

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CULTURE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1172
ANSWERED ON:05.03.2013
CLASSICAL LANGUAGE STATUS TO MALAYALAM
Dhanaplan Shri K. P.

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) the criteria for declaration of a language as a classical language;
- (b) the details of applications/ requests received from the State Governments including Kerala and pending before the Union Government for declaration as classical languages;
- (c) the present status of such applications including the request for declaring Malayalam as a classical language; and
- (d) the time by which the pending applications are likely to be cleared?

Answer

MINISTER OF CULTURE (SMT. CHANDRESH KUMARI KATOCH)

- (a) The criteria for declaration of a language as a classical language 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.
- (b) to (d) Requests have been received from the Chief Minister of Kerala directly and also through Prime Minister's Office, Shri E. Ahmed, former MOS Railways, Shri M.A.Baby, former Minister for Education & Culture (received through PMO), Chief Secretary, Government of Kerala, Kerala Sahitya Academy and Madras Kerala Samaj for conferring classical language status on 'Malayalam language'.

Similar requests pertaining to Odia and Marathi languages have also been received from various Members of Parliament, through not from the State Governments.

These requests were forwarded to the Secretary, Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi for placing the same before the Committee of Linguistic Experts.

The Committee of Linguistic Experts had examined the matter in its meeting held on 19.12.2012 and submitted its report which is under consideration in the Ministry.