

Scheme for Protection and Preservation of Endangered Languages of India (SPPEL)

December 3, 2021

In news- The Union Minister of Culture has mentioned the Scheme for Protection and Preservation of Endangered Languages of India (SPPEL) in Rajya Sabha recently.

About the SPPEL-

- This Scheme **was instituted by the Ministry of Education, Government of India in 2013.**
- **The sole objective of the Scheme** is to document (digitally) and archive the country's languages that have become endangered or likely to be endangered in the near future.
- The scheme **is monitored by the Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL) located in Mysuru, Karnataka.**
- Under this Scheme, the CIIL, Mysore works on protection, preservation and documentation of all the mother tongues/languages of India spoken by less than 10,000 speakers keeping in mind the degree of endangerment and reduction in the domains of usage.
- **All the languages listed under SPPEL are placed under one of the six Zones** for academic or administrative convenience. The six zones are:
 1. **Northern Zone** is documenting the endangered languages spoken in Chandigarh, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, and Uttarakhand
 2. **Southern zone** covers documentation of the endangered languages spoken in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and Telangana.
 3. **Northeast Zone** comprises eight states namely,

Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, and Tripura.

4. Under **East Central Zone** fourteen languages come under SPPEL.
5. **West Central Zone** is geographically attached to the States /Union territories of Gujarat, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Daman, Diu and Dadra Nagar Haveli, and Goa. In this zone, five languages have been identified as Endangered in the first phase of documentation of the SPPEL. They are: Baradi, Bhala, Bharwad/Bharwadi, Diwehi, Nihali.

- **The last one is Andaman and Nicobar Island.**

- In the first phase of the scheme, 117 endangered languages/mother tongues have been chosen from all over India for study and documentation on a priority basis.

Endangered languages in India-

- India has the highest number of languages – 197 languages- which were endangered, vulnerable or extinct as of 2017.
- Out of these 5 languages were extinct, 42 critically Endangered, 7 severely endangered and 62 were definitely endangered and 81 were vulnerable.
- Nearly 60% of these languages originated in the Northeast and Andaman & Nicobar Islands.
- More than half of endangered languages have fewer than 10000 speakers and therefore have not been recorded in the Indian Census.
- India's language Census records only those languages with more than 10,000 speakers.
- According to UNESCO, any language that is spoken by less than 10,000 people is potentially endangered.

Degree of endangerment	Intergenerational Language Transmission
safe	language is spoken by all generations; intergenerational transmission is uninterrupted >> not included in the Atlas
 vulnerable	most children speak the language, but it may be restricted to certain domains (e.g., home)
 definitely endangered	children no longer learn the language as mother tongue in the home
 severely endangered	language is spoken by grandparents and older generations; while the parent generation may understand it, they do not speak it to children or among themselves
 critically endangered	the youngest speakers are grandparents and older, and they speak the language partially and infrequently
 extinct	there are no speakers left >> included in the Atlas if presumably extinct since the 1950s

Extra

reading :

<https://journalsofindia.com/endangered-languages-in-india/>