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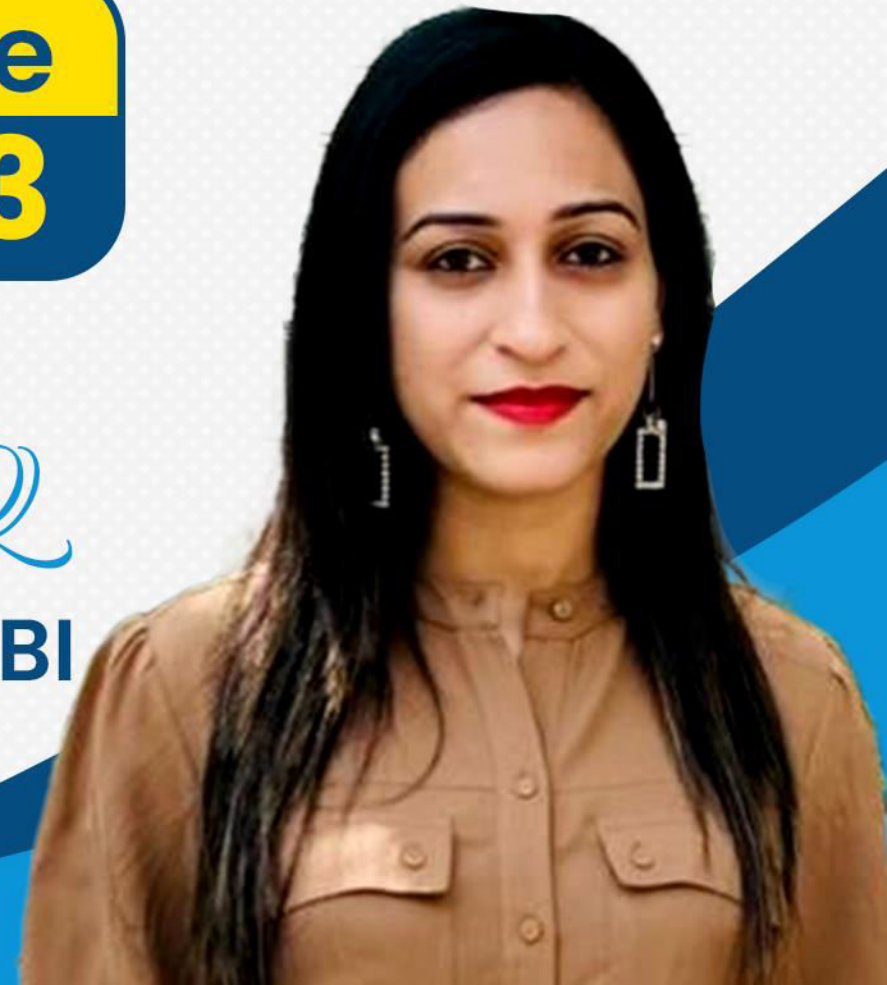
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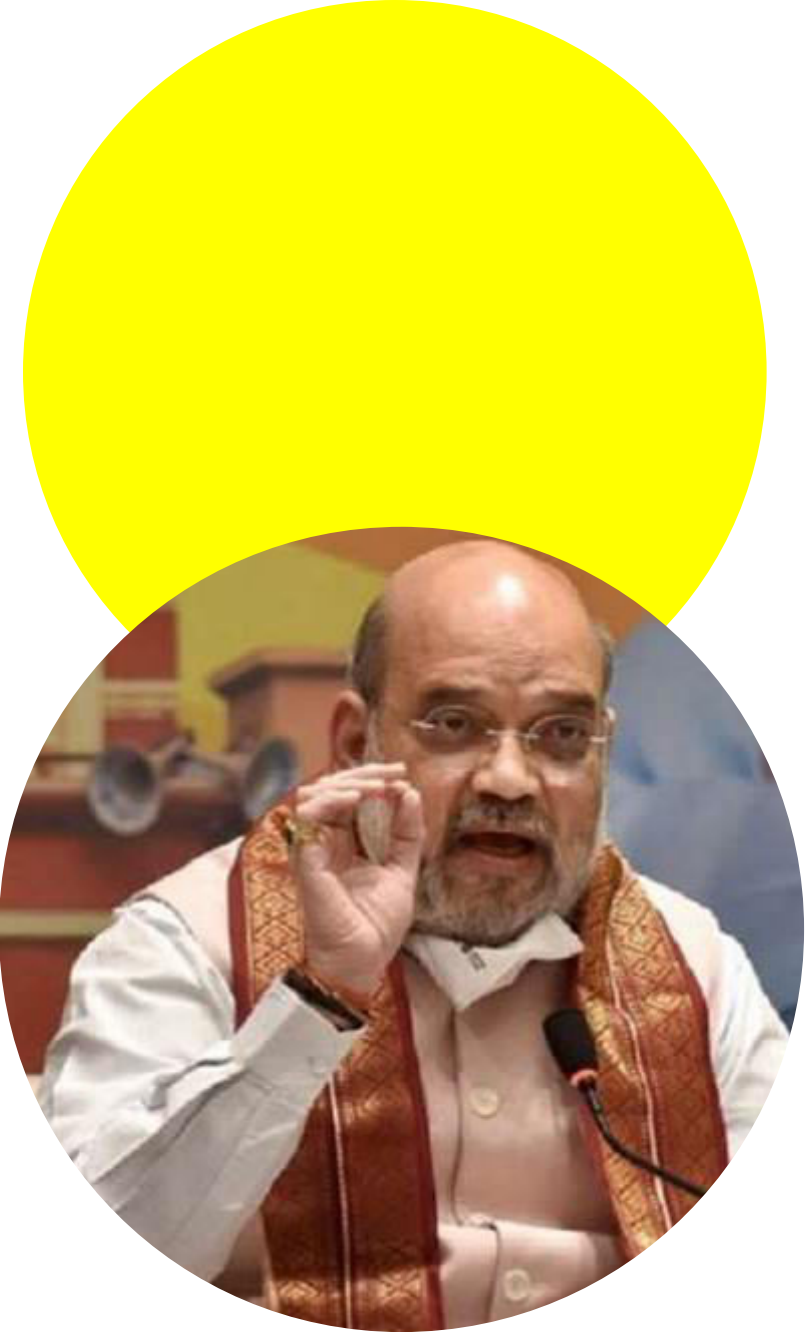
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- Last week, Home Minister Amit Shah suggested that states should communicate with each other in Hindi rather than English, while stressing that Hindi should not be an alternative to local languages.
- ***“When citizens of states who speak other languages communicate with each other, it should be in the language of India,”*** Shah was quoted by the Home Ministry as having said at the meeting of the Parliamentary Official Language Committee.

