

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
TRIBAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3594
ANSWERED ON:16.04.2010
TRIBAL DIALECTS
Dhurve Jyoti

Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of tribal dialects in the country;
- (b) whether the Government has taken any steps for protecting such dialects from extinction; and
- (c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (DR. TUSHAR A. CHAUDHARY)

(a) According to the Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL), under the Ministry of Human Resource Development, the term Tribal Dialects is not used in Census records, which is the chief source of information. The analysis, based on Census 2001 reveals that out of a total of 234 mother-tongues (each spoken by atleast 10,000) people there are 147 tribal mother-tongues.

(b) & (c) Various steps are being taken by the Government, both Central and States, to study and develop the languages of tribal communities across the country, conduct training programmes for language development, publish dictionaries, handbooks, school and literacy primers. Various State Governments have taken some initiatives to promote over 40 tribal languages in schools as a part of the national policy on education including Sarva Siksha Abhiyan. The CIIL also has ongoing programmes on data collection, description, documentation and material production in a number of these languages as part of the XI Five Year Plan activity. Many tribal dialects are being supported by Sahitya Akademi under the Ministry of Culture by way of giving Bhasha Sammans to the writers and scholars, who are working in those dialects. Besides, this Ministry, under its Central Sponsored Scheme ' Research and Training ' - Grants-in-aid to Tribal Research Institutes (TRIs)', provides funds to the TRIs in the States for conducting research on different aspects of tribal life which could include tribal languages.