

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3915  
ANSWERED ON:17.12.2014  
CONSERVATION OF LOCAL LANGUAGES  
Chowdhury Shri Adhir Ranjan

**Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether the Government is aware of a new study which was conducted by a team of international experts revealing that Himalayan region is one of the global 'hotspots' where local languages are at risk of extinction due to thriving economies;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has taken or proposes to take any steps to stop the loss of languages diversity and to conserve the local languages; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SMT.SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI)

(a) & (b): Yes Madam. A recent study has concluded that many of the world's languages face serious risk of extinction. According to this research, threatened languages are numerous in the tropics, the Himalayas and northwestern North America. These results indicate that risks of future language losses are especially high in the tropics and in the Himalayas as these regions harbour many small population languages and are undergoing rapid economic growth. Languages have recently declined particularly in areas with high Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita and temperature seasonality.

(c) & (d): Yes Madam. The University Grants Commission (UGC) has developed Guidelines for providing assistance for establishment of Centre of Endangered Languages in Central Universities. Approval has been accorded to nine Central Universities for Establishment of Centres for Endangered Languages. An allocation of Rs.50.00 crore has been made for establishment of the Centres of Endangered Languages in the nine Central Universities by the UGC. The Government of India has initiated a Scheme known as "Protection and Preservation of Endangered Languages of India". Under this Scheme, the Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL), Mysore works on protection, preservation and documentation of all the mother tongues/ languages of India spoken by less than 10,000 people. Under this Scheme, dictionaries and basic grammars in all the endangered languages/mother tongues are prepared in digital format. The cultural and ethno-linguistic aspects of the languages/ mother tongues and indigenous knowledge system of the communities are video-graphed and stored electronically for archival and retrieval purposes. A digital map with linguistic/cultural words with actual pronunciation for accounting variation in speech is also part of the scheme. In addition talking dictionaries in the endangered languages/mother tongues are prepared with the help of technology.