

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO- 1917
TO BE ANSWERED ON-14/03/2022

PRESERVATION OF TRIBAL LANGUAGES

1917. SHRI M.V.V. SATYANARAYANA:
SHRIMATI GODDETI MADHAVI:
SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR BELLANA:

Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has undertaken any steps in Preservation and Documentation of Threatened Tribal Languages;
- (b) whether the Government is contemplating in providing official status to more languages among the 880 dialects/languages spoken in the country; and
- (c) the steps taken by the Government to promote tribal literature in the mainstream?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRIBAL AFFAIRS
(SMT. RENUKA SINGH SARUTA)

(a): Ministry of Tribal Affairs provides grants to State Tribal Research Institutes for promotion of tribal languages and development of bilingual primers for preservation of tribal languages. Further New Education Policy also stipulates that young child learn and grasp quickly in their home language and mother tongue. Accordingly, Central and State Government are making efforts to encourage multi-lingual policy for imparting education and preservation of language. Further, under the component "Financial Assistance for support to Centres of Excellence" of the scheme "Tribal Festival, Research, information and Mass Education", financial assistance is provided to reputed Institution for carrying out research study programmes including documentation of tribal languages. In this regard, Ministry has sanctioned projects to Bhasha Research and Publication Centre during 2018-19 and 2019-20 which inter-alia covered activity of identification and documentation of threatened/dying languages.

(b): Ministry of Home Affairs, the nodal Ministry for inclusion of languages in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution, has stated that there are 22 languages included in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution and there have been demands for inclusion of more languages. 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, whether to distinguish them from dialects, or for inclusion in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution. Government of India 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.

(c): Under the scheme 'Support to Tribal Research Institutes', efforts are being made to promote tribal literature in the mainstream through provision of financial assistance to State Governments for organization of literary festivals, publication of books written by tribal writers/ authors, translation works and literature competitions, based on the proposals received from the Tribal Research Institutes.
