

15.42 hrs

Shri L.K. Advani.

HIGH COURT AT GUWAHATI (ESTABLISHMENT OF A PERMANENT BENCH AT IMPHAL) BILL

[Translation]

[English]

SHRI YAIMA SINGH YUMNAM (Inner Manipur): Since a permanent Bench of the High Court at Guwahati at Imphal has been established and functioning, the purpose of the Bill has been served. Hence, I beg to move for leave to withdraw the Bill to provide for the establishment of a permanent Bench of the High Court at Guwahati at Imphal.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is: "That leave be granted to withdraw the Bill to provide for the establishment of a permanent Bench of the High Court at Guwahati at Imphal."

The motion was adopted.

SHRI YAIMA SINGH YUMNAM: I withdraw the Bill.

SHRI L.K. ADVANI (Gandhinagar): Mr. Chairmen, Sir, I am starting this discussion. I would only like to draw the attention of the House to the fact that the several residents of Manipur are on hunger-strike for the last nine days on the question of the Manipuri language and the condition of one of them is serious. That is why. Though the House has held discussion twice on it on Friday and there is a consensus. I hope that the response of the Government will be favourable and it will be such a response that we may convey the opinion of the house to them and they may call off the hunger-strike. The condition of the one of them is quite serious and that is why I am rising to express my concern (*Interruptions*).

[English]

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH (Uluberia): Sir, some Nepali people are also planning self-immolation.. (*Interruptions*)..

[Translation]

15.43 hrs

CONSTITUTION (AMENDMENT) BILL-
CONTD.

(Amendment of Eighth Schedule)

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: The House will Now take up further consideration of the following motion moved by Shrimati Dil Kumari Bhandari on the 10th April, 1992, namely:-

"That the Bill further to amend the Constitution of India, be taken into consideration."

SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA: Hon. Advani ji has raised an issue in the House, it is my request that the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs is present in the House.. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA (Andaman and Nicobar Islands): Khurana ji, Advani ji has already spoken, what else is left now.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, as I had mentioned it here in the last few days that by bringing this Bill in the House hon. Dil Kumari ji has won hearts of all of us as also won the hearts of the people, who are living in all those States where they are resorting to agitational ap-

proach on the question of language. She has given us an opportunity..(Interruptions).. their name is not there. I would like to tell you that today we have got an opportunity in the House that we should not only confine this issue to Manipuri and Nepali alone, but we need to ponder over this issue more seriously. The reason for this is that there is a proposal before us to give constitutional recognition to languages like Nepali, Manipuri or Konkani. There can be no two opinions on this because today if the unity of the country has to be maintained, we shall have to think again on the language-policy.

All of us know that all the major languages in this country have been included in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution. All of us also know that Hindi is the national language of this country and even on this there are no two opinions, nor is there any opposition to it. But in this country, even after 40-50 years of independence, people living in remote areas at different places and in backward areas have an attachment with their respective languages they speak, all of them want their own language to get ahead, but the apathy on the part of the Government towards those languages has created surprise and resentment among the people.

That is why I would like to submit to you that there are many minor languages in this country in each State which do not have their own script but people speak those languages and converse in them. Some languages such as Nicolabri language in the Andaman & Nicobar Islands, has got no script of its own but the former Member of Parliament, Late John Bishop Richardson, who was elected to this House in 1952, made an effort to write it in Roman alphabets. He gave the Nicobari language of that place a written form and in this way translated it into a script. You may find many such languages in different parts of the country and we have no knowledge of these languages completely. That is why I want that research should be carried out in

respect of all such languages and they are brought to light from the point of view of the unity and integrity of the country as well as to make the nation strong. We should obtain complete information about such languages and we should ponder over the ways to get all those languages included in our Constitution.

The hon. Minister of State for Home Affairs is sitting in the House, he must be having information about many such languages. I would like to submit to him to constitute a Language Commission in the country and after its constitution, all the languages spoken in the country should be placed in a list. After that list is prepared, we should find out as to which languages do not have their own script. A separate list should be prepared for such languages and those languages which are spoken by people, which figure in the list and which have a script of their own should be placed in a separate list. In this way after a list is prepared of all such languages, there is a need today to frame a policy in a proper way with regard to the languages spoken by tribals and others throughout the country, but which have never been presented before us in a proper form.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, in the constituency that I represent, people belonging to every state and speaking all sorts languages of the country are living. We have three-language formula, First-Hindi, second-English and third-own mother tongue, all these three languages are also compulsory. If someone wants to receive education through his mother tongue, he has no, problem, Therefore, language has never become a bone of contention. At the time when an agitation was going on against teaching of Hindi in one part of the country, the people of my State were studying in the medium of English and their mother tongue-. Thus, no controversy ever reged on language in my State. It has maintained our language policy.

[Sh. Manoranjan Bhakta]

Mr. Chairman, Sir, in various States of the country various controversies have been going on language issue for a long period. Therefore, taking all things into consideration, the review of the language policy becomes necessary. There is a Department of Official languages in the Ministry of Home Affairs but the Government has never given a thought towards a number of languages in the country. What has it done? It has taken no measures to encourage the official language. It has taken no measures to hold any discussion in this regard. I, therefore, realise that it is very essential to consider it anew. It is very essential for the sake of national integration as well.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, if the Government thinks that it has fulfilled its responsibility merely by encouraging Hindi, that will not serve the purpose. It is very essential to encourage Hindi. Undoubtedly, it is our national language and I am not saying it at all that Hindi should not be encouraged. Hindi must be encouraged, but the Government has to pay attention to the development and propagation of other 15 languages mentioned in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution. It is true that every State Government is responsible for the progress of the language of the State, but besides it, there is no one to pay any heed to the dialects spoken as regional languages in the State and spoken by the majority of the people for their development. The Central Government owns the responsibility of propagating the Official Language and State Government does so in respect of the language spoken in that State but Nobody is there to develop the regional languages. Therefore, it is high time that we examined every issue and its every aspect properly. I would like to urge upon the hon. Minister of Home Affairs to formulate a policy in the regard.

Mr. Chairmen, Sir, it is my demand to

the hon. Minister of Home Affairs that after the discussion is over, he should take some concrete steps to revise the language policy and also see that some steps are taken to encourage these languages. For doing all this funds are also required for the Government to implement its plans because nothing can be done without money. Similarly, work should be done for the development of Manipuri, Nepali and Konkani languages also. Recently, I found in Tripura that they have developed a separate language of their own. They have given certain name to it. They have evolved its script also. That is a Tribal language. The Government must pay attention to it. I think it is a genuine demand. You should make an announcement that the Government will bring forward a Bill in this regard by such and such date.

Just now, Shri Advani has said that the Manipuri students are on the path of agitation. We all want to request them that since it is being discussed in the House and the Government is aware of it, they should not launch agitation. Their purpose of drawing attention has already been served.

I support the move and conclude.

PROF. PREMDHUMAL: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I support the Constitution (Amendment to the Eighth Schedule) Bill introduced by Shrimati Dil Kumari Bhandari. Our party leader Shri Advani has also supported this Bill fully. Nepali and Manipuri were promised to be included in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution in our election manifesto.

