

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
TOURISM AND CULTURE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1234
ANSWERED ON:02.03.2006
PHALGUNA SAKA CRITERIA FOR DECLARING CLASSICAL LANGUAGE
Rao Shri Devarakonda Vittal

Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) the criteria being followed to declare any language as classical language;
- (b) whether the Government is considering to relax the said criteria for declaring a language as classical;
- (c) if so, the details thereof;
- (d) the details of the languages declared as classical languages so far;
- (e) whether there is any proposal to be declared Telugu as classical language;
- (f) if so, the details thereof; and
- (g) if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SMT. AMBIKA SONI)

(a): Ministry of Home Affairs created a new category of languages as 'Classical Languages' vide notification No.IV-14014/7/2004-NH dated 12th October, 2004 read with the Corrigendum Notification dated 29th October 2004 and amended by Notification dated 25th November, 2005. Accordingly, the following criteria was laid down to determine the eligibility of languages to be considered for classification as a 'Classical Language':-

(i) High antiquity of its early texts/recorded history over a period of 1500 - 2000 years.

(ii) A body of ancient literature/texts, which is considered a valuable heritage by generations of speakers.

(iii) The literary tradition be original and not borrowed from another speech community.

(iv) 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.

(b)&(c): The criteria was amended vide notification dated 25th November 2005.

(d): Tamil and Sanskrit.

(e): Yes, Sir.

(f): We have received representations from various quarters for declaring Telugu as classical language. A Committee of Linguistic Experts has been constituted to examine the claims of any Indian Language for Classical Status. This Committee will advise the Government in the matter.

(g): Does not arise.