

INDUSTRIAL WORKERS' INSURANCE BILL*

[English]

SHRI AJIT KUMAR SAHA : I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to provide for life insurance of industrial workers.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : The question is :

“That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to provide for life insurance of industrial workers.”

The motion was adopted.

SHRI AJIT KUMAR SAHA : I introduce the Bill.

CONSTITUTION (AMENDMENT) BILL*

(Amendment of Article 31B)

(English)

SHRI AJIT KUMAR SAHA : I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Constitution of India.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : The question is :

“That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Constitution of India.”

The motion was adopted.

SHRI AJIT KUMAR SAHA : I introduce the Bill.

CONSTITUTION (AMENDMENT) BILL

(Amendment of Eighth Schedule)

BY

SHRI SATYAGOPAL MISRA

(English)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Before I call upon Shri Satyagopal Misra to

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move his Bill for consideration and passing, we have to fix the time limit for this Bill. Shall we fix two hours?

MANY HON. MEMBERS : Yes.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Two hours are allotted to this Bill.

SHRI SATYAGOPAL MISRA : I beg to move :

“That the Bill further to amend the constitution of India, be taken into consideration.”

*SHRI SATYAGOPAL MISRA (Tamluk) : Sir, this Bill that I am presenting before this House today is totally noncontroversial, and I hope that it will meet with the approval of all sections of this House and will be passed without any opposition. This simple Bill seeks to add one more important language of our country viz., Nepali, to the list of the fifteen languages already included in the Eighth Schedule of our Constitution. On several occasions in the past discussions and debates had taken place over the question of including the Nepali language in the eighth schedule of the Constitution. There was never any major opposition to that proposal from any side of the House. Today also I hope that this Bill be passed with the help and cooperation of all sections of this House and the Nepali language will find its due place in the eighth schedule of the Constitution. I am reminded of what Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had once said in the context of the eighth schedule, he had said that ‘the eighth schedule is not an in exhaustible list’. That means that he too had thought that in the future some more languages can be added to that list. In keeping with that idea, the Sindhi language was included in the eighth schedule in the year 1967. Therefore there are no legal or constitutional impediments in the way of including the Nepali language in the eighth schedule. If all of us can agree and be unanimous, then this objective can be achieved quite easily

*The speech was Originally delivered in Bengali.

[Shri Sataygopal Mishra]
and smoothly. Our desire and effort in including the Nepali language in the eighth schedule does not mean that we are against or opposed to other languages. There are other languages which, I hope will gradually find a place in the eighth schedule of the Constitution. In this context I want to place before you the famous statement of the renowned linguist, Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterjee. He had said "other Indian languages are to be added to the eighth schedule following the wishes of the speakers and their importance i.e. Sindhi and Nepali." Half of what Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterjee had stated has been achieved in so far as 'Sindhi' has since been included in the eighth Schedule. The remaining half we can fulfil today by passing this Bill. If we look to some other provisions of the Constitution, we will find that there is a need to include the Nepali language in the eighth schedule of the Constitution.

In Article 351 of the Constitution, it has been stated that those languages will be included in the eighth schedule which will ultimately help in the development of Hindi. For further development, further progress and further enrichment of Hindi, it is necessary to include the Nepali language in the eighth Schedule. This is because the script and alphabets of the Nepali language is 'Devnagari'. The same is the case with Hindi which also uses 'Devnagari' script and alphabets. Therefore we can utilise the wealth of the Nepali language and literature in further development and enrichment of Hindi.

In Articles 29 and 30 of the Constitution, provision has been made for protecting the interests of the linguistic minorities. To hold the importance of Article 29 and 30, it is necessary to accord recognition to other languages also and to protect the interest of all those who use the Nepali language, it is very necessary to include the Nepali language, in the eighth schedule.

One more provision of the Constitution may be quoted in this context.

Article 19(1) (a) speaks about freedom of speech and expression. Freedom of speech and freedom of expression is a fundamental right. I fail to understand how one can have freedom of speech and freedom of expression without the use of his own language or mother tongue. This is just not possible. In the past, one hon. Member of this very House, Shri Ratan Lal Brahman: was not even permitted to take oath in Nepali. The provision of freedom of speech and freedom of expression therefore becomes meaningless in this context.

Looking to all the above mentioned provisions of our Constitution, the importance and need of including the Nepali language in the eighth Schedule becomes quite apparent. This issue has been discussed in the Lok Sabha many times before. In 1971, 74 hon. members of that time had sent a Memorandum under their signatures, demanding the inclusion of the Nepali language in the eighth schedule. Many other eminent members of this House had put forth this demand again and again S/Shri Samar Mukherjee, Jyotirmoy Bosu, Indrajit Gupta, Ananda Pathak, Ramavatar Shastri, Dr. Karan Singh, Ratan Lal Barhman, Somnath Chatterjee, Chitta Basu etc. had repeatedly raised this issue in this House, so that 'Nepali' may find a place in the eighth schedule.

Sir, the Nepali language is a rich language. All the wealth of any rich language can be found in the Nepali language. It has its own alphabets, and script. It has got a rich literature in drama, poetry, folk songs etc., etc. Today nobody can deny the richness and wealth of the Nepali language. We cannot deny the contribution of Nepali language to the composite culture existing in our country. From that angle also Nepali language occupies an important place. There are some people who want to project the Nepali language as a foreign language. But the scholars in linguistic matters and knowledgeable persons have said again and again that 'Nepali' is not a foreign language. Actually Nepali belongs to the Indo-Aryangroup of languages. It has taken

birth from a 'Satem' language of the Indo-European group and through successive stages of development has taken the form of the present 'Nepali' language. The eminent linguist Dr. Parasmani Prodhan has clearly stated that the Nepali language has taken its birth from khag 'Prakrit'. Later on this language was known as 'Gorkhali'. During the British rule, the Nepalis residing in India renewed this language as 'Nepali' and that name continues to this day. In many Government documents of the British period we find mention of 'Nepali' language. In a Government Circular dated 8th January, 1927, the 'Nepali' language was given recognition as an official language. Through these stages of gradual development, 'Nepali' has attained its present form.

Not only that, Sir, our Nepali friends residing in this country had played a very important role in our freedom movement and our struggle against British imperialism. Major Durga Mulla, Captain Dal Bhadur Thapa and many others fought against British imperialists and helped this country in attaining freedom. Even in the post-independence era, Nepali Jawans have played an important role in guarding our borders and in preserving the sovereignty and freedom of our country.

Sir, you are aware that the area in which 'Nepali' is mostly used falls in the Himalayan region, the Himalayan valley, which is our border areas and hence very sensitive border areas. Now the people of these sensitive areas are asking for the recognition of their language as one of the important languages of India. I think we will be doing justice to them by extending this recognition. This will also be an effective step towards solving the problems of these sensitive border areas.

The 'Sahitya Akademi' of our country has already recognised the 'Nepali' language as one of the major languages in the field of literature. The left front Government of West Bengal have in recent times set up the 'Nepali Sahitya Akademi' for the development of Nepali language and literature. Sir, on 2nd July 1977 a resolution was passed

unanimously in the West Bengal legislative Assembly, irrespective of party affiliations, demanding the inclusion of 'Nepali' in the eighth Schedule of the Constitution. On 11th October, 1977, a similar resolution was adopted in the Sikkim assembly and that too unanimously. On 28th June 1978 a similar resolution was unanimously passed in the Tripura assembly. Now, three State assemblies of West Bengal, Sikkim and Tripura passed unanimous resolutions demanding and appealing for the inclusion of the Nepali language in the eighth Schedule. The time has now come to do justice to their appeals in this respect. Sir, ten important Universities of our country like Calcutta, North Bengal, Patna, Gauhati etc. have recognised Nepali as their University language and in these universities facilities for studying Nepali have been provided. The All India Radio also broadcasts regular programmes in Nepali from their Delhi, Gauhati, Karsiang, Shillong etc. radio stations. In this way 'Nepali' has today emerged as a major language in the North-Eastern border regions of our country, and it is functioning as the lingua franca of the Himalayan Valley. There can be no justification for not extending due recognition to this language in the Constitution.

