

SHRI ARJUN SINGH: Sir, as a matter of abundant caution, I requested the hon. Chairman of this Commission to see me and I pointedly asked her whether, in the answer of the Question, what we have said is correct or not. She said, it is totally correct and no such complaint had been received by her.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is enough. (*Interruptions*)

SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA: Sir, it is not only in Kerala, but all over India this is happening.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is for Kerala only.

SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA: Sir, it is happening everywhere....(*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: It may be happening. But the Question is not related to the whole of the country. It is limited only to Kerala.

डा० प्रभा ठाकुर: माननीय सभापति महोदय, यह एक चिंता का विषय है। सारे कानूनों के बावजूद महिलाओं के शोषण और उत्पीड़न में लगातार वृद्धि हुई है।...(*व्यवधान*)... मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से जानना चाहती हूँ कि चाहे राजस्थान हो या केरल हो, ऐसी घटनाओं में वृद्धि हुई है या कमी हुई है?

श्री अर्जुन सिंह: सर क्वेश्चन तो स्पेसिफिक है। Normally one answers specific questions. But, if the hon. Chairman wants, and if some occasion could be made available, we can discuss this issue in general also.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is right. Next Question.

Languages spoken in the country

*162. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:†

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) how many languages are spoken all over the country as per Government records;

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Santosh Bagrodia.

(b) whether it is a fact that at the opening day of UNESCO's meet on "Safeguarding the World's Intangible Heritage" it was disclosed that the future of about 80 percent of the Indian languages was uncertain; and

(c) if so, the steps Government propose to take in order to keep the less spoken languages alive?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) As per the Census of India 1991 there are 1576 classified and 1796 unclassified languages. Out of these 10,000 persons or more speak only 216 languages.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Under the proposed mission of intangible heritage and through the Sangeet Natak Akademi and Zonal Cultural Centres, the music and oral traditions of less spoken languages are sought to be safeguarded.

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Sir, I am referring to part (c) of the reply. It says: Under the proposed mission of intangible heritage and through the Sangeet Natak Akademi and Zonal Cultural Centres, the music and oral traditions of less spoken languages are sought to be safeguarded.

I would like to know from the hon. Minister, as a first supplementary, has anybody been monitoring it? Has any fund been allocated to these Centres or the Academy, which are specifically meant for this purpose? Or, is it general? In the process, nothing happens. Also the Indian Languages Promotion Council was established in the last Government. What is the status of that Council? Are there any meetings being held?

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Sir, it is only in September, 2003 the UNESCO Convention on the safeguarding of intangible heritage was adopted, as part of which, we are to look after, what I might call, endangered linguistic species, Sir, we have formulated a mission, Mission of Intangible Heritage. That is under formulation. We will provide necessary funds for that. As far as the question he raised is concerned, about the plan of the earlier Government, I must frankly confess, Sir, that I don't have the details with me.

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Mr. Mohsen Tawfik, UNESCO representative, Director (India) offered support to India's endeavour to save, both tangible and intangible heritage. In this connection, I would like to know, as a second supplementary: what help have they provided for this? If no help is given, would the Government like to make efforts? Do you propose to establish a national commission for this purpose, for languages?

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Sir, we will take support from the UNESCO, whose office is also based in Delhi. As of now, we have not received any help. We have received only an offer. As I said, Sir, we are evolving a mission in regard to protection and preservation of intangible heritage. As part of which, these endangered languages will be sought to be taken care of.

As far as the national commission is concerned, I don't think a commission is required because we are formulating a mission, and the task is huge. We have as many as, as the Census pointed out, 3,372 languages. So, the task is immense. But, even so, we shall make our best effort.

SHRI LEKHRAJ BACHANI: Sir, there is one language, Marwari, which is being spoken in Rajasthan, Haryana, Gujarat and Sindh State of Pakistan, About 8 crore people are speaking this language. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government would like to safeguard it through the Sangeet Natak Academi or the Zonal Cultural Centre or through some other means. We know, there are so many kinds of music in Marwari. I would like to know whether the Government has got any scheme to safeguard the tradition and heritage of this Marwari language which is being spoken in 4-5 States, in two countries, and a language which is being spoken by 8 crores of people.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Sir, Marwari is one of the important languages in the country, spoken in various parts of the country. We recognise the need for preserving this language and also promoting it. We are also aware of the fact that Marwari language has its own unique tunes and music and there is an attempt, on our part, to digitise all these things so that they could be preserved and also disseminated. I take note of the suggestion. We will act upon that.

श्री जनार्दन द्विवेदी: सभापति जी, मुझे एक अत्यंत महत्वपूर्ण बात कहनी है ... (व्यवधान)

श्री सभापति: नहीं, बिल्कुल नहीं।

श्री जनार्दन द्विवेदी: यह बहुत ही महत्वपूर्ण बात है, आप एक मिनट सुन लीजिए।

श्री सभापति: मैं नहीं सुनूंगा, आप बैठ जाइए। श्रीमती प्रेमा करियप्पा।

SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA: I would like to ask the hon. Minister whether the Government intends to promote use of local languages up to the primary standard in various Government schools in order to save the language from extinction.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Mr. Chairman, Sir, many languages are adopted as medium in primary schools. It will not be physically possible to see that all the languages are taught in primary schools. I have already mentioned, Sir, in my answer that there are as many as 216 languages, which are spoken by more than 10,000 persons. To preserve them itself is very difficult. As of now, the idea is to see that languages do not disappear and that they are preserved forever.

