

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINORITY AFFAIRS  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4340  
ANSWERED ON:20.02.2014  
PROTECTION OF MINORITY LANGUAGES  
Thomas Shri P. T.

**Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:**

- (a) the details of minority languages in the country and the estimated number of speakers of such languages;
- (b) whether any study has been done about endangered minority languages in the country; and
- (c) if so, the details thereof and the measures taken/proposed to be taken by the Government for the protection of minority languages.?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINORITY AFFAIRS (SHRI NINONG ERING)

(a) Linguistic minorities have not been defined in the Constitution or by any statute. They get defined when their mother tongue differs from regional language of the area. They are identified by State Government/Union Territory on the basis of Census data.

(b)&(c) No, Madam. However, the Commissioner for Linguistic Minorities appointed under Article 350-B of the Constitution investigates all matters relating to the safeguards provided for Linguistic Minorities under the Constitution and Nationally Agreed Scheme for the Linguistic Minorities. Safeguards for Linguistic Minorities are as under:-

1. Translation and publication of important rules, regulations, notices, etc., into all languages, which are spoken by at least 15% of the total population at district or sub-district level;
2. Declaration of minority languages as second official language in districts where persons speaking such languages constitute 60% or more of the population;
3. Receipt of, and reply to, representations in minority languages; scheme of safeguards
4. Instruction through mother tongues/ minority languages at the Primary stage of education;
5. Instruction through minority languages at the Secondary stage of education;
6. Advance registration of linguistic preference of linguistic minority pupils, and inter- school adjustments;
7. Provision for text books and teachers in minority languages; scheme of safeguards
8. Implementation of Three-language Formula;
9. No insistence upon knowledge of State's Official Language at the time of recruitment. Test of proficiency in the State's Official Language to be held before completion of probation
10. Issue of Pamphlets in minority languages detailing safeguards available to linguistic minorities;
11. Setting up of proper machinery at the State and district levels.

The Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL), Mysore, a subordinate office of the Ministry of Human Resource Development is implementing a scheme for preservation and protection of languages spoken by less than 10000 people during the current Five Year Plan. Under the scheme, grammatical descriptions, monolingual and bilingual dictionaries, language primers, anthologies of folklore, encyclopedias, etc of all the endangered languages / mother tongues, especially those spoken by less than 10000 persons are prepared.