

Bill No. 204 of 2019

THE CONSTITUTION (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2019

By

SHRI AJAY BHATT, M.P.

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further to amend the Constitution of India.

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

1. This Act may be called the Constitution (Amendment) Act, 2019.

Short title.

2. In the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution,—

Amendment of
the Eighth
Schedule.

5 (i) entries 5 to 9 shall be renumbered as entries 6 to 10, respectively, and—

(a) before entry 6 as so renumbered, the following entry shall be inserted,
namely:—

"5. Garhwali.";

10 (b) after entry 10 as so renumbered, the following entry shall be inserted,
namely:—

"11. Kumaoni."; and

(ii) existing entries 10 to 22 shall be renumbered as entries 12 to 24, respectively.

STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS

The Eighth Schedule to the Constitution recognizes twenty-two languages as national languages of India being spoken and written by the citizens. It is believed that education, culture and intellectual pursuits get created and develop around these languages. But it is unfortunate that languages like Garhwali and Kumaoni spoken and written by millions of people having distinct culture have not yet been included in the Eighth Schedule.

The Garhwali language is being spoken since ancient times in the Kedarkhand region of Central Himalaya. However, when exactly the people started using this language in writings can be correctly answered by linguistics only. Prior to 13th century, when the Hindi language was not in existence, the official work of the State of Garhwal, spreading from Saharanpur to Himachal, was being done in Garhwali language. The donation box inscription dating back to the year 1335 during the reign of the Emperor Jagatpal in Devprayag temple, the 15th century script of Ajaypal in Devalgarh, the inscriptions on copper plates found at various places like Badrinath, Malduyl etc., are all evidences to prove that the Garhwali language is one of the oldest languages. According to Dr. Haridutt Bhatt Shailes, literature of 10th century is also available in this language.

Our country is a multilingual country. Some of the languages have been successful in maintaining their existence and dignity with time while other have been struggling hard to save their existence and dignity due to lack of adequate facilities of propagation. Garhwali and Kumaoni are two such languages amongst them.

Keeping in view the sentiments of the people of Central Himalayan region and linguaphiles, Garhwali and Kumaoni languages should be accorded the status and honour of national languages by including them in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution. It is urgently required that necessary steps should be taken to propagate these languages. An academy for the development of these languages should also be set up on the lines of Hindi Academy, Urdu Academy, Punjabi and Sindhi Academy.

Such a step will not only help in propagation of these languages but would also save the ancient Himalayan culture and heritage from becoming extinct.

Hence this Bill.

NEW DELHI;
June 27, 2019.

AJAY BHATT

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. Maithilli.
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 Ajay Bhatt, M.P.)