

Seventeenth Loksabha

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Title: Regarding Inclusion of Koshali in the 8th Schedule to the Constitution- laid

SHRIMATI SANGEETA KUMARI SINGH DEO (BOLANGIR): Koshali is an ancient, original & distinct language having a very rich & proud history. It is intimately connected with distinct culture & heritage of western Odisha. It is one of the 5 Prakrit languages, in fact Ardha-Magadhi Prakrit, with its own grammar, extensive vocabulary, idioms & proverbs. It isn't a sub-language of Odia or Bengali. People of Koshal region, which has been prominently mentioned in our epics like Ramayana & Mahabharat, were communicating in Koshali in the Vedic & Puranic era.

It is the mother tongue of 10 districts of western Odisha comprising 40-50% of Odisha's population & a large portion of Chhattisgarh. This area has a substantial Adivasi population.

Around 4500 writers contribute articles to Koshali Publications. Annually around 2300 books are published in this language. Koshali literature, drama, songs and dances are popular the world over. Sambalpur University offers a Post Graduate Diploma course in Koshali. 15 of our States and all 7 UTs have more than one official language. This year, Shri Narsingha Prasad Guru was awarded the Padma Shree for his contribution to propagation of Koshali.

I request the Hon'ble Home Minister to include Koshali in 8th Schedule to the Constitution to protect and preserve this ancient

language.