

Sixteenth Loksabha

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Title: Need to release census data on language spoken in the country.

SHRI B. VINOD KUMAR (KARIMNAGAR):Currently, the Indian Constitution recognises 22 languages under the Eighth Schedule. Of these languages, 14 were initially included in the Constitution and the rest were added later on. The census, conducted every ten years, clearly notes the mother tongue as well as other languages spoken by every surveyed individual. However, data has not been released on the same for the 2011 Census, as well as many before it.

Rather than seeing language as a divisive characteristic, we need to embrace it and ensure their protection from extinction. Some languages in the South such as Telugu, Malayali, Kannada, etc. are facing an increasing threat from the use of Hindi and English for administrative as well as schooling purposes. The more recent generations are losing touch with their mother tongues as they choose to interact in more commonly spoken languages. This is causing a severe depletion of language resources with some estimates claiming we have lost several languages due to such language migration. There is a need to sensitise the people and communities of the diminishing use of regional languages in some areas. Language forms a part of culture and heritage and must be preserved to keep the cultural diversity in the country.

I urge the Government to take action on this and release data on languages from the last Census at least, so that conservation efforts can be put into place before any language becomes endangered /extinct.

