



Getting the language count right

Posted at: 19/07/2018

Recent Census data appear to inadequately reflect India's linguistic composition, and are inconsistent with global ideas

Highlights

- The death of a tree or a forest sacrificed at the altar of development is mourned but not spoken about. Similarly, the death of a language is literally shrouded in silence.
- Because of its nature, a language is not visible and fails to move anyone except its very last speaker who nurtures an unrequited hope of a response.
- When a language disappears it goes forever, taking with it knowledge gathered over centuries. With it goes a unique world view. This too is a form of violence.
- Large parts of culture get exterminated through slight shifts in policy instruments than through armed conflicts.
- Just as nature's creations do not require a tsunami to destroy them, the destruction of culture can be caused by something as small as a bureaucrat's benign decision.
- The Census, a massive exercise that consumes so much time and energy, needs to see how it can help in a greater inclusion of the marginal communities, how our intangible heritage can be preserved, and how India's linguistic diversity can become an integral part of our national pride.

Source: [The Hindu](#)

