

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS**

**RAJYA SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. *142**

TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 2ND AUGUST, 2023/ SRAVANA 11, 1945 (SAKA)

INCLUSION OF TRIBAL LANGUAGES IN THE EIGHTH SCHEDULE

***142 DR. AMAR PATNAIK:**

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) what is the criteria for including a language under the Eighth Schedule;**
- (b) the reason for not including the three crucial tribal languages of Odisha namely Ho, Mundari and Bhumij in the Eighth Schedule despite repeated requests from the State;**
- (c) whether Government has data on the change in the number of tribal languages spoken in Odisha from 1971 to the current year, and has noticed decline in it; and**
- (d) what measures Government has taken to preserve the linguistic culture of the tribes, especially those classified as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)?**

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS
(SHRI NITYANAND RAI)**

(a) to (d): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

**STATEMENT IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) to (d) OF THE RAJYA SABHA
STARRED QUESTION No. 142 FOR 02.08.2023**

(a) to (c): There have been demands from time to time for inclusion of several Indian languages in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution including Ho, Mundari and Bhumij. However, there are no fixed criteria for consideration of any language for inclusion in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution. The attempt to fix such criteria through Pahwa and Sitakant Mohapatra Committees have remained inconclusive. As the evolution of dialects and languages is a dynamic process, influenced by socio-cultural, economic and political developments, it is difficult to fix any criterion for languages for inclusion in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution. The Government is conscious of the sentiments and requirements for inclusion of other languages in the Eighth Schedule. Such requests have to be considered keeping in mind these sentiments, and the other relevant considerations.

As per data published in the Census of India, total number of speakers of Bhumij, Ho and Mundari in Odisha is as under:-

Census Decade	Number of Speakers of Bhumij, Ho and Mundari Languages in Odisha		
	Bhumij	Ho	Mundari
1971	28,208	2,13,871	1,17,802
1981	34,594	2,52,688	1,08,898
1991	27,669	2,92,619	1,45,097
2001	31,510	2,53,235	1,19,573
2011	5,912	4,11,724	1,23,488

(d): The Central Institute of Indian Languages, Ministry of Education works towards the promotion of all Indian languages, including the languages spoken by the tribal population. The Institute has published several works on all of these three languages, grammar, phonetic reader, dictionaries etc. The Bharatavani project also promotes 121 languages of India and digitizes knowledge content available in these languages. The Institute also has plans to bring out online learning courses in all the languages of India, including these three, in the near future. The Institute also has a project named Scheme for Protection and Preservation of Endangered Languages (SPPEL) wherein vulnerable languages, having a speaker strength of less than 10,000, are taken up for promotion and revitalization.
