



# Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution

## Why in News

Recently, the **Union Minister of Education** has informed in the [Lok Sabha](#) about the various **steps taken** by the government to **promote the Languages in Eighth Schedule**.

## Key Points

### ▪ Eighth Schedule:

#### ◦ About:

- It lists the **official languages of the republic of India**. **Part XVII of the Indian constitution** deals with the official languages in [Articles 343 to 351](#).
- The Constitutional provisions related to the **Eighth Schedule** are:
  - **Article 344:** Article 344(1) provides for the **constitution of a Commission by the President on expiration of five years** from the commencement of the Constitution.
  - **Article 351:** It provides for 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.
- However, It can be noted that there is **no fixed criteria** for any language to be considered for inclusion in the Eighth Schedule.

#### ◦ Official Languages:

- The Eighth Schedule to the Constitution consists of the **following 22 languages**:
  - Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Kashmiri, Konkani, Malayalam, Manipuri, Marathi, Nepali, Oriya, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Sindhi, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu, Bodo, Santhali, Maithili and Dogri.
- Of these languages, **14 were initially included in the Constitution**.
- Sindhi language was added by the **21<sup>st</sup> Amendment Act of 1967**.
- Konkani, Manipuri, and Nepali were included by the **71<sup>st</sup> Amendment Act of 1992**.
- Bodo, Dogri, Maithili, and Santhali were added by the **92<sup>nd</sup> Amendment Act of 2003** which came into force in **2004**.

### ▪ Classical Languages:

#### ◦ About:

- Currently there are **six languages** that enjoy the **'Classical' status in India**:
  - Tamil (declared in 2004), Sanskrit (2005), Kannada (2008), Telugu (2008), Malayalam (2013), and Odia (2014).
  - All the [Classical Languages](#) are listed in the **Eighth Schedule of the Constitution**.

◦ **Guidelines:**

- The **Ministry of Culture** provides the guidelines regarding Classical languages which are as given below:
  - **High antiquity of its early texts/recorded history** over a period of 1500-2000 years;
  - A body of **ancient literature/texts**, which is considered a valuable heritage by generations of speakers.
  - The **literary tradition is original** and not borrowed from another speech community.
  - The classical language and literature being **distinct from modern**, there may also be a discontinuity between the classical language and its later forms or its offshoots.
- **Benefits for Promotion:** Once a language is notified as a Classical language, the **Human Resource and Development Ministry** provides certain benefits to promote it:
  - **Two major annual international awards** for scholars of eminence in classical Indian languages.
  - A **Centre of Excellence for studies in Classical Languages** is set up.
  - The **University Grants Commission** is requested to create, to start with at least in the **Central Universities**, a certain number of **Professional Chairs for the Classical Languages so declared**.

**Source: PIB**

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