



Fresh Hindi Imposition Row

For Prelims: Constitutional provisions related to promotion of the Hindi, Language commission, Official Languages Act 1963.

For Mains: Use of Hindi as official/National Language, 3 language formula, Anti-Hindi agitation, etc.

Why in News?

The 11th volume of the Report of the Official Language Committee submitted to the President of India, has triggered angry reactions from some of the Southern states (they view the report as an attempt to impose Hindi on them).

What are the Recommendations of the Panel?

- Hindi should be **the medium of instruction in IITs, IIMs, and central universities** in the Hindi-speaking states.
- The language used for communication in the administration should be Hindi, and efforts should be made to teach the curriculum in Hindi.
- High Courts in other states, where proceedings are recorded in English or a regional language can make available translations in Hindi, because verdicts of High Court of other states are often cited in judgments.
 - Lower courts in Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Haryana, and Rajasthan already use Hindi.
- The use of Hindi, by the officers and other employees in the central government, in Hindi-speaking states would **reflect in their Annual Performance Assessment Report (APAR)**.
- It is the Committee's responsibility and role to see that the Hindi language is promoted in official communication.
- There are specific proposals to make the language in official letters and invitations simpler.
 - "There should be a deliberate attempt to reduce the usage of the English language in official communication and to increase the usage of Hindi".
 - "Knowledge of Hindi would be compulsory in a number of government jobs,".

Are these Recommendations Intended for Every State Government, its Institutions, and Departments?

- **States like Tamil Nadu and Kerala are exempt as per The Official Languages Act, 1963 and the Rules and Regulations (of the Act), 1976.**
- **The law is implemented only in 'A' category states, in which the official language is Hindi.**
 - According to the Rules, **region 'A' includes** the states of Bihar, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Uttarakhand, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh, and the Union Territories of Delhi and Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
 - **Region 'B'** includes Gujarat, Maharashtra, and Punjab, and the Union Territories of Chandigarh, Daman and Diu and Dadra and Nagar Haveli.

- Other states, where the **use of Hindi is less than 65%, are listed under region 'C'.**
- The **Committee** has suggested that efforts should be made to use **Hindi "100%" in the 'A' states.**
 - The medium of instruction in IITs, central universities, and Kendriya Vidyalayas (KVs) in the 'A' states should be Hindi, while the regional language should be used in other states.
- **As per Committee, Use of Hindi in Government Departments:**
 - The use of Hindi in Ministries like Defence and Home are 100% but the Education Ministry has not yet come to that level.
 - The **Committee had certain parameters to assess the usage of language.**
 - Many central universities including Delhi University, Jamia Millia Islamia, BHU, and AMU, the usage is just 25-35% when it should have been 100%.

What is Committee of Parliament on Official Language?

- The Committee of Parliament on Official Language was **set up in 1976 under Section 4 of The Official Languages Act, 1963.**
- With the active promotion of Hindi being mandated by Article 351 of the Constitution, the Official Language Committee was set up to review and promote the use of Hindi in official communications.
- The **first Report** of the Committee was submitted in **1987.**
- The Committee is constituted & chaired by the union home minister, and has, in accordance with the provisions of the 1963 Act, 30 members (20 MPs from Lok Sabha and 10 MPs from Rajya Sabha).
- Unlike the **other Parliamentary panels submit its report to Parliament, this panel submits its report to the President**, who "shall [then] cause the report to be laid before each House of Parliament, and sent to all the State Governments".

What are the Government's Effort to Promote Hindi and Other Regional Language?

- **Three-Language Formula (Kothari Commission 1968)**
 - **First language:** It will be the **mother tongue** or regional language.
 - **Second language:** In **Hindi** speaking states, it will be other modern Indian languages or English. In non-Hindi speaking states, it will be Hindi or English.
 - **Third Language:** In Hindi speaking states, it will be **English or a modern Indian language.** In the non-Hindi speaking state, it will be **English or a modern Indian language.**
- The new **National Education Policy (NEP) in 2020** too had attempts to "promote Hindi, Sanskrit" and regional languages. The **NEP says that mother tongue or the regional language would be the "preferred" mode of instruction until Class 5, and possibly Class 8.**
 - **NEP 2020 it was decided to push for the three-language formula, to promote multilingualism and national unity.**

What is Position of Hindi in India with respect to other Regional Languages?

- **As per, 2011 Linguistic census:** there are 121 mother tongues in India.
 - 52.8 crores individuals or 43.6% population declared Hindi as its mother tongue and 11% of the population reported Hindi as their second language.
 - So, 55% of the population knows Hindi as either as mother tongue or as their second language.
 - Bengali 9.72 crore individual and 8% population, as 2nd most spoken language in India.
 - The share of the languages like Bengali, Malayalam and Urdu has declined but Hindi and Punjabi speakers have increased.
 - Between 1971 to 2011 the speakers of Hindi multiplied by the 2.6 times from 20.2 Crore to 52.8 crores.

What is the Constitutional Status of Hindi?

- **Schedule 8** of the Indian Constitution has 22 Official Languages, **including Hindi as well.**
- **Article 351** states that, it is the duty of the Union to **encourage the spread of the Hindi language** to make it lingua franca (a shared language of communication used by people who are speakers of different languages) in India without interfering with its genius, style and expressions.
- **Article 348 (2)** provides that the Governor of the State may, with the previous consent of the President, authorize the use of the **Hindi language** or any other language used for **any official purpose of the State, in the proceedings of the High Court** having its principal seat in that State provided that **decrees, judgments or orders passed by such High Courts shall be in English.**
- As per **Article 343(1)** of the Constitution of India, **Hindi in Devanagari script shall be the official language of the Union.**
- The **Official Language Act, 1963** provides under **Section 7** that the use of Hindi or official language of a State in addition to the English language may be authorized, with the consent of the President of India, by the Governor of the State for the purpose of judgments, decrees etc. made by the High Court for that State.

UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Q. Consider the following statements:

1. 21st February is declared to be the International Mother Language Day by UNICEF.
2. The demand that Bangla has to be one of the national languages was raised in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans: (b)

Exp:

- The Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, in its session at Karachi on 23rd February, 1948 proposed that the members would have to speak either in Urdu or in English at the Assembly. Dhirendranath Datta, a member from the East Pakistan Congress Party, moved an amendment motion to include Bangla as one of the languages of the Constituent Assembly. In the same year, the Government of the Dominion of Pakistan ordained Urdu as the sole national language, sparking extensive protests among the Bengali speaking majority of East Bengal.
- The students of the University of Dhaka and other political activists defied the law and organised a protest on 21st February, 1952. After years of conflict, the government relented and granted official status to the Bengali language in 1956. In Bangladesh, 21 February is observed as Language Movement Day. Hence, statement 2 is correct.
- International Mother Language Day is observed on 21st February every year. It was declared by UNESCO and not by UNICEF. It is in tribute to the Language Movement and the ethnolinguistic rights of people around the world. Hence, statement 1 is not correct. Therefore, option B is the correct answer.

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