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# People from different states should speak in Hindi, not English: Amit Shah

Shah, however, clarified that Hindi should be accepted as an alternative to English, and not local languages. He also suggested that Hindi should be made more flexible by accepting words from other local languages.

By: [Express News Service](#) | New Delhi |

Updated: April 9, 2022 8:30:45 am



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# Criticism by Opposition



- Opposition parties have criticised this as “**Hindi imposition**”.
- In the Northeast, organisations such as the Asam Sahitya Sabha and the North East Students’ Organisation have protested against Shah’s statement that the states of the region would make Hindi compulsory up to class 10 in schools.

# India's language politics

- The issue of language has been a long one in Indian history. In 1949, the Constituent Assembly adopted the **Munshi-Ayyangar formula**.
- According to this, **Hindi in the Devnagari script would be the official language of the Union**.
- **English** would continue to be used for all official purposes **for the next 15 years**, to enable a smooth transition for non-Hindi speaking states.
- However, when the issue came up again in 1965, it became a **movement against the imposition of Hindi**. Tamil Nadu saw protests, including strikes, hartals and self-immolations.

- Keeping in mind the protests, the Government of India enacted **Official Language Act in 1963** which provided for continued use of English alongside Hindi indefinitely.
- Since then, the demand for making Hindi the national language has kept cropping up.
- In 1968, a National Policy on Education was adopted, which said that in non-Hindi-speaking states, the language should be taught optionally along with English and the regional language.
- However, in 2019, when the policy was updated, it stated that Hindi should be taught mandatorily in schools in non-Hindi speaking states. The backlash against this was so strong that the Centre had to tweak its policy.



# Major Reason for opposing

- The first reason is that language is a vehicle to protect the culture of that particular place and is protected by the civil society and politicians of the State. If any attempt is taken at diluting the importance of the **Tamil language can be viewed as an attempt at homogenisation of culture.**
- Also, one of the reasons for opposing the Hindi Language is that many in **Tamil Nadu see it as a fight to retain English.** There, the English language is a well-known language of empowerment and knowledge.

