



## EDITORIAL: INDIAN EXPRESS

**GENERAL STUDIES 2: GOVERNANCE**

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**TOPIC: EDUCATION**

**Dis/Agree: CM Stalin, protect language – don't politicise it**

### Political Motivations Behind CM Stalin's Allegations

- **Misleading Assertion:** Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M. K. Stalin's statement claiming that Hindi has endangered smaller languages like Maithili and Santhali appears misleading. It seems more like a political strategy rather than a factual concern.
- **Strategic Political Move:** Stalin's claim seems to be strategically timed to gain political advantage, particularly in light of upcoming elections. By stoking emotions about language preservation, he appears to be appealing to voters on the basis of linguistic identity.
- **Lack of Support from Affected Communities:** Notably, no representatives from smaller language communities, such as Maithili and Santhali, have raised alarms about Hindi's impact on their languages. It is Stalin, a regional political leader, who is making these claims, which raises questions about his motives.
- **Electoral Motivation:** With elections around the corner, Stalin may be attempting to galvanize voter support by using the sensitive issue of language politics to his advantage.
- **Clarification from Education Minister:** Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan has clarified that the government is not imposing Hindi and that the three-language policy encourages learning an additional language without undermining regional languages. This clarification counters Stalin's claims and presents a more balanced view.

### The Myth of a Monolithic Hindi Identity

- **Misrepresentation of Hindi:** Stalin's argument that Hindi is being presented as a singular, uniform identity is not entirely accurate. In India, no language group is monolithic, and regional dialects are an integral part of linguistic diversity.
- **Regional Variations:** Even in states like Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu, different dialects and variations of languages exist. This diversity is essential and reflects the richness of India's linguistic culture.
- **Need for Standardization:** While some standardization is necessary for administrative and educational purposes, this does not mean that regional dialects should be eradicated. Regional variations should be preserved alongside the standard forms of language.
- **Linguistic Resilience:** India's linguistic culture thrives on adaptability and resilience. Forcing uniformity would undermine this diversity, and Stalin's narrative overlooks this fundamental aspect of Indian linguistics.

### Understanding the Real Threats to Regional Languages



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- **Linguistic Colonialism and Its Impact:** The influence of foreign languages like Urdu and Persian during the Mughal era, followed by English under British colonial rule, has had a long-lasting effect on India's linguistic landscape. These foreign languages overshadowed native languages and hindered their development. The historical dominance of Persian, for example, led to the creation of a Marathi dictionary to preserve native terminology.
- **English as a Social Status Symbol:** The colonial association of English with higher social status has contributed to its dominance in modern India. Many language communities have internalized the idea that speaking English represents prestige, leading to a gradual decline in the use of regional languages. While languages like Tamil, Bengali, and Malayalam have retained strength, many others have struggled to compete with English.
- **Erosion of Native Vocabulary:** In urban areas, the widespread use of English words in everyday speech has led to the erosion of native vocabulary. This trend further threatens regional languages by diluting their linguistic richness.
- **Inactivity of Language Advocates:** Language survival requires proactive efforts. Mere political rhetoric

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