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Title: Regarding declaring Odia language as classical language.

श्री भक्त चरण दास (कालाहांडी): सभापति महोदय, मुझे आज एक बहुत ही महत्वपूर्ण बात पर बोलने का मौका दिया है, इसके लिए मैं आपको धन्यवाद देता हूं। आज सरकार की कैबिनेट ने उडिया भाषा को क्लासिकल भाषा की मान्यता दी है। उड़ीसा के हमारे पूर्वज कई सालों से यह लड़ाई लड़ रहे थे। उत्कल गौरव मधुसुदन जी के समय से ले कर अभी तक उड़ीसा के लोग चाहते थे कि उडिया भाषा को क्लासिकल भाषा का दर्जा दिया जाए।

आज मैं माननीय प्रधानमंत्री जी, यूपीए अध्यक्षा श्रीमती सोनिया गांधी जी और कैबिनेट को उड़ीसा की जनता की तरफ से धन्यवाद देता हूं। हमारे सभी एमपी साथी खास कर राज्य सभा के खूंटिआ जी ने हम सभी एमपीज़ को इनिशिएट किया था। खूंटिआ जी और हमारे सभी उड़ीसा के माननीय साथियों को मैं धन्यवाद देता हूं कि सभी के इनिशिएशन से भारत सरकार ने उड़ीया भाषा को क्लासिकल भाषा का दर्जा दिया है। इसके लिए मैं भारत सरकार के प्रति आभार प्रकट करता हूं।
...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB (CUTTACK): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I stand here today to express the sense of pride and privilege that the people of Odisha has attained because today, the Union Government, the Cabinet, has accepted Odia as a classical language. ...(*Interruptions*) The criteria that have been fixed by the Government are that the language should be around or more than 2,000 years old; should have a continuous history; the alphabets must have undergone a modern change; there would be a continuous literary output; and there would be a continuity of the literary standard. ...(*Interruptions*)

Odia language was there during the Kalinga war. The script was there. It was continued during the middle ages. Rich literature was created by Odia littÃ©rateurs both during the dark ages of the Indian history and also during the middle ages and in modern times. ...(*Interruptions*)

Today, it is a concerted effort of the people, of the literary people, of the educated people, and of the elected representatives of Odisha, both of the State Assembly and also of the Lok Sabha. May I suggest one thing, Sir, that the Odisha Government has repeatedly requested the Central Government to accord classical status to Odia language. Earlier, the Kendra Sahitya Akademi has given this *bona fide* recognition to Odia language as a classical language. ...(*Interruptions*) Today, the 20th February, 2014, will be a golden letter day because Odia language, along with Tamil, along with Malayalam, along with Kannada and along with Telugu has become a classical language. Other than the Dravidian languages of this country, this is the second Indo Aryan language other than Sanskrit to be declared as a classical language. I thank the Government. ...(*Interruptions*)