Now a person speaks his own language. His thoughts, his attitude, his knowledge, his intellect, his science and technology all develop properly in that very language. India is a multi-lingual country. The culture, the literature, the scientific development that takes place in all these different languages, goes to frame the composite culture of India. That is why we say that unity in diversity is the corner stone of India's culture and Indian life. The cultures of different language speaking people come together and helps in the progress of the composite Indian culture. In this way the different languages gradually develop, and when one reaches a particular stage of development the need for its inclusion in the eighth schedule arises. The Nepali language has today arrived at such a

[Shri Satyagopal Misra] stage where it is felt necessary to include it in the eighth schedule of the Constitution.

What was the condition of the Sindhi language in 1967 when it was included in the eighth Schedule? If we make a comparative study of the stage of development of Sindhi in 1967 and of the Nepali language today, we will find that the Nepali language is far more developed and advanced than the Sindhi language at that time. Moreover much larger number of people, comparatively, speak the Nepali language. Looking to all these, there is simple justification for including Nepali in the eighth Schedule.

On account of India being a multi-lingual country, the linguistic minorities may develop a feeling that they are getting separated from the main stream of the country if their language and culture are not given proper importance and recognition in our national life. This way a separatist tendency may develop. This sort of feeling gradually develops in a secessionist movement and with the help of interested foreign imperialist powers assumes dreadful dimensions later. The happenings in Assam and Punjab are all too fresh in our minds. Therefore, all these languages, when they reach a particular stage of development, should be gradually included in the eighth schedule. Nepali has today reached that stage of development when it should be included in the eighth schedule. The linguistic minorities should be made to feel that they are part of the main stream of the country.

Since 1973 many things have been said at different times by the ruling party and the Government in support of the Nepali language. This has been accepted in principle. Particularly at the time of elections many verbal assurances are given in this respect, much sympathy is expressed. But when the actual occasion comes for including the Nepali language in the eighth schedule, they retrace their steps and start hesitating.

In 1973, the then Prime Minister had told Shri Indrajit Gupta, M. P. in this connection, that, "It is better to decide across the table than to allow it to get hotted up and that is what we are trying to do." This was said in 1973, more than 10 years have elapsed since then. Then again, towards the beginning of the 7th Lok Sabha in June 1980, a similar Bill was brought forth in the Lok Sabha. At that time also the Minister had repeatedly stated that a decision regarding inclusion of 'Nepali' in the eighth Schedule will be arrived at, at the negotiating table with the concurrence of all concerned. More than 10 years have passed since then. I will like to know clearly and categorically today what is the Government's decision in this respect.

Without prolonging my speech I invite other hon. members to participate in this valuable discussion. I appeal to all sections of this House to extend their unanimous support to this Bill.

I will also request the Government to accept this Bill and include the Nepali language in the eighth schedule; to fulfil the verbal assurances given by them on numerous occasions and thereby prove the firmness and honesty of their assurances. I again appeal for full support to this Bill from all sides of this House.

With that Sir, I conclude.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM PYARE PANIKA (Robertsganj): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I honour one Sentiments of my hon. friend Shri Satyagopal Mishra and thank him for introducing this constitution (amendment) Bill. It is true that this language is spoken in a vast area which is a sensitive area and in fact the question of language itself is very sensitive. But in the past 35-37 years we have seen the parochal approach and activities in the name of language, communalism and regionalism and the results have been frightening.

Recently, Shri Bhajan Lal gave a Suggestion regarding Punjab. We have committed a few mistakes in the past

like demarcation of States on the basis of language, inclusion of several languages in the Eighth Schedule—I feel this was a mistake on our part because ours is a country where it is believed that after every third mile the language changes. So if we try to include all these languages in the Eighth Schedule there will be no end to it whereas we say there is unity in diversity in our country let us have a look at the languages spoken by our tribals. They too have a rich literature. Like Nepali language, we too have our literature. If we go on agreeing to it I feel, a day will come when we will have to include their languages and the dialects also in the Eighth Schedule. I would like to remind hon. Shri Misra that at the end of his speech he had said that people were preparing for an agitation. Does it not indicate that we should not give undue importance to regionalism and communalism and such other things as may create parochial feelings in us. There are many languages in our country and we have accepted Hindi as a national language and till the time everybody does not learn Hindi we have accepted English too. The three language formula that we have accepted can bring about the feeling of national integration...

(Interruptions)

[English]

DR. A. KALANIDHI: No we have not accepted it.

SHRI RAM PYARE PANIKA: Please listen to me. You can reply later on.

[Translation]

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I believe that the House will have to discuss this subject seriously. It is a serious subject. There is no doubt that on the one hand he has given figures to show that there are two crore Nepalis in India—our sympathies and the country's sympathies are with them—but I feel...

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI RAM DULARI SINHA): According to the 1971 census, it is not two crores, but 10 lakhs.

SHRI RAM PYARE PANIKA: The hon. Minister says it is 10 lakhs. There

are over two crore tribals in India and they have their own languages. Therefore my submission is that we should not take any action on the basis of a threat of agitation by ten lakh people lest it should provoke crores of people to agitate. The country is passing through a grave situation at present. On the one hand we see a threat to our borders and on the other hand the Punjab and Assam issues are still alive. If we are caught in the regional tangles it will not be good for us. Regional parties are being formed in the country in the name of language and Telugu Desam is one such party. In this situation can we talk like this? Therefore I appeal that we should not do anything which may harm our national unity. This is a serious issue. I welcome Shri Misra's sentiments but at the same time I would like to warn that we should not do any such thing which may disintegrate our nation. After all, you have seen how in some areas various parties are raising their heads which is certainly against the national unity and national integration. Therefore I would like that the House should consider sensitive issues very carefully and should not make any legislative or constitutional changes in the name of region, language, caste colour or creed which may weaken the society. I respect my friend Shri Misra's sentiments but I would like to say that I am not in favour of including this in the Eighth Schedule. If something is to be done, then I would appeal to the hon. Minister of State for Home and the hon. Home Minister who are present here to constitute a committee in order to find out the languages spoken in various regions of the country and to suggest what can be done for them. The need of the hour is national unity and no issue should be raised purely on the basis of a group or a caste. The Sarkaria Commission has been appointed and Mr. Misra can refer this question to it. I feel that reorganisation of state on linguistic basis was not proper. It is being proposed that Urdu should be the second language. Mr. Misra told us that this language has been accepted in Bengal & Tripura. Your CPM Government has agreed to it and it must have been done because of your influence there. This has been

[Shri Ram Pyare Panika]

made the second official language in Bengal and Tripura with an eye on the ballot box and to make political capital out of it.

[English]

SHRI SATYA GOPAL MISRA :
There your party also supported this.

SHRI RAM PYARE PAINKA :
May be due to political reasons ; I do not disagree with that.

[Translation]

I was saying that the hon. Home Minister should constitute a Committee or the Government should itself refer it to the Sarkaria Commission to find out the regional languages and the tribal languages which have not been kept in view in the Constitution. If you include a few and leave others, it can create discontent. Therefore I would suggest rethinking on this subject and if necessary a comprehensive constitution (Amendment) Bill should be brought wherein a provision should be made in respect of all these things. It should not be that whenever a member wishes to speak in some language he starts insisting that the language be included in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution. We should try to strengthen national unity and integrity. To appease small groups or tribes would not serve any purpose. I would not take much time of the House and would suggest to the hon. Home Minister that discussion on sensitive issues which give rise to parochial feelings, should be deferred for a few days. To solve this problem if the Government considers it proper a Commission can be appointed to look into these things.

Sarkaria Commission has been constituted and is examining Centre-State relations if you need allocation for development you demand more funds from Centre, if there is talk of development in your State you ask for more money from the Centre. You talked at length about the Sixth Finance Commission report. You don't say anything definite. Just now you spoke of overdraft also.

Sir, the confrontation on these issues leads to deterioration of Centre State relations which weakens national unity.

I would request our hon. Minister to seriously consider it and bring forward a new comprehensive Bill in this regard. Though I respect the sentiments of the hon Member who has introduced this Bill, I would like to advise him that in the present situation he should withdraw this Bill and I would also request the Government to bring forward a comprehensive Bill which would strengthen the sense of unity and integrity in the minds of 65 crores people of our country.

