

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Constitution of India."

The motion was adopted.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: Sir, I introduce the Bill.

15.01 hrs.

CONSTITUTION (AMENDMENT)
BILL—(Amendment of article
343)—contd.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The House will now take up further consideration of the following motion moved by Shri C. K. Bhattacharyya on the 22nd November, 1963:—

"That the Bill further to amend the Constitution of India be circulated for the purpose of eliciting opinion thereon by the 31st March, 1964."

Shri D. C. Sharma was on his legs. He is not here now.

Shri Hajarnavis: Only 14 minutes are left.

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs (Shri Hajarnavis): I shall finish within 10 minutes.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: The time may be extended. Speak a little in Sanskrit also!

Shri Hajarnavis: I wish I could. Sir, I regret that I am unable to accept the motion of the hon. Member. I am one of those who, though not proficient in Sanskrit, have very great regard and affection for Sanskrit, and one of the minor dissatisfactions in life which I suffer from is my wholly inadequate knowledge of Sanskrit. Sanskrit, of course, is the fountain-head of our cultural life. It has a very rich literature, and as I expressed at the other place, two days back, no study of the northern languages will be complete without a knowledge of Sanskrit. Of course, I am not competent to speak of the Southern

languages. But I am told that Malayalam and Telugu have also a very large percentage of Sanskrit words. I am quite sure that no one can be fluent or proficient in Bengali, Marathi or Gujarati unless he has adequate knowledge of Sanskrit. Sanskrit, with its almost perfect grammar, with its highly developed science of Alankaras which is adopted in the vernaculars in the regional languages, ought to be regarded as a necessary subject of study, at least in the secondary stage. Speaking for myself, I am one of those who feel like that. But all this will not permit of its being prescribed as the official language. When a census was conducted in India, not more than 500 people claimed to speak in Sanskrit, so that the very pre-condition, the actual necessary condition for a language to be prescribed as an official language, that is to say, the language in which Government transacts its business, is wanting, in this particular language. Therefore I must oppose the motion for circulation.

Dr. M. S. Aney (Nagpur): That is not the object of the Bill. The aim of the Bill is to include Sanskrit as a co-official language.

Shri Hajarnavis: Even for describing it as a co-official language there must be some substantial number of persons who speak it. It was suggested by the Sanskrit Commission that it should be used for certain official purposes, ceremonial purposes. I believe it is still used in my own university. For instance, in the Nagpur University convocation is conducted in Sanskrit. Then, many of our own mottoes are also in Sanskrit. For instance, over the very august Chair which you are now occupying there is a Sanskrit inscription: धर्मचक्र-प्रवर्तनाय The Air Force and the Navy mottoes are also in Sanskrit. Sanskrit can certainly be used so as to lend dignity and decorum and a certain amount of traditional authority

to conventional occasions to say that it can be a language of daily use is not to take into consideration the facts as they exist. That being so, I oppose the motion.

Shri C. K. Bhattacharyya (Raiganj): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I thank the hon. Minister for the speech that he has made in support of Sanskrit. While I admired his argument, I was surprised how he avoided the very inevitable conclusion that a language which could have such a footing in the country should be at least allowed to be used for some official purposes. He admired, he argued admirably in favour of Sanskrit, but came to the wrong conclusion that it may not be used. That is how I understand him, and I thank him for his admiration of the language. In any case, I feel I have got the House with me as the speeches that have been made on the last occasion will show on record. I must thank those Members who made those speeches and I feel assured to find that in the number of speakers who supported me were some of the most eminent lawyers in India. That is a matter of satisfaction to me.

I introduced the Bill by quoting the hon. Prime Minister. While I am to conclude, I shall quote him again. I am quoting from the *Discovery of India*. This is what the hon. Prime Minister says about Sankaracharya.

"Born in Malabar in far south of India he travelled incessantly all over India, meeting innumerable people, arguing, debating, reasoning, convincing and filling them with a part of his own passion and tremendous vitality. He strove hard to synthesise the diverse currents that were troubling the mind of India of his day and to build a unity of outlook out of that diversity."

This happened not in some bygone ages in history. This happened in the eighth and ninth century. May I ask, what was the medium in which

this great mind carried on all these things—this arguing, debating, reasoning and convincing? What was the language which he used for doing this on an all-India scale, on a mass scale, from Kerala to Kashmir, and from Kashmir to Assam? The medium was Sanskrit. I question again, what was the binding thread that he used to bring about unity and synthesis out of the diversity that was present during his time? That force, that binding thread, that cement, was again Sanskrit which he used. If this could have happened in the eighth century, not very long ago, what is the reason that we are so diffident now? What is the reason that we feel sceptic now and speak as the hon. Minister has just now spoken?