The purpose of language is to one's feeling and message to the other. Nepali and Manipuri are languages which are used to give expression to the feeling of many people of this country. There are already 15 languages in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution. These two languages should also be included in it and they should be recognised. In a democratic Government the Govern-

ment itself should understand the feeling of the people. Unfortunately, such circumstances were always created which have compelled people to resort to violent agitation to get their demand accepted. The Government has always ignored such issues presented through a resolution or negotiation. When it was expressed through violent agitation, the Government accepted it.

Today, the people of Manipur and Sikkim are lauding agitation to get their respective languages included in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution. As Shri Advani said some people are sitting on fast and the condition of one of them is serious. The Nepali students have threatened to commit self-immolation. I think that had the Government been vigilant towards the sentiments of the people, the moment the State Home Minister came to the House, he would have said that in the light of the support from every section of the House he accepts it and the agitation would have been called off at once. I fail to understand as to what does the Government lose if it does so.

The Government itself reconstituted States on the basis of language and it was accepted only when some of the people agitated for it. The people of Punjab went on demanding reorganisation of Punjab on the basis of Punjabi language. The Government opposed it and the intensity of resentment went on increasing. Violent agitation took place, then they were given a small State of Punjab on the Basis of Punjabi language. Punjab was divided. At present such agitation is going on in Manipur. The people of Manipur are opposing the Central Government and all other Indian languages. They say that unless Manipuri is included in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution, they are not prepared to Schedule of the Constitution, they are not prepared to accept any other language. The Nepalese students threaten to agitate. They are sitting here on hunger-strike. After this, Since this Bill has

been brought by on hon. Member of the House and the entire House has supported it, the hon. Minister should not make further delay in accepting it.

Not only this, the Legislative Assemblies of Manipur, Tripura, West Bengal, and that of my own State, Himachal Pradesh have passed a resolution and sent it to the Government to include Nepali and Manipuri languages in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution. Recently the conference of the Bharatiya Janata Party was held in Gandhinagar (*Interruptions*)

SHRI KRISHAN DUTT SULTANPURI (Shimla): Let the hon. Member say that the conference was held in Anatyadaya Nagar-

PROF. PREM DHUMAL: It is better for the hon. Member not to speak on the issue which is beyond his comprehension. At that conference we said that not only Manipuri and Nepali but Konkani should also be included in it. Since the formation of Goa as a new State, the people have been demanding inclusion of Konkani in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution. If the Government of India makes further delay on any pretext, it will be taken that it is being denied as the saying goes-

[*English*]

Justice delayed is justice denied.

[*Translation*]

If it is delayed for long, the public resentment will increase. I, therefore, urge upon the Government to accept the Bill, for the inclusion of Nepali and Manipuri as it is and create a history. It is a very good Bill and all parties are supporting it. You are requested to treat it as Government Bill and include it in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution.

Many Members would like to speak on

[Prof. Prem Dhumal]

it. So, once again I would like to say that prior to that the movement may turn violent you are urged to understand the feelings of the people and decide this matter respecting the norms of the democracy. As a member of your party Shri Manoranjan Bhakta has said that if this Bill is passed, the people will start believing that this Government has full faith in democracy and it understands the feelings of the people. You are requested to pass this bill and try to understand the feelings of the people and ours. Soon the good results of this Bill will come before us and I hope that you will adopt it.

With these words I support this bill and conclude.

[English]

SHRI INDERJIT (Darjeeling): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am grateful to you for giving me an opportunity to speak on the Constitution (Amendment) Bill which is of great interest to more than eight to ten lakhs of people of my constituency of Darjeeling and carries far-reaching implications for the future of India, its integrity and unity.

Many friends from all sides of the House have already spoken on the Bill. I have heard all of them with much interest, and if I might add, in some cases, with not a little concern.

Some here may be surprised at my use of the word 'concern'. Candidly, Sir, I have chosen to do so deliberately, I feel concerned because I find that some of the speeches sadly reflect what I have often described as the bane of present day India, a crisis of casualness. I get the feeling that adequate thought has not been given to the proposal to include Nepali language in the Eighth Schedule. Regrettably, the approach of some friends appears to be rather casual. Major developments have taken place in the

Darjeeling hills over the past few years. Surprisingly and regrettably, these have not been taken into account. Some friends have also slurred over recent developments which must be kept in mind before we take a decision on the legislation before us, a Bill which is not as simple as it appears to be in regard to the proposal for the inclusion of the Nepali language in the Eighth Schedule.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, this Bill needs to be viewed in the first place in the light of the agitation launched by the Gorkha National Liberation Front and its leader, Mr. Subash Ghisingh, for the establishment of Gorkhaland early in 1986 and its culmination in the historic Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council Accord on August 23, 1988. This agitation was not just for a separate State of Gorkhaland within India's borders. Sir, it was a battle for identity by the Gorkhas of the Darjeeling hill areas who had come to India with the ceded land—as also a battle by the Gorkha National Liberation Front for forging a common national political platform for the 'settled Gorkhas' all over India.

Mr. Ghisingh and his supporters were not prepared to be labelled as Nepalis and, in effect, have the words "Reciprocal Nepalis" permanently inscribed on their foreheads under Article VII of the Indo-Nepal Treaty of 1950. This article provides and I quote:

"The Governments of India and Nepal agree to grant on reciprocal basis to the nationals of one country in the territories of the other the same privileges in the matter of residence, ownership of property, participation in trade and commerce and privileges of a similar matter."

They, therefore, asserted that they were Indians and not Nepalis and demanded that they be formally recognised as Indians. In other words... (Interruptions) Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am not yielding. I did not object when Mr. Upadhyay talked in terms of "We, the

Nepalis..."(Interruptions)

26.1.1950 became part of or constituted the territory of India as defined in Article 1 (2) of the Constitution of India; and

MR. CHAIRMAN: He has his point of view. Let him express. Do not disturb him.

SHRI INDER JIT: They, therefore, asserted that they were Indians and not Nepalis and demanded that they be formally recognised as Indians. In other words, they drew a sharp and clear distinction between those who were "settled Gorkhas" of India and Indians and those who were Nepali nationals residing in India in accordance with Article VII of the Indo Nepal Treaty and described as "reciprocal Nepalis". Basically they were eager to make one thing clear. They were will and truly Indians and had nothing to do whatsoever with Nepali.

- (a) who was born in the territory of India;
- (b) either of whose parents was born in the territory of India;
- (c) who had been ordinarily resident in the territory of India for not less than five years before such commencement;

shall be a citizen of India as provided in article 5 of the Constitution of India;

To cut a long story short, Mr. Ghising and the GNLF fought hard and won their battle for identity. The Government of India acknowledged that Mr. Ghising and the "settled Gorkhas" of India were Indian citizens. Simultaneously, the Government of India issued on August 23, 1988, a Gazette Notification declaring all the "settled Gorkhas" to be Indians. I quote the Gazette Notification:

- (2) No such person as is referred to in paragraph
- (1) above shall be a citizen of India or be deemed to be a citizen of India if he has voluntarily acquired to citizenship of any foreign State as provided in article 9 of the Constitution of India..."

"Whereas it has come to the notice of the Central Government that there have been some misconceptions about the citizenship at the commencement of the Constitution of India of Certain classes of persons commonly known as Gorkhas, who had settled in India at such commencement.

Sir, I will not bother you with more details of this Gezette notification. But it is very vital for our discussion.

