अंकिता मिश्रा बुंदेला, भा.प्र.से.
अपर सचिव
Ankita Mishra Bundela, IAS
Additional Secretary

सत्यमेव जयते

भारत सरकार
शिक्षा मंत्रालय
उच्चतर शिक्षा विभाग
Government of India
Ministry of Education
Department of Higher Education

D.O. No. 16-2/2026-Skt. I(Pt.) **Dated: 31st October 2026**

Dear Sir,

This is in reference to D.O. No. 16-2/2026-Skt.I (Pt.) dated 9th October 2026 regarding the nationwide Students' Engagement Programme being organised as part of the fifth edition of Kashi Tamil Sangamam (KTS 5.0), scheduled to be held from 28 November 2026 to 12 December 2026.

2. Kashi Tamil Sangamam, envisioned by the Hon'ble Prime Minister, seeks to celebrate, reaffirm and strengthen the age-old civilisational links between Kashi and Tamil Nadu. Thirukkural is a classical Tamil text of enduring ethical, social and philosophical significance. The theme of KTS 5.0 is "**Thirukkural Payilvom - Thirukkural Abhyas Karen**".

3. As part of KTS 5.0, a nationwide Students' Engagement Programme will be undertaken through 1,000 higher educational institutions across the country. The programme seeks to promote wider understanding of the Thirukkural among students from different academic disciplines and language backgrounds through structured study, research and campus-based knowledge-dissemination activities.

4. As communicated vide the D.O. referred above, your institution has already been designated as the Nodal Higher Educational Institution for the concerned State/Union Territory, as indicated in **Annexure-I.** All interested Higher Education Institutions (Central/State/Private Universities and Colleges) may register on the KTS 5.0 portal (kts.cict.in). The Nodal Institution shall select the Participating Institutions from amongst all eligible and registered Institutions from the State/UT, in accordance with the Standard Operating Procedure, as per numbers prescribed in **Annexure-I**. The final list of selected Institutions shall be furnished in the format at **Annexure-II.**

5. The selected Participating Institutions shall assess interested students on the basis of their interest and understanding of the Thirukkural through an appropriate and transparent assessment process, using the prescribed resource materials in text and audio-visual formats as available on CICT's KTS 5.0 portal. The materials are available in 22 Scheduled Indian Languages, including Tamil and Hindi, as well as in English. This is intended to encourage students to study and propagate the teachings of the Thirukkural in an Indian languages known to them. Participating Institutions are accordingly advised to encourage the participation of students from diverse language backgrounds, subject to the availability of suitable faculty guidance. Each selected Participating Institution shall assess interested students and nominate one student on merit through the CICT KTS 5.0 portal by 20 November 2026. The one-month research and academic engagement will commence **on 15 December 2026.**

6. The revised programme guidelines, timeline, roles and responsibilities; format for furnishing Participating Institution and activity details; and the SOP for selection of Participating Institutions are enclosed at **Annexures III, IV and V** respectively.

7. The Nodal Institution is requested to kindly nominate a senior officer as the State/UT Nodal Officer and furnish the details in the format below, if not already shared.

Particulars	**Details**
Name of Nodal Institution	
Name and designation of Nodal Officer	
Mobile No.	
Official email ID	

8. In view of the above I would request you to kindly initiate necessary action and make all requisite arrangements for smooth and timely implementation of the Students' Engagement Programme under KTS 5.0, in close coordination with the Central Institute of Classical Tamil (CICT).

