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Title: Need to declare Tamil as a classical language and the year of 2003 as the `Year of Tamil Language`.

***SHRI P. MOHAN (MADURAI):** Hon. Speaker Sir, through this august House I had pleaded with the Union Government as early as in 1999 to declare Tamil as a classical language. On August 22, along with my colleagues hon. Members Vaiko, and Sudarsana Nachiappan obtaining taking the signatures of my other Tamil colleagues of this august House as well, we submitted a memorandum to the Prime Minister to make efforts and take steps to declare Tamil language as a Classical Language and also to observe the subsequent year as 'Year of the Tamil language'. But till date Tamil language has not been officially declared as a classical language of the country and of the world. Instead, in reply to my raising the same matter in the House in the form of matter under rule 377, hon. Minister for Human Resources Development has merely stated that he recognises Tamil as one of the ancient languages of the land and as a language that contributed to the cultural tradition of the country. He had simply stated that it would be treated the same as with other Indian languages. He had failed to accept Tamil as a classical language of the land and also of the world like Sanskrit. Tamil is one of the ancient languages of the world and has contributed vastly to the cultural heritage and tradition of not only our country but of some of the neighbouring countries in this region and some other countries in other parts of the world. The Union Government is not fulfilling the notional assurance the Prime Minister had given to the delegation that met him seeking to declare Tamil as a classical language and to declare the commencing year of the new millennium as 'Year of the Tamil language'. Sir, the whole of Tamil Nadu raises its voice in unison urging upon the Union Government. All the parties of Tamil Nadu are united on this demand. But still no action has been taken by this Government at the Centreâ€¦ (Interruptions)

* English Translation of the speech originally delivered in Tamil.

SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM (THANJAVUR): Mr. Speaker, Sir, this is a genuine demand and I request that this should be accepted. â€¦ (Interruptions)

SHRI ADHI SANKAR (CUDDALORE): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I also want to associate myself with this demand. I request that this demand should be accepted. ... (Interruptions)