And whereas it is considered necessary to clear such misconceptions; it is hereby clarified as follows:

Importantly and significantly the GNLF and its leaders did not rest at that. They insisted that the proposed Darjeeling Hill Council, which was to be an autonomous body and a little short of the full-fledged State demanded by them, be called the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council. The West Bengal Government objected to including the word "Gorkha" in the name of Hill Council. Eventually, Shri Buta Singh, the then Home Minister, and I as one privileged to play the role of a mediator in the thorny and highly emotive dispute, were able to persuade both the then Prime Minister, Shri Rajiv Gandhi, and the West Bengal Chief Minister, Mr. Jyoti

- (1) As from the commencement of the Constitution, that is as from 26.1.1950, every Gorkha, who had his domicile in the territory of India, that is in the territories which on

[Sh. Inder Jit]

Basu, to accede to the GNLf demand and give the proposed Council the name of Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council,

The GNLf and its supporters in the Darjeeling Hill areas as also in the adjoining areas of Alipur Dooars are today proud of their Indian citizenship and identify. They are happy to have drawn a clear and sharp distinction between themselves as Indians and those who are "reciprocal Nepalis". They do not wish to be seen as having any link, even remotely, with Nepal and are eager to ensure that there is no scope for any doubt in regard to their commitment to their motherland India

In fact, not long ago, the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council and its Executive took another significant step to assert their Indian identity and separateness from Nepal. Both formally declared "Gorkha Bhasha" as their official language. This, it needs to be noted, was done by Mr. Ghisingh and his council at a time when some leaders in the region have been busy campaigning in a big way for the inclusion of Nepali language in the Eighth Schedule as one of India's National languages.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We shall have to extend the time of this Bill as the time of the Bill is over. Shall we extend it by two hours?

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

MR CHAIRMAN: The time is extended by two hours. Shri Inder Jit, please continue.

SHRI INDER JIT: We must be clear about certain fundamental while viewing the Constitution Amendment bill before us. The Nepali language is today officially the national language of Nepal even as the Kingdom has many other languages spoken by

its various communities as the Rais, the Limbus and the Gurungs. I am told that Nepal had formally no national language until Kathmandu applied for the membership of the United Nations. Earlier, the ruling circles in Kathmandu used the Khas language. Subsequently, the name was changed to Parbatiya or the language spoken in the hills. (*Interruptions*) Shrimati Dil Kumari Bhandari can reply at the end. Please give me a patient hearing. Thereafter, it was called Gorkha Bhasha till Nepali language in Newari script was formally declared as the Kingdom's national language.

The Nepali language is at present not only the national language of Nepal, it is also the language of all the Nepalis abroad, including lakhs residing and working in India in accordance with Article VII of the Indo-Nepal Treaty of 1950. In sharp contrast, Gorkha Bhasha, according to the GNLf and my understanding of the Darjeeling Accord, is the language of the "settled Gorkhas" of India who have been accepted as Indian citizens under the Accord and have been declared to be such by the Government of India Gazette Notification of August 28, 1988. (*Interruptions*). I am not yielding.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No disturbance Please.

SHRIMATI DIL KUMARI BHANDARI (Sikkim): Sir, he is misleading the House.

MR. CHARIMAN: You can reply and lead the House properly.

SHRI INDER JIT: The distinction between them is clear and marked—a distinction which we must underline and emphasize in India's best national interest and that of its unity and integrity. Shakespeare once said "What is in a name" and hastened to add: "A rose by any other name would smell as sweet.

SHRIMATI DIL KUMARI BHANDARI:
You translate it in Gorkha language.

SHRI INDER JIT: Alas, this does not hold good insofar as a language is concerned! A language by any other name may not only not smell as sweet but could, in fact, turn out to be a thorny cactus. Every one in the Darjeeling hill areas has, for instance, great respect—I want you to note, Sir— and love for the Gorkha *bhasha*, presently described erroneously by some people as Nepali. They also have affection and regard for the Script. But they are not prepared to call it Nepali language as the name is identified with the nationality of another country, namely, Nepali...*(Interruptions)*. Sir, the Members are entitled to their views. I have my views. In fact, the GNLF strongly opposes...*(Interruptions)*. Mr. Chitta Basu, when have you joined the Congress Party? If you want to join, please apply for it. We will then consider.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member has freedom of speech.

SHRI INDER JIT: Sir, it is my privilege to represent Darjeeling and its Gorkha here. It is my privilege and my duty to put forward their point of view. It may be acceptable to people, it may not be acceptable to Members, but I have a right to express my view very freely and forthrightly, and this is all I seek.

In fact, the GNLF strongly opposes the legislative enacted by the West Bengal Assembly declaring Nepali as one of the State languages. It also opposes its demand that the Centre should include Nepali in the Eighth Schedule. They want the State Act amended and the words 'Gorkha Bhasha' substituted for Nepali language. This was, indeed, my own stand also when I successfully contested the Lok Sabha polls of 1989 and 1991— the first at the invitation of the GNLF as its candidate and the second as a

Congress(I) candidate with the full backing of the GNLF. The point is...*(Interruptions)*.

MR. CHARIMAN: It is not proper to interrupt the hon. Member.

SHRI INDER JIT: Mr. Upadhyay, you have gone on record about your views on Nepali I am not going to enter into any acromony now and I want to keep that out.

I would like to inform the House, and more especially fellow-Members of the Congress(I), that the last poll for the Lok Sabha and the West Bengal Assembly was fought on the basis of a clear and firm understanding between the Congress(I), then heroically led by the late Rajiv Gandhi, and the GNLF. Both the parties backed each other's candidates...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: You can make your point at the end.

SHRI INDER JIT: Specifically, the GNLF not only supported my candidature for the Lok Sabha but also the Congress(I) candidates for the West Bengal Assembly constituencies of Siliguri, Phansidewa was, Islampur and Chopra in the plains...*(Interruptions)*. Sir, the hon. Member, the mover, will have a chance to rebut all my arguments. Would the lady Member be generous enough and gracious enough to give me a patient hearing? At the end of it she can spurn all my arguments. It is upto her, but she must give me a patient hearing.

The Congress-I, for its part, fully supported the GNLF candidates for the West Bengal Assembly from the hill constituencies of Darjeeling, Kurseang and Kalimpong. The GNLF won all the three Assembly seats, defeating in one case a Minister in Jyoti Basu's Government. Importantly, the GNLF put forward in its manifesto its strong opposition to the declaration of Nepali language as an official language of West Bengal and

[Sh. Inderjit]

demanding that the name Nepali be substituted by Gorkha Bhasha. .

The crucial importance of the Indian identity is basic to our argument. It is also fundamental to India's integrity and unity in view of the fact that our country is contiguous to Nepal and has a long unmanned border with it. What is more, the Indo-Nepal Treaty of 1950 is unique. We have no such treaty with any other country. Mercifully, we have not extended such reciprocal facilities to any other neighbouring country. Some prominent leaders of Sikkim have been talking in terms of "Bharatiya Nepalese" and have put forward what I would call an absurd concept. Perhaps, we would also be confronted today with two other absurd propositions of "Bharatiya Bangladeshis" and "Bharatiya Pakistanis", had similar reciprocal facilities also been extended to Bangladeshis and Pakistanis. Please remember, we already have many more Bangladeshis residing illegally in India today than the "reciprocal Nepalese".

