

- **Official Language Commission:** As per the Constitutional provisions, an Official Language commission was set up in 1955. It recommended that Hindi should start progressively replacing English in various functions of the Central government.
- **Resentment against the report:** However, two members of the commission, one each from Tamil Nadu and West Bengal dissented with the report.
- The Joint Parliamentary Commission reviewed the report of the commission.
- **President issued an order in 1960,** stating that after 1965 Hindi would be the principal official language but English would also continue as associate official language without any restriction.
- **Increased demonstrations** were witnessed especially in south India against making of Hindi as the sole official language, as it was seen as discriminating against the non-Hindi speakers.
- **Assurance from Nehru:** Nehru, in 1959, in order to remove their fears assured in the Parliament that English would continue as the official language as the people required.
- **Official Languages Act:** To this effect, Official Languages Act, 1963 was passed to remove restrictions which had been placed in the Constitution regarding the use of English as the official language beyond 1965.
- Further in 1967, Indira Gandhi government amended the Official Languages Act of 1963.
- The main objective of the amendment was that indefinite bilingualism was adopted.

In the years to come, the issue of language remained non-relevant except on occasions when three language formula were proposed in the education policy.

### LINGUISTIC REORGANIZATION OF STATES

The boundaries in pre-independent India were drawn in a haphazard manner serving the imperial needs of the Britishers. The case of reorganizing the states on linguistic basis came to the forefront immediately after independence.

#### Benefits of aligning administrative units on linguistic lines

- **Close affinity of language with culture:** Language is closely related to culture and customs of people. Growth of mass literacy and education can be achieved only through mother tongue.
- **Ease of administration:** When administration and politics is conducted in the language of the people, democracy in true sense is achieved.
- **Development of provincial language:** Gandhiji encouraged people to behave as Indians but at the same time said that provincial languages can develop to their fullest only when reorganization takes place on linguistic basis.

Due to these reasons, political mobilization of the masses by the Congress was done in regional languages. In 1921, Congress amended its Constitution and reorganized its regional branches on linguistic basis.

#### Why the national leadership was averse to linguistic reorganization in the initial years after independence?

- **National Unity as foremost priority:** The most important task after independence, according to the national leaders was consolidation of national unity.
- **Problems associated with linguistic reorganization:** Partition resulted into serious administrative, economic and political problems, the linguistic reorganization probably could have resulted into further economic and law and order problems.
- **Intensified regional rivalries:** Redrawing of boundaries could have intensified linguistic and regional rivalries and thus damage the unity of the country.
- **The Dhar Commission** appointed in 1948 to look into the feasibility of linguistic provinces, **suggested against such measures** as it might threaten national unity.