

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO - 1795
ANSWERED ON - 07/08/2024

PRESERVATION OF KONKANI LANGUAGE

1795 Shri Sadanand Mhalu Shet Tanavade:

Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

- (a) in what manner the New Education Policy intend to leverage technology to promote and safeguard India's diverse linguistic heritage in education;
- (b) the steps Ministry has taken to employ technology for the advancement of Indian languages and to promote search engine localisation;
- (c) the manner in which the Ministry plans to tackle challenges like digital literacy and technology access in promoting and preserving India's linguistic diversity; and
- (d) whether the Ministry has launched initiatives or programs to support and preserve the Konkani language under the NEP and through technological advancements, if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

(DR. SUKANTA MAJUMDAR)

(a) to (c) : National Education Policy 2020 places strong emphasis on the fusion of technology with education, particularly in the context of preserving and promoting the nation's diverse linguistic heritage/diversity. Technology is being used extensively to provide study materials in Indian Languages, conduct competitive exams in Indian Languages and provides opportunities to students to study in Indian Languages. National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) is running a Bhasha Sangam programme as also Machine

Translation cell which is translating various books into the scheduled languages. Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has also asked its affiliated schools to consider using Indian languages, as enumerated in the Schedule 8 of the Indian Constitution, as the medium of instruction from Foundational state till end of Secondary stage i.e. from pre-primary classes till class XII as an optional medium in addition to other existing options. All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) and University Grants Commission (UGC) have leveraged Anuvadini App to translate books for Under Graduate and Post Graduate courses including technical books in multiple Indian languages. The translated books are available on e-KUMBH portal. National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET), Joint Entrance Exam (JEE) and Common University Entrance Test (CUET) have been conducted in 13 languages. Engineering education is being imparted in certain (AICTE) approved institutions in 8 regional languages. Course material including text books and teaching resources are available on Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing (DIKSHA) portal in 33 Indian Languages. ASMITA (Augmenting Study Materials in Indian Languages through Translation and Academic Writing) is a new initiative by University Grants Commission (UGC) towards promotion of Indian languages in Education, including Konkani language.

Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MEITY) has launched Mission Digital India Bhashini in the year 2022 to develop core language technologies for speech and text translation for 22 Scheduled Indian languages in the open source. The Bhashini open Application Programming Interface (APIs) for language translation in text and voice have been listed on API Setu (<https://apisetu.gov.in>). Bhashini APIs are available for anyone to integrate with any application.

(d): The policy of the Government of India is to promote all Indian Languages including Konkani language. NEP provides, wherever possible, for medium of instruction to be in the home language/ mother tongue/ local language/ regional language upto at least class 5 and preferably upto class 8. The policy also provides for making available high quality text books in home language/ mother tongue and encouraging teachers to use bilingual approach while teaching. In order to achieve this objective the Government is integrating multilingualism at school and higher education levels by providing reading materials in Indian languages including Konkani language so that students have the choice to study in their mother tongue/local language. Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL), Mysuru works for the promotion of all Indian languages including Scheduled/Non-Scheduled and Classical languages. CIIL developed both speech and text corpora in Konkani language that help in developing speech and text technology in that language. This Institute teaches Konkani language in its Regional Language Centre at Pune as a second language to non-native speakers. Under the Linguistic Data Consortium - Indian Languages (LDC-IL) programme, the following datasets have been developed and released for public use:

- i) Gold standard Konkani Raw Text Corpus
- ii) Konkani Raw Speech Corpus
- iii) Konkani Sentence Aligned Speech Corpus

CIIL, Mysuru and Government of Goa have signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for promotion of Konkani language and other languages of the region.
