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Title: Need to include Kamtapuri language in the Eighth Schedule of the constitution.

*SHRI S.S.AHLUWALIA (DARJEELING) : Respected Speaker Madam, I would like to speak in Bengali since I represent North Bengal. I wish to raise a matter of urgent public importance in this august House. The language of the Rajbongshis and the people of Kamtapur is 'Kamtapuri'. There is always a special place for the mother tongue in every man's heart. Man grows up speaking and listening to his mother tongue. But unfortunately when our country was under the British imperial rule, English was the Queen's language. Therefore Indians had begun to use English for all official purposes and as a medium of instruction.

I am speaking in Bengali because I am talking about the mother tongue. Lakhs of Kamtapuri people stay in North Bengal and Assam. They are fighting for their right of language. As I said earlier, since the British rulers used English and the mother tongue of the Queen was English, we Indians became more comfortable in using the English language for all purposes. But the Eighth Schedule of the Indian constitution enumerates various regional languages. Though the Kamtapuris have their own script, own linguistic history, cultural identity, they have not succeeded in getting their language incorporated in the Eighth Schedule. I urge upon the Government, through you madam, that at least the Doordarshan and All India Radio can telecast or air programmes in Kamtampuri language so that their unique identity is spread far and wide. The people of Kamtapur, the Rajbongshi students know and read about Bhagat Singh but their text books are silent on Veer Chilarai. So no Indian is aware of the contributions of Veer Chilarai. Thus I demand that the Government text books should also mention about the rich cultural and linguistic heritage of Kamtapuris and Rajbongshis. I also want that Kamtapuri language should be included in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution.

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