[English]

DR. A. KALANIDHI (Madras Central) : I express my thanks to the hon. Deputy Speaker for having permitted me to express my opinion and views on behalf of the DMK.....

(Interruption)

SHRI RAM PYARE PANIKA : Sir, today it has been decided that everyone will speak either in his regional language or in the national language, that is Hindi..... (Interruption)

DR. A. KALANIDHI : We cannot accept that. It is an encroachment on my fundamental rights. We cannot accept Hindi as the national language. I have every right to speak in any language I like. Being a senior Member the hon Member should learn that I have every right to speak in my own language or in English. In fact, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru accepted English as a link language. He should understand that.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Please carry on.

DR. A. KALANIDHI : Sir, I express my thanks to the Deputy Speaker for having permitted me to participate in the Bill moved by Shri Satyagopal Misra seeking inclusion of Nepali in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution. As you know, language is the soul and breath of a human being. Human being remains a human being only through the language he speaks.

Language is as dear as the mother, and that is why we call language as the mother tongue. But unfortunately what is happening in our country? We should know no importance is being given to the other languages. I am quite happy the Member has drawn the attention of the Government to include Nepali in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution. This is not a matter of today, there has been a long standing demand from the people of West Bengal for this. Hindi is one of the languages that are included in the Eighth Schedule but what is happening? You have given extraordinary importance to Hindi. You have spent not a crore of rupees but hundreds of crores for the development and growth of this language. You have sent teams to foreign countries to find out how Hindi is being implemented in the embassies and in other places, but have you taken any interest in the other languages? You have included fifteen languages in the Eighth Schedule but have you taken any interest at any time to know about Tamil? In fact, I want tell you that Tamil language has the richest tradition. It has got a good literature. Recently an archaeological survey made by the people of USSR in the Mohenjodaro and Sind Valley has revealed that the scripts belonging to the Dravidian language are likely to be of Tamil origin. They go to the extent of saying that other languages have originated from Tamil language only. So, Tamil is the mother of all other languages. Whereas people in the USSR are able to appreciate and understand the value of Tamil, the Union Government fails to understand the importance and the richness of the Tamil language, I am sorry to say this.

Whereas we are spending Rs. 10 crores for the Hindi language, for Tamil and other regional languages we are spending only Rs. 1 crore per annum. It is not a partisan attitude which you are adopting? My hon. friend was referring to the unity and integrity of the country. We are second to none, so far as our faith and belief in the unity and integrity of the country is concerned. We have many

stalwarts from our part of the country, who have fought for the freedom, unity and integrity of the country. Rajaji is one such stalwart. He did not fight only for the Southern States.

The hon. Member was saying that the inclusion of the Nepali language in the Eighth Schedule will lead to the disintegration of the country. This is an illusion and it probably arises out of fanaticism. I would request the hon. Minister to take note of it. If you really want the integrity of the nation, you have to give equal importance to all the languages. Otherwise, all such talk about unity and integrity have no real meaning. It is only a mirage.

The Government is not going to incur any expenditure by the inclusion of Nepali language in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution. So, why not accept the spirit of the Bill and, I ter on, bring your own Bill? Kindly try to accept it.

Our language existed even in 5,000 BC. That is the tradition of our language. As the saying goes :

*Kal thonri Mann Jhonra Kalathe
Mun Thenriya Mootha Mozhi*

It is the oldest language which had appeared, when rock but not sand had appeared. Bharati Dasan said :

*Tamizhukku Amudenru peyar Anda
Thamiz*

Inba Thaniz Yengal Uyirukku Ner.

Tamiz is called nectar; that Tamil is the breath of our life. He has gone to the extent of saying that it is the soul of all languages.

You should try to understand the sentiments of the people of a particular region. You should not unnecessarily try to impose a language on unwilling people. What is happening in this country is that you are imposing Hindi in every shape and form. You have issued a circular to the State Bank of India that the maximum number of Hindi typewriters should be purchased, the maximum, number of circulars

[Shri A. Kalanidhi]

should be in Hindi and that the heads and top officials should write letters only in Hindi. This is a circular, which has been issued by the Government of India. Since you have 15 official languages, why do you not treat Tamil, Marati or Malayalam on the same footing? Why do you want to give the entire importance only to Hindi? That is why we are opposing it. Otherwise, why should I oppose it unnecessarily? We are opposing it, because you are not giving equal importance to all the languages, because you are ignoring some language.

If you are talking about the unity and integrity of the country, we are second to none in supporting you. But, unfortunately, you are paying only lip sympathy to those expressions. Everywhere you talk of the integration of this country. But, do you really believe in the unity of the country and the integration of the country? If so, please try to give equal importance to all the languages. Please try to see what is happening in the USSR, which is our brotherly country, your good friend.

SHRI RAM PYARE PANIKA : I am not against any language. I am equally concerned with all languages...

(Interruptions)

DR. A. KALANIDHI : Very recently, our hon. Prime Minister visited USSR. I would request the hon. Prime Minister and the Minister in charge to see how USSR is giving equal importance to all their languages, how they are treating all their languages. For example, in Malaysia their local language and Tamil are given equal importance. It is the same in Singapore also. But in India only one national language namely, Hindi, is given importance. You should try to understand our feeling and our viewpoint. If you really believe in the integrity of this country, if you really believe in the unity of this country, as you proclaim from every political platform, what is the meaning of giving importance and the pride of place to only one of the national languages, to the neglect of

the others? So, I would request you to kindly give equal importance to all the national languages which are included in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution.

So far as the inclusion of Nepali in the Eighth Schedule is concerned, I would request the Government not to oppose this Bill. After all, the Nepalese are our own people and two crores of people in West Bengal converse in that language. So, there is nothing wrong in its inclusion as one of the official languages I support the Bill, moved by Shri Satyagopal Misra, and request the Government not to oppose it.

[Translation]

SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA (Pali) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, there is a difference between principle and balancing. The politicians bother less about principle and prefer balancing. The politics of votes creates difficulties. It sometimes brings such an odd situation that we forget our principles and prefer balancing... (Interruptions)

I think Bengali language is used more in the Bengal Legislative Assembly and maybe, Nepali language is spoken in the Bihar Legislative Assembly. If you include all the languages then you can understand where the politics of votes will take you. The people of Rajasthan will make demand for inclusion of Rajasthani language. The hilly people will demand for Pahari language. After all which are the languages that you want to be included in the Eighth Schedule. Dr. Karan Singh had also demand for Dogri language...

(Interruptions)

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY (Midnapore) : Retain Hindi and leave the rest.

SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA : The Constitution is very clear in this respect. You please listen to me... (Interruptions) I want to inform you as to what had happened during the rule of Janata Party :

[English]

"The Government is of the view that Schedule VIII to the Constitution should not be enlarged. However, the Government's endeavour is to encourage development of the cultural and literary heritage of all languages the Schedule VIII or not."

That is the policy of the Government.

Then again it was repeated. This question was put in the year 1979.

[Translation]

This decision was taken when the Janta Party was in Power...
(Interruptions) Then the Home Minister had replied :

[English]

"The Government are of the view that the inclusion of more languages in the Schedule VIII would create other repercussions and reactions. As stated above, it is the endeavour of the Government to develop the cultural and literary heritage of all the languages irrespective of their inclusion in the Schedule VIII."

[Translation]

You might have read the decision taken by the Government that all the languages should be developed. It is stated in the Statement of Objects and Reasons and Reasons that 2 crore persons speak Nepali language. What is the source of these figures...

(Interruption)

16.43 hrs.

[SHRI ZAINUL BASHER in the Chair]

[English]

SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA : There also he is not certain. In the Objects and Reasons he states : "About two crores of people scattered all over India." About two crores of people,

Now, what does the Chief Minister of Sikkim say ? He says only 50 lakhs of people.

[Translation]

This is your statement...

(Interruptions)

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY : What is the number of Sindhis in India ?

SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA : About 5 crores... (Interruptions)

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY : Mr. Daga, You are not correct...

(Interruptions)

SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA : Will you please tell me whether the names of Nepalese mentioned earlier were those of poets, writers or M. Ps. Choubeyji always interrupts...

