. This format ensures a standardized assessment method, allowing for efficient evaluation of a large number of participants and setting a foundation for the more advanced stages of the Olympiad.

Stage 2 (District Level): The district-level competition diverges in its approach based on the student's grade levels. For beginners (Classes 1 to 6), a drawing cum painting competition or essay writing or as per requirement contest will be organized. This creative and expressive format is intended to gauge the students' comprehensive abilities, encouraging them to convey their understanding and appreciation of heritage in artistic and written forms. For intermediate (Classes 7 to 8) and advanced (Classes 9 to 12) level students, the examination will consist of subjective questions, including both short and long answers. This one-hour test will delve deeper into the students' conceptual understanding and logical reasoning, while also assessing their ability to articulate heritage awareness. The subjective format encourages critical thinking and detailed expression, providing a platform for students to demonstrate their in-depth knowledge and analytical skills.

Stage 3 (State Level): The final stage is a prestigious culmination of the Olympiad, bringing together the district toppers from all three levels (Beginners, Intermediate, and Advanced) in the capital of the state. Here, the selected students will participate in an objective, oral speech or debate contest or as per requirement. This final stage is crafted to assess the students' verbal articulation, depth of knowledge, and persuasive skills regarding West Bengal's heritage. The oral presentations and debates will challenge students to engage with heritage topics dynamically, demonstrating both their factual knowledge and also their passion and advocacy for cultural preservation. This stage aims to identify and celebrate the state toppers, those who can compellingly communicate their understanding and appreciation of West Bengal's heritage.

Throughout these stages, the West Bengal Heritage Olympiad is thoughtfully designed to progressively challenge students at each level. By combining objective assessments, creative expressions, written analyses, and oral presentations, the Olympiad provides a holistic evaluation of students' heritage awareness and intellectual capabilities. This comprehensive approach ensures that the most knowledgeable and articulate students are recognized and rewarded, fostering a deeper connection with and appreciation for West Bengal's cultural heritage among the youth.



Registered students participating in the Olympiad

Awards

The awards for the West Bengal Heritage Olympiad are designed to recognize and honour the exceptional knowledge and enthusiasm of students who excel in different stages of the examination process. These awards aim to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of students who demonstrate a deep understanding and appreciation of West Bengal's rich cultural heritage.

District Heritage Ambassador Award : This award is presented to the top-performing students at the district level. It recognizes outstanding achievement within their respective districts, highlighting the students' proficiency in heritage knowledge. The District Heritage Ambassador Award serves as a significant accolade, elevating the recipients' status as young advocates for cultural heritage within their communities. These students are celebrated for their academic excellence and passion for heritage, encouraging them to continue their journey in cultural education.

State Heritage Ambassador Award : This prestigious award is given to the state toppers from each of the three levels—Beginners (Class 1 to 6), Intermediate (Class 7 to 8), and Advanced (Class 9 to 12). The State Heritage Ambassador Award honours the highest level of academic and cultural accomplishment. It positions the recipients as leading figures in heritage advocacy across West Bengal. These students, having demonstrated exceptional understanding, articulation, and enthusiasm for West Bengal's heritage, are recognized as exemplary representatives of the Olympiad's mission.

West Bengal Heritage Olympiad Alumni Network :

Winners at both the district and state levels and interested participants are given the opportunity to join the West Bengal Heritage Olympiad Alumni Network. This exclusive group connects them with a broader mission of heritage awareness and provides a platform for continued involvement and contribution to cultural preservation efforts. As members of the alumni network, these students gain access to special events, resources, and initiatives that further promote the importance of heritage education.

Heritage Tour Benefits : The Olympiad offers Heritage Tour benefits to the toppers at different stages. These tours are designed to provide students with first-hand experiences of West Bengal's significant heritage sites, deepening their understanding and appreciation through immersive learning. This experiential learning is a key component of the awards, ensuring that students gain a comprehensive understanding of the heritage they have studied.

In addition to these, the winners at various stages of the Olympiad will receive a range of accolades, including certificates, prizes, and medals. Participants will be awarded participation and merit certificates, recognizing their involvement and exceptional performance, respectively. Prizes such as trophies, books, educational materials, electronic gadgets like tablets and laptops, and scholarships for further studies may also be given. Medals, including gold, silver, and bronze, will be awarded to the top three performers in each category or subject.

