



# Opposing imposition

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## Context

- The announcement of the BJP-led government in Maharashtra that English and Marathi medium schools will begin teaching **Hindi as a third language from Class 1**, as **part of the implementation of the National Education Policy 2020**, is running into significant political opposition.
- The imposition of Hindi was contested in many non-Hindi states, especially in the southern state of Tamil Nadu. **Violent protests** broke out in southern India leading the then **Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru**, to introduce the 'Official Languages Act' in 1963, which assured the continuation of English along with Hindi as the official language of the Union of India.

## Constitutional Provisions

- The **Constituent Assembly of India** adopted Hindi written in Devnagari Script along with English as the official language of the country on September 14, 1949, under Article 343(1).
- **Article 351** gives power to the **Union Government** to issue a directive for the development of the Hindi language.
- The Hindi language is **one of the 22 languages of the Eighth Schedule** of the Constitution of India.

## Eighth Schedule

- The Eighth Schedule to the Constitution consists of the following **22 languages**:
  - Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Kashmiri, Konkani, Malayalam, Manipuri, Marathi, Nepali, Oriya, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Sindhi, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu, Bodo, Santhali, Maithili and Dogri.
- Of these languages, **14 were initially** included in the Constitution.
- **Sindhi** language was added by the **21st Amendment Act of 1967**.
- **Konkani, Manipuri, and Nepali** were included by the **71st Amendment Act of 1992**.
- **Bodo, Dogri, Maithili, and Santhali** were added by the **92nd Amendment Act of 2003** which came into force in 2004.

## NEP and Hindi

- NEP 2020 Policy: Requires students to **learn three languages, with at least two being Indian**.
- Changes from Past Policies: Unlike the **NEP 1968, which mandated Hindi, English, and a regional language**, **NEP 2020 allows flexibility in language selection**.

- **Regional Flexibility:** States and students can choose languages, promoting multilingualism while respecting cultural and regional diversity.