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தினம் ஒரு குறள்

குறள் எண் **338**

நிலையாமை

குடம்பை தனித்துஒழியப் புள்பறந் தற்றே
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உடம்போடு உயிர்க்கு உள்ள உறவு, தான் இருந்த கூடு தனியே இருக்க அதை விட்டு வேறிடத்திற்குப் பறவை பறந்தாற் போன்றது.

— மு. வரதராசன்

Big Tech's contempt for Indian public health

Dinesh S. Thakur

is the author of 'The Truth Pill: The Myth of Drug Regulation in India' (Simon & Schuster)

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Since 1927, when the topic of drug regulation was first discussed in the Council of State after Sir Haroon Jaffer sought a resolution regarding the "control of the craze for medicinal drugs", the issue of advertisements of drugs claiming to have a therapeutic effect on humans has been a serious public health concern.

It took 27 years before India tackled the issue through the Drugs and Magic Remedies (Objectionable Advertisements) Act (DMRA), 1954. This law prohibits any advertisements of any drugs, whether approved or not by the regulator, for a list of 54 medical conditions. For example, the law prohibits the advertisement of any drug for the treatment of diabetes, regardless of whether its efficacy has been clinically established.

The advent of Internet-based advertising

A lot has changed since 1954, especially in the world of advertisement. The Internet and the rise of Big Tech platforms, in the nature of search engines, social media platforms, video-sharing platforms and online marketplaces for goods, have steadily eaten into the traditional avenues of advertising in print and broadcast formats. This shift has not only upended print journalism across the world which was reliant on advertisements, but also made it far tougher for governments across the world to police advertisements published on these Big Tech platforms headquartered in the United States.

In a deep dive on the advertising policies and practices of the most popular American Big Tech platforms in India, we were astonished to note that not a single one of them warns advertisers not to submit for publication, advertisements which are in violation of the DMRA. Thus, it is no surprise that all Big Tech platforms routinely publish a wide variety of misleading advertisements, especially for ayurvedic and homeopathic products. For example, a simple search for "ayurveda" + "blood pressure tablets" or "homeopathy" + "diabetes" on the most popular search engine and online market place in India will throw up a variety of advertisements on these platforms under the "sponsored" tag, indicating that they have been paid for by advertisers.

One of the most popular social media platforms features video advertisements by a notorious godman with the claim of being able to cure all kinds of diseases using ayurvedic products.

Similarly, a search of the online ad-libraries of these Big Tech platforms reveals a long list of offending advertisements, including those for cow-urine based products to treat cancers; these advertisements were supported by a charitable programme run by the Big Tech platform. All these advertisements are in violation of the DMRA.

None of these Big Tech platforms runs similar advertisements in the United States for ayurvedic and homeopathic products. The policies of these platforms for advertisements for health-related products to be displayed to users based in the U.S. are elaborate, with some even having pre-screening mechanisms that are meant to ensure compliance with tough American laws; these laws prohibit advertisements for therapeutic claims that are not approved by the drug regulator. In the U.S., violation of American law can attract swift criminal prosecution.

The rise in misleading advertisements by popular platforms is also linked to the immunity that Big Tech enjoys in India

Disregard for Indian law

So, what explains Big Tech's brazen disregard of Indian laws such as the DMRA?

The first reason could be the traditional contempt that American corporations, dating back to Union Carbide, have shown for the lives of Indians. It is possible that this contempt arises from systemic racism that afflicts the management of American corporations, wherein Indian lives are not considered to be comparable to American lives.

The second is that Big Tech has escaped serious punishment earlier for violation of another law called The Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Prohibition of Sex Selection) Act, 1994 (PNDT). This law prevents advertisements for products and services related to determination of the sex of the unborn foetus. A PIL was filed in 2008 by an activist before the Supreme Court of India pointing out how Big Tech platforms were in brazen violation of this law. Before the Court, Big Tech was evasive on the point of instituting proactive measures to block such advertisements, insisting that it was under an obligation to remove offending advertisements only if government or others informed them about such violations. To make a long story short, Big Tech fell back into a familiar pattern of deception, by claiming that it was the "intermediary" not the "publisher".

Under Indian law, intermediaries have qualified immunity from legal liability for content generated by their users because they are presumed to lack knowledge of each piece of content that is posted by users. But when it comes to advertisements, Big Tech knows very well that it is the "publisher" and not the "intermediary". The marketing teams of Big Tech on the ground in India actively pitch for advertisements, sign contracts with advertisers and accept payments for the purpose of displaying the advertisement on their platform. They have complete knowledge about these advertisements; hence, they are publishers and not mere intermediaries who can claim immunity under the law.

The PIL regarding the violation of the PNDT languished for nine years before ending with the usual insipid orders for the creation of a government committee to look into the issue. Criminal prosecution was never ordered by the Court despite being the prescribed punishment under the PNDT Act. The abject failure of the Court to enforce the law by ordering criminal prosecutions, and the process which frustrates litigants who represent public interest in such cases undoubtedly emboldened Big Tech's sense of impunity in India.

The third reason is that Big Tech is aware that the U.S. government would never extradite top managerial personnel from America to face criminal prosecution in India for violating the DMRA. Big Tech's employees running Indian subsidiaries located on Indian territory cannot be prosecuted because the Indian subsidiary is a different legal entity from its parent company located in the U.S., which legally owns and operates the advertising platforms in India. Undoubtedly, this implicit immunity is what fuels