

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2119
ANSWERED ON 01/08/2025

REGIONAL LANGUAGES IN COURT PROCEEDINGS

2119. SHRI ROBERT BRUCE C :

Will the Minister of Law and Justice be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of High Courts in the country that are using regional languages in their proceedings;
- (b) whether the Government has received any request/representation from different High Courts for use of regional languages in their respective High Courts;
- (c) if so, the details thereof and the response of the Government in this regard;
- (d) whether the Government has held any meeting with the Bar Councils in various States to develop a mechanism to facilitate the people in court proceedings/cases, if so, the outcome thereof; and
- (e) whether Government has prepared a common legal dictionary for the use of courts in legal system of regional languages, if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE; AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS

(SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL)

(a) to (c): Article 348(1)(a) of the Constitution of India states that all proceedings in the Supreme Court and in every High Court, shall be in English language. Clause (2) of the Article 348 of the Constitution states that notwithstanding anything in sub-clause (a) of clause (1), the Governor of a State may, with the previous consent of the President, authorize the use of Hindi Language, or any other language used for any official purposes of the State, in proceedings in the High Court having its principal seat in that State.

The Cabinet Committee's decision dated 21.05.1965 has stipulated that consent of the Hon'ble Chief Justice of India be obtained on any proposal relating to use of a language other than English in the High Court.

The use of Hindi in the proceedings of High Court of Rajasthan was authorized under clause (2) of Article 348 of the constitution in 1950. After the Cabinet Committee's decision dated 21.05.1965 as mentioned above, the use of Hindi was authorized in the High Courts of Uttar Pradesh (1969), Madhya Pradesh (1971) and Bihar (1972) in consultation with the Chief Justice of India.

Government of India had received proposals from the Government of Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal and Karnataka to permit use of Tamil, Gujarati, Hindi, Bengali and Kannada in the proceedings of the Madras High Court, Gujarat High Court, Chhattisgarh High Court, Calcutta High Court and Karnataka High Court respectively. The advice of Chief Justice of India was sought on these proposals and it was intimated that the Full Court of the Supreme Court after due deliberations, decided not to accept the proposals.

Based on another request from the Government of Tamil Nadu, the Government requested the Chief Justice of India to review the earlier decisions in this regard and convey the consent of the Supreme Court of India. The Chief Justice of India conveyed that the Full Court, after extensive deliberations decided not to approve the proposal and reiterated the earlier decisions of the Hon'ble Court.

(d) & (e): Under the aegis of the Ministry of Law and Justice, the Bar Council of India has constituted 'Bharatiya Bhasha Samiti' chaired by former Chief Justice of India, Hon'ble Mr. Justice S.A. Bobde for the purpose of translating legal material into regional languages by developing a Common Core Vocabulary close to all Indian Languages. In addition, Legislative Department of Ministry of Law and Justice has prepared a legal glossary of 65,000 words in Hindi for digitization and making available in public domain in searchable format for the usage of all.