9. For any clarification or coordination regarding the Students' Engagement Programme, the following officer of CICT may kindly be contacted:

Dr. R. Bhuvaneshwari
Registrar
Central Institute of Classical Tamil (CICT), Chennai
Email: registrar@cict.in
Mobile: 9790325518 / 9965734497

9. I look forward to your continued cooperation and support in making the programme a success.

Yours sincerely,

31/10/26

(Ankita Mishra Bundela)

Vice-Chancellor/Director
(As per Annexure-I)

ANNEXURE-I

STATE/UT-WISE LIST OF NODAL HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

#	State/UT	Nodal HEI	Number of Participating HEIs to be Selected
1	Andhra Pradesh	Central University of Andhra Pradesh	50
2	Arunachal Pradesh	Rajiv Gandhi University	7
3	Assam	Assam University	14
4	Bihar	Central University of South Bihar	18
5	Chhattisgarh	Guru Ghasidas Vishwavidyalaya	14
6	Goa	NIT Goa	7
7	Gujarat and Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu	Central University of Gujarat	50
8	Haryana	Central University of Haryana	21
9	Himachal Pradesh	Central University of Himachal Pradesh	9
10	Jharkhand	Central University of Jharkhand	11
11	Karnataka	Central University of Karnataka	49
12	Kerala and Lakshadweep	Central University of Kerala	21
13	Madhya Pradesh	Dr. Harisingh Gour Vishwavidyalaya	40
14	Maharashtra	Mahatma Gandhi Antarrashtriya Hindi Vishwavidyalaya	71
15	Manipur	Manipur University	5
16	Meghalaya	North-Eastern Hill University	5
17	Mizoram	Mizoram University	5
18	Nagaland	Nagaland University	5
19	Odisha	Central University of Odisha	48
20	Punjab and Chandigarh	Central University of Punjab	21
21	Rajasthan	Central University of Rajasthan	37
22	Sikkim	Sikkim University	5
23	Tamil Nadu and Andaman and Nicobar Islands	Central University of Tamil Nadu	50
24	Telangana	University of Hyderabad	23
25	Tripura	Tripura University	5
26	Uttar Pradesh	Banaras Hindu University	300
27	Uttarakhand	Hemvati Nandan Bahuguna Garhwal University	11
28	West Bengal	Visva-Bharati	48
29	Delhi	University of Delhi	34

30	Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh	Central University of Jammu	11
31	Puducherry	Pondicherry University	5
TOTAL			**1000**

Note: Registration is open to institutions without any State/UT-wise ceiling. The figures above indicate the final number of Participating Institutions to be selected by the respective Nodal Institution in accordance with Annexure-V. Registration does not by itself confer selection.

ANNEXURE-II

FORMAT FOR LIST OF INSTITUTIONS SELECTED BY THE NODAL HEI

State/UT: .....

Name of Nodal HEI: .....

Number of institutions prescribed in Annexure-I: .....

Total registrations received: .....

Number of institutions selected: .....

#	Name of Institution	District/City	Type	AISHE/Institution Code	Coordinator Name	Mobile No.	Email ID

ANNEXURE-III

REVISED PROGRAMME GUIDELINES AND TIMELINE

Programme Information

Item	Details
KTS 5.0 Programme period	**28 November 2026 to 12 December 2026**
Theme	Thirukkural Payilvom - Thirukkural Abhyas Karen - Let's Learn the Thirukkural
Programme portal	kts.cict.in
Registration of institutions	Open to all interested higher educational institutions (Central/State/Private Universities and Colleges) across the States/UTs.
Selection of Participating Institutions	The State/UT Nodal Institution shall select only the number prescribed in Annexure-I, in accordance with the SOP.
Nomination of selected students	One student from each selected Participating Institution is to be nominated on merit **by 20 November 2026**.
Assessment on Understanding of Thirukkural	Demonstrated interest in and understanding of the Thirukkural.
1,000 Selected Students to Join the Inaugural and Valedictory Functions Online	(Date, time and virtual joining link will be notified separately.)
Research and academic engagement	Commencing **on 15 December 2026**.

A. Registration and Selection of Participating Institutions

1. All interested higher educational institutions may register on the KTS 5.0 portal (kts.cict.in).
2. The Nodal Institution shall verify the applications received from institutions interested in participating in the Students' Engagement Programme under KTS 5.0 and select only the number of Participating Institutions prescribed for the State/UT in Annexure-I.
3. Selection shall be undertaken transparently in accordance with the SOP at Annexure-V, with due regard to institutional readiness, outreach capacity, geographical spread and representation.
4. The Nodal Institution shall maintain the complete registration list, evaluation record, approved selected list and a reserve list.