This leads us to the pertinent question: Would it be right and proper for the Parliament of India to include among the national languages listed in the Eighth Schedule of our Constitution the Nepali language which is the language of the "reciprocal Nepali" people in India—persons who are here today and could be gone tomorrow. We can include the Nepali language in the Eighth Schedule only if these Nepalis come to be declared as Indian citizens as in the case of the "settled Gorkhas" of India under the Darjeeling Accord of August 23, 1988 between the GNLF and the Government of India.

Therefore, I would like to ask the mover of the Resolution and all those who have supported the Bill—Where is the Gazette Notification which confers Indian citizenship on the "reciprocal Nepalis" in India? Kindly

produce this notification and I shall promptly withdraw my opposition to the Bill. In fact, I go a step further to inform the House that even the GNLF and its supreme leader, Mr. Ghisingh, will gladly extend support to the Bill if you can produce such a notification.

I know there is no such Gazette Notification of the Government of India till now. Therefore, I would strongly plead with all my friends here to pause and ponder. Please do not support the Bill. It is true that some parties have made certain commitments in their party manifestos for the last took Sabha poll. But their stand, in my view, has been unfortunate, unwise and even populist. I would urge them to remember that two wrongs have never added up to a right. They should take a fresh look at the issue in the light of the views put forward by me on behalf of my constituency and lakhs of its people.

There should be no question at all of including the Nepali language in the Eighth Schedule until and unless the "reciprocal Nepalis" are formally and officially designated as Indians through a Gazette Notification of the Government of India. Declaration of any language as a State language does not necessarily give the language the status and acceptability of a national language. The mover of the Bill should try to get the "reciprocal Nepalis" declared as Indians first.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have already taken a lot of time of this august House. But I seek your indulgence for a little longer as I am the only Member presenting the other side of the coin in regard to the Nepali language. The entire exercise of those who are "reciprocal Nepalis" and are demanding inclusion of the "Nepali language" in the Eighth Schedule is to enable those people to claim that they are Nepalis and to that extent virtually exercise dual nationality. Would this be in our national interest at a time when leftist and other forces in Nepal are stridently urging Kath-

mandu to reclaim the Darjeeling hill areas upto Teesta river as its territory? In my view, we cannot deal with this serious matter rightly or casually. (*Interruptions*)

Therefore, I urge with all the emphasis at my command that if the language of the Gorkhas of India is to be included in the Eighth Schedule then that language will have to be the "Gorkha Bhasha" and not the Nepali language. My suggestion would emphasize and underline the Indian identity of the Gorkha Bhasha as against the foreign identity of the Nepali language. I might add that the suggestion I am making is not a new proposition. We have in the past drawn up a sharp and meaningful distinction between various common languages spoken along our northern and other borders. We have given these languages on our side of the borders Indian names and Indian identity.

Take the case of Ladakhi, which is today the language of the people of Ladakh. This language is identical to the Tibetan language across the border. The script, too, is the same. But we have for long called the language spoken by the people of Ladakh as Ladakhi and the script used by them also as Ladakhi. This identifies the language as one belonging to Ladakh and, therefore, to India. Likewise, the Bhutias in Sikkim and the Darjeeling hill areas speak a language and use a script which is the same as Tibetan. But the Maharaja of Sikkim prior to the State's merger with India called the language and the script Sikkimese to draw a distinction between their language and the Tibetan language. In the Darjeeling hill areas, the language has been called Bhutia to assert its Indian identity. Thus, when you speak of the Bhutia language, you convey the clear view that the language is the language of the Bhutias of India, as distinct from the language of the Tibetans.

That, Mr. Chairman, is not all. Every country is and needs must be very clear

about the distinct identity of its national language. Two other instances may be cited. The people of India's emerald islands of Lakshdweep speak the same language and use the same script as those of the Maldives, namely, Divehi. But we wisely decided to emphasise the Indian identity of the language of Lakshdweep and gave the language and script a distinct Indian name of Mahal. Again, the Bangladeshis call their language "Bangla Bhasha" and not Bengali, as we do in India. This was done with an eye mainly on one thing: to draw a sharp distinction between Bangladesh's national language and Bengali, the language of neighbouring West Bengal and, therefore, a language of India.

Two other points require to be made in this context. First, today we are proud to have Urdu as one of our national languages. It is a fine and beautiful language which I chose as my Indian language for graduate studies. Urdu is also the national language of Pakistan. This enables the people of both our countries to share the joys of ghazals and mushairas. But I ask: Would we in India have included Urdu in the Eighth Schedule of our Constitution if the language had been called Pakistani? Hence the rationale behind GNLFC's strong objection to the inclusion of Nepali as one of India's national languages in the Eighth Schedule. There would be no problem today if Nepal too had given or were to give to its national language the name "Gorkha Bhasha" which, like Urdu or, for that matter, English is not identified with any nationality. (*Interruptions*).

Sir, I am the only Member who is speaking against this Bill. So, I must have a chance to put across my view.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have given you sufficient time.

SHRI INDERJIT: Sir, I know. Just a few moments more, Sir.

[Sh. Inder Jit]

The second point is, as we all know, the British Raj greatly respected the prowess and fighting qualities of the Nepalis. Consequently, they recruited them in large numbers for their Army under the Raj- and continued to do so even after Independence. Importantly, however, they called these men Gorkhas and the troops as Gorkha regiments and Gorkha troops etc. They also called the Nepali language spoken and written by these Gorkha troops as Gorkhali, a point made by Col. Ram Singh on April 10 last when he happened to be in the Chair. Why? The answer is not far to seek. They did this because they wanted to draw a clear distinction between their own Gorkha troops and those of Nepal!

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I shall now wind up by drawing your attention to an interesting fact. The demand for the inclusion of Nepali language in the Eighth Schedule is not new. It has been raised time and again over the past many year. But Delhi has advisedly not acceded to it. The demand was raised initially during Indira Gandhi's time. But she refused to oblige. Mr. Morarji Desai as Prime Minister understood the problem very clearly. Characteristically, he bluntly told a delegation of the All India Nepali Bhasha Samiti at Darjeeling on September 29, 1977: "Nepali is a foreign language." Further, he said there was no question of including it in the Eighth Schedule. Indira Gandhi was again approached after her return to power in 1980. But she diplomatically declined to oblige. What is the reason? The issue is not as simple as has been made out by the mover and its supporters. It has serious, indeed, grave implications.

As the representative of the people of Darjeeling in this House, I have the greatest regard and affection for the language and script of the Gorkha, who are fellow Indians. I strongly believe that their language, the

Gorkha Bhasha, deserves, to be included in the Eighth Schedule. But I am totally opposed to the inclusion of Nepali language as one of our national languages in the Eighth Schedule. In fact, West Bengal needs to amend its earlier legislation and substitute the words "Gorkha Bhasha" for Nepali. The Sahitya Academy, too, needs to review its earlier decision of recognising Nepali as "one of the major Indian languages": in 1975 in the light of the developments between 1986 and 1988, culminating in the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council Accord. Under this Accord, the Gorkhas asserted their Indian identity and refused to be seen as having any link with Nepal.