Coming to our present time, I quote the hon. Prime Minister again. In this House, the Prime Minister has spoken a number of times on the official language or the official languages. You must have noted Sir, that whenever he takes up the question of official language, the vision of Sanskrit appears in the background. It appears in his mind, and the Prime Minister lays stress on the importance of Sanskrit in that context. I am quoting from his speech on the 7th August 1959 on Shri Frank Anthony's proposal to put English in the Eighth Schedule. This is what the Prime Minister stated:

"Everyone knows Sanskrit was the symbol of our magnificent civilisation in the past—a tremendous thing. Whenever I think of it I am overwhelmed by the achievement of Sanskrit. It is a tremendous thing. Now we cannot leave it."

Then, in September of the same year, the Prime Minister spoke on the report of the Committee of Parliament on Official Language. There, he said:

"I have on a previous occasion expressed my great admiration for Sanskrit. I think if there is

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one thing which can embody the greatness of India's thought and culture in the past, it is Sanskrit."

"The Indian languages of today are either directly descended from Sanskrit or like the southern languages been closely allied with it. The background of thought and culture whether it is of Tamil, Telugu or any other southern language is closely allied to the background of thought and culture of northern languages because of Sanskrit and its effect on the whole of India. If we cut away those roots it will be very bad for us."

It is to maintain these roots, it is to preserve our connection with these roots that I have suggested that Sanskrit be given recognition as official language at least for some limited purposes, as has been recommended by the Sanskrit Commission.

These thoughts come to the Prime Minister whenever he speaks of official language. Why? It is because here is an abiding realisation in his mind that in the scheme of official languages of India, Sanskrit has got an important place, not an insignificant one. That is why the Prime Minister launches into this praise of Sanskrit whenever he takes up the question of official language for India. I hoped that if my arguments do not prevail with the Government of India, at least the arguments of the Prime Minister would. But somehow I have failed. While the Minister argued for Sanskrit and came to a conclusion against it, I feel there is some confusion somewhere. Otherwise, it could not have been so.

When I heard the Minister speaking like that, the Lord's saying in Gita came to my mind:

"कर्तुं तेच्छ्रमि यन्मोहान्
कश्चिद्यस्मि वशोऽपि तन्"

What you are not inclined to do today because of confusion in thinking, you will have to do some day out of force of circumstances. That is the saying in Gita and that comes to my mind on this occasion.

When I proposed Sanskrit as official language, I did not think of a classical language at all. I proposed Sanskrit because it is very modern in its thought and ideas. It is one of the store-houses of the most progressive thinking. It is because of its modernism that I proposed that it may be given a place in the scheme of official languages. It has the capacity to express ultra-modern ideas. There are my friends in the opposition as well as on the Congress who want to put a ceiling on the possession of an individual. I am quoting something beyond which they will not go. I am quoting from *Bhagavatam*.

"यावद् भ्रियेत जठरं तावत् मृतं
चि देहिनाम् ।
अधिकं यो भिमन्वेत सस्तेनो
दण्डभाग भवते ॥'

An individual in a society is entitled only to that much which will be required to sustain his existence. Any individual trying to have more is a social thief and he deserves punishment. I do not know whether my friends in the opposition are prepared to go so far as what *Bhagavatam* has said about the individual's rights in society.

I would have quoted Manu Smriti; it is not with me now. We are now thinking of land reforms and ownership of land. If my friend Shri Mukerjee refers to Manu, he will find it stated there that the land belongs to the person who tills it. These are the most modern ideas, of which Sanskrit is the store-house. I could have given more. This is what attracted me to suggest that that may be taken up as an official language.

As a language, I have supported it because of its scientific character. It is the most scientific language in the world. In its precision and integrity, it has no equal in the world; not even English is equal to Sanskrit in precision, integrity and scientific character. These are the reasons for which I took it up.

