

AS INTRODUCED IN LOK SABHA

Bill No. 252 of 2019

THE PROMOTION OF SANSKRIT LANGUAGE BILL, 2019

By

SHRI RAJENDRA AGRAWAL, M.P.

A

BILL

to provide for promotion of Sanskrit language including its compulsory teaching in schools, appointment of Sanskrit teachers, establishment of Board for Promotion of Sanskrit language and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

BE it enacted by Parliament in the Seventieth Year of the Republic of India as follows:—

1. (1) This Act may be called the promotion of Sanskrit Language Act, 2019.

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

Short title and
commencement.

Definitions.

2. In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires,—

(a) "appropriate Government" means in the case of a State, the Government of that State and in all other cases, the Central Government;

(b) "Board" means the Board for Promotion of Sanskrit Language constituted under section 8; and

(c) "prescribed" means prescribed by rules made under this Act.

Compulsory teaching of Sanskrit language in schools.

3. From such date, as the Central Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette specify, the Sanskrit language shall be taught as a compulsory subject in all schools.

Appropriate Government to issue directions for compulsory teaching of Sanskrit language in schools.

4. The appropriate Government shall, immediately after issuance of the notification under section 3, issue directions for compulsory teaching of Sanskrit language in all schools from such class onwards as it may determine, within its jurisdiction.

Appointment of Sanskrit language teachers.

5. Subject to such rules, as may be prescribed, the appropriate Government shall ensure appointment of such number of teachers with such qualifications, as may be specified, for teaching Sanskrit language in schools.

Act to apply to minority educational institutions in certain situation.

6. Notwithstanding anything contained in this Act, the provisions of this Act shall apply to minority institutions only if the management of such institutions convey to the appropriate Government their willingness to include the Sanskrit language in their school curriculum.

Derecognition of schools for non-compliance of the provisions of the Act.

7. The appropriate Government shall derecognize a school, which does not comply with the provisions of section 4:

Provided that such school shall be given reasonable opportunity of being heard before any decision on derecognition is taken.

Board for the Promotion of Sanskrit Language.

8. (1) From such date, as the Central Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette appoint, there shall be constituted a Board for the Promotion of Sanskrit Language.

(2) The Board shall consist of a Chairperson and not more than four members to be appointed by the Central Government in such manner as may be prescribed.

(3) The salary and allowances payable to, and other terms and conditions of the service of the Chairperson and other members of the Board shall be such as may be prescribed.

Functions of the Board.

9. (1) The Board shall perform such functions for the promotion of Sanskrit language as it may consider necessary for the purpose.

(2) Without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing provision, the Board shall—

(i) monitor the progress of promotion of Sanskrit language in the country;

(ii) take steps for collection and safekeeping of Sanskrit manuscripts from different parts of the country;

(iii) organize workshops and fairs in different parts of the country with a view to popularize Sanskrit language especially among the youth; and

(iv) encourage the translation of Sanskrit books in various Indian languages.

Central Government to provide fund.

10. The Central Government shall, after due appropriation made by Parliament by law in this behalf, provide adequate funds to the States for carrying out the purposes of this Act.

11. The provisions of this Act shall have effect notwithstanding anything inconsistent therewith contained in any other law for the time being in force.

Overriding effect of the Act.

12. (1) The Central Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, make rules for carrying out the purposes of this Act.

Power to make rules.

5 (2) Every rule made under this Act shall be laid, as soon as may be after it is made, before each House of Parliament, while it is in session, for a total period of thirty days which may be comprised in one session or in two or more successive sessions, and if, before the expiry of the session immediately following the session or the successive sessions aforesaid, both Houses agree in making any modification in the rule or both the Houses agree that the
10 rule should not be made, the rule shall thereafter have effect only in such modified form or be of no effect, as the case may be; so, however, that any such modification or annulment shall be without prejudice to the validity of anything previously done under that rule.

STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS

“The Sanskrit language is of a wonderful structure, more perfect than Greek, more copious than Latin and more exquisitely refined than either. Human life would not be sufficient to make oneself acquainted with any considerable part of Hindu literature.”

The above lines by William Jones clearly denote that Sanskrit has not been just the language of India or Indians, but a transnational language with a global footprint. It is also said to be the mother of all languages. It has been the vehicle of Indian thoughts for millions. Sanskrit contains literature of exemplary value and the finest Indian minds found the expression in it. Famous Indian Sanskrit scholars like *Aryabhata, Sushruta, Charaka, Bhaskaracharya* among others have excelled in field such as maths, physiology, surgery, science, philosophy, astronomy, sociology, anthropology etc. Sanskrit literatures are source of fundamental and behavioural knowledge of different fields and have inspired many in all generations. No wonder great Indian sages like Sri Aurobindo and Swami Vivekananda viewed Sanskrit language as the most perfect medium for expressing spiritual and philosophical ideas. Sri Aurobindo, while speaking of the importance of the Sanskrit language for India, says: “It is of the utmost value to a nation, a human group-soul to preserve its language and make it a strong and living cultural instrument. A nation, race or people which loses its language cannot live its whole life or real life.”

It is highly deplorable that such a language, which has a vast literature, is being neglected in its own country. Although, it is included in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution, enough has not been done to promote it. In a situation where the new generation is running away from its own roots and has developed a contempt for the cultural traditions of our country, the importance of teaching Sanskrit becomes crucial. The time has come when we must make sincere efforts to make the new generation aware of the great traditions and thoughts of India. Accordingly, it is proposed in the Bill to make teaching of Sanskrit compulsory in schools to enable our children to identify themselves with noble traditions and thoughts of our country.

The Bill also envisages creation of a Board for the promotion of Sanskrit language. The proposed Board will not only oversee the progress being made for the promotion of Sanskrit language, but will also take other pro-active measures including translation of Sanskrit epics and plays in other Indian languages and safekeeping of priceless Sanskrit manuscripts lying in various parts of the country.

Hence, this Bill.

NEW DELHI;
October 25, 2019

RAJENDRA AGRAWAL

FINANCIAL MEMORANDUM

Clause 5 of the Bill provides for appointment of Sanskrit language teachers in all schools. Clause 8 provides for creation of a Board for promotion of Sanskrit language. Clause 10 provides for payment of adequate funds to the States for carrying out the purposes of the Act. The Bill, therefore, if enacted, would involve expenditure from the Consolidated Fund of India. It is estimated that a recurring expenditure of about rupees one thousand crore per annum will be involved.

A non-recurring expenditure of rupees fifty crore is also likely to be involved.

MEMORANDUM REGARDING DELEGATED LEGISLATION

Clause 12 of the Bill empowers the Central Government to make rules for carrying out the purposes of the Bill. As the rules will relate to matters of detail only, the delegation of legislative power is of a normal character.

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