

# Adoption of Hindi: This Day in History – Sep 14

On the 14<sup>th</sup> of September 1949, Hindi was adopted as the official language of the Union of India. This day is celebrated as '**Hindi Diwas**' in India. Language issues are often seen in the news due to their sensitive nature. This is an important part of polity, as well as social issues for the IAS exam.

## Hindi Diwas - Background

- Hindi was adopted as the official language of the Union of India on the 14<sup>th</sup> of September 1949.
- Subsequently, in 1950, Hindi in the Devanagari script was declared as the official language of India.
- The states of India identify their own official languages through the process of legislation. However, English is also considered as the official language of India.
- About 45% of the Indian population speaks in Hindi. In 1950, it was decided that the use of English was to be ended by 26<sup>th</sup> January 1965, 15 years from the date of adoption of the Constitution of India.
- Due to strong opposition to the decision of adopting Hindi as the national language, the constitutional makers accepted all the major languages spoken in India as the "Languages of India".
- Besides, there was a huge resistance from the South Indian states to accept only Hindi as the official language of India. Keeping this concern in mind, the Indian parliament passed the **Official Languages Act in 1963**.
- The act allowed the usage of English along with Hindi, even after 1965.
- Certain states in the North-eastern part of India, like Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland still make use of English as their official language.
- Part 17 of the Indian Constitution has in it, elaborate provisions with respect to the official languages of the Republic of India.
- Article 343 and 344 of the Constitution embody the major provisions dealing with the official languages of the Union of India.
- 8<sup>th</sup> schedule has a list of 22 officially recognized Indian languages. Of these 22 Indian languages, 14 were initially added by the Constitution makers.
- Subsequently, in 1967 Sindhi was added by the 21<sup>st</sup> Amendment Act; Konkani, Manipuri, Nepali were in 1992 by the 71<sup>st</sup> Amendment Act. Bodo, Dogri, Maithili, Santhali in 2003 by 92<sup>nd</sup> Amendment Act.

## Notable events during Hindi Diwas

- Apart from local-level events in schools and other institutions, a few of the notable events include

- The former President of India, Pranab Mukherjee had conferred awards in different categories for the excellence in different fields pertaining to Hindi at a function in Vigyan Bhavan in New Delhi.
- Rajbhasha Awards were conferred upon the Ministries, Departments, PSUs and Nationalised Banks.
- The Ministry of Home Affairs in its order dated 25 March 2015 has changed the name of two awards given annually on Hindi Divas. 'Indira Gandhi Rajbhasha Puraskar' instituted in 1986 changed to 'Rajbhasha Kirti Puraskar' and 'Rajiv Gandhi Rashtriya Gyan-Vigyan Maulik Pustak Lekhan Puraskar' changed to "Rajbhasha Gaurav Puraskar"