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17.00 hrs.

Title: Need to declare Tamil as one of the official languages of the Union.

SHRI K. MALAISAMY (RAMANATHAPURAM): Tamil language is one of the earliest, ancient, oldest, chaste, polished rich, unique languages with glorious tradition and culture. Its characteristics and features are varied and substantial. It has crossed the barriers of Tamil Nadu and spread many parts of the world as the mother tongue of more than 80 million population.

As such, it would be eminently suited to declare Tamil as one of the classical languages of India. I appeal to the Government of India to include and implement it as one of the Union's official languages. Let me conclude with one more emphasis that Thirukkural, which is a sacred, oldest, unique, moral code for living an exemplary life of the world, be declared as the National Literature of India.