# How widely is Hindi spoken in India?

- The 2011 linguistic census accounts for **121 mother tongues**, including 22 languages listed in the 8th Schedule of the Constitution.
- Hindi is the most widely spoken, with **52.8 crore individuals, or 43.6% of the population**, declaring it as their mother tongue.

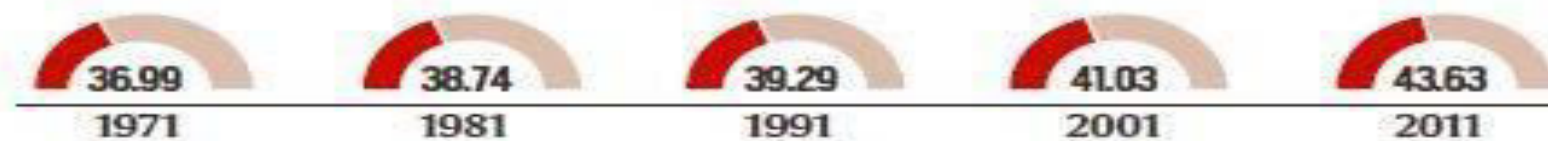




# A giant among 121 languages

**CHART 1**

## GROWTH OF HINDI AS MOTHER TONGUE (% OF POPULATION)



**CHART 2**

## MOTHER TONGUES BY SPEAKERS, 2011

*Minimum 1 cr*

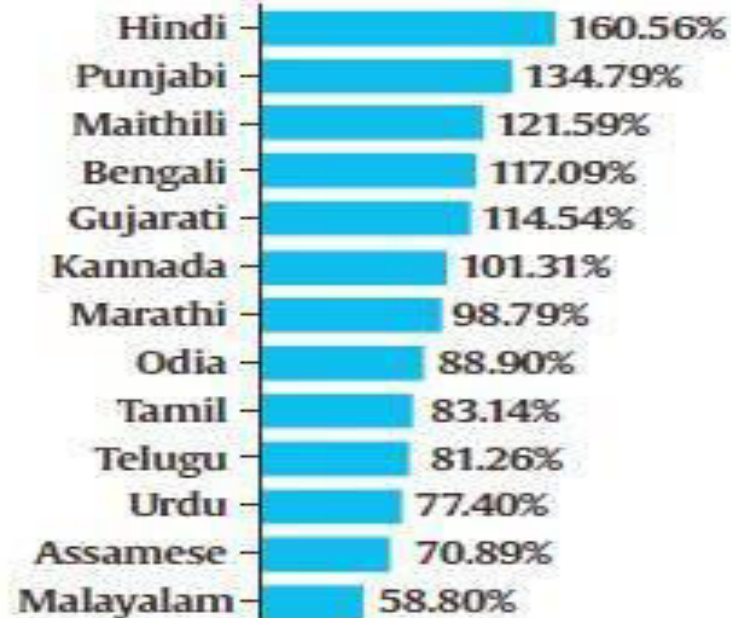
Figures on the right are % of population



**CHART 3**

## GROWTH OF HINDI vs OTHER MOTHER TONGUES, 1971-2011

% growth in number of speakers



Source: Graphs based on Census of India data



# Has it always been this widespread?

- Hindi has been India's predominant mother tongue over the decades, its share in the population rising in every succeeding census.
- In 1971, **37% Indians had reported Hindi as their mother tongue**, a share that has grown over the next four censuses to 38.7%, 39.2%, 41% and 43.6% at last count.



