

Bill No. 76 of 2024

THE COMPULSORY TEACHING OF SANSKRIT LANGUAGE
IN SCHOOLS BILL, 2024

By

SMT. SMITA UDAY WAGH, M.P.

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BILL

to provide for the teaching of Sanskrit as a compulsory language in schools.

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

1. (1) This Act may be called the Compulsory Teaching of Sanskrit Language in Schools Act, 2024.

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 this Act, unless the context otherwise requires,—

Definitions.

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

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

Teaching of Sanskrit as a compulsory 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 in every school as a compulsory subject up to eighth standard in such manner as may be prescribed.

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 direction for teaching of Sanskrit language as a compulsory subject upto eighth standard in every school within its jurisdiction.

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Expenditure to be shared by Central Government and State Governments.

5. The Central Government and the State Governments shall equally share the expenditure likely to be incurred on the implementation of the provisions of this Act.

Power to make rules.

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

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(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 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.

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STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS

Sanskrit, the mother of all Indo-Aryan languages, which has also helped in development and enrichment of almost all languages across the globe is fighting a tough battle in its own country of origin *i.e.* India. The language, acknowledged and documented to be the most structured and scientific language in the entire world, and which was once the *lingua-franca*, has now been reduced to a vanishing minority with just about 14,000 speakers left, across a country of over 1.2 billion population.

India's official education policy specifically mentions that facilities for the intensive study of Sanskrit have to be encouraged. Still, the apathy, neglect and propaganda against Sanskrit went on to such an extent that the Supreme Court of India had to intervene in 1994 to declare that Sanskrit had to be a part of education. However, the various States of India are still disadvantaging, discouraging and discriminating with teaching of Sanskrit language at school, college and University level.

It is absolutely essential that Sanskrit be taught as language in all schools and institutions of higher learning. State must ensure that institutions of higher learning produce good Sanskrit teachers and that all vacancies of Sanskrit teachers in schools are filled-up immediately. It is highly deplorable that such a language which has a vast literature is being neglected in its own country.

It is high time now to make sincere efforts to increase awareness in the younger generation about the importance of Sanskrit. Teaching of Sanskrit as a compulsory language in schools at least upto eighth standard will enable the younger generation to enrich their personality and to be aware of the noble traditions and thoughts of India which would help them become better citizens.

Hence this Bill.

NEW DELHI;
July 9, 2024.

SMITA UDAY WAGH

FINANCIAL MEMORANDUM

Clause 5 of the Bill provides that the total expenditure incurred on teaching of Sanskrit as a compulsory language in every school upto eighth standard shall be borne equally by the Central Government and the State Governments. The Bill, therefore, if enacted, would involve expenditure from the Consolidated Fund of India. Although, the exact amount of expenditure cannot be estimated, however, it is estimated that a recurring expenditure of about twenty crore rupees per annum is likely to be involved from the Consolidated Fund of India.

No non-recurring expenditure is likely to be involved.

MEMORANDUM REGARDING DELEGATED LEGISLATION

Clause 6 of the Bill empowers the Central Government to make rules for carrying out the provisions of the Act. As the rules will relate to matters of detail only, the delegation of legislative power is of a normal character.

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(Smt. Smita Uday Wagh, M.P.)