(Interruptions)

Article 351 already embodies the decision to this effect, which says :

[English]

"It shall be the duty of the Union to promote the spread of the Hindi language, to develop it so that it may serve as a medium of expression for all the elements of the composite culture of India and to secure its enrichment by assimilating without interfering with its genius, the forms, style and expressions used in Hindustani and in the other languages of India specified in the Eighth Schedule, and by drawing, wherever necessary or desirable, for its vocabulary primarily on Sanskrit and secondarily on other languages."

[Translation]

We want the development of all the languages included in Article 29 and 30 but here you are starting a new trend. If some person belonging in to Rajasthan, with an eye on the ballot box, demands that Rajasthani languages should be included in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution and similarly some people raise the question of inclusion of Dogri language

[Shri Mool Chand Daga]

in the Eighth Schedule then you may be able to please people of your area and may also secure their votes, but here the question is quite different. The question is which language you want to develop. As far as I know about Rajasthan, the people living around Alwar speak Hindi, people living around the area of Sirohi speak Gujarati, in Shekhavat people speak Shekhavati and people of Marwar speak Marwari. These are all different languages. I do not know on what basis these are termed as Rajasthani language? No language can become rich and beautiful by merely singing a few songs in praise of kings and monarchs...

(Interruptions)

So far as shri Satya Gopal Misra, the mover of this Motion is concerned, I would like to ask whether he has ever delivered a speech in Nepali, can he recite a poem in Nepali, does he know the names of Nepali poets: can he give the names of Hindi magazines and of places where they are published...

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: All languages are beautiful, all languages are good.

SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA: I also agree that all languages should develop and should be respected.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You may please confine your opinion about the question of inclusion of Nepali in the Eighth Schedule.

SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA: That is what I am saying that it should not be included.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But please do not deride any language.

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL VYAS: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the words used by him in criticising the Rajasthani language should be expunged.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All the languages are good, beautiful and rich.

SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA: A language can be considered rich when its literature in science and technology

becomes rich and advanced. The question here is whether the mover of the Motion has given his speech in Hindi, whether Nepali is spoken in his State Legislative Assembly and whether Nepali language is used somewhere else also?

[English]

DR. A. KALANIDHI: Hindi language had no richness or culture or tradition or literature. It has developed only in course of time. In the same way if, you give time for Nepali language, naturally it will definitely be developed in the course of time.

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Daga, you confirm your speech.

SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA: Sir, my submission is that this Bill has been introduced here just to get certain votes in Darjeeling. There is no other purpose of this Bill. (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: What difference does make to you, let him speak.

SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA: Perhaps he is not aware that earlier also I opposed Rajasthani language. Such things harm us because we can speak neither English nor Hindi properly and will lag behind in learning Rajasthani also. If from tomorrow he starts speaking in Nepali, their strength in Parliament will further decline. Who is going to listen to Nepali? There is one National language and that should be enriched.

(Interruptions)

SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA: Otherwise, there are other languages also.

SHRI K. P. UNNIKRISHNAN (Badagara): I do not accept that there is only one language.

SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA: We do not want to impose our will. We know that you see Hindi pictures and listen to Hindi songs. Love for Hindi is increasing automatically. We do not insist that South Indias should learn our language. We may be knowing

many languages, but in the evening you like to see films in our language and hear songs in our language.

(Interruptions)

SHRIMATI GITA MUKHERJEE : Have you not listened Rabinder Nath's songs ?

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Mr. Daga, just express your own views.

SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA : I was saying that if you want to include any language in the Eight Schedule, it should be done only when it is facing any difficulty in any region. You have not stated that in what way non-inclusion of Nepali language in the Eighth Schedule has hampered its development. Merely saying that as Nepalese, have started living in India in considerable number and they speak Nepali language, therefore, Nepali should be included in Eighth Schedule is not logical. Do we put hindrance in its development? We rather spend money on the development of Nepali language.

(Interruptions)

[English]

DR. A. KALANIDHI : In what way it harms the country ?

[Translation]

SHRI NARAYAN CHUBEY : What is the harm in including it in the Eighth Schedule.

SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA : There is no use including it in the Eighth Schedule, there are 14 languages in it and Sindhi is the latest addition. Inclusion of more languages in the Schedule will be a wrong step. The Government should not take this step. All the languages of the States have already been included. Nepali is not a language of any particular State and, therefore, should not be included in the Schedule. I, therefore, oppose it vehemently.

[Translation]

SHRI ANAND PATHAK (Darjeeling) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I shall try to speak in Hindi.

While supporting the Bill, I would like to reiterate what my friend Shri Satyagopal Misra said at the time of introduction of the Bill. While demanding inclusion of Nepali in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution, we do not intend to oppose other languages. Our aim is to provide opportunity for advancement of all the languages of our country including Sanskrit. But it is a matter of regret that Government's attitude is different in this respect.

Every time it is said that Government would not enlarge the Eighth Schedule. I had tabled a question in respect this :

“Will the Minister of Home Affairs be pleased to state :

- (a) Whether the Government of India have decided to include Nepali language in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution; and
- (b) if so, by what time it is proposed to be implemented ?”

The reply was as under :

“(a) No, Sir.

(b) Question does not arise.”

The reply ‘question does not arise’ is beyond our comprehension. This is the attitude of the Government. It is said that amendment would be brought forth but no amendment has been made so far.

Sir, you might be aware that when in June 1980 this matter was discussed in the Lok Sabha, the hon. Home Minister had given us an assurance that they would look into the matter and would convene a round-table conference and would find a solution unanimously. But it is very strange that no round-table conference has so far been convened. I would like to say that the assurance given by you should be ful-

[Shri Anand Pahtak]

filled. There is no use giving assurances if no solution is found.

The Government repeatedly says that it would endeavour for the advancement of cultural and literary heritage of all the languages irrespective of the fact whether they are included in the Eighth Schedule or not. But this does not solve the problem and this assurance is not enough. The languages which have not so far been included in the Eighth Schedule should be included therein. We, the Nepali-speaking people have to suffer in economic field and other spheres of life. Consequent upon the exclusion of some of the languages from the Eighth Schedule, the language have been divided into two categories. The languages included in the Schedule have benefited and those not included have to suffer a lot.

We were of the view that we all are equal and we will march forward together. These impressions are now no more. If one has to take any examination conducted by the Public Service Commissions, one can take the written examination in one of the Indian languages included in the Eighth Schedule. Since the Nepali language has not been included in the Eighth Schedule, the Nepali-speaking people are deprived of this facility. Mr. Speaker, Sir, you can imagine the difficulty these people have been experiencing.

I would like to draw your attention to the importance of languages included in the eighth Schedule. On 7th December, 1967 Official Languages (Amendment) Bill was passed by Lok Sabha. It says :

[English]

‘Whereas the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution specifies 14 major languages of India besides Hindi, and it is necessary in the interest of the educational and cultural advancement of the country that concerted measures should be taken for the full development of these languages . . .

[Translation]

It means Government will spend money for the advancement of only those languages which have been included in the Eighth Schedule. Crores of rupees are being spent by Government, but nothing is being done for the advancement of cultural and literary heritage of those languages which have not been included in the Eighth Schedule and for providing employment to the people speaking these languages. It is clear from above that concerted efforts can only be made for full development of the languages which have been included in the Eighth Schedule.

I would like to draw your attention to this fact also that only those languages which have been included in the Eighth Schedule can be accepted as alternative languages for taking examinations conducted by Union Public Service Commission. I am making it clear before you that the other languages are deprived of these facilities even to this extent.

The said Bill further says :

[English]

‘‘And, whereas, it is necessary to ensure that the just claims and interests of persons belonging to non-Hindi speaking areas in regard to the Public Services of the Union are fully safeguarded . . .’’

[Translations]

It has been stated further :

[English]

‘‘That all the languages included in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution and English shall be permitted as alternative media for All India and Higher Central Services Examinations after ascertaining the views of the UPSC on the future scheme of the examinations, the procedural aspects and the timings.’’

[Translation]

I would like to tell you that here also, they are being deprived.

In 1979 also, when I was a Member of Rajya Sabha, I had raised this issue and at that time, the then Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs, Shri Dhanik Lal Mandai had stated that no other language can be included in the Eighth Schedule, but he had added that if there would be any difficulty, the matter would be considered. At that time I had stated that it would be very difficult for Nepali-speaking candidates to appear in the UPSC examinations, if they had not learnt any other alternative languages. From the above it is abundantly clear as to how the people knowing a particular language are being deprived because their language has not been included in the Eighth Schedule.

