

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CULTURE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1858
ANSWERED ON:22.07.2014
LOCAL LANGUAGES
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Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that local languages of India are disappearing due to globalisation;
- (b) if so, the details thereof, language wise; and
- (c) the corrective steps taken/being taken by the Government to preserve local languages?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (IC) FOR TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD NAIK)

(a) & (b): The Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL), Mysore under the Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of Higher Education) was established to coordinate the development of Indian languages to bring about the essential unity of Indian languages through Scientific studies, promote inter-disciplinary research, contribute to mutual enrichment of languages and thus contribute towards emotional integration of the people of India. CIIL is also mandated to advise Central and State Governments on language matters. CIIL has stated that globalisation is not directly killing local languages. It is true that globalization is affecting languages in the sense that many languages under pressure are losing oral literature and words related to culture, especially, food items, dress and ornaments, rituals, flora and fauna, etc., but globalisation is not the cause of language death. When the speakers of a language start to realize that their language does not have a global functionality, i.e., they feel that their language is unable to take them from their local and marginal standpoint to the global mainstream they might begin to abandon it or shift towards a stronger language. Under globalization, interaction of cultures brings about a lot of pressure on languages in the sense that languages which co-exist on different levels and for different functions come together, and as they do, they begin to compete against each other for speakers. So, such languages that speakers find to be of limited potential at the global stage, if abandoned they might come under threat or even die. Under the pressure of globalization, the domains of use of some languages are shrinking with a result that many Indian languages have become threatened and even endangered. A language dies when its speakers die. For example, a language of Andaman and Nicobar islands, namely, Aka-Bo has died recently when its last speaker died in 2010.

(c): The Government of India through CIIL has initiated a scheme known as 'Protection and Preservation of Endangered Languages of India'. Under this scheme, CIIL is documenting all the languages used by the tribal and non-tribal people and non-scheduled languages/ mother tongues spoken by less than ten thousand persons. The Institute is already documenting 70 such languages/mother tongues spoken in various States.