DR. K. MALAISAMY: Mr. Chairman, Sir, it is reckoned throughout that Tamil is an ancient, sophisticated, polished and time-honoured language. By virtue of this fact, there was enough pressure from various quarters that it should be declared as a classical language. I would like to know whether a notification to this effect has been issued or not. If so, have you received any message or information that some part of the notification is defective?

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Mr. Chairman, Sir, at the outset, I would like to submit, in all humility, the thrust of the question is on the danger posed to languages which are spoken by fewer people without script and so on and so forth. If the Chairman permits, I have no problem.

We recognise that Tamil language is one of the most ancient languages. It has all the qualities of a classical language. Therefore, recently, the Cabinet has created a new category called 'classical language'. And Tamil has been included in it. This resolution has been notified. I have not received any complaint as such about the shortcomings in the notification.

डा० प्रभा ठाकुर: सभापति जी, अभी एक माननीय सदस्य ने मारवाड़ी भाषा के बारे में, जिसे हम राजस्थानी भाषा कहते हैं, एक बहुत अच्छा सवाल पूछा था, जो कि देश के अनेक क्षेत्रों में बोली जाती है और जिसमें बड़ा समृद्ध साहित्य है—राजस्थानी साहित्य, लोक साहित्य, लोक संस्कृति जिसने कि पूरे देश में और अंतर्राष्ट्रीय क्षेत्र तक में ख्याति प्राप्त की है। इतना समृद्ध साहित्य होते हुए भी अभी तक इस भाषा को मान्यता नहीं प्राप्त हुई है। इस संदर्भ में मंत्री जी ने अभी स्वयं स्वीकार भी

किया है कि राजस्थानी भाषा देश के बहुत से भागों में बोली जाती है। मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से जानना चाहती हूँ कि इस पर विचार करते हुए क्या राजस्थानी भाषा को मान्यता प्रदान करने की कोई कार्रवाई करने का वे विचार रखते हैं?

श्रीमती जमना देवी बारूपाल: राजस्थानी भाषा के बारे में है। क्योंकि राजस्थानी भाषा जो कि बहुत से भागों में बोली जाती है...(व्यवधान)...

श्री सभापति: क्योंकि कुछ नहीं है, आप बैठ जाइये। जिसकी मर्जी आए, बोलना शुरू कर देते हैं।

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Mr. Chairman, Sir, as I mentioned earlier, we are aware that marwari is one of the important languages. It is also a vibrant language. It is a living language and it has a lot of heritage. I think, the way people speak it, ensures its longevity. As per classification, Sir, it does not come under the Eighth Schedule. Otherwise, it receives all the benefits of all the other important languages.

श्रीमती सुषमा स्वराज: सभापति जी, भाषा और बोली में फर्क होता है। There is a difference between language and dialect. हमारे यहां कहते हैं कि बोली हर दस कोस पर बदलती है, इसलिए यह जो सैंकड़ों की संख्या है यह बोलियों की है, भाषाओं की नहीं, लेकिन मंत्री जी जो जवाब दे रहे हैं उसमें लैंग्वेज और डाइलेक्ट सिनॉनिमस के रूप में हैं, भाषा और बोली पर्यायवाची के रूप में वे इस्तेमाल कर रहे हैं। इसलिए मैं मंत्री महोदय से जानना चाहूंगी कि जिस रिपोर्ट का जिक्र प्रश्नकर्ता ने किया है, वह भाषाओं के बारे में है या बोलियों के बारे में है?

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Sir, I am aware of the semantic distinction between languages and dialects. However, there is no standardised official definition for these two terms. I have, therefore, gone by the latest 1991 Census Report. There, they did not choose to draw a distinction between language and dialect. Therefore, I have used the generic term 'language.'

SHRI M. P. ABDUSSAMAD SAMADANI: Sir, in the present world scenario, there is a very great relevance for the local languages. Due to the impact of political phenomenon like globalisation and liberalisation, many of our local languages are facing the problem of extinction. Many of them are on the verge of extinction.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please put your question.

SHRI M. P. ABDUSSAMAD SAMADANI: Considering this situation, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government will come forward with a broader policy on language in which there will be a great relevance for the mother tongue.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Sir, mother tongues—in so far as they are considered regional languages—are used as medium of instruction at all levels and they are also used as the medium of administration in the concerned State. Otherwise, we have only missions to see that languages are not endangered. The modernisation process is inexorable. It could face danger from other languages. But, there is a modern technical way of preserving the original shape of the languages and we shall make every attempt to do so.

*163.[The questioner (Shri Abu Asim Azmi) was absent. For answer *vide* page.....*infra*.]

*164. [The questioner (Shrimati S.G. Indira) was absent. For answer *vide* page.....*infra*.]

*165. [The questioner (Shri C. Perumal) was absent. For answer *vide* page.....*infra*.]

*166.[The questioner (Shri S.P.M. Syed Khan) was absent. For answer *vide* page.....*infra*.]

Indo-Pakistan trade talks

***167. SHRI LALIT SURI:** Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the nature of trade talks held between India and Pakistan during SAARC meeting held recently at Islamabad; and

(b) the decisions arrived at and the extent to which the trade between the two neighbours is expected to improve?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) On the occasion of the Fourth Meeting of the SAARC Commerce Ministers held in Islamabad on November 22-23, 2004, Commerce Ministers of India and Pakistan had a separate interaction to lay down a road map for promoting trade between the two countries.

(b) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.