Sponsoring Benefits

The Olympiad is an ambitious initiative designed to raise awareness about West Bengal's rich cultural heritage among school students. This event promises to engage over 100 schools from various districts across the state through the registration process. Sponsoring the Olympiad offers a multitude of benefits that can significantly enhance the sponsoring organization's profile and community impact.

1. **Enhanced Brand Visibility:** The logo and name of the sponsoring agency will be prominently displayed in event promotions, materials, and media coverage, significantly increasing the organization's visibility and reach. This ensures that the sponsor's brand is seen by a wide audience, including students, educators, parents, and community members, thereby enhancing brand awareness across various demographics.
2. **Community Engagement:** By supporting this educational initiative, the sponsorship will demonstrate the organisation's commitment to the community and the development of young minds. This involvement contributes to the growth and education of students and reflects positively on the sponsor's dedication to fostering educational and cultural values within the community.
3. **Positive PR and Corporate Social Responsibility:** Association with a meaningful and impactful event like the Heritage Olympiad contributes to the building of a sponsor's larger corporate image and reputation. This involvement positions the sponsor as a socially responsible entity that prioritizes educational enrichment and cultural preservation, enhancing the sponsor's public relations profile and corporate social responsibility credentials.
4. **Networking Opportunities:** Sponsors will have the chance to engage with educators, students, parents, and other stakeholders throughout the Olympiad Program, fostering valuable connections. These interactions can lead to meaningful partnerships, collaborative opportunities, and insights into the educational sector, benefiting the sponsor's business objectives and community relations.
5. **Brand Recognition:** The extensive reach of the Olympiad across different districts of West Bengal ensures that the sponsor's brand receives widespread recognition. This visibility is particularly valuable in remote areas, where the event provides quality exposure to potential markets and future opportunities. The brand's association with a respected and educational event like the Heritage Olympiad can lead to increased trust and loyalty among the audience.
6. **Market Research and Insights:** Participation in the Olympiad provides sponsors with unique access to a broad and diverse audience. This access can be utilized for conducting market research, gathering insights on student and parent preferences, and understanding community needs and aspirations, which can inform the sponsor's future business strategies.
7. **Exclusive Sponsorship Rights:** Sponsors may be given exclusive rights to certain aspects of the event, such as branding specific stages, workshops, or prizes. This exclusivity can help differentiate the sponsor from competitors and create a unique association with the educational and cultural values promoted by the Olympiad.
8. **Increased Social Media Presence:** The Olympiad is likely to generate significant social media buzz, and sponsors can capitalize on this by being featured in online posts, event hashtags, and digital promotions. This increased social media presence can amplify the sponsor's reach and engagement with a younger, tech-savvy audience.

Inaugural and Launch of the Olympiad – 2024

The Olympiad 2024 has been officially launched during the inaugural ceremony of World Tourism Day on 27 September 2024. The launch event promises to be a grand affair, setting the stage for the country-wide celebration of India's rich cultural and historical heritage.

Launch Event Details : The World Tourism Day, a premier gathering aimed at promoting and preserving cultural heritage, provides an ideal platform for the launch of the Olympiad. The presence of distinguished guests underscores the importance of this initiative in fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of India's rich cultural legacy among young students.

Post-Launch Activities : Following the launch event, the Olympiad organizing committee is undertaking a comprehensive outreach program targeting various schools across different districts. This outreach aims to generate awareness about the Olympiad, encourage participation, and provide detailed information about the competition's structure and objectives. The committee is engaging with school administrations, teachers, and students, ensuring that all interested participants have access to the necessary resources and support.

Registration Process : The registration process for the Olympiad 2024 has been officially commenced from 27 September 2024. Schools and individual students is registering through both online and offline portals specifically designed to streamline the enrolment process. The portal will provide detailed guidelines on eligibility criteria, competition stages, and important dates. Additionally, the organizing committee will offer assistance to ensure a smooth and inclusive registration process, accommodating participants from diverse backgrounds.



Dr. Prem Kumar, Hon'ble Minister, Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Government of Bihar and other dignitaries releasing the poster of the Olympiad.