All that I have ventured to put forward also needs to be seen in the light of a significant but little-known experience in the Darjeeling hills. Quiet and clandestine efforts were made during the last census operation to get the people to declare themselves as Nepalis instead of Indians. They were also sought to be persuaded through various familiar means and pressures to declare Nepali as their language in preference to Gorkha Bhasha. In fact, we discovered during the last general election that many "reciprocal Nepalis" had managed to get their names included in the electoral rolls and had voted. This issue was subsequently taken up by Mr. Ghisingh with the Chief Election Commissioner in my presence in a letter personally delivered to Mr. Seshan on July 18, 1991.

Sri, as I said earlier, it is time to pause and ponder. We must avoid doing something in haste and then repent at leisure. Nothing must be done which goes against the letter and spirit of the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council Accord and the Gazette notification of the Government of India, dated August 23, 1988 according Indian citizenship only to the "settled Gorkhas" and not to the "reciprocal Nepalis." Nothing must also be done which suits the surreptitious strategy of

those who are working for Greater Nepal from within our country and from across the border.

Sir, the talk of Greater Nepal is not the figment of anyone's imagination. The threat, howsoever, feeble today, is very much there. Remember, there are powerful forces who have not reconciled to the merger of Sikkim with India. There are also powerful forces who want to stop India from becoming strong and playing its due role in the comity of Nations. Let not history accuse this Lok Sabha of doing something which goes against our best national interest and could very well put a question mark over India's integrity along its strategic and sensitive northern borders. We can ignore this warning only at our peril. (Interruptions) I think arguments must honourably be met by arguments only and not by shouting down.

Sir, I shall now conclude by sharing with the House, the text of an urgent telegram sent by the GNLF President, Mr. Subash Ghisingh to the Prime Minister yesterday with a copy marked to me as the MP representing Darjeeling. (Interruptions)

PROF. SUSNATA CHAKRABORTY (Howrah): Sir, how can he read his speech like this for a long time?

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please do not quote that telegram here. Please conclude quickly.

(Interruptions)

SHRI INDER JIT: Sir, these Members should deal with the Chair and not with me. They should not interrupt me like this. I will not quote the telegram, but I will give a summary of that telegram. He says that if the Government of India is keen and determined to include the different Indian lan-

guages in the Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution, then the GNLF party extends its full support except in the case of the Nepali language as the said language is spoken by the reciprocal people directly covered by the Indo-Nepal Treaty of 1950. He says that this must not be included in the Eighth Schedule. (Interruptions)

SHRIMATI DIL KUMARI BHANDARI (Sikkim): Sir, he has asked for no man's land. Will you concede to that? (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude now. You have spoken for a long time. Shri Yaima Singh will speak now.

(Interruptions)

SHRI INDER JIT: In the final analysis, I appeal to all the hon. Members and, particularly to the Government, to give serious thought to all that I have said.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have crossed all limits of time now.

SHRI INDER JIT: Only three more sentences.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No please. No.

SHRI INDER JIT: Three more sentences.

I say that I and GNLF can never be a party to accepting Nepali language which is a foreign language as one of India's national languages.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have given you opportunity to conclude five times.

SHRI INDER JIT: I am going to take less than half-a-minute. Allow me to conclude.

MR. CHARIMAN: No.

SHRI INDER JIT: I seek your indulgence for half-a-minute.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have shown sufficient indulgence.

SHRI INDER JIT: I want to assure friends on all sides that there is no attempt whatsoever to divide the people of the area. The attempt is only to draw a sharp distinction between those who are Indians and those who are not Indians but Nepalis (*Interruptions*)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Nothing will go on record. The hon. Member may now conclude. Nothing will go on record now.

SHRI YAIMA SINGH YUMNAM (Inner Manipur): Sir, I rise to support the Bill in the name of Shrimati Dil Kumari Bhandari, the hon. Member of the House.

Shrimati Dil Kumari Bhandari has spoken earlier and dealt exclusively on the merits of the Nepali and Manipuri for inclusion of the two languages in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution and I would like to leave it to her most of the points raised by Shri Inder Jit which she can clarify and refute in her reply.

So, I would like to devote more of the time in the case of Manipuri of which I have more ideas on it and I can give more information to the august House on this language.

In respect of Nepali, if I am allowed to say a few words, I think the hon. Member Mr. Inder Jit is very clever. He is trying to mislead the House by pointing out some irrelevant points in regard to this Indo-Nepali treaty. Those are irrelevant in respect of this Bill.

I would like to mention one instance. In

Manipur, there are many Gorkhalis in Assam Rifles. When we ask them "What is your language," they simply say "Our language is Nepali." It is very clear. There might be Gorkhalis but their language is Nepali. It is very clear. In Manipur, there are hundreds of thousands of Gurkhas. They say that their language is Nepali.

I do not know how Mr. Inder Jit manages to make treaties out of this. I leave it to the hon. Member in charge of the Bill to refute all that.

Now I come to Manipuri. In the case of Manipuri, I would like to ask why it was not included at the time when the Constitution was drafted or passed. Manipur was merged with the Indian Union only in 1949 on 15th October. So, she had not got a chance of sending her representative to say that Manipuri language also must be included in the Eighth Schedule because Manipur was not with the Indian Union. At that time, it was a native State under the British rule. Even during the British time, Manipuri was recognised as a language by the Britishers.

Now, I would like to come to the justification part that would be necessary to present the facts before the House. There are one million people in Manipur who speak Manipuri as their mother-tongue. There are more than half-a-million people living in the hilly areas who use this Manipuri language as their common language for communication purpose. So, by virtue of this, Manipuri is the *lingua franca* in the State of Manipur. Secondly, Manipuri has been the official language throughout. It has been the official language even before the British rule when Manipur was a native State. Manipuri was the official language and also the court language. Even now, Manipuri is the court language in Manipur. It is used in the courts which are subordinate to the High Court. It is

*Not recorded.

the official language. It is now being codified by the Manipur Legislative Assembly to make it the official language of the State. So, for all practical purposes, it is the official language; it is used in the courts which are subordinate to the High Court. It is the medium of instruction and examinations from primary-level upto the post-graduate level. These are produced in Manipuri in respect of Honours in Manipuri up to B.A. Post-graduation, M. Phil and Ph. D. There are provisions under the Manipur University Act for all these subjects. This language has been recognised by the Universities of Calcutta, Guwahati, Dibrugarh, Delhi and some other Universities which I cannot mention. It is, therefore, a major Indian language up to the Degree Course.

Sir, the Sahitya Akademi has recognised it as a major Indian language since the year 1971. All the Sahitya Akademi Awards have been awarded. Uptill now, more than 15 awardees of this language are there. It has its own script. We have got the Manipuri Script. At the moment, we use the Bengali script. But we do have the Manipuri script. It is being taught up to Class-VIII. Now it is coming up to Class 10th. The Manipuri script is very much improved now. For some time, it was not encouraged but now the people have taken up this very seriously, for improvement of this script. The doyen of linguists, Dr. Suneeti Kumar Chatterjee, who is no more, be once described that this Manipuri language is a most developed language of the Tibetan-Burman speech family of India. And we claim that.

At present, the languages under the Eighth Schedule, most of them are Dravidian, Indo-Aryan and Burman languages. And the language of Tibeto-Burman is excluded. Now it would be proper to include this Manipuri language from that consideration also.