I would also like to give certain other examples. National Prize competition is held for literature and adult education, but for that competition also only those languages have been prescribed which are included in the Eighth Schedule and other languages have not been prescribed. I would like to quote an advertisement :

[English]

“First National Prize competition of posters on adult education.

Twenty-fifth National Prize Competition for Literature for Neo-literates.”

[Translation]

For those competitions, only those languages such as Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Kashmiri, Malayalam, Marathi, Oriya, Tamil, Telugu, which are in the Schedule have been prescribed. I am happy that these languages have been included in the Schedule and I am thankful for the same, but the people knowing those languages which have not been included in the Eighth Schedule are being deprived of the benefits. If Nepali language is included in the Eighth Schedule of the

Constitution, it would strengthen the unity of the country. I am putting this point before you for your consideration.

One of the biggest problems is that if any foreigner applies for naturalisation, he is asked if he can speak any of the languages included in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution or not and whether he has any knowledge of them. If he does not have any knowledge of any of those languages, he is not issued the certificate. I would, therefore, like to submit that various languages are involved in this issue and some languages get the benefit whereas some other languages are deprived of these benefits. Some languages get an opportunity for literary development and economic advancement. The people knowing a language, which is not included in the Eighth Schedule, are being deprived of those benefits. If you adopt the policy of divide and rule, unity of the country cannot be maintained. It is also said that one can enter government service only if one has knowledge of any of the languages included in the Eighth Schedule. I would, therefore, urge upon the government to solve this problem.

The Nepali speaking people have made sacrifices out of a sense of patriotism, but even then they are called foreigners time and again. Their language is also often called a foreign language. By calling it a foreign language, injustice is done to them. Even today they stand like a rock to defend the country. I would, therefore, like to submit that this language should be included in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution. Just now my friend was saying that several Assemblies have passed this resolution unanimously and urged upon the Government to include this language in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution.

The Nepali-speaking people are ready to sacrifice their lives for maintaining the unity and integrity of the country and are always prepared to provide help in the nation-building task ; even then they are being discriminated against. As my friend has said,

[Shri Anand Pathak]

I would also like to endorse his view that Nepali language has its origin in India. It has grown in India and this enriched language is spoken by many people in India. The hon. Minister has said that the number of Nepali-speaking people is one million. Shri Daga has said that their number is 1.5 million, I do not know as to what is the source of his information.

This language is spoken in the entire himalayan region, right from higher ranges down to the foot-hills and the number of Nepali-speaking people is over two crores. It does not, of crores in India. This was what Shri Misra had said, I do not know what my friend has heard.

At the time of census, not only in one area but in Dehradun, Himachal Pradesh and other places also when the personal engaged on enumeration approach the people, they do not ask what their mother-tongue is, but instead ask whether they can speak Hindi and all the people are shown as Hindi-speaking. This is gross injustice. Therefore, I would like to say that the number of Nepali-speaking people in India is not less than 60—70 lakhs. Why do we demand that Nepali language should be include in the English Schedule? The Constitution provides that our official language will be Hindi in due course. It means that if Hindi is to be developed as a language of the entire country, cooperation of all languages of the country will have to be taken for its enrichment and from this point of view all other languages have been included in the Eighth Schedule. With the inclusion of Nepali in the Eighth Schedule, Hindi will be further enriched as it is similar to Hindi. Its script is Devnagri, script of Nepali is the script of Hindi. Its words and sentences are almost similar. If there is any language which can enrich Hindi as official language it is Nepali which will contribute maximum in enriching Hindi as national language. And by including Nepali in the right Schedule the resentment in the minds of Nepali-speaking people will be removed

It will go a long way in strengthening the unity of the country further. This can also add to emotional integration.

I have tried to express my views here taking into account all points of view and I would like to request again that time has come to include Nepali language in the Eighth Schedule as soon as possible, because any delay in this matter may lead to adverse consequences which will not be good for the country. You know as my friends have said that non-acceptance of this demand may create separatist tendency in them. Therefore, my submission is that all should be given equal rights.

Shri Daga is not present here at the moment. He said that nobody knew Nepali here. Therefore, I shall speak before you a few words in Nepali.

An hon'ble member has just now said in the House that no member in the House can speak Nepali. Therefore, I want to speak in Nepali. Nepali is a rich language. Nepali is written in Devnagri script and it is a beautiful and simple language. Almost all people who speak Indian languages can understand Nepali. This language has a rich literature. By accepting the proposal of including Nepali in the Eighth Schedule, the emotional integration of the country will be strengthened and at the same time our literature will also become rich.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, it is not correct to say that Nepali language has no literature. I would like to submit that Shri Bhanubhakta Acharya was the greatest poet of Nepali language who wrote Ramayana in Nepali. Besides, there were other great poets and writers like Poet Laxmi Prasad Devkota Dr. Paras Mani Pradhan, Pandit Dhruv-dhar Sharma and Shri Suryavikram Gyavali who wrote large volumes of poetry, stories, novels and numerous other books. In addition to these, there had been a number of other poets whose names I cannot mention for want of time. There is a vast literature in Nepali and it is a rich language.

**This part of the speech was originally delivered in Nepali.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Nepali is a very rich language

SHRI ANANDA PATHAK : With these words I conclude my speech and hope that Government will not reject this proposal outright and will give it due consideration and approve its inclusion in the Eighth Schedule. While replying to this debate, the hon. Minister must keep these points in mind and approve the inclusion of Nepali language in the Eighth Schedule. I am thankful to you for having given me an opportunity to speak.

17.17 hrs.

SHRI VIRDHI CHANDER JAIN (Barmer) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to express my views on the Constitution (Amendment) Bill introduced by Shri Misra in the House.

We have included 15 languages in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution and some norms and criteria have been laid down on the basis of which we have included them in this Schedule. Therefore, if we wish to include any other language in the Eighth Schedule, we will either have to lay down some norms or to follow the norms already laid down and decide on their basis. About Nepali language too we will have to decide in the same manner. We will have to see whether it is rich or not ; whether the Nepali dictionary contains scientific and technological words. At the same time information will have to be gathered about the literatures and poets who have written novels and other important masterpieces and a detailed study of them will have to be undertaken. We will also have to ascertain the number of Nepali-speaking people. I mean to say that so many factors will have to be taken into account. We see at times there is this issue of Maithali language or Rajasthani or Bhojpuri or Dogri or for that matter Nepali language. Likewise, issues about other languages are also raised and there will be more of such demands. I would like to submit that we will have to decide once for all with regard to these languages and we

should constitute a committee or commission which can study in detail whether these languages can stand the test of our norms and criteria. In this context this criterion should be adopted whether these languages, irrespective of the fact that they originate from Sanskrit or 'Prakrit' language, have such vocabulary with which the people knowing these languages can promote their knowledge about science. Secondly, it should be kept in mind whether that language can serve as a medium of instruction for education in science. We have unity in diversity in our country. We have never opposed any language and that is why we have 15 language in the Eighth Schedule of our Constitution. We want that all the languages should be promoted and respected. As they progress, Hindi should also become rich. Hindi should have power to adopt and absorb words from these languages. Hindi should not be rigid. It can become richer if it tries to adopt more words from these languages. (*Interruptions*) These words may be from any language for example, from Urdu, Hindi should adopt words from all language. I mean Hindi should not be rigid. It should borrow words from all languages, even from English and make itself rich, Likewise, Hindi should absorb words from Nepali language.

I have never said that Nepali is a foreign language. We should not have such an attitude. Nepali has originated from 'Prakrit' language Sanskrit and 'Prakrit' language go together. All the languages in our country should progress and develop and become rich. But I would also like to point out that to include any language in the Eighth Schedule, some norms and criteria should be laid down and followed. 15 languages are already enlisted in this Schedule. If the list goes up to 50 languages it can create difficulties. We can have difficulty in translating them here in Lok Sabha. Therefore, some yardstick should be laid down.

