

STATE LANGUAGE OF INDIA

Congress Party Accepts Compromise Proposal

GRADUAL RESTRICTION ON USE OF ENGLISH

From Our Special Representative

NEW DELHI, August 22.

THE appointment of a Language Commission at the expiration of five years of the commencement of the new Constitution for making recommendations to the President regarding progressive use of Hindi for any one or more official purposes and gradual restriction of English is contained in a provision which is intended to be included in the Draft Constitution.

General support to this proposal was indicated at the meeting of the Congress Party as it is believed to be a compromise between non-Hindi-speaking areas, who dreaded "Hindi imperialism" and wanted English to continue unhindered for ten years, and the Hindi-speaking people who desired to see Hindi adopted without any further delay.

The main provision will, of course, make it clear that while the official language of the Union would be Hindi in Devanagari script with the use of international numerals, for a period of 15 years from the commencement of the Constitution, English would continue to be used for all official purposes of the Union.

The President may, however, make provision for the use of Hindi side by side with English for any one or more official purposes.

It is gathered that a new Article may be included in the chapter on directive principles of State policy making it incumbent on the Union to ensure the development of Hindi which is defined as the language in which all the elements of the composite culture of India find expression and to secure its enrichment by the assimilation of the forms, style and expressions used or current in Hindustani and in different languages of India, and by drawing for its vocabulary primarily on Sanskrit and secondarily on other languages.

P.T.I. adds: The Commission will be asked to take into consideration the industrial and scientific advancement of India and the interests of persons holding office in connection with the affairs of the Government of India.

The proposal envisages the constitution of a committee consisting of 80 members, including 15 members of each House of Parliament, to examine the recommendations of the Commission and to report to the President their opinion on the recommendations.

REGIONAL LANGUAGES

On the question of regional languages, it is proposed that a State may by law adopt any regional language or languages or the Hindi language as the language to be used within the State for all or any of the official purposes of that State. A provision attached to the proposal, however, states that English shall continue to be used for official purposes until the legislature of the State otherwise provides. The official language of the Union shall be the official language for intercourse between one State and another State and between a State and the Union.

It is also proposed that all the proceedings in the Supreme Court and in every High Court, the authoritative text of all Bills, amendments, motions or resolutions to be moved in Houses of Parliament and legislatures and of Acts of Parliament and legislatures, ordinances and of all orders, rules, regulations and bye-laws issued under the Constitution shall be in the English language.

It is understood that at today's party meeting, which was presided over by Mr. K. M. Munshi, Dr. Ambedkar, Chairman of the Drafting Committee, explained the provisions of the new proposals, which will be discussed by the party tomorrow.