

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF MINORITY AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 918
TO BE ANSWERED ON 21-11-2019

Identification of Linguistic Minorities

918. SHRI RAJU BISTA:

Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of the process of identification of a community as a Linguistic Minority;
- (b) the progress made on the recent request to “Preserve Heritage Minority Religious Sites” in the North Bengal particularly in the districts of Darjeeling, Kalimpong and North Dinajpur; and
- (c) the steps taken by the Government to establish a “Dedicated Centre for Linguistic Minority Empowerment” in Kurseong district of North Bengal?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF MINORITY AFFAIRS
(SHRI MUKHTAR ABBAS NAQVI)**

- (a) Linguistic Minorities have not been defined either in the Constitution of India or by the Statute. However, Article 29 and 30 of the Constitution provide for protection of interest of minorities which includes Linguistic Minorities also.

The working definition followed by the Commissioner for Linguistic Minorities is as follows:-
“Linguistic Minorities are group or collectivities of individuals residing in the territory of India or any part thereof having a distinct language or script of their own. The language of the minority group need not be one of the twenty two languages mentioned in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution. In other words, linguistic minorities at the State level mean any group or groups of people whose mother tongues are different from the principal language of the State, and at the district and taluka/tehsil levels, different from the principal language of the district or taluka/tehsil concerned.”

The State/UT wise, broad linguistic profile is available in the 52nd Report of the Commissioner for Linguistic Minorities (CLM).

- (b) There are two centrally protected monuments namely (i) Tomb of Alexander-Cosma de Koros and (ii) Tomb of General Lhyod in the District of Darjeeling under Archeological Survey of India (ASI). There is no centrally protected monument in the District of Kalimpong and North Dinajpur under ASI. Day to day maintenance upkeep works of the aforesaid two monuments in Darjeeling District are undertaken.
- (c) No, Sir. No such Centre for Linguistic Minority Empowerment in Kurseong district has been approved by the Ministry of Minority Affairs.
