

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3722
ANSWERED ON 25/03/2026

Recognition of ancient languages as classical languages

3722 # Shri Govindbhai Laljibhai Dholakia:

Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

- a) the number of ancient languages in India currently been granted the status of classical language;
- b) whether Government is giving special emphasis to classical languages that preserve the country's ancient cultural heritage and whether it is continuously working to grant classical language status to more ancient languages; and
- c) the details of special efforts being made by Government to encourage achievements in the field of classical languages?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
(DR. SUKANTA MAJUMDAR)

(a) to (c): The Government of India has conferred Classical Language status to eleven languages, viz. Tamil, Sanskrit, Kannada, Telugu, Malayalam, Odia, Assamese, Bengali, Marathi, Pali and Prakrit. For the preservation, promotion and development of Classical languages and other Indian languages, several initiatives have been undertaken by the Government through dedicated institutions and academic programmes. Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL), Mysuru, a subordinate office under the Ministry of Education, undertakes research, documentation, propagation and teaching of Indian languages, including the classical languages.

The Government has established four Centres of Excellence under CIIL, namely the Centre of Excellence for Studies in Classical Kannada (CESCK), Centre of Excellence for Studies in Classical Telugu (CESCT), Centre of Excellence for Studies in Classical Odia (CESCO) and Centre of Excellence for Studies in Classical Malayalam (CESCM) to promote and strengthen Classical Languages. These Centres undertake research across various domains and organise seminars, workshops and training programmes for the promotion and development of Classical Languages.

The Central Institute of Classical Tamil (CICT), Chennai, an autonomous organisation under the Ministry of Education, undertakes activities relating to research, preservation and dissemination of Classical Tamil. The promotion of the Sanskrit language is undertaken by the Government through three Central Universities dedicated to its teaching, preservation and research. These initiatives are aligned with the objectives of the National Education Policy 2020, which emphasises multilingualism and promotion of Indian languages.
