

Classical status to Indian languages

July 31, 2019

Source: *Press Information Bureau*

A proposal for granting Classical status to Marathi Language was received from Marathi Language Department, Government of Maharashtra. The said proposal was placed before the Committee of Linguistic Experts for its consideration

History of classical languages

Tamil academicians made the first call for a classical language. They asserted that the anthologies of Sangam should be regarded as classical languages. It is an ancient language and the old Tamil is the prototype of the Dravidian family language. The govt took a note and consulted the Sahitya Akademi specialists afterwards. A committee was later created to grant the status of Classical Languages and some criteria were developed

Criteria related to Classical languages in India

The criteria evolved by Government to determine declaration of a language as a Classical language is as under:

- 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 be 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

Current classical languages

- Tamil (2004)
- Sanskrit (2005)
- Kannada (2008)
- Telugu (2008)
- Malayalam (2013)
- Odia (2014)

22 languages recognised under the 8th schedule of India

Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Kashmiri, Konkani, Malayalam, Manipuri, Marathi

Nepali, Oriya, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Sindhi, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu, Bodo, Santhali, Maithili, Dogri