

AS INTRODUCED IN THE RAJYA SABHA
ON 5TH AUGUST, 2011

Bill No. V of 2011

THE LEARNING OF DEVANAGARI SCRIPT (FOR NATIONAL UNITY)
BILL, 2011

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BILL

to provide for compulsory learning of Devanagari Script in schools by every citizen of India and for matters connected therewith and incidental thereto.

WHEREAS article 343 of the Constitution provides that official language of the Union shall be Hindi in Devanagari Script and therefore it is expedient that in national interest, every citizen should learn Devanagari Script.

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

1. (1) This Act may be called the Learning of Devanagari Script (For National Unity) Act, 2011. Short title and commencement.

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

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

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

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

(c) "primary school" means any school imparting education from first to fourth standard, whether established by the appropriate Government or, local self Government and includes aided school recognised by the appropriate Government and private school.

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Central Government to make provisions for compulsory learning of Devanagari Script.

3. The appropriate Government shall, within six months of the commencement of this Act, ensure compulsory learning of Devanagari Script by every citizen during the first four years of learning in the primary school throughout India for reading and writing words in Devanagari Script in addition to the language and script in which the primary education is imparted to him:

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Provided that the marks secured by a student out of the prescribed marks for writing words in mother tongue or official language of the State as the case may be, and the marks obtained in Devanagari Script and *vice versa* shall be added to the total marks secured in the primary school examination but the marks obtained in the Devanagari Script shall not count for determining pass in the examination.

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Schools to be prepared for Devanagari Script.

4. (1) The appropriate Government shall ensure that every school within its jurisdiction is fully prepared to impart learning in Devanagari Script in accordance with the provisions of this Act.

(2) For the purposes of sub-section (1), every school shall appoint at least one qualified teacher for imparting education of Devanagari Script at all level in the school and maintain data of the performance of each student about his learning of Devanagari Script.

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Monitoring of schools.

5. The appropriate Government shall ensure periodic monitoring and inspection of schools imparting learning of Devanagari Script in such manner as may be prescribed.

Central Government provide fund.

6. The Central Government shall, after due appropriation made by the Parliament, in this behalf provide requisite funds for the purpose of this Act.

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Penalty.

7. If any school violates the provisions of this Act, the appropriate Government shall take such action against the school as is available to it under the existing laws regulating the functioning of the schools in its jurisdiction.

Power to make rules.

8. The Central Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, make rules for carrying out the provisions of this Act.

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STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS

Under Article 343 of the Constitution Hindi in Devanagari Script has been made the official language of the Union. It is a matter of common knowledge that out of the twenty two languages mentioned in the eighth Schedule to the Constitution, the script of three languages, namely, Sanskrit, Hindi and Marathi is Devanagari Script. Number of States have been formed on the basis of language considering it as essential in democracy for the respective state Government should speak to the people in their own language. In, view of this policy, each State has adopted its own official language and consequently the primary education is imparted by and large in the language in which all children learn not only the official language of the State but also its scripts. Though Hindi has been declared as the official language of the Union, it takes considerable time to use the said language effectively at all levels and in all departments of the Union. However, learning Devanagari Script by all the citizens will go a long way in the matter of National unity as learning of Devanagari Script would enable the citizens to read and write any words or phrases in Devanagari Script. It would also help in having single sign boards and in particular on all the Kilometer stones. As a result, citizens do not feel any difficulty after crossing borders of their State and travel in other parts of the Country. Therefore, in National interest, it is considered necessary to prescribe that every citizen should learn Devanagari Script which is sure to help National unity.

Hence, this Bill.

M. RAMA JOIS

FINANCIAL MEMORANDUM

Clause 3 of the Bill provides for the compulsory learning of Devanagari Script by every citizen during the first four years of learning in the primary schools. Clause 4 provides school to appoint teacher and maintain data of the performance of student in Devanagari Script. Clause 6 provides that the Central Government, shall after due appropriation, provides fund for the purpose of this Act. The Bill, if enacted, would involve expenditure from the Consolidated Fund of India and it is very difficult to estimate the expenditure at this juncture. No non-recurring expenditure is likely to be involved.

MEMORANDUM REGARDING DELEGATED LEGISLATION

Clause 8 of this Bill empowers the Central Government to make rules for carrying out the purposes of the Bill. The rules will relate to matters of details only. The delegation of legislative power is, therefore, of a normal character.

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(Shri M. Rama Jois, M.P.)