Pilot Projects on Heritage Olympiads in Previous Years

In previous years, the Olympiad was conducted successfully on a smaller scale as pilot projects, focusing on engaging schools in Patna and several districts in other states. These initial efforts were designed to test the feasibility and effectiveness of the Heritage Olympiad model, allowing organizers to refine the format and logistics of the competition. Schools in Patna served as primary venues, where students participated enthusiastically, demonstrating a keen interest in Bihar's rich cultural heritage. The pilot programs included a series of quizzes, interactive sessions, and educational activities aimed at enhancing students' knowledge and appreciation of historical sites, cultural traditions, and notable figures from Bihar's history. The pilot editions of the Bihar Heritage Olympiad, witnessed a remarkable surge in participation, underscoring its growing popularity and impact. Drawing the enthusiastic involvement of over 100 schools and an impressive cohort of around 30,000 students from diverse corners of Bihar and other states, the event served as a vibrant platform for the exploration and celebration of our local and regional cultural heritage.



The successful execution of these pilot Heritage Olympiads provided valuable insights and feedback, which have been instrumental in shaping the larger-scale West Bengal Heritage Olympiad 2024. The organization also expanded its reach to include districts in other states, further validating the program's appeal and educational value across diverse regions. This year's Olympiad is set to take place on a much larger scale, involving a wide range of schools across various districts in West Bengal.



Glimpses of participation of the registered students of the selected schools during the pilot project.

Message

Dear Students, Parents, and School Administrators,

Greetings to all as we embark on the exciting journey of the West Bengal Heritage Olympiad 2024!

The West Bengal Heritage Olympiad represents not just a competition, but a unique opportunity to explore and celebrate the rich cultural heritage of West Bengal. We have officially launched the Olympiad of this year on 27 September 2024 during the occasion of World Tourism Day. This momentous occasion was graced by the presence of esteemed dignitaries. Their presence underscores the importance of this initiative in fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of our heritage among the younger generation.

Following the launch, the organizing committee has initiated country-wide registration campaign, reaching out to schools across various states. This extensive campaign aims to engage more than 500 schools and more than 1 lakh students have the opportunity to participate in this prestigious Olympiad. This year's Olympiad promises to be larger and more inclusive than ever, with the goal of fostering a deeper connection to India's cultural heritage among a diverse group of students.

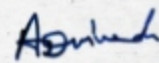
To all the participating students, we extend our heartfelt encouragement and best wishes. The West Bengal Heritage Olympiad is an extraordinary opportunity for you to delve deep into the history and cultural heritage of the state. By participating, you will enhance your knowledge and develop a profound appreciation for the legacy of West Bengal. This Olympiad is a platform for you to showcase your talents, challenge your intellect, and engage with peers who share your enthusiasm for heritage studies. We believe that this experience will be both enriching and rewarding, offering you a chance to explore your roots and gain a greater sense of identity and pride in your heritage.

To parents, we seek your support and encouragement for your children as they participate in the West Bengal Heritage Olympiad 2024. Your role is crucial in nurturing their interest in our cultural heritage and history. The Olympiad provides a unique educational experience that extends beyond conventional classroom learning, fostering critical thinking, curiosity, and a sense of pride in our heritage. We are grateful for your continued support and hope that you will motivate your children to take full advantage of this invaluable opportunity. By encouraging their participation, you are helping them develop a broader perspective and a deeper appreciation for our cultural legacy.

To the administrators and teachers of the participating schools, we express our sincere gratitude for your cooperation and enthusiasm in promoting the West Bengal Heritage Olympiad 2024. Your commitment to providing quality education and fostering a love for cultural heritage among students is commendable. The Olympiad will offer numerous benefits to your students, including the development of a deeper understanding of our India's history, improved academic skills, and the opportunity to win prestigious awards. We appreciate your efforts in facilitating the registration process and encouraging wide participation from your schools. Your support is vital in making this event a success and ensuring that it reaches its full potential in inspiring young minds.

As we embark on this remarkable journey, we extend our best wishes to all participants, parents, and schools. May this Olympiad be a source of inspiration and pride for everyone involved, and may it instil a lasting appreciation for the rich heritage of India. Let us all come together to celebrate and preserve the legacy of our state, ensuring that it continues to inspire future generations.

Best Regards



Dr. Anantashutosh Dwivedi

President, World Heritage Olympiad;

Director General, Heritage Society, India;

Chairman, Heritage India Olympiad Development Federation