



Tulu Language

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Why in News

There has been growing demand to include Tulu in the **Eighth Schedule of the Constitution**. At present, Tulu is **not an official language in India or any other country**.

Key Points

- Tulu is a **Dravidian language** whose speakers are concentrated in the region of Tulu Nadu, which comprises the districts of **Dakshina Kannada and Udupi in Karnataka** and the **northern part of Kasaragod district of Kerala**.
- Kasaragod district is called '**Sapta bhasha Samgama Bhumi (the confluence of seven languages)**', and Tulu is among the seven.
- The oldest available inscriptions in Tulu are from the period between **14th to 15th century AD**.

Case for Inclusion in the Eighth Schedule

- **Global Efforts:** The **Yuelu Proclamation made by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) at Changsha, China, in 2018** plays a central role in guiding the efforts of countries and regions around the world to **protect linguistic resources and diversity**.
The **United Nations General Assembly** has proclaimed **2019 as the International Year of Indigenous Languages (IYIL)**. The IYIL 2019 strives to preserve, support and promote indigenous languages at the national, regional and international levels.
- **Constitutional Safeguard: Article 29** of the Indian Constitution deals with the "**Protection of interests of minorities**". It states that any section of the citizens residing in any part of India having a **distinct language, script or culture of its own**, shall have the right to conserve the same.

- **Number of Speakers:** According to Census-2011, there are more than 18 lakh native speakers of Tulu in India. The Tulu-speaking people are larger in number than speakers of Manipuri and Sanskrit, which have the Eighth Schedule status.
- **Literary Recognition:** Robert Caldwell (1814-1891), in his book, A Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian or South-Indian Family of Languages, called Tulu as “**one of the most highly developed languages of the Dravidian family**”.

Yuelu Proclamation

- Yuelu Proclamation was adopted at the first international conference on language resources protection in **Changsha, Central China's Hunan province in 2018** by UNESCO. It is a document on protection and promotion of the world's linguistic diversity.
- It calls upon the international community, states, governments and non-governmental organizations, among others, to reach a consensus on the protection and promotion of linguistic diversity in the world.

Advantages of Recognition in Eighth Schedule

If included in the Eighth Schedule, Tulu would get the **following benefits:**

- Recognition from the **Sahitya Akademi**.
- **Translation of Tulu literary works** into other languages.
- Members of Parliament (MP) and Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) could **speak Tulu in Parliament and State Assemblies**, respectively.
- Option to take **competitive exams in Tulu including all-India competitive examinations like the Civil Services exam**.
- **Special funds** from the Central government.
- **Teaching of Tulu** in primary and high school.

Way Forward

- India has a lot to learn from the **Yuelu Proclamation**. Placing of all the deserving languages on equal footing will promote social inclusion and national solidarity.
- It will **reduce inequalities within the country to a great extent**. So, Tulu, along with other deserving languages, should be included in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution in order to **substantially materialise the promise of equality of status and opportunity mentioned in the Preamble**.

Source: TH