

**High Commissioner's address on  
Conferment of Classical Language status on Assamese, Bengali,  
Marathi, Pali and Prakrit Languages**

Friday, 22<sup>nd</sup> November, 2024

Members of Assam Society of New Zealand,  
Members Wellington Maharashtrian Association Incorporated,  
Members Wellington Durgotsav Committee, and  
Members of Wellington Hindi School  
Distinguished Guests and other Indian Community members  
My colleagues at the High Commission  
Ladies and Gentlemen !

**Namaskar, Kia Ora, and Good Evening !**

It is a matter of immense pride and pleasure for me to share with you that on 3<sup>rd</sup> October, 2024, Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi approved to confer the status of Classical Language to Assamese, Bengali, Marathi, Pali, and Prakrit languages. The Classical Languages serve as a custodian of Bharat's profound and ancient cultural heritage, embodying the essence of each community's historical and cultural milestone. Earlier, Other classical language of India are Tamil, Sanskrit, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam & Odia.

2. Today, we gathered to celebrate the conferment of Classical Language Status upon five exceptional languages - Assamese, Bengali, Marathi, Pali and Prakrit. These languages that have not only enriched the cultural tapestry of India but have also left indelible marks on the world. The inclusion of languages as Classical Language will create significant opportunities particularly in academic and research fields. Additionally, the preservation, documentation, and digitization of ancient texts of these languages will generate jobs in archiving, translation and publishing.

3. I convey my thanks and regards to Mr. Naseer Ahmed Ji from Assam Society of New Zealand, Shri Dayanand Deshpande ji from Wellington Maharashtrian Association Incorporated and Shri Sambol Kumar Bhattacharjee ji, President of Wellington Durgotsav Committee, and Sunita Narayan ji from Wellington Hindi School for collaborating with High Commission and celebrating this event on a large-scale in New Zealand. This event will also encourage other Indian communities and associations across the New Zealand to celebrate their languages and showcase their rich cultural heritage.

4. The conferment of Classical Language status is a recognition of the deep intellectual and cultural heritage embedded in these languages. It is a commitment to preserving, promoting, and fostering their continued growth for future generations. But it is also a reminder of our duty to ensure that the vibrancy and richness of our languages remain alive not

only in the academic spaces but also in daily life, in literature, in cinema, and in the evolving narratives of our society.

5. As we look toward the future, let us all take a moment to reflect on the incredible wealth of knowledge, culture, and tradition that these languages carry. Let us work together to preserve this legacy for future generations.

6. Today, we will have presentations on classical languages, as well as cultural performances by associations representing the states of Assam, West Bengal, and Maharashtra. I am confident that you will thoroughly enjoy every aspect of this event.

7. In conclusion, the conferment of Classical Language status is a moment of profound significance - not only for the speakers of these languages, but for all of humanity. It is a celebration of the spirit of India's pluralism, culture and unity in diversity of our Nation.

Thank you !

Jai Hind !

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