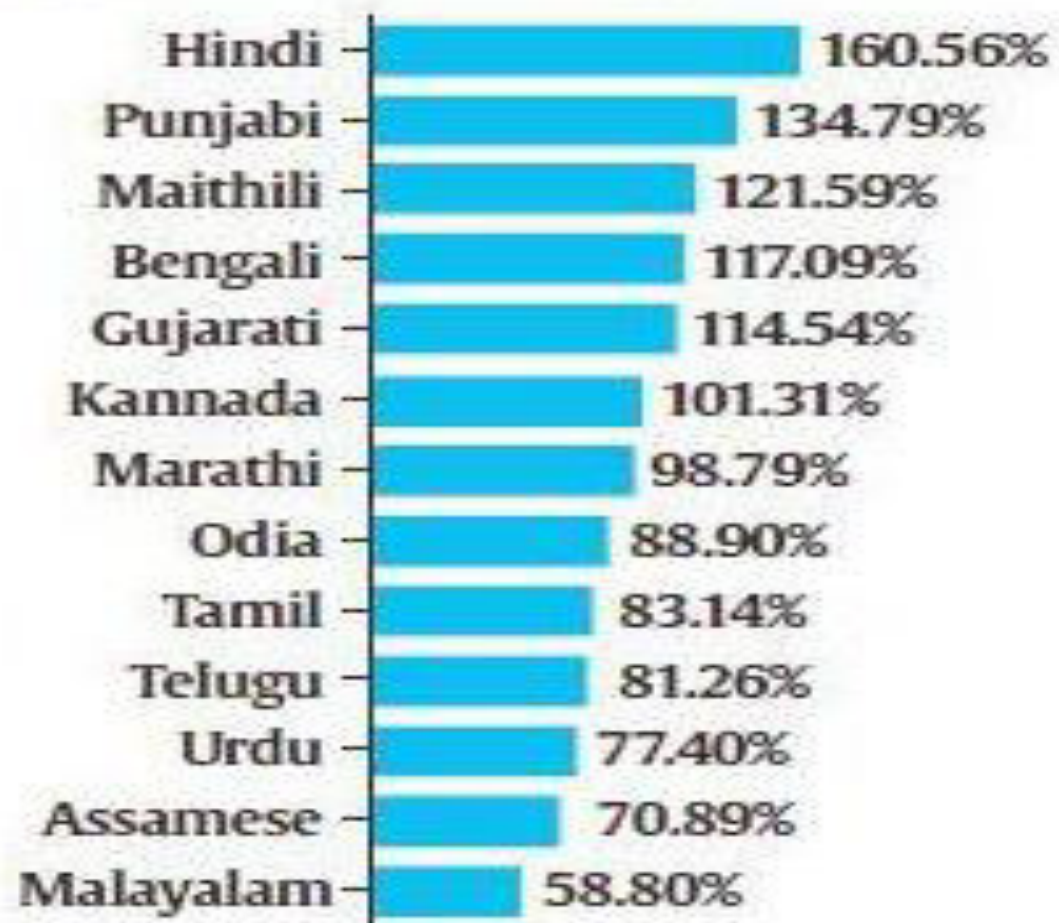
# Decline in Mother Tongues

- A number of mother tongues other than **Hindi have faced a decline in terms of share**, although the dip has been marginal in many cases.
- Bengali's share in the population declined by just 0.14 percentage points from 1971 (8.17%) to 2011 (8.03%).
- In comparison, Malayalam (1.12 percentage points) and Urdu (1.03 points) had higher declines among the mother tongues with at least 1crore speakers in 2011.
- Punjabi's share, on the other hand, rose from 2.57% to 2.74%.

**CHART 3**

## GROWTH OF HINDI vs OTHER MOTHER TONGUES, 1971-2011

% growth in number of speakers



*At the other end of the scale (among the 22 languages listed in the 8th Schedule of the Constitution) were Malayalam, whose numbers rose by under 59% in four decades, and Assamese, rising just over 71%*

