

# Some superstitions

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In Goa, the issue of medium of instruction mixed with indispensability of English. Strangely, superstitions about superiority of English are cherished by people who flatter themselves as rationalists and realists. Some of them are as follows:

Indian languages are not as developed and as rich as English, French and German. Factually, there are as excellent Dramatists, Essayists, Historians, Jurists, Novelists, Poets, Philosophers and Thinkers in Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Tamil and Telugu as there are in European languages. One resists the temptation of compression between them for want of space. There are dictionaries in Indian languages as sound as Oxford, Chamber's and Webster's. There encyclopaedias are as informative as Encyclopaedia Britannica. Tragically only Konkani lags behind. People of Goa are free to hate Marathi. Hatred of Marathi does not lead to the development enrichment of Konkani. Marathi will be supremely happy if Konkani outshines it in creative excellence. Truly cultured people appreciate creativity regardless of its medium of expression. Hence, branding champions of Indian languages as chauvinists and jingoists and praising champions of foreign languages as rationalists and Universalists is clearly the logic of slaves.

That English is the world language is the worst superstition. Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose repeatedly told Indians that *Superiority Complex* is bad but *Inferiority Complex* is worse. There had never been and there could never be a world language. Happily, world has many beautiful and fine language. Hence, people of world refuse to be the slaves of any one of them.

It is stated that for Indians English is a language for earning their living. If even after forty years of freedom, Indians cannot earn their bread without the help of foreign language, then experiment of Swaraj is yet another miscarriage in the long life of Mother India. A State that compels its citizens to search living beyond its borders should be thoroughly ashamed of itself. But the strength of India's rulers in Swaraj lies in utter shamelessness.

The powers that be are thinking in terms of making Right to work a Fundamental Right. If past is a guide, people of India will get the *Right*, lawyers will get the *Work* and scholars will cite more constitutional cases to parade their *Learning*. In an exploitative society, shadow-boxing is the pastime of parasites on the pay roll of exploiters. Fortunately, the exploited are intelligent enough to know that the game is played at their expense.

If the Governments are truly interested in economic justice, nothing prevents them from making a beginning. The Government of India should immediately discard English as the Official Language. All official business of Government of India should be transacted only in Hindi. Official Business of various State Governments should be only in the language so respective State and in Hindi.

All legislation enacted by Union and State Legislatures should only in Indian Languages. In "Market Economy Democracies", firmness of the Government is first grasped by the Internal and External Businessmen to whom the most important medium is Money. Trade is faithfully followed by Professions and Occupations.

Makers of modern India rightly realized that the best method to teach people grammar of democracy and to educate them in the art of self-government is to conduct administration in the language people know and understand. The makers were betrayed by the rulers of India who have proved to be the masters in the art of blowing-hot and cold in the same breath. They adopted Hindi as national language and continued English for official purposes.

It is claimed that Konkani outlived Portuguese colonialism because of the Roman Script. It is conveniently forgotten that the Roman Catholic Church and missionaries used Roman Script as a policy for the indoctrination of the converted. Despite several attempts from several quarters to strangle it, Konkani lives because it is the language with strong and deep roots in its own soil. Konkani can bloom naturally only in its natural script which is Devnagri. Developing Konkani in Roman Script is like nursing a hothouse plant. It is as absurd as writing English in Devnagri. That Catholics of Goa cannot study in Devnagri script is a purely puerile contention. Catholics, Protestants, Jews and Muslims of Maharashtra write Marathi in Devnagri as fluently and as masterly as the Hindus. So do they in Kannada, Malayalam, Tamil, Telugu, Gujarati and Hindi. Clearly, the source of allergy of Goa's Catholics to Devnagri script must be elsewhere.

People of Goa should carefully reflect on the disastrous consequences of Government of Goa's Medium of Instruction Policy. It is decisively against the vital interests of both Goa and Konkani. The Government have decided to make Konkani a medium of instruction only for first four standards of primary education. Education from fifth standard upwards - secondary, graduate and post-graduate will be entirely in English medium. Consequently, the administration of Goa will be forever in a language which people of Goa do not understand. This will also adversely affect the growth of Konkani.

Wise policy would be to decide the cut-off date for introduction of Konkani as a medium of instruction in the first standard and steps to give those children secondary, graduate and post-graduate education completely in Konkani. Generally, dynamic people never waste their time and energy on searching precedents whilst initiating policies promoting National Interests. If a precedent is necessary, it is provided by Bombay University. The Oxford of East is liberating itself from the slavery of English. Bombay university is moving forward by encouraging even the Ph.D. dissertations on any subject in Marathi language.