

Community Centres (Chitalishta) in the Time of Pandemic – Policies and Practices

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(Summary)

The measures for limiting the distribution of COVID-19 that have been undertaken by the state during the last months affected many institutions and people engaged with the preservation of local cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible. The article discusses the official policies towards the community centres (chitalishta) in the current complicated situation caused by the pandemic crisis. Additionally, it utilises direct observations in the field, in the media and in internet milieu, and interviews with community centre workers and representatives of communities that are successors of cultural heritage. Based on concrete examples, the study offers a general and up-to-date picture of preservation practices, developed on local level, such as the ethnographic collections at the community centres, the non-professional groups for folklore, and different initiatives related to the popularisation and socialisation of cultural heritage.

Keywords: community centres (chitalishta); pandemic; preservation; local cultural heritage; policies; practices

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