As regards the richness of this language, I need not say much because all the

Members of this august House, they are very much acquainted with the richness of this language and almost all the Members, leaders of all the parties in this House, they are also agreeable to include Nepali and Manipuri in the Eighth Schedule, so that these two languages can be given national recognition. I need not elaborate very much on that. In stead of that, I would like to give much more time to our hon. other Members to speak on this. I would like to give these few justifications in support of inclusion of Manipuri language.

Now, I would like to come to the immediate problems being faced in the State of Manipur. We have been demanding for the inclusion of this Manipuri in the Eighth Schedule since 1949-50 because when it was merged with the Indian Union, it was anticipated by the people that after the merger with the Union, it will be respected and it will be honoured. So, it was a great expectation of the people of Manipur. And they have been demanding for this. When they have lost their patience, the people of Manipur, they have organized themselves and they deputed their representatives to meet the hon. the Prime Minister, the leaders of the nation. They have met Nehruji, Indirji, Rajivji, Shri V.P. Singh and then Shri Chandra Shekhar. All of them have given their consent. But they could not put up any Bill before this House, so that these languages can be included in the Eighth Schedule. It took time and it was unfortunate on our part.

But now the people, they are demanding and are agitated now. Earlier, the people including women population and people from all walks of life, they have resorted to hunger strikes. Thousands and thousands of people, they have resorted to hunger strikes and now the students-All Manipuri students-they have taken up the task. Now what they have done is that they have blocked; they have cut off, they have blacked out. Even, they went to the extent that they would not allow the

[Sh. Yaima Singh Yumnam]

schools to teach Hindi. They have gone to the extent of even not allowing the Hindi films to be screened. Any cassette of Hindi or any other language under the Schedule is not being allowed to be played. They have destroyed them. The whole population is supporting the student community. Now what they have done? Taking advantage of this, they have now resorted to even destroy, damage and even burn buses. A Central School bus was burnt. School buses, State Transport buses were burnt. As a result of this what happened is that the prices sore up. In Manipur, the prices of commodities are so high that it cannot be imagined. These are the sufferings. They are prepared to suffer because their demands are not met. Earlier, here in Delhi, a batch of persons resorted to hunger strike; and in support of them, the entire Opposition walked out, here. Now, three persons have resorted to indefinite hunger strike, that is, fast unto death. Yesterday, I went to the hospital. I met the Police people also. They have declared that their conditions are alarming and very critical. I am very much afraid of them. If they succumb to that, then Manipur will flare up. There are so much fear that people will suffer greatly and the law and order situation will be greatly affected. The extremists and the underground organisations like PLA, Per-Pak take advantage of this. The employees and youth are telling, "You have seen this. What is the use of merging with the Indian Union? So, come out and let us disintegrate and so on". They have taken advantage of this and more harm will be done. That is why, we are very much afraid of that.

The agitation is going on now and we are only waiting for the hon. Minister to reply to it. We are anticipation some positive reply from him so that this agitation can be called off and we can run smoothly.

I would not take much time of the House.

But, I would suggest one thing. A delegation including myself met the hon. Home Minister, some three or four days back and the hon. Home Minister was very much agreeable to the inclusion of Nepali and Manipuri in the Eighth Schedule. He also mentioned about the inclusion of Konkani also. He has suggested for convening a meeting of leaders of all the political parties for a consensus. I have also mentioned that all the parties in the country have agreed to the proposal. The Home Minister also replied that in principle he had agreed. However, to make it a consensus, he would like to convene a meeting of all the leaders of the parties.

Only the other day, I also with Shri Sontosh Mohan Dev and some others met the hon. Prime Minister and made a request for the inclusion of Manipuri and Nepali in the Eighth Schedule. Hon. Prime Minister also gave us blessings. He informed that he is prepared for it. He is agreeable.

Today in the Press, we have seen that a delegation of the National Front and Left parties and also leaders of the BJP met the Prime Minister who assured that a Bill to this effect would be introduced in the next monsoon session. So, we are very grateful to the Prime Minister for this assurance. I am also grateful to all the hon. Members of this august House for expressing their support in favour of the two languages, that is, Nepali and Manipuri.

While concluding, I will say a few lines in Manipuri expressing my gratefulness to the hon. Members.

[Translation]

SHRI BHOGENDRA JHA (Madhubani):
Mr. Chairman, Sir, on behalf of my party and myself I support the Bill moved by Shrimati Dil Kumari Bhandari. I support this bill to include Nepali language in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I do not want to argue but I would like to say that my friend Shri Inder Jit ji has raised such questions with hard labour, wisdom, and understanding which is unnecessary because Gorkhali and Nepali are the name of the same language. With the development of mankind the languages also progressed and in that process many languages became obscure and many new languages came into existence.

One of the oldest language of the world which has been found written in Mahanjodaro could not be read upto now because its reader ceased to exist so the language has also vanished. We are fortunate that the most ancient language like Sanskrit still exist in our time and it has a history of 5-7 thousand years. Several languages have developed, some have died, Hindi and been developing some-time before the freedom struggle to till now. Hindi, which we call Khari Boli, is the only language which is understood by most of the people of our country. Those who do not speak, can also understand it. So, our parliament has recognised it as a language which joins the people our country or as a national link language. Besides it, no other language is capable to take its place. We have not made so much efforts to develop this language as it should have been. The pace of its development has remained very slow. There is a need to excelebrate it. But some people want that only the Hindi should prosper and all the other languages should not be given due recognition. I do not doubt on their wisdom. But it is like the same as if all the flowers from a garland have been taken away and only thread remains there. A country can not progress like this. Hindi is our most favourite language but India is more loved and greater than it. There are several ancient languages in India. If Hindi becomes a garland having the flowers of all languages and if it works to join the country, the country and Hindi itself can progress more.

17.00 hrs.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the mother tongue has its own importance. Which is learnt by the children from their childhood without any effort. So, the place of mother tongue is first of all, the fact which has also been accepted by the Parliament and it has decided to accept it as a link language. Countries which have achieved 100 percent literacy have got it by using their mother tongue only. We can also make it link language in a certain period of time, if we have the intention to do this. My friend Shri Inder Jit has called Nepal a foreign country. Before the treaty of Sugrdi between Britishers and Nepal, according to which Britishers divided Nepal, my ancestors used to study there. He himself has now gone to Darjeeling. He made such a long speech which was not needed. This erudition was not needed. This erudition was not needed. Nepal is an independent country. We have to give full respect to an independent country. It is our friendly country. Our History, Geography, Nature, Culture and language is same. So why we should be afraid of Nepali language. It will work as a link language and as a bridge between the people of two countries. Why do we take it as language which will disunite the country? Even then, I do not want to be adamant on it. If all the people of Darjeeling and Sikkim want to give it some other name, I would be happy but there is no need of such a erudition.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, Maithili language belong to this Certagory only, which has been included in the Eighth Schedule of the constitution. Besides it, Maithili is the first language which was recognised by Sahitya Academy. It had been recognised by Calcutta University for post graduate courses in the beginning of this Century when Bihar even did not come into existence. At present it is taught in seven universities on post graduate level. Even after post graduation, all the students who are doing their Ph. D.

