

Bill No. 168 of 2025

THE CONSTITUTION (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2025

By

SHRI RAJEEV RAI, M.P.

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further to amend the Constitution of India.

BE it enacted by Parliament in the Seventy-sixth Year of the Republic of India as follows:—

1. (1) This Act may be called the Constitution (Amendment) Act, 2025.

Short title and
commencement.

5 (2) It shall come into force on such date as the Central Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, appoint.

2. In the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution,—

(i) existing entries 3 to 9 shall be re-numbered as entries 4 to 10, respectively, and before entry 4 as so re-numbered, the following entry shall be inserted, namely:—

“3. Bhojpuri.”;

(ii) after entry 10 as so re-numbered, the following entry shall inserted, namely:— 5

“11. Magahi.”;

(iii) entries 10 to 22 shall be re-numbered as entries 12 to 24, respectively.

STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS

There is a long-pending demand for inclusion of Bhojpuri and Magahi languages in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution, so that these can be accorded the status of official language. Both Bhojpuri and Magahi languages are over a thousand years old having their roots in ancient India and are part of our collective heritage.

Bhojpuri is the most widely spoken languages in Bihar and eastern Uttar Pradesh with its roots in ancient India. Bhojpuri is an important language chiefly spoken in eastern Uttar Pradesh, western Bihar, and northwestern Jharkhand in India, as well as by significant diaspora communities in countries like Mauritius, Suriname, Fiji, Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, Nepal etc. It is estimated that more than twenty million people speak Bhojpuri in India, making it one of the most widely spoken languages in the country. It is also estimated that number of Bhojpuri speakers across the world is more than twenty eight lakh fifty thousand. Ironically, because of overwhelming official support to other languages, Bhojpuri language is listed as potentially vulnerable in the UNESCO World Atlas of Languages.

Similarly, apart from Bihar and eastern part of Uttar Pradesh, Magahi is also widely spoken in Jharkhand, West Bengal and parts of Odisha. It is considered to be an Indo-Aryan language with roots in the ancient Magadhi Prakrit, a language spoken by lord Buddha and is believed to have originated in the region of Magadha. It was the official language of the great Mauryan empire. The famous Vajrayani Buddhist poet Sarahapa is well recognised as the first Magahi poet. With large scale migration of people from these regions since last five hundred years, Magahi is also spoken in countries like Fiji, Jamaica, Trinidad and Guyana. It is also widely spoken in the Terai region of Eastern Nepal. It is estimated that there are about fifteen million Magahi speaking population in India alone. Magahi has been granted the status of second official language in Jharkhand State and the Government of Bihar has recommended to the Central Government for it to be included in the 8th Schedule of Indian Constitution. The United Nations has recognized the importance of Magahi by publishing the Charter of Human Rights in the language.

Despite this, both Bhojpuri and Magahi languages have been treated in step motherly manner which is evident from the fact that in the 2011 Census both these languages were grouped together under 'Hindi' and therefore the exact number of people speaking these languages is not available with the Government. Constitutional recognition to both these languages would give it official recognition, ensuring its use in Government administration and education for its development and promotion and can help preserve and promote our shared heritage. I would request the Government to include Bhojpuri and Magahi in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution without any further delay.

Hence this Bill.

NEW DELHI;
July 4, 2025

RAJEEV RAI

ANNEXURE

[EXTRACT FROM THE CONSTITUTION OF INDIA]

EIGHTH SCHEDULE

[Articles 344(1) and 351]

Languages

1. Assamese.
2. Bengali.
3. Bodo.
4. Dogri.
5. Gujarati.
6. Hindi.
7. Kannada.
8. Kashmiri.
9. Konkani.
10. Maithili.
11. Malayalam.
12. Manipuri.
13. Marathi.
14. Nepali.
15. Oriya.
16. Punjabi.
17. Sanskrit.
18. Santhali.
19. Sindhi.
20. Tamil.
21. Telugu.
22. Urdu.

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(Shri Rajeev Rai, M.P.)