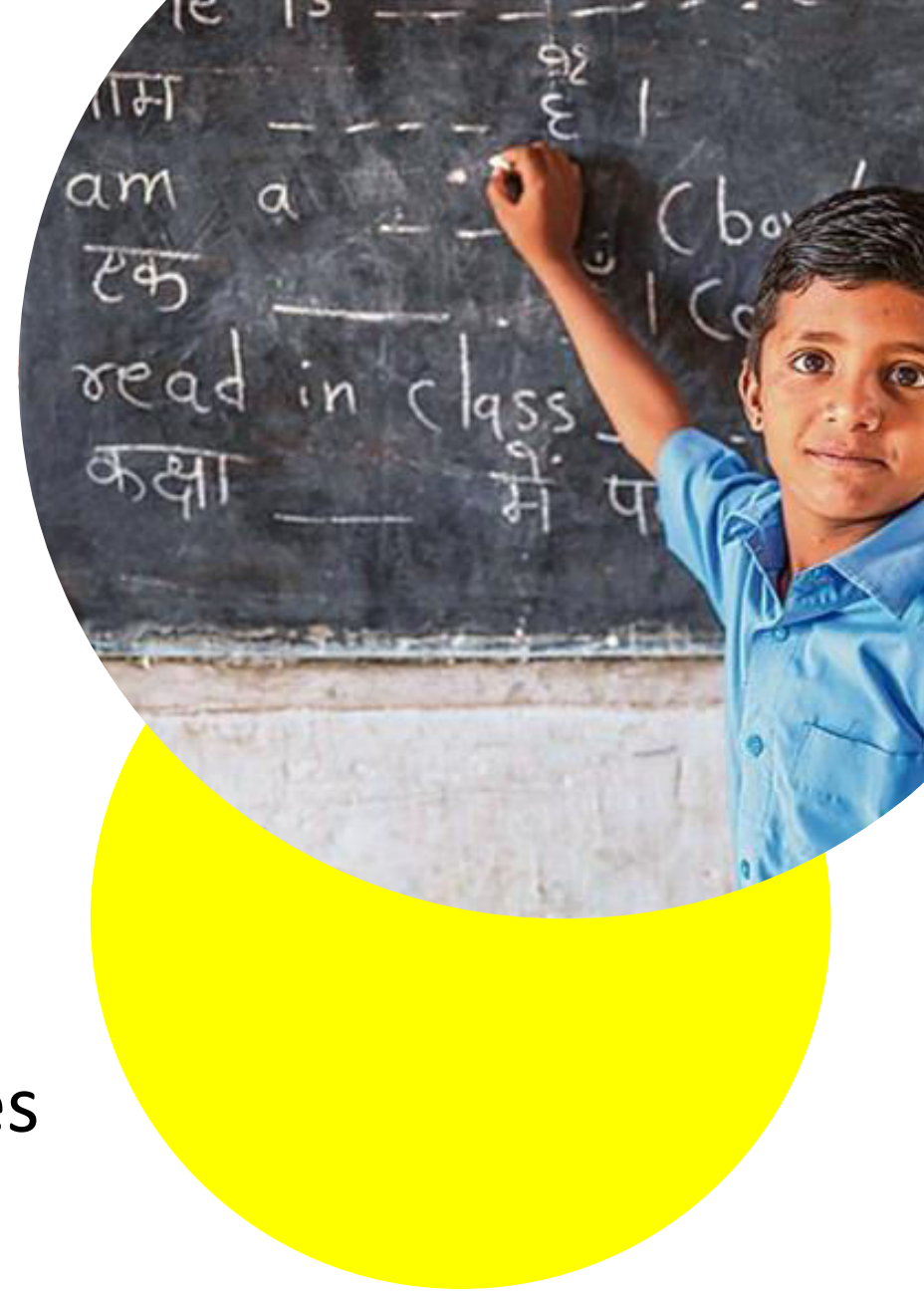
# Reason of Hindi's High Numbers



- Hindi is the **predominant language in some of India's most populous states**, including Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar.
- Another reason is that **a number of languages are bracketed under Hindi** by census enumerators, according to Dr Ganesh Devy, chairman of the People's Linguistic Survey of India, a ongoing project to map the languages of the country.



- In 2011, **there were 1,383 mother tongues** reported by people, and hundreds were knocked out. These mother tongues were then grouped into languages.
- You will find that under Hindi, they have listed nearly **65 mother tongues**. Among them is Bhojpuri, **and 5 crore people have reported Bhojpuri** as their mother tongue, but the census has decided that Bhojpuri is Hindi.
- If one were to knock out the other languages merged with Hindi, the total figure goes down to 38 crore.



# How widely is English spoken?



- Although English, alongside Hindi, is one of the two official languages of the central government, **it is not among the 22 languages** in the 8th Schedule; it is one of the 99 non-scheduled languages.
- In terms of mother tongue, India had just **2.6 lakh English speakers in 2011** — a tiny fraction of the 121 crore people counted in that census.

- That does not reflect the extent to which English is spoken. It was the second language of 8.3 crore respondents in 2011, second only to Hindi's 13.9 crore.
- If third language is added, then English was spoken — as mother tongue, second language or third language — by over 10% of the population in 2011, behind only Hindi's 57%. Bengali was third at about 9%.

