

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF CULTURE**

**LOK SABHA**

**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. †2166  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 01.01.2018**

**STATUS OF CLASSICAL LANGUAGE TO MARATHI**

**† 2166. SHRI KAPIL MORESHWAR PATIL:**

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of ancient languages granted status of classical language by the Government;
- (b) the criterion adopted by the Government for granting classical language status to a particular language;
- (c) whether the Government has received any proposal from Maharashtra Government and Abhijaat Marathi Bhasha Samiti for grant of classical language status to Marathi; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by the Government thereon?

**ANSWER**

**MINISTER OF STATE (I/C) FOR CULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE FOR  
ENVIRONMENT, FOREST & CLIMATE CHANGE**

**(DR. MAHESH SHARMA)**

- (a): So far six languages i.e. Tamil, Sanskrit, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam and Odia have been given status of classical languages.
- (b): The Criteria adopted by the Government to determine the eligibility of a language for granting classical language status, are as under:
  - (i) High antiquity of its early texts/ recorded history over a period of 1500-2000 years;
  - (ii) A body of ancient literature/ texts, which is considered a valuable heritage by generations of speakers;
  - (iii) The literary tradition be original and not borrowed from another speech community;
  - (iv) The classical language and literature being distinct from modern, there may also be a discontinuity between the classical language and its later forms or its offshoots.
- (c)&(d): Yes, Sir. A proposal for granting of classical status to Marathi language has been received from Marathi Language Department, Government of Maharashtra. The said proposal was placed before the Committee of Linguistic Experts for its consideration. The said Committee recommended the grant of classical status to Marathi language and the said recommendations are under consideration of the Ministry. However, in the light of several Writ Petitions filed by Shri R. Gandhi in the High Court of Judicature at Madras on the subject, it was decided to wait for the outcome of the said Writ Petitions. The Hon'ble High Court of Judicature at Madras has disposed of the Writ Petitions vide common order dated 08.08.2016 declining to interfere in the matter and disposed of all the petitions. Consequently, the proposal for grant of classical status to Marathi language is again under active consideration of this Ministry.

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