

**Bill No. IX of 2016**

THE CONSTITUTION (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2016

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BILL

*further to amend the Constitution of India.*

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

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| 1. | (1) This Act may be called the Constitution (Amendment) Act, 2016.  | Short title and commencement.                             |
| 2. | (2) It shall come into force at once.   | Amendment of Article 343. National language of the Union. |
| 5  | 2. For article 343 of the Constitution, the following shall be substituted, namely:—<br>"343. The national language of the Union shall be Hindi in Devanagari script."  | Amendment of Article 348.                                 |
| 3. | In article 348 of the constitution, in clause (1),—<br>"(i) in Sub-clause (a), after the words all the proceedings in the Supreme Court and in every High Court the words shall be both in Hindi and English be inserted. |   |

(ii) for sub-clause (b), the following shall be substituted, namely:—

"(b) the authoritative texts—

(i) of all Bills to be introduced or amendments thereto to be moved in either House of Parliament or in the House or either House of the Legislature of a State,

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(ii) of all Acts passed by Parliament or the Legislature of a State and of all Ordinances promulgated by the President or the Governor of a State, and

(iii) of all orders, rules, regulations and bye-laws issued under this Constitution or under any law made by Parliament or the Legislature of a State,

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shall be in the Hindi language.

## STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS

In the British period, in order to establish their sway over India and for their administrative convenience, British imposed English on the people of India. This is nothing short of an irony that even after sixty-nine years of independence linguistically we continue with that colonial mindset. After independence, our constitution makers had expressed the mass sentiment towards Hindi through the Constitution. Keeping the linguistic diversity in mind, an arrangement was made for using English for official purposes for the next 15 years. Alongside, in the Constitution, President was entrusted with the power to constitute Official Language Commission to resolve the language related issues and promotion of Hindi. Thereafter, commission was constituted, committees were formed with umpteen numbers of reports and several orders were issued and attempts to implement the provisions of Official Language Commission were made. But, eventually, the expected results could not be achieved. Activities being undertaken in this Official Language remain a mere formality and no concrete effect can be seen on the ground. Due to government policies, English evolved rapidly as official language whereas the Hindi, the language of the masses remained neglected.

It is unfortunate that English remains the primary language for judicial, parliamentary and other administrative functions. Even today, we are not in a position to preserve and promote our rich language. Whereas, the language of all the rich countries are continuously flourishing and we are backtracking in the level of our own language. Hindi is the only language that can unite this diverse nation in one strand. The utmost need of the hour is to initiate the rise and evolution of as a rich language as Hindi. It is necessary to take a concrete initiative in this direction so that Hindi language can get its due respect. To attain this we cannot get expected results only from the Constitutional Commission and Official Language Commission, but what we need today is to entrust the status of national language upon Hindi and make a way for its evolution.

Hence the Bill.

VIVEK GUPTA

ANNEXURE

EXTRACTS FROM THE CONSTITUTION OF INDIA

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PART XVII

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

CHAPTER 1.—LANGUAGE OF THE UNION

Official language of the union.

**343.** (1) The official language of the Union shall be Hindi in Devanagari script.

The form of numerals to be used for the official purposes of the Union shall be the international form of Indian numerals.

(2) Notwithstanding anything in clause (1), for a period of fifteen years from the commencement of this Constitution, the English language shall continue to be used for all the official purposes of the Union for which it was being used immediately before such commencement:

Provided that the President may, during the said period, by order authorise the use of the Hindi language in addition to the English language and of the Devanagari form of numerals in addition to the international form of Indian numerals for any of the official purposes of the Union.

(3) Notwithstanding anything in this article, Parliament may by law provide for the use, after the said period of fifteen years, of—

(a) the English language, or

(b) the Devanagari form of numerals,

for such purposes as may be specified in the law.

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CHAPTER III.—LANGUAGE OF THE SUPREME COURT, HIGH COURTS, ETC

Language to be used in the Supreme Court and in the High Court and for Acts, Bills, etc.

**348.** (1) Notwithstanding anything in the foregoing provisions of this Part, until Parliament by law otherwise provides—

(a) all proceedings in the Supreme Court and in every High Court,

(b) the authoritative texts—

(i) of all Bills to be introduced or amendments thereto to be moved in either House of Parliament or in the House or either House of the Legislature of a State,

(ii) of all Acts passed by Parliament or the Legislature of a State and of all Ordinances promulgated by the President or the Governor of a State, and

(iii) of all orders, rules, regulation and bye-laws issued under this Constitution or under any law made by Parliament or the Legislature of a State,

shall be in the English language.

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RAJYA SABHA

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**BILL**

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*(Shri Vivek Gupta, M.P.)*