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Title: Regarding establishing a Nepali Language Council.

SHRI RAJU BISTA (DARJEELING): Sir, Nepali language is one of the 22 languages recognised under the VIII Schedule of our Constitution on 20th August, 1992. Across India, there are over 1.5 crore Nepali-speaking citizens.

Even though it is recognised as a second language in West Bengal and Sikkim in theory, very little has been done for promotion and preservation of the language.

Even after almost three decades since the recognition of Nepali under the Scheduled languages of India, there is not even a single dedicated DD Nepali or AIR Nepali channel.

Academically, nothing much has been done to preserve the language. Central Universities like Visva Bharati in West Bengal do not offer any course in Nepali; schools in Darjeeling and Dooars, where majority are Nepali-speakers, do not have proper teachers and study materials.

I request the hon. HRD Minister to establish a Nepali Language Council with the mandate to preserve and promote Nepali language in India.