

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CULTURE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1651
ANSWERED ON:23.08.2007
KANNADA AS A CLASSICAL LANGUAGE
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Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the proposal of declaring Kannada language as classical language is pending with Government since long time;
- (b) if so, the criteria adopted for declaring a language as classical language;
- (c) the details of the benefits it will get, if a language is included as classical language; and
- (d) the time by which it is likely to be declared?

Answer

MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND CULTURE (SMT. AMBIKA SONI)

- (a) The proposal has been referred to the Committee of Linguistic Experts of the Sahitya Akademi.
- (b) The criteria are as under:-
 - i. High antiquity of its early texts/recorded history over a period of 1500-2000 years.
 - ii. A body of ancient literature/texts, which is considered a valuable heritage by generations of speakers.
 - iii. The literary tradition be original and not borrowed from another speech community.
 - iv. The classical language and literature being distinct from modern, there may also be a discontinuity between the classical language and its later forms or its offshoots.
- (c) The benefits are as under:-
 - i. Two major International awards for Scholars of eminence in Classical Indian language be awarded annually.
 - ii. A `Centre of Excellence for Studies in Classical Languages` be set up.
 - iii. To start with at least in the Central Universities, the University Grants Commission would be requested to create a certain number of Professor Chairs for Classical Languages for scholars of eminence in Classical Indian Languages.
- (d) The future course of action would depend on the completion of the scrutiny of proposals by the Committee of Linguistic Experts.