B. Student Assessment and Nomination

1. Each selected Participating Institution shall invite participation from interested students.

2. The institution shall assess students on their interest in and understanding of the Thirukkural in different Indian Languages. The assessment may include a short written test, oral interaction, presentation, essay, quiz or a suitable combination thereof, based on the prescribed study material.
3. The assessment process shall be fair, documented and approved by the Head of the Institution or an authorised committee.
4. Each selected Participating Institution shall nominate one student on merit and complete portal registration **by 20 November 2026**.

C. One-Month Research and Academic Engagement

1. The one-month research and academic engagement shall commence on **15 December 2026**.
2. CICT shall provide multilingual study material, educational videos and academic orientation.
3. Each selected student shall undertake structured study and prepare an original article/research note of four to five pages under the guidance of a Faculty Supervisor/Guide.
4. Each selected student shall deliver a one-hour presentation/lecture at the institution during the engagement period. The institution shall submit the video recording of the presentation to CICT.
5. Each eligible selected student shall be entitled to a stipend of **Rs. 10,000**, subject to the programme guidelines and completion of prescribed requirements.
6. The stipend shall be disbursed directly to the student through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT), subject to validation of the student's bank account details by the Participating Institution through the CICT portal.

D. Revised Timeline

Date/Period	Activity/Milestone	Action/Deliverable
Up to 15 November 2026	Institution registration and outreach	Open registration of interested institutions; Nodal Institutions to undertake wide outreach.
16-17 November 2026	Scrutiny and selection of Participating Institutions	Nodal Institutions to select the prescribed number of Participating Institutions as per **Annexure-I**; reserve list to be prepared.
By 19 November 2026	Assessment on understanding of Thirukkural and nomination of selected students	Each selected Participating Institution shall complete the assessment of interested students.
20 November 2026	Nomination of Selected Students on Portal by Participating Institutions	Each Participating Institution shall nominate only one student on the basis of the assessment undertaken and submit the nomination through the CICT portal.
28 November 2026	Inaugural Function of KTS 5.0	All Nodal Institutions, Participating Institutions and nominated students shall join the programme

		virtually. The virtual joining link shall be communicated separately.
12 December 2026	Valedictory Function of KTS 5.0	All Nodal Institutions, Participating Institutions and nominated students shall join the programme virtually. The virtual joining link shall be communicated separately.
By 14 December 2026	Academic orientation and access to resources	CICT to provide orientation and access to study material and educational videos.
15 December 2026	Commencement of one-month research and academic engagement	Structured study, supervised research and institution-level academic activities commence.
15 December 2026-14 January 2027	Research, writing and knowledge dissemination	Selected students to prepare articles/research notes and deliver institutional presentations under faculty guidance.
By 14 January 2027	Completion of engagement and submission of prescribed outputs	Article/research note, activity report and supporting records to be submitted through the prescribed channel. Stipend shall be disbursed through DBT after verification of the prescribed outputs and validation of the student's bank account details.
Thereafter, as notified by CICT	Academic review, compilation and recognition	CICT to undertake review, compilation and further action in accordance with separately issued instructions.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A. State/UT Nodal Institution

1. Nominate a senior officer as State/UT Nodal Officer and constitute a coordination team.
2. Publicise the registration process across the State/UT among higher educational institutions, including Central, State and private universities and colleges.
3. Scrutinise all registered institutions and select only the State/UT-wise number prescribed in Annexure-I, in accordance with **Annexure-V** or through a documented alternative methodology communicated to CICT.
4. Maintain registration records, evaluation sheets, the approved selected list, reserve list and evidence of approval by the competent authority.
5. Ensure that each selected Participating Institution assesses students on their interest in and understanding of the Thirukkural and nominates one student **by 20 November 2026**.
6. Ensure that all Participating Institutions, along with their nominated students, attend the Inaugural and Valedictory Programmes virtually.
7. Coordinate with CICT for verification, orientation, learning resources and commencement of the one-month engagement on **15 December 2026**.
8. Monitor the preparation of articles/research notes, the conduct of one-hour presentations and the maintenance of institutional documentation, and submit consolidated reports as prescribed.