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degree have chosen this languages as the medium of their studies. In the entire teral area of Nepal border Maithili is spoken by all the people there and it is a link language of people living on both the sides. It helps us. All people know the ancient Janakpur. The Dot-Dwara which was annexed with India after the Sugoli treaty by the Britishers is now in my constituency. But Dot-Dwara is regarded as a part of Cultural heritage by the people. The people go round of it. We need no passport to enter in Nepal. So we should treat Nepal as a friendly country.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, constitution amendment Bill was introduced in this regard in this House for discussion in 1971. It was discussed for two fortnights, ultimately it was postponed on the request of Shri Raj Bahadur who was the then Minister of Parliamentary Affairs. Because he assured that the Government would consider it. It is very unfortunate that the Government of India has adopted an anti-language attitude. This is not a case of opposing Maithili. It is a case of opposing language policy. In the census of 1921, 1931, 1951, 1961, these people were registered as Maithili speaking people. 1941 census was cancelled due to the Second World War.

I think that the Government of India has violated the Constitution? The persons who mentioned their mother tongue as Maithili but it has been written as Hindi. It is a different thing. The cases in which Maithili has mentioned as mother tongue have not even been published. Two years back I came to know that its publication had been stopped through a secret order. In my opinion, it is a mockery with the Constitution. It is a crime. You are talking of providing a new right but in the way, you are snatching away the existing right too. Who has the authority to snatch away the right during the publication of census. If I ask for my right. Can you refuse for it? I would like from the hon.

Minister when he will reply, he should keep all these things in mind and clarify also all these things. The Government of Bihar has also committed this mistake on the same line. The Government of Bihar has decided, not to allow the Maithili language for the examinations for Public Service Commission. In the sate conference of the Communist Party of India, Bihar., it has been passed unanimously that the said decision is not correct and the Government should withdraw it.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, this Maithili language has a rich literature since 12th century. Folk literature of Ludic and Shailsh is very popular. Shailsh means the Leader of the Mountains. People come from far of places and enjoy these folk songs. The people have been singing these songs for centuries. As I have already said that Maithili is taught in universities at post-graduate level. In view of these facts how the Government of Bihar has taken such a decision? I think that it will impede our development.

I hope that the Government of India as well as the Government of Bihar should change their decisions with regard to Maithili language. I hope that the entire House and the lovers of democracy will give their full cooperation in improving the situation. As far as the question of including it in the Eighth Five Year Plan is concerned we had also met the hon. Prime Minister. Our hon. friend has mentioned about Manipuri. I submit that the hon. Minister of Home Affairs should give an assurance to the students who are sitting on hunger strike so that they may call off their strike. You should not give an opportunity to anyone to be an opponent of Hindi. On the name of Hindi language we should have Hindi as a national link languages. No non-Hindi speaking person should feel it like a burden on his shoulder. As far as Maithili is concerned: Maithili, Nepali, Orria, Bangle, Assamese are all the languages of one family. For example we say 'jeachi' in Maithili, 'Janchu' in Nepali and 'Jachi' in Bangle. All these languages belong to the same family.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the hon. Prime Min-

ister has also assured us that a decision will be taken early in this matter so that some action may be taken in this regard during the next session. I hope that the youths of Manipur who are on hunger strike, will call off their strike in view of this assurance, and we will solve that issue of language in the Eighth Five year Plan. I go beyond it. So I have given a notice regarding the Constitution Amendment. My Bill is till under consideration of this House. Last time it was on No. 4 in ballet but this time it is lagging behind. I have mentioned in this bill 20 or 25 languages are included in the Constitution, it will not be a surprise for our country having the population of more than 85 crore, because languages are the heritage of culture and the backbone of social life. The inclusion of these languages will make our country more prosperous and strong. No country can be stronger by repressing any mother tongue. It will weaken our unity and particularly when there is an external threat to our unity and integrity from foreign dividing forces. In the end I would like to point out to Shri Indarjit Gupta that there will be no objection if his voters from Darjiling and people of Sikkim decide to change the name. But don't create a foreign phenomena towards Nepali by constantly saying it a foreign language. The language is the same either you say it Nepali or Gorkhali, therefore 'foreign' world should not be used in it and the hon. Minister should assure the House about it. Again supporting this resolution I request that all the other deserving languages including Malthili may be included in the schedule. With these words, I conclude.

[English]

SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI (DEOGRAH): Mr. Chairman, at the outset, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to participate in this debate. I also thank Mrs. Dikumar-iji, for having moved this Bill demanding inclusion of two languages-Nepali and Manipuri in the eighth Schedule of the Constitution.

Sir, there has been no opposition to this Bill in substance. There is only one dissenting voice that we have heard and that is of our learned friend honourable Shri Inder Jit. He, in fact, laboured hard to prepare his speech and put his argument for a different name.

But, as you know, Sir, there has been no opposition to this demand that these languages-Nepali or Gorkhall or Gorkha Bhasha-should be included in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution. These languages should be included in the Constitution as quickly as possible. It is rather over due.

You know, Sir, Dr. Sunit Chatterjee was the famous linguist of our country. He was also the President of Kendriya Sahitya Akademi for quite some time. In his Report on the Official Language Commission, Dr. Sunit Kumar Chatterjee commended inclusion of other Indian Languages. Now, I will quote what he had said: "The other Indian languages are to be added in this Eighth Schedule following the wishes of their speakers and their importance, viz. Sindhi and Nepali. "These two languages were recommended to the given berth in the Eighth Schedule. But, in 1967, Sindhi could be included and Nepali was left out. I do not want to go into the details. Nepali has been given recognition by different organisations including the Sahitya Akademi in 1974. When Sahitya Akademi accorded its recognition to the Nepali language as a major literary language and when there was merger of Sikkim with India, this language could also have been given this Constitutional status, visit could have been included in the Eighth Schedule.

In 1911, the Allahabad University had introduced Nepali as a vernacular subject. In 1921, the Calcutta University had introduced this. Later on the Banaras Hindu University introduced it. It offers Nepali as a subject for Post Graduat and PhD studies. There are several other Boards in other places which have provided this facility in education Take

[Sh. Sriballav Panigrahi]

the example of Central Secondary Education Board. Not only this, thereafter, the importance or significance of Nepali is well-established by the fact that, it is the principal language of Gangtok and Kurseong Stations of all India Radio. A special programme is being broadcast by the Guwahati Station of All India Radio and an internal service news in Nepali is broadcast by the New Delhi Station also. The Calcutta Doordarshan Kendra telecasts a 15-minute Nepali programme every day and a few Nepali feature films are telecast, New Delhi at times. The News in Nepali are broadcast by BBC, Beijing, Moscow and Bangladesh Radios. So, the significance of this language is established. This is an old language. We had our first Census in 1871.

The predominant population of Darjeeling was shown as Nepali speaking population. Sahitya Akademi, West Bengal and also North East University, have set up Nepali Sahitya Akademi.

About more than 10 million people we have got in our country who speak Nepali either as their first or second language; it has rich literature. And particularly, as you know, language is a very sentimental subject, very sentimental issue. It is spoken in our border areas, hilly areas; and that also has its own strategy and significance. Sikkim, West Bengal, Tripura, Himachal Pradesh, all the Hindi States, Assemblies have unanimous passed resolution for constitutional status to be given to this language. And I also quoted from Sunity Chatterjee's Report. In this background, it is now overdue that Nepali language should find a place, should be included in the eighth Schedule.

