

Press Information Bureau

Government of India

Vice President participates in Matribhasha Divas celebrations in New Delhi today

Calls for a national movement to promote Indian languages in a big way

New Delhi

20th February, 2020

The Ministry of Human Resource Development is celebrating Matribhasha Divas which falls on 21st February every year in a big way. The Vice President of India, Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu was the Chief Guest at the main event organized today in New Delhi. Union HRD Minister Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' was the Guest of Honour on the event. MoS, Ministry of Culture and Tourism Shri Prahlad Singh Patel and MoS, HRD Shri Sanjay Dhotre also graced the occasion. The theme of the programme is 'Celebrating our Multilingual Heritage' reflecting the spirit of Ek Bharat Shreshth Bharat.

Highlighting the importance of preserving, protecting and promoting Indian languages, the Vice President of India, Shri M Venkaiah Naidu today spoke in 22 languages during the event. He urged all the citizens to take a pledge to promote mother tongue and also learn other languages. The Vice President called for a national movement to promote Indian Languages in a big way, and said: "When we protect and promote mother tongues, we protect and promote linguistic and cultural diversity also."



Calling for a link between the language and employment, the Vice President said that knowledge of Indian languages must be made compulsory for recruitment up to a certain level in government jobs. Stating that language should become a catalyst for inclusive development and growth, Shri Naidu stressed the need to use local language in administration. Shri Naidu also said that medium of instruction should be mandatory in languages up to high school level.

For the full speech of Vice President kindly click the link

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1603859>

Speaking on the occasion Union HRD Minister Shri Nishank said that the Mother tongue refers to the language that a person learns without any effort and to which the person has a deep emotional attachment. Shri Pokhriyal said that the language is not only a medium of communication; it has a strong social, cultural, geographical and economic connect with the speakers of that society as well. He further said that our country believes in the concept of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam. So, we not just only respect each other's language and culture, but also assimilate it and live it. In a country like India, where about thousands of languages and dialects are spoken, each language has its own significance and identity.

Shri Pokhriyal highlighted that while we take pride in that India has such a large number of mother tongues, on the other hand, 196 languages of India have been included in the list of endangered languages released by UNESCO, which is a matter of concern. Not only are some languages and dialects fading away or are on the verge of getting extinct, sadly the condition of many major languages is also of grave concern. He further added that the main reason is that sometimes people suffer from inferiority complex in relation to their mother tongue, but one should understand that no language is major or minor, rich or poor and strong or weak. Now the time has come for us to document and preserve our languages, as well as to encourage them.

The Minister informed that the Matribhasha Diwas is celebrated to promote linguistic and cultural diversity and multilingualism in the world, as well as to spread awareness about languages. He said that every year UNESCO celebrates International Mother Language Day with a new theme. The theme of this year (2020) is "**Languages without Borders**" which means languages across/devoid of geographical boundaries.



While addressing the gathering, Shri Prahlad Singh Patel said that we are proud of all the languages but undoubtedly the mother tongue plays an important role in the development of one's personality. Although one learns many languages as per the needs, the emotional connection remains with one's own mother tongue. He added that every language in India has vast history and linguistic society and a cultural perspective. He stressed upon promoting vernacular languages across the world, to remain connected beyond the boundaries.

Speaking at the event, Minister of State for HRD Shri Sanjay Dhotre said that mother tongue is the first language that anyone acquires from one's parents and the surrounding. And one is most comfortable in articulating oneself in their respective mother tongues only. Hence mother tongue should be preferred as the medium of instruction in the classroom especially in primary classes. Shri Dhotre also added that in India most of the people are either bilingual or multilingual. This phenomenon and the larger linguistic diversity of our country are an asset to cherish.

MHRD along with educational institutions and language institutions is celebrating the Matribhasha Diwas. The educational institutions will organize activities like Elocution, Debating, Singing, Essay writing competitions, painting Competitions, Music and dramatic performances, Exhibitions, Online resources and activities as well as events exploring the cognitive, economic, social and cultural activities of multilingual society, Exhibitions depicting linguistic and diverse wealth of India in at least two languages and also more.

NB/AKJ/AK/OA