B. Selected Participating Institution

1. Obtain approval of the Head of Institution and designate an Institutional Coordinator and Faculty Supervisor/Guide.
2. Invite interested students and conduct a transparent, documented assessment of their interest in and understanding of the Thirukkural.
3. Select one student on merit, obtain endorsement of the Head of Institution and complete nomination through the portal **by 20 November 2026**.
4. Ensure that the nominated student and representatives of the institution attend the Inaugural and Valedictory Programmes virtually.
5. Ensure the selected student participates in orientation and undertakes the one-month research and academic engagement **from 15 December 2026**.
6. Guide the preparation of an article/research note and organise a one-hour presentation/lecture during the engagement period.
7. Maintain notices, assessment records, attendance, photographs, presentation material, reports and other supporting documentation.
8. The Participating Institution shall validate the student's bank account details through the CICT portal.

ANNEXURE-IV

FORMAT FOR PARTICIPATING INSTITUTION AND ACTIVITY DETAILS

Particulars	**Details to be furnished**
Name and address of the Institution	
State/UT and District	
Type of Institution and AISHE/Institution Code	
Name and designation of Head of Institution	
Institutional Coordinator: name, designation, mobile and email	
Faculty Supervisor/Guide: name, designation, mobile and email	
Date and mode of student assessment	
Number of students assessed	
Name of selected student and portal registration number	
Title/topic of article/research note	
Date of one-hour presentation/lecture	
Participation and supporting records	

ANNEXURE-V

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE FOR SELECTION OF PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS BY NODAL INSTITUTIONS IN STATES/UTs

To ensure the transparent, equitable and documented selection of the prescribed number of Participating Institutions from among all institutions registered in a State/UT.

1. Registration and Eligibility Screening

- Keep registration open to all interested higher educational institutions during the notified registration period.
- Verify the institution's identity, location, recognition/affiliation, AISHE/Institution Code, where applicable, official contact details and approval of the competent institutional authority.
- Record eligible, deficient and ineligible applications separately. Curable deficiencies may be permitted to be corrected within the notified scrutiny period.
- Only applications found eligible after scrutiny shall be placed before the Evaluation Committee for assessment.

2. Evaluation Committee

- The Head of the Nodal Institution shall constitute an Evaluation Committee comprising at least three members, including the State/UT Nodal Officer.
- The Committee shall evaluate all eligible applications using the criteria and scoring parameters prescribed under Paragraph 3.
- The Committee shall sign the evaluation sheets and recommend the selected and reserve lists for approval by the competent authority of the Nodal Institution.

3. Selection Criteria

S. No.	Criterion	Scoring Parameters	Maximum Marks	Evidence
1	**Institutional Readiness**	20 marks: All four requirements fulfilled: (i) Nodal/Institutional Coordinator identified; (ii) adequate faculty support available; (iii) arrangements made for student assessment; and (iv) readiness to undertake the one-month academic engagement. 15 marks: Any three requirements fulfilled. 10 marks: Any two requirements fulfilled. 5 marks: Any one requirement fulfilled. 0 marks: None fulfilled.	**20**	Institutional undertaking and implementation plan

