

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF MINORITY AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2043
ANSWERED ON 11.02.2026

LINGUISTIC MINORITIES IN THE COUNTRY

2043. DR. THIRUMAAVALAVAN THOLKAPPIYAN:

Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of the number of linguistic minorities living in the country during the time of independence; and
- (b) the details of the number of linguistic minorities living in the country as on date?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF MINORITY AFFAIRS

(SHRI KIREN RIJJU)

(a) & (b): The term 'Linguistic Minorities' has not been defined in the Constitution or by any Statute. Linguistic Minorities are identified by the State, the State Government/Union Territory on the basis of Census data.

The concept of Linguistic Minorities came into existence consequent to creation of the Linguistic States on the recommendations of the State Reorganization Commission Report, 1956.

As per the working definition of Linguistic Minorities followed by the Commissioner for Linguistic minorities: "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 the 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 Language Data as per Census 2011 is available in the public domain: censusindia.gov.in of the Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner, India, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India.
