

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF MINORITY AFFAIRS
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 132
ANSWERED ON 01.12.2025

LIST OF MINORITY LANGUAGES IN THE COUNTRY

132. SHRI SANDOSH KUMAR P:

Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the list of minority languages in the country and the number of people speaking these languages in each State;
- (b) whether Government has any programme to encourage minority languages and literature in the country;
- (c) if so, the details of the programme, total funds allocated for the programme and total funds disbursed for each language;
- (d) whether Government is planning to elevate any of the minority languages into the status of official languages scheduled in the Constitution, if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF MINORITY AFFAIRS

(SHRI KIREN RIJJU)

(a) to (e): Minority languages have not been defined in the Constitution of India or by the Statute. However, Article 29 and 30 of the Constitution provide for protection of interest of minorities which includes Linguistic Minorities also.

The working definition followed by the Commissioner for Linguistic Minorities is as under:

“Linguistic Minorities are group or collectivities of individuals residing in the territory of India or any part thereof having a distinct language or script of their own. The language of the minority group need not be one of the twenty two languages mentioned in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution. In other words, linguistic minorities at the State level mean any group or groups of people whose mother tongues are different from the principal language of the State, and at the district and taluka/tehsil levels, different from the principal language of the district or taluka/tehsil concerned.”

The State/UT wise, broad linguistic profile is available in the 52nd Report of the Commissioner for Linguistic Minorities (CLM).