2	**Proposed Student Outreach**	20 marks: 200 or more students proposed for mobilisation. 15 marks: 150-199 students. 10 marks: 100-149 students. 5 marks: 50-99 students. 0 marks: Fewer than 50 students.	**20**	Number of students proposed and outreach plan
3	**Academic Engagement with the Thirukkural**	20 marks: The Participating Institution undertakes to cover all four components: (i) use of prescribed resources; (ii) faculty-guided study; (iii) preparation of an article/research note; and (iv) presentation. 15 marks: Any three components covered. 10 marks: Any two components covered. 5 marks: Any one component covered. 0 marks: No component covered.	**20**	Academic activity plan. Preference should be given for choosing the study of Thirukkural in any of the 22 scheduled Indian Language)
4	**Geographical Representation**	20 marks: Institution is located in or substantially serves an Aspirational District or an otherwise under-represented district/region of the State/UT. 15 marks: Institution strengthens representation of a district/region having limited representation among the institutions under consideration. 10 marks: Institution provides additional district/regional representation. 5 marks: District/region is already adequately represented.	**20**	Institution location, district coverage and distribution of eligible applications. This is intended to ensure the participation of students from diverse geographical and language backgrounds.
5	**Institutional and Disciplinary Diversity**	A. Institution Type - up to 10 marks 10 marks: Selection adds an institution type not represented, or not adequately represented, in the proposed State/UT list. 5 marks: The institution type is already adequately represented. Institution types may include: University; College; Standalone Institution; and Institution of National Importance/other	**20**	Institution profile, AISHE details and programme/course information

		specialised HEI. B. Disciplinary Diversity - up to 10 marks 10 marks: Programmes offered in four broad disciplinary groups. 7 marks: Programmes offered in three groups. 5 marks: Programmes offered in two groups. 2 marks: Programmes offered in one group. Broad disciplinary groups: (i) Arts, Humanities, Languages and Social Sciences; (ii) Science and Mathematics; (iii) Engineering, Technology and Technical Education; and (iv) Commerce, Management, Law, Education, Medical/Allied and other Professional disciplines.		

Total: 100 marks. Recommended qualifying benchmark: 60 marks.

Note: *The Nodal Institution shall apply the scoring parameters uniformly to all eligible applications. While finalising the list, due consideration shall be given to geographical spread and diversity of institution types and disciplines so that the selected Participating Institutions are reasonably representative of the State/UT.*

Where an adequate number of eligible applications is unavailable, the Evaluation Committee may record reasons and recommend a suitable relaxation without compromising the basic eligibility requirements.

4. State/UT-Wise Finalisation

- Rank all eligible institutions in descending order of total marks and select only the number prescribed for the State/UT in Annexure-I.
- While finalising the list, ensure reasonable geographical spread and representation of different institution types and disciplinary groups. Any departure from the merit order shall be supported by specific and recorded reasons.
- Prepare a reserve list, ordinarily up to 20 per cent of the prescribed allocation, to address withdrawal, non-response or failure to complete student nomination.
- In the event of a tie, preference shall be given sequentially to: (i) higher marks in Institutional Readiness; (ii) higher marks in Academic Engagement with the Thirukkural; (iii) higher marks in Geographical Representation; and (iv) the earlier complete registration.

5. Approval, Communication and Record

- Obtain approval of the competent authority of the Nodal Institution for the selected and reserve lists.

- Communicate the selection to the institutions along with the programme guidelines, student-assessment requirements and the notified deadline for nomination of the selected student.
- Inform non-selected institutions that registration does not confer any right to selection.
- Retain the complete registration database, eligibility scrutiny record, score sheets, proceedings of the Evaluation Committee, approved selected and reserve lists, communications and supporting records for audit and programme review.

6. Replacement

- If a selected institution declines, remains non-responsive or fails to nominate a student by the notified deadline, the next eligible institution from the approved reserve list may be included.
- Every replacement shall be recorded with reasons and approved by the State/UT Nodal Officer or the competent authority before being communicated to the Central Institute of Classical Tamil (CICT).
- The replacement institution shall comply with all programme requirements and timelines communicated by the Nodal Institution and CICT.

Note: *A Nodal Institution may, if considered appropriate, adopt its own transparent and objective methodology for selection of Participating Institutions, keeping in view the objectives and broad principles outlined in this SOP. In such cases, the methodology adopted shall be duly documented and communicated to CICT.*