Classical Language Status

Maharashtra government has sent a proposal to Ministry of Culture for granting classical language status to Marathi language. As of now, six languages i.e. Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Odia and Sanskrit have been given the status of classical languages.

The criteria adopted for the eligibility of a language for granting classical language status are

   i. High antiquity of its early texts/recorded history over a period of 1500-2000 years;
   ii. A body of ancient literature/texts, which is considered a valuable heritage by generations of speakers;
   iii. The literary tradition be original and not borrowed from another speech community;
   iv. The classical language and literature being distinct from modern, there may also be a discontinuity between the classical language and its later forms or its offshoots.

The benefits include-

   • A one-time grant of Rs 100 crore for research and development of the language.
   • Two major annual international awards for scholars of eminence in the concerned language.
   • Setting up of a 'Centre of Excellence for Studies in Classical Languages' can be set up.
   • The University Grants Commission can be requested to create, to start with at least in Central Universities, a certain number of professional chairs for classical languages, for scholars of eminence in the concerned language.