



EDITORIAL: THE HINDU

GENERAL STUDIES 2: GOVERNANCE

DATE: 15.03.2025

TOPIC: EDUCATION

A school closure that must be called out

Issue with Gondi School:

- Maharashtra's only Gondi-medium school in Mohgaon village faces a threat of closure.
- The school was established in 2019 to provide primary education to tribal students in their mother tongue, Gondi.

Constitutional Rights:

- The school aligns with **Article 29** (right to preserve languages and culture) and **Article 350(A)** (right to education in mother tongue).
- However, the **Right to Education Act (RTE), 2009** lacks provisions for tribal languages like Gondi.

Gondi Language Overview:

- Gondi is spoken by over 2.9 million people across multiple states.
- It is not included in the **Eighth Schedule** of the Indian Constitution, limiting its recognition and protection.

Government's Argument for Closure:

- The government argues that without recognition under RTE, the school cannot meet educational standards and students might struggle to transition to higher education.
- The suggestion is to absorb students into other schools, ignoring the importance of language and culture.

Bureaucratic and Systemic Issues:

- The issue goes beyond procedural matters and reflects the subordination of Adivasi communities, particularly their language and culture.
- This is part of the broader socio-political bias against tribal languages.

Nehru's Vision for Tribal Communities:

- Nehru believed that tribal communities should grow while preserving their traditions and identities.
- The Constitution provides protections for tribal communities, allowing them to participate in nation-building without losing their culture.

Forces Threatening Tribal Identity:

**P.L. RAJ IAS & IPS ACADEMY | 1447/C, 3rd floor, 15th Main Road,
Anna Nagar West, Chennai-40. Ph.No.044-42323192, 9445032221
Email: plrajmemorial@gmail.com Website: www.plrajiasacademy.com
Telegram link: <https://t.me/plrajias2006> YouTube: P L RAJ IAS & IPS ACADEMY**



PL RAJ IAS & IPS ACADEMY

MAKING YOU SERVE THE NATION

- Both secular and religious forces push tribal communities into mainstream society, leading to a loss of cultural practices and spiritual traditions.
- These forces weaken the tribal identity, threatening the survival of indigenous cultures and languages.

Niyamgiri Case:

- The Supreme Court ruled against a bauxite mining project in Odisha after the local tribes unanimously opposed it, protecting their sacred land rights.

Importance of Adivasi Languages:

- Adivasi communities have oral traditions that are under threat due to deforestation, urbanization, and market pressures.
- The loss of a tribal language could erase an entire cultural identity, making the protection of these languages vital.

Constitutional Moral Failure:

- While **Sanskrit**, spoken by a small number of people, is promoted in the Constitution, **Gondi**, spoken by millions, lacks state-level recognition and support.
- This disparity highlights a moral failure in the protection of Adivasi languages.

Way Forward:

- The Gondi-medium school should be recognized and expanded across India.
- Gondi should be included in the **Eighth Schedule** of the Constitution.
- Policies should be implemented to promote and preserve tribal languages and cultures through tribal-led educational initiatives.

Conclusion:

- To honor the Constitution's spirit, it is essential to protect tribal languages and educational initiatives that preserve their cultural identity, ensuring Adivasi communities thrive without losing their heritage.

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/a-school-closure-that-must-be-called-out/article69331346.ece>