In this connection, I would like to know from the hon. Minister that, when the Constitution came into being, in the Eighth Schedule we had first 14 languages included; and later on the 15th member in this family was the Sindhi; Sindhi Language joined this group in 1967. What was the criterion of selecting these languages.

As you know, India is a unique country; it is a country of very large population, large area and also so many communities, castes, religions and languages; that way, it cannot be just called a country; it is much more than a country; it is a sub-continent; it is more than a sub-continent; I call it a mini world; India is a mini world with all varieties, culture, languages, it is our prime duty, all of us, to keep the country together in the midst of such diversity; to maintain unity, to ensure unity is a great problem. We have also got to address ourselves to this.

Language is such a sentimental issue that our leaders immediately after independence also had to think about it; and there was Reorganisation of States; on the basis of language. Of course, the wisdom behind it is now disputed by some. The wisdom that we should have gone for Reorganisation of States or formation of States on the basis of language. It gives rise in certain cases to lingual troubles and all those things. Therefore, the wisdom is disputed sometimes. But, anyway, we have given due importance to the language issue; and I would like to quote—I cannot resist my temptation to quote—a famous Oriya Poet of my area. Swabre Kavi Gangadhar Meher has written *Matra Bhoime Matru Bhasha Reya hirudy Mamta Janaminai; Taku Yadi Giani Panara Ganiba; Agyana Rahibe Kanhi*. Although it is in Oriya, it is very lucid, very clear. One cannot claim himself to be educated, to be learned who does not develop liking, love, respect for, (1) Motherland and (2) mother tongue; Motherland and mother tongue are very dear to us, very close to our heart. Therefore, we all love our mother tongue; and in a country of India's size and with so many languages, it is our duty to develop a spirit of tolerance to all languages, not only tolerance but also to create a situation so that we respect also other languages.

We respect other languages. It is a question of co-existence of all languages. They should have their due place in the country, in the Constitution, in the Kendriya Sahitya Akademi, everywhere. So, I would

say, about the name, let us not do something in a hurry.

Shri Inder Jit has also come forward with his arguments. Nepali, it is also the ancient name, probably it is also Gorkhali, but it had got momentum after this agitation.

SHRI INDER JIT: Originally it was the 'Khas' language.

SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI: The present nomenclature may be different. It is not a big thing.

The hon. Home Minister should sort out his problem and this cannot be allowed to go on for a long time; nor can we do something which will distance another section of the community. We have about ten million people who speak Nepali language. There is always a solution for any problem. The language can be Nepali, Gorkhali, or Gorkha Bhasha, anything. For language there is no opposition. Shri Inder Jit the hon. Member from Darjeeling has also supported this. There is no question about it. This problem can be sorted out.

Again, about Manipuri also there is no problem. It is the main language, or the official language of manipur. It is the first language of Manipur, we may say.

Similarly, Konkani also. Although there is no reference to it in the Bill Konkani is the main language of Goa. That also deserves consideration for inclusion in the eighth Schedule.

What was the criterion for including languages in the Eighth Schedule? Of course, the main languages are spoken by a sizeable population. Even on that consideration Sindi must have been considered. But now neither there is a Sindh Province in India nor is it the official language of any State. But there are a large number of people who speak that language.

Similarly, there are other languages, which on the same analogy, deserve consid-

eration for inclusion in the Eighth Schedule.

I will now conclude by mentioning one more point. As I said, about language, we should not be rigid. About the policy of the Government of India there should be some criteria. There should be some basis for consideration. Otherwise also, I am pained to understand that there is an agitation being carried on now, to pressurize the Government for inclusion of Manipuri. Who is supporting it? But at the same, I am afraid, a section of the population also is for another nomenclature, not Manipuri, but they are suggesting something else.

Therefore, there can be some discussion on this question and this can be sorted out and this language may be included.

Again, there are languages like Mythily. Our hon. friend Shri Bhogendra Jha had also mentioned it. Also about Nicobari language also there was a reference by our friend, Shri Manoranjan Bhakta. It is time now to give a fresh look at these Things. these things cannot directly go to the Eighth Schedule. The Kendriya Sahitya Academy and the concerned State Sahitya Academy have to accord recognition to these languages first. It has to go step by step, ladder by ladder, phase by phase.

On Orissa, we have a language called "Sambalpur language". It may be called "sambalpur language" or "Kosali language". Every body talks about Sambalpur saree, Sambalpur music, etc. this language has got a rich Literature About 10 million people speak nepali and we are discussing about its inclusion in the Eighth Schedule. The Sambalpur language also spread over large areas, five to six districts. And about one crore population speak this language. This language is different from the standard oriya language.

Now we are talking about removal of illiteracy and universalisation of primary education. the child 'is to be

Taught, is to be given education at the

[Sh. Sriballav Panigrahi]

primary stage, in his own mother tongue, which is naturally not the standard language of that place. In the tribal areas, many children are not attracted to schools and they treat the standard language as a foreign language. In the tribal belts, we should make arrangement for imparting education in their own mother tongue.

The Sambalpur language is spoken by one crore population, spread over five western districts in Orissa. This language has a good and a rich literature. This language also should be treated as a separate language. The concerned authorities should give recognition to this language. First to start with Sahitya Academy should give recognition to this language.

I do not want to make a lengthy speech because several Members are interested to give their viewpoints on this.

Sir, language is a very sensitive issue and it is something which can be instrumental to strengthen our national solidarity. It is like atom. If not properly handled, it can do a lot of harms. The language issue is a very emotional issue and a sensitive issue. So, it is time to give a fresh look at these things.

According to Science of language, at a distance of every one hundred Kilometres, there is some change in the language. Even though substantially the same language is spoken, there are some variations. You may call it as dialect or something like that. But it is not the same language that is spoken throughout the State. And wherever is spoken by a large number of people, but it has a literature behind it, it has a distance features, of a separate language, then it is entitled to be called a separate language. Therefore, the concerned authorities should liberally consider these things. And in the process, our literature, our language and our much sought national solidarity, will be strengthened and not weakened.

With these words, I support this Bill. I

request the Government to sort out the differences with regard to its nomenclature by holding discussions with all concerned. It can be, as I said earlier, Nepali or Ghorkali or it can be both or anything, which is acceptable to everyone. If we accept something which is not liked by thousands and lakhs of people, then they will create trouble.

17.30 hrs.

[RAO RAM SINGH *in the Chair*]

A problem like this cannot be solved in this way. The entire approach has to be changed. There should be a *via media* solution, in a country like India of vast dimension. Sometimes, we have to go through a process of compromise in a situation like this. (Interruptions). As I said, people are very much agitated; young people are agitated. As a result of the discussion today about the inclusion to the Manipuri language in the eighth Schedule, it is getting unanimous support of this House. There should be no reason for them to feel disappointed. I request all those who are leading the agitation to end the hunger strike.

with these words, I conclude.

17.31 hrs

[English]

RE: SHRI LIMBA RAM'S WINNING A
GOLD MEDAL IN ARCHERY IN
BEIJING

SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA (Andaman & Nicobar Islands): Sir, a news has just come that in Beijing, Shri Limba Ram has got a Gold Medal in archery. The Minister of State in the Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of Youth Affairs and Sports and the department of Women and Child Development) Kumari Mamata Banerjee is here. We want to congratulate him. From the Chair let it go to the country and to him that the entire Parliament