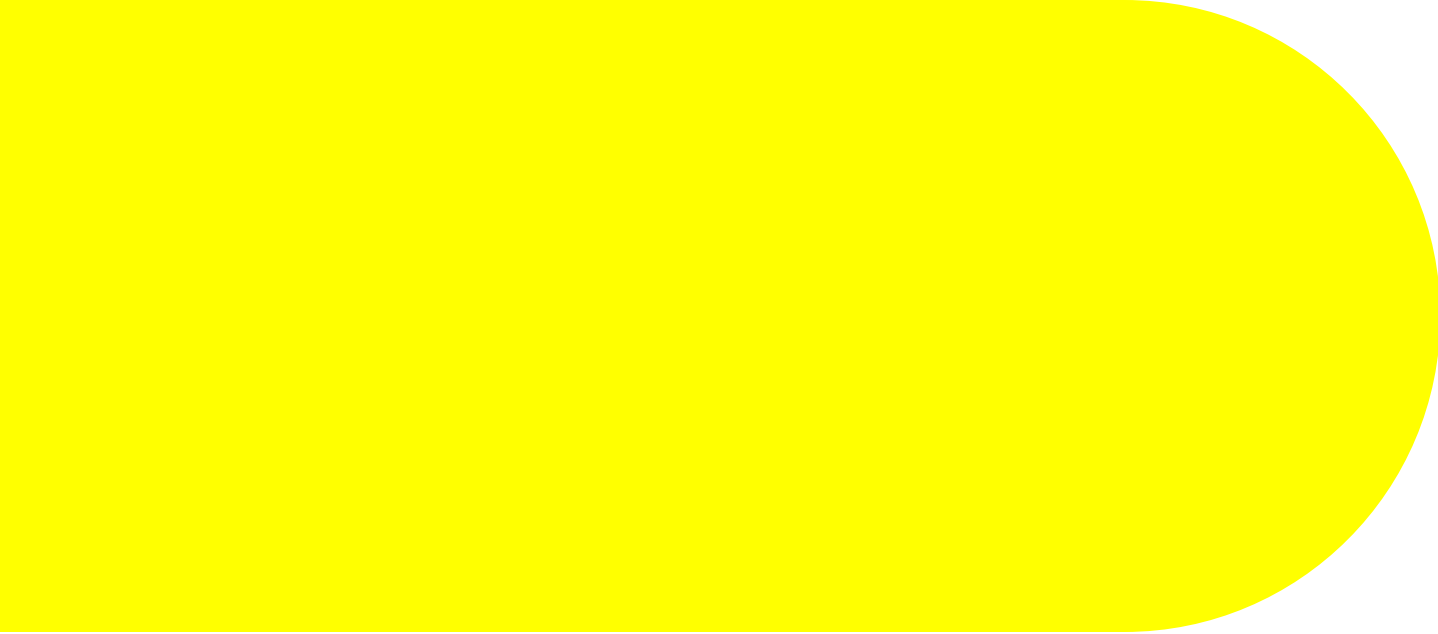


# Where is English most prevalent?



- As mother tongue, Maharashtra accounted for over 1 lakh of the 2.6 lakh English speakers.
- As second language, English is preferred over Hindi in parts of the Northeast.
- Among the 17.6 lakh with Manipuri (an 8th Schedule language) as their mother tongue in 2011, 4.8 lakh declared their second language as English, compared to 1.8 lakh for Hindi.





Among the non-scheduled languages spoken in the Northeast, Khasi, predominant in Meghalaya, was the mother tongue of 14.3 lakh, of whom 2.4 lakh declared their second language as English, and 54,000 as Hindi.

- The trends were similar for Mizo, and for various languages spoken in Nagaland, including **Ao, Angami and Rengma**.
- Beyond the Northeastern languages, among **68 lakh with Kashmiri as their mother tongue**, 2.8 lakh declared their second language as English, compared to 2.2 lakh who declared Hindi.



# What is Three-language Formula?

- It was first incorporated in the National Education Policy in 1968 by the Indira Gandhi government.
- ***In Hindi-speaking states:*** English, Hindi, and a modern Indian language.
- ***In Non-Hindi speaking states:*** English, Hindi, and one Indian language.
- The three-language formula sought to serve three functions namely, accomodating group identity, affirming national unity, and increasing administrative efficiency.





## Question:

The National Song of India, 'Vande Mataram' was composed in \_\_\_\_\_ language.

- a) Urdu
- b) Hindi
- c) Sanskrit
- d) Bengali



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