

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3154

ANSWERED ON:13.12.2006

INCLUSION OF HINDI IN INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

Mehta Shri Bhubneshwar Prasad;Pathak Shri Brajesh

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether any efforts are being made by the Government to include Hindi as one of the official languages of the United Nations Organisation;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the details of the official languages of the United Nations and the number of people speaking those languages, country-wise; and
- (d) the number of Hindi speaking people around the world, country-wise?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI ANAND SHARMA)

(a)&(b) The Government has been actively taking necessary measures for introduction of Hindi as one of the official languages of the United Nations. A high level Committee under the Chairmanship of External Affairs Minister was constituted on 26th February, 2003 followed by a sub-Committee under the chairmanship of Minister of State for External Affairs in August, 2003 and a core-group headed by the Additional Secretary (Administration) in the Ministry of External Affairs in September, 2003 to look into this matter and take necessary measures. As a step in this direction it was decided to prepare an Advocacy Paper to present the Indian case with regard to introducing Hindi in the UN. The draft Advocacy Paper has been prepared which is being currently reviewed by the Ministry. However, this has financial, procedural as well as legal implications. The procedure for getting any language recognized as one of the Official Languages of the UN involves obtaining approval of the General Assembly to amend Rule-51 of the Rules of Procedure. Such a proposal has to be approved by more than half of the members of the General Assembly where every member-State has a vote. At present the proposal would require approval of 96 member States given the current membership of 192. In addition, recognizing any language as the official language of the UN entails a substantial increase in the expenditure of the UN necessitating an enhanced contribution by every member country, which is why most of the members remain reluctant to support such a proposal.

(c) The UN has six official languages which are English, French, Spanish, Russian, Chinese and Arabic. The UN does not officially publish or maintain figures of the number of people who speak these languages.

(d) According to the census of 1991 there are 337,272,114 Hindi speaking persons in India. Language related figures of 2001 census are yet to be released.

Though there are many countries with a large Indian diaspora, no precise figures are available in respect of Hindi speaking people in the world.