I have quoted the Prime Minister. I may as well quote others also. While Shri Hirendranath Mukerjee was trying to justify his party's patriotic character the other day, in the very climax of his sentiments, what were the words which came to him? They were not English words, but Sanskrit words. He said:

“यथाहम् राघवादन्यं मनसापि न चिन्तये ।
तथा मे माधवो देवो विवरं दानुमर्हति ॥”

That was how my friend expressed himself while he was trying to justify his party's patriotic character. When the other day, Mr. Nath Pai was trying to impress upon the Prime Minister the necessity of preserving the integrity of India in the face of Chinese aggression, what were the words that came to him in the very climax of his speech? He said:

“ईमाम् सागर पर्यन्तां हिमवद्-विन्ध्यकुण्डलाम्”

That was how he reminded the Prime Minister of what our forefathers thought about India. These are words which come to us not because they are mere obsolete classical words, but because they express the ideas and thoughts which are currently in our blood even now. That is what emboldened me to take it up.

My friend the hon. Minister stated that 500 people have recorded Sanskrit as their speaking language. The very fact that even in these days there are 500 people who use Sanskrit as speaking language is enough commendation for giving it the recognition

that I suggest for it. We have been learning English for the last 2 centuries. What an amount of money the British Government had spent and this Government is spending on learning English. I quote from the same report which the hon. Minister quoted from, about persons speaking Sanskrit—the report of the Kher Commission. There it is said that even after two centuries of learning English, not even 1 per cent of the people of India could express themselves sufficiently in English. Will he throw out English because not even 1 per cent of the people speak English? Yet, you are passing laws in English and you are maintaining it as an associate official language. If that can be done, simply because only 500 people speak Sanskrit, there can be no bar to Sanskrit being adopted as an official language.

A language dies when the culture dies. If the culture does not die, the language does not die. Some of the European languages are dead because the culture is dead. The climate of the culture in which Sanskrit was born still persists. I maintain that that culture is living and having very active existence in our life.

Let it be remembered that the proposal to have Sanskrit as an official language was broached in the Constituent Assembly by Shri Naziruddin Ahmed. That should be remembered, because that is a remarkable thing. Our present Speaker, who was a member, said, “I do again make it clear that I am not against Sanskrit and if that is taken up straightway, I will support it.” You will find it recorded in the proceedings of the Constituent Assembly. Even then, I do not want to disturb the present scheme of things. Let Hindi remain where it is; let English remain where it is. But let Sanskrit be given recognition for limited official purposes.

The Minister was referring to some universities. In my introduction speech, I stated that I asked the

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Parliament Secretariat for the use of Sanskrit on certain ceremonial occasions, but I was told it cannot be used unless it is there in article 343. I have not raised the question of *lingua franca*. I have not raised any other question. I have suggested Sanskrit only as an integrating factor in the present India; not only India, but it will integrate us with the rest of the world, particularly the eastern Asia. Some years ago, I was in Saigon and I met the Education Minister of Burma there. I asked the Education Minister of Burma how they found out technical words for their language. He said that they tried to find out those words from their Burmese language and when they could not find them in the Burmese language they went to Sanskrit. Even now the Education Minister of Burma is doing it. What is the difficulty in our case, I do not know.

I shall quote only one more instance and then conclude. I spoke of Israel. When that State was formed the Jews from all sides came and amongst that multi-national and multi-language people the only way they found to bring about unity was to restore Hebrew. This could be done even in our present case as a measure of integrating factor.

I shall conclude with a saying of Bhavabhuti that comes to my mind now. This time when we close the chapter which began in 1958 and when I conclude it sadly, the words of Bhavabhuti come to my mind:

“ये के राम इ अथन्त्यवजाम्
जानन्तु किमपि तान् प्रति नैषयन्तः”

Those who are ignoring me today, whatever knowledge they may possess, let them also know that my efforts have not been for them. Then he said:

“उत्पश्यतेऽस्ति मम कोऽपि समानर्थकः”

There are others who think like me and more will come. Then he concluded:

“कालोऽध्वयम् निरवधि विपला च पृथ्वी”

The world is vast and time is eternal.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: What is he going to do with his Bill?

Shri C. K. Bhattacharyya: Let the Bill be disposed of by the House itself.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: There is an amendment by Shri N. R. Ghosh. I shall put it to the House.

The amendment was put and negatived.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The question is:

“That the Bill further to amend the Constitution of India be circulated for the purpose of eliciting opinion thereon by the 31st March, 1964.”

The motion was negatived.

15.24 hrs.

DISCLOSURE OF ASSETS OF MINISTERS BILL

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: Sir, I beg to move:

“That the Bill to provide for the periodical disclosure of assets of Ministers be taken into consideration.”

Shri H. N. Mukerjee (Calcutta Central): Would it be in order, Sir, if at this point of time I move for extension of time for the discussion of Shri Kamath's Bill? Could I suggest to the House that an extension by two hours would be very appropriate?