As regards Rajasthani language, it has a vast vocabulary and is a literary language. Daga Sahib was deriding it and was saying that it was the language

[Shri Vridhi Chander Jain]
of kings and emperors. This language not only contains literature of Kings Emperors but many poets also have contributed to the enrichment of this language through their literary pieces.

Therefore, my submission is that a committee should be constituted which can consider this problem. The Committee should also consider Rajasthani language and how it can help and develop other languages and Hindi.

With these words, I would like to say that we must keep this point of view in mind while taking a decision. I hope the suggestions made by me will be accepted.

[English]

SHRI K. P. UNNIKRISHNAN (Badagara) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am grateful to you for giving me this opportunity. As a matter of fact, it was my esteemed friend Mr. Gaga's speech which provoked me a little. I did not want to intervene, but I thought it was important that certain things must be put in proper focus.

While I support this move, it is not a question of accepting X language or Y language; it is a question of our approach to the problem of unity of India and certain fundamental facts of our existence as a nation, which to my mind, more important than a language being included or excluded from the Eighth Schedule or being used in Centre or in the State; and this concept of unity which has its roots in our existence is important and more so important in the present context when we have a trouble present because we refuse to recognise certain realities of our existence. The most important thing to my mind. I submit, is that India is essentially a land of minorities; India is very different from other national agglomerates like the United States or the USSR or China. These are the three comparisons that would come naturally and obviously to your mind or to any one's mind when we discuss this problem.

I recall a speech of the Soviet leader, Mr. Brezhnev. I think it was in the 26th Congress of the CPSU when he referred to the great mother culture and the great Russian culture which is accepted by all nationalities; and that is, mind you, after the revolution in the Soviet Union, one of the great landmarks of human history. Every effort has been made not only to develop the Russian language but to develop the languages of minorities, not even languages, but, mind you even dialects. One of the significant things of the Soviet experiment has been this tremendous attention paid even to the language, dialect, dialects which were fully developed, half-developed or not developed at all. If you go to Turkmenia or Kirghiz and so on, you will find that languages have helped the people who speak these languages or use these languages as the medium; they have been helped to develop themselves and their respective regions. When Mr. Brezhnev, made that speech, he was only referring to this great tradition. Similarly, in the United States you will find if you go through the history of the United States, that the most significant thing has been the role of the WASP (White Anglo Saxon Protestants) and the English Languages in the development of the United States during the last 150-200 years. Today, it is a fact, that migrants from Southern Europe like Italy or Eastern Europe like Poland or from the Latin American countries to the United States accept the English Language because of the acceptance of this White Anglo-Saxon predominance and their languages and culture; that is today the most important thing about the very existence of the United States. If you go to China you will find that non Han minorities are less than 5 per cent. You have the problem there also, as you know, as we are very familiar with the problem of the Tibetan minority. Therefore, I submit the problem of the Indian subcontinent is different. Here a question is what kind of unity you want. That was the question raised even before partition. Do you want unity in uniformity? Do you want unity where any kind of dissent or any culture of a

different kind will be wiped out. That was the question posed even during the freedom struggle which Mahatma Gandhi answered: the question was raised whether India was a nation. You know, one of the first tasks, fundamental tasks of our nationalist movement in the early years was to reply to this question. There again, we had emphasised that Indian unity can only be promoted through diversity. Unity cannot be found in uniformity and our acceptance of this encouraged nationalist forces to emerge on the top. And that is why Mahatma Gandhi in 1920 in the Nagpur Session of the Congress, said that these provinces that the British colonialists have made in the subcontinent are artificial, they have no relationship to the needs of India and that was a historical interpretation that he gave because during the last five hundred years or so, ever since the *Bhakti* movement, the most important factors of India has been the emergence of these assertive regional cultures and languages. We in South, have a languages with thousands of years of history, the great Tamil language; but other regional languages which have developed during the last five hundred years or so and contributed immensely to the richness and diversity of our culture cannot be wiped out and as we go along we will find that there will be many more demands. Some people here were referring to the demand for inclusion of Mathili and even small Manipuri language. But one cannot forget that there are people who speak Manipuri language; there are people who have their cultural roots in Manipuri language, there are people who are devoted to Mathili, as Abdul Ghafoor Sahib will tell you. If there is a people's movement we have to recognise this fact of our national existence whether it is Nepali, Manipuri or Maithili and India will not get weakened. The concept of Indian unity will, on the country, get strengthened because for the last five thousand years, the most important thing about this country has been, even dominant religion not to be confused with the dominant nationality in India. There has been a continuing conflict between the liberal Hindu, and the

Hindu who refused to absorb, the Hindu who wanted to absorb, who wanted to absorb the best things, who wanted to merge himself with the larger things and the Hindu who looked to himself and his immediate environment. And this was the greatest significance of Mahatma Gandhi, he brought this again in this aspect of looking at our culture and nationhood when he said, "I shall defend the right of every minority, every linguistic minority in India." If we had only listened to Mahatma, what he said in Assam or Punjab, I am sure, we could have solved many other problems which we are confronted with even today.

Therefore, my point is that even in the Indian nationalist movement there were distinguished men who were Hindu nationalists. I have great respect for Vir Savarkar as a great revolutionary, as a freedom fighter. But I cannot accept his approach to the problem of India nationhood. Therefore, there is a confrontation between Mahatma Gandhi's approach and the approach of people like Vir Savarkar, Hindu nationalists. There had to be and the battle had to be fought, and therefore, there was nothing lost in the battle. Therefore, when Mahatma Gandhi talked about these regional languages or Urdu,— because after all Urdu represents a symbol of our composite culture— we cannot forget five hundred years of Indian history and so you can go back and back.

There are people who want to make Sanskrit our national language. There were people who wanted it, at the time of the Constituent Assembly— if you go through the debates you will find it — but it could not be accepted. With the highest respect and regard for Sanskrit as a student of Sanskrit, I tell you, it cannot be the national language in the present context.

Gandhiji wanted Hindustani. But as Shri Abdul Ghafoor, a little while ago, referred to in a jocular manner, there are people who want to impose a vocabulary which nobody will understand, who, violating the principles even of the Constitution,

[Shri K.P. Unnikrishnan]

are trying to impose certain set of numerals. In my State and your State, on the national highways I can read, but I am sure that many of you cannot read, what is written there. Is there any justification for that? That the money of the Union must be sent so that nobody will understand. There are similarly people who want even English language to continue. There are States of Meghalaya and Nagaland. There is nothing wrong. The whole edifice will not collapse because somebody wants to use a particular language. If the prime Minister wants to take this country to the 21st century and he could privately start a movement — I know politically he cannot do it — and say that down with all the Indian scripts, we are going to adopt Roman script for all Indian languages, then possibly, that will be a great jump and social advance, because even during the last two wars we have seen how Urdu was promoted, how people come to learn Hindustani through Romanised Urdu. You will find even in South a large number of people who have learn Urdu and Hindustani in Roman script. Therefore, there is nothing wrong in the the script. While we may have attachment and say that Devanagri script is a very scientific script, I accept this fact, but it is also equally true for the modern purposes that if this nation is to move forward, it would be advantageous to have Roman script. There is nothing wrong. The edifice of our unity is not that brittle that it will collapse by adopting Roman script or by accepting Nepali or Manipuri or Sindhi or any of these languages which are people's languages. It is very important for use to remember that this was the approach of the nationalist movement. While trying to integrate, they also wanted to give self-respect to these people. That is why, when Mahatma Gandhi went to Assam, while addressing Assam Sahitya Sammelan he said: "I will come and defend your rights if anybody violates it." He said the same thing in Punjab. He had written something about the Sikhs in the *Young India* that they were Hindus. Sikhs protested. When

Mahatma Gandhi went to Punjab he said: "I am sorry. You have brought certain facts which I did not know." That was the greatness of the man. He said: "Hereafter I shall not call you Hindus. If you do not want to be called Hindus, you shall not be called Hindus." Similarly, the genesis of the present movement in Punjab began with the movement in 1951 during the census period when certain sections of Hindus, under the influence of Arya Samaj and RSS, asked Hindus themselves, who were using Punjab language, to give Hindi as their mother tongue. This continues in attitudes to other languages in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar or in other northern States — I am very happy that something has been done for Urdu in Bihar recently — or in attitudes to the smaller languages or the attitudes of certain Hindi sellers to the question of Union language. In all these things we have adopted an approach which does not promote unity as is being claimed by the protagonists of this. On contrary, it only promotes dis-unity. India had always been great when it looked outward. If you go to Cambodia or Indonesia you will find that whenever India is looked outwardly India has always been on the top in the historical cycle. But whenever we have looked India inwards, we have refused to absorb or merge our identity, we have gone down. That is exactly the point. Therefore, I am not prepared to accept the concept of unity based on Hindi, Hindu, Hindustani. That will negative and destroy the very concept of Indian Unity. Any price is worth giving for fighting this concept. That is the task today. While supporting this Bill. I want to emphasise that you will have to fight this tendency. This trend which is trying to assert itself in the nation. That alone shall promote unity.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DAS MUNSHI (Howrah) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I must congratulate Shri Anand Pathak for his constructive contribution so far in support of this Constitution (Amendment) Bill moved by Shri Satyagopal Misra. I had an occasion to very closely watch the

developments and the demands of this Nepali language's recognition and I must say, what Mr. Unnikrishnan has stated, that forgetting the politics from this side or that side, if you really think at this hour of the question of unity, we must think of Gurndev Rabindra Noth Tagore who said unity in India means unity in diversity, if at any moment that string is slashed, you will find that there is a threat to the very basic of the unity of this country. I quite well appreciate the problems of the Government, because you have dealt with this matter many times, that if Nepali is included today to the Eighth Schedule, naturally the Santhalis tomorrow, the Dogris day after and some others will come forward and if any part of India is left in terms of language, naturally, instead of doing good to the Nepalese, it will create more problems for the unity of the country. Therefore, my suggestion is very brief and very simple. I would request that all the languages and all the dialects, whether they are spoken by the plain tribes or in hill tribes, among the hill tribes of Himachal Pradesh, Garhwal, Darjeeling, Sikkim as well as in Bastar area of Madhya Pradesh, Ganjam or Keonjhar areas of Orissa, Jhargram of Bengal or among the Santhalis, be taken into consideration before you begin the Seventh Plan, I would request the Government to consider this and take a firm approach as to how they can accommodate all the hill tribes' languages and among those Nepali should get the highest priority and it should be included first. I think that will serve the purpose for ever. If you just take Nepali, it may not help. Shri Misra or some other friends may have to come to this House with other Bills. So, this is my first suggestion. Secondly, I would let our DMK friend who contributed to this debate today that we all agree that the regional languages should be promoted, the languages of the minorities should be encouraged. But you cannot think of unity in this country if you do not give priority for one national language of the country. You should not forget that responsibility. My DMK friend was referring to USSR. He must be knowing the

fact that it was possible for Lenin to build up the Revolution not by the teachings of Marx only but also because he was able to persuade every Soviet person to speak in one language after the Revolution, and that is Russian language. Today the basis of unity of Russia and Soviet Union is not only because of many other things but also because of the common language. They speak in Russian. They may have the protection of various dialects in Turkmenia, in Tashkent and in many other places.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY :
Wrong.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DAS
MUNSHI : If it is wrong, you just go through the speeches, why contradict me? You are a communist, you know better, If it is wrong that they talk in Russian language, if it has hurt you, better you print your speech in New Age and see what your party does to it. What I say is that Hindi language should not be imposed but it is also very wrong to have been saying for the last fifteen years that imposition of Hindi will not be tolerated. What is tolerance? I say I have every respect for Tamil language. Tamil is one of the richest languages of our country with the highest culture, and if I bow down to any language, I bow down to Tamil because I have gone through the history of the language in my class of philology. It is nearest to Sanskrit and it has a rich heritage. But what is wrong in Tamil Nadu is that in Tamil Nadu you write the first sentence in Hindi, second sentence in Tamil and the third in English. Let people talk in Tamil. No matter (*I interruption*).

DR. A. KALANIDHI : How can it be... (*Interruptions*).

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DAS
MUNSHI : Don't misunderstand me.

DR. A. KALANIDHI : Are you prepared to take our language to your birth place?

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DAS
MUNSHI : Please listen to what I say. Don't get impatient. I say each State language should be given highest

[Shri Priya Ranjan Das Munshi]
 priority. But having given priority to the State language, also give promotional avenues and opportunities to the national language to become akin to the people. This is what I have said. I do not say Hindi should be spoken by everybody. What I say it is not wrong to ask a person in Tamil Nadu or in Bengal to learn Hindi. In Bengal, people read Bengali first and in Tamil Nadu, they read Tamil first. But if they find time to learn Hindi, there is nothing wrong in that. It is not imposition. This is my approach. If you talk of national unity, that should be the approach.

DR. A. KALANIDHI : Sir, on a point of order. We are opposing the imposition of Hindi. It is being imposed. That is the reason why we are agitated.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DAS MUNSHI : Similarly, I am. I am also opposing the imposition of Hindi. So, what is the difference between us? I entirely share your view...*(Interruptions)* I am also opposing imposition. But, while talking of Hindi...*(Interruption)* What I am saying is, in whatever language you may talk in this country, be it Tamil, Bangla or Oriya, when we talk to the whole world, we have to talk in a language which is shared and understood by a large number of people in the country. There is nothing wrong in it. I do not understand this opposition. When I read the names of my great friends in Tamil Nadu, I feel proud because most of the names carry Sanskrit, the original culture of the country...*(Interruptions)*

DR. A. KALANIDHI : You are misleading the House...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : You can explain or clarify it, when you get your chance.

SHRI N. V. N. SOMU : When Mahatma Gandhi visited Madras city, he exhorted all people to learn Tamil...*(Interruptions)* The Father of the nation has told us that. Are they prepared to follow that?

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DAS MUNSHI : I love that language and I will be most happy to learn that language. While participating in a discussion on a private Members' Bill, I do not talk in terms of Congress or opposition. I am not speaking in the spirit of DMK or ALDMK...*(Interruptions)* I shall continue to say that while we promote regional languages, all efforts should be made to see that Hindi is taught to almost every section of the people in this country.

SHRI N. V. N. SOMU : We are Tamilians by language and Dravidians by race...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DAS MUNSHI : I do not want to talk in terms of Tamil and non-Tamil. We have to have a common language, which will be a common link for all of us and that is either Hindi or English...*(Interruptions)* Perhaps, you have not followed what I said. I have referred to the ancient culture of Tamil; I have said it. Among the languages of India, I will first bow down to Tamil.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : You talk about the Nepali language.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DAS MUNSHI : I am coming to Nepalese. You have allowed all the members to talk about Hindi, Tamil or other languages before coming to Nepali. Why don't you allow me also to do that?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : You have also done that. Further, the time is only ten minutes.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DAS MUNSHI : Secondly, I entirely share the view expressed by Shri Satyagopal Misra and I support it. But, we have had enough of movements and agitations. This is not the time for force, coercion or confrontation. Further, even if you achieve something by those means, ultimately it does not help. So, let us leave it to the wisdom of the Government. Let us not talk now only in terms of the Nepalese language. Then, what about the language of the hill tribes, the plains people, the

Manipuri of Dogra? Let the Government bring a comprehensive legislation for amendment of the Constitution to incorporate the various languages in the Eighth Schedule, rather than giving opportunity to any particular language to say "we are neglected". That is my concrete proposal, not exclusive of Nepali only, though I fully support the Bill by Shri Ananda Pathak and Shri Satyagopal Misra. If I have hurt the sentiments of my Tamil friends, I am sorry. Let us see that all our languages, including Tamil and Malayalam develop, but ultimately one day or the other we should also speak Hindi.

[Translation]

****SHRI A.C SHANMUGAM** (Vellore): Hon. Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, my hon friend, Shri Satya Gopal Misra, has introduced the Constitution Amendment Bill seeking the inclusion of Nepali language in the VIII Schedule of the Constitution. On behalf of my party the All India Anna D.M.K. I welcome this Bill, While doing so, I would like to express my view relevant to this Bill. I thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to participate in the discussion.

The hon. Members who preceded me changed the direction of the debate to suit their pet theories. They talked about the pre-eminence of Hindi and about India's language policy. They referred to the imminent danger that the country will have to face if Nepali language is included in the VIII Schedule of the Constitution. For years there have been agitations and demonstrations for the constitutional recognition of Nepali language. By making Nepali as the 16th language in the VIII schedule of the Constitution, India is not going to be enveloped in great chaos. India's economy is not going to be foundered. Hindi language is not going to be threatened with grave consequences. The arguments of hon. Members in this regard are based on the quick-sand of unwarranted fears.

The Nepali speaking people living in North Bengal, Himachal Pradesh,

****The speech was originally delivered in Tamil.**

Sikkim, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura etc. have been demanding for long that their language Nepali should be included in the VIII Schedule of the Constitution. On behalf of my party the AIADMK, I demand that their sentiments should be respected by the Government. Napali language should be given constitutional recognition.

Some hon. Members referred to 15 languages enlisted in the VIII Schedule and the financial allocations for their growth and development. They have fanned the flame of such unseemly controversy during this debate, I would like to echo the voice of my party the AIADMK that we are opposed to three-language formula, which my friends wanted to be implemented throughout the country. So far as Tamil Nadu is concerned, we are unequivocally committed to two-language formula. From the days of Perarignar Anna to our beloved leader Puratchi Thalaivar Dr. M.G.R. two-language formula is our cherished ideal. I can say without any hesitation that the history of Tamil Nadu will not see any wavering in this committed policy of Tamil Nadu Government. I have to apprise this House of this unalterable two-language formula of the Government of Tamil Nadu.

The members referred to the 15 languages of the VIII schedule. Hindi is also one of the 15 languages. Hindi is not, therefore, occupying any pre-eminent place. I say with all the force at my command that India will not accept Hindi as the leader of all languages in the country. Is Hindi being spoken by 75% of the population in the country? You know, Sir, that 400 Members have been elected to this House on Congress-Party ticket. Is Hindi the mother-tongue of 350 member belonging to the Congress Party in this House? It is not so. Hindi is spoken by just 35% of the people in India. Please do not forget this basic fact. The Government should not fail to honour the sentiments of 65% of the population speaking other languages.

Several crores of rupees are being spent for the growth of Hindi language. Why should not similar amounts be

[Shri A. C. Shanmugam]

spent for the development of other 14 languages in the VIII Schedule of the Constitutions? Give 10 crores, 20 crores or 30 crores for each of these languages, while you are spending 100 crores of rupees for Hindi. On the other hand only one crore is given every year for each of the languages enshrined in the VIII Schedule. From this it is patently obvious that the Central Government is partisan in its language policy and is adopting step-motherly attitude for other languages of the VIII Schedule.

Some hon. Members were apprehensive that India's unity will be undermined if Nepali language is given the constitutional recognition. I am of the firm view that India is not going to be dominated by people speaking only one language or people wearing only one kind of uniform or by people professing only one kind of culture or by people affiliated to only one kind of religious concept. India is a land of diverse cultures. India has lived for ages with this unity in diversity. We cannot afford to forget that for millennium India will continue to live with this kind of unity in diversity. I take this opportunity to demand that at least 50% of the amounts being spent on Hindi should be allocated for other languages of VIII Schedule.

My hon. friends stated that they are not opposed to Tamil and they will learn Tamil. On behalf of 5 crores of Tamil people, I assert that we are not opposed to Hindi; we learn Hindi; we see Hindi cinema; we hear Hindi songs. But we are opposed to Hindi imposition we will not tolerate Hindi imperialism.

Sir, you must know that there is an Official Language Committee, in which the M.P.S. are members. This committee is in existence for several years. So many times this Committee has gone around the world—for what purpose? That is for finding out how Hindi has progressed in Indian Embassies abroad. Is this necessary? Lakhs and lakhs of valuable foreign exchange has been wasted in this kind of wild-goose chase

throughout the world. Sir, our illustrious Chief Minister, Dr. M.G.R. has been repeatedly and ceaselessly assuring in several Conferences of Chief Ministers that we are committed to one India; we will foster for ever India's unity; we will lay our lives for protecting India's sovereignty and unity. He has publicly stated in many forums that India's unity is our soul-breath. India's integrity is our irrecocable concern.

But, we would like to warn the Hindi profaganists that we will oppose till our last breath Hindi imposition and we will not allow the suppression of other languages by Hindi. It is time that they change their stance soon. I would take this opportunity to request our dynamic Prime Minister to ensure that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's solemn assurance to non-Hindi speaking people is given the statutory support. Pandit Nehru had categorically assured non-Hindi speaking people that so long as they do not want Hindi, English will be allowed to be continued as the official language, as the link language. On behalf of my party the AIADMK, I appeal to the hon. Prime Minister, who is sworn to nurture and nourish the unity of the country, that he should translate his grand-father's assurance into a law. This is a must, because you see the general trend in the country that Hindi is being insidiously imposed. Take the U.P.S.C. examinations, State Banks and other public sector banks. CA examinations and other competitive examinations. Only when the candidates write Hindi examination, they will be selected promotions will be given only if they pass the Hindi examination. Such orders are being issued day in day and day out.

Now, Tamil Nadu is confronting another serious problem. Upto 9.30 PM in TV Tamil programmes were being telecast. Six months ago the national programme was advanced to 8.30 PM, thus denying the opportunity to telecast Tamil programmes upto 9.30 P.M. We agitated against it and the earlier arrangement was revived, enabling Tamil programme to be telecast upto 9.30 P.M.

Now, again the national programme has been advanced to 8.30 P.M. Naturally Tamil programmes cannot be telecast till 9.30 P.M. I would like to know whether any of the Central Ministers see this national programme on T.V. Before I conclude, I demand that the earlier timing must be revived, so that Tamil programmes can be telecast upto 9.30 P.M. With these words, I conclude my speech extending my support to the Bill of Shri Satya Gopal Mishra.

(English)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : This discussion on the Constitution (Amendment) Bill moved by Shri Satyagopal Mishra can be continued next time. Let us go to the next item.

RESIGNATION OF MEMBER

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : I have to inform the House that the Speaker has received a letter from Shri Nar Bahadur Bhandari, an elected Member from Sikkim constituency of Sikkim resigning his seat in Lok Sabha. He has accepted his resignation with effect from today, i.e. the 15th March, 1985.

STATEMENT RE SITUATION IN SHRI LANKA

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI KHURSHEED ALAM KHAN) : Sir, Many Members have expressed serious concern over the situation in Sri Lanka, and its repercussions on us. From time to time, Government have shared with the House its views on this extremely important and sensitive subject.

2. The situation in Sri Lanka continues to be tense, and its fall out on us has been severe. A very large number of refugees has left Sri Lanka over the last month ; more than 15,000 have arrived in India over and above the 50,000 who have been here since July, 1983. This is a matter of deep concern to us, and places a severe strain on the State Government of Tamil Nadu as well as on us. While we are providing temporary shelter and food to the

refugees, we have conveyed to the Sri Lanka Government that there should be no army excesses, that Sri Lanka should ensure that no more refugees come to India, and that conditions are created so that refugees can return to their country in honour and safety, capable of pursuing their peaceful avocations.

3. In the past few month, there have been incidents in the Palk Straits where our fishermen have been killed, injured or arrested. We have expressed our concern to the Sri Lanka Government in the strongest possible terms, and sought compensation for the loss of lives and property. Full protection is being provided to our fishermen inside our own maritime zone and Coast Guard and Naval Patrolling has been intensified. Since last month, additional air surveillance has been introduced. I assure the House that Government will ensure the safety and security of our citizens.

4 While the situation in Sri Lanka continues to be unstable, it would be unwise to enter into an exchange of recriminations. All parties need to consider the problem in a constructive and sympathetic spirit. We continue to believe that only a political solution within the framework of Sri Lanka's unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity, acceptable to all concerned can resolve the ethnic problem. Violence, from whatever source, is not the answer.

5. I should like to inform the House that Government is in touch with the Sri Lankan Government to explore all possibilities that would defuse the situation and facilitate an enduring settlement. The House will recall that with a view to having a personal exchange of views which might facilitate the resumption of the political dialogue in Sri Lanka, at the Prime Minister's suggestion, the Sri Lanka President sent his National Security Minister, Mr. Athulathmudali as his emissary to Delhi early last month. They had useful talks. The Prime Minister had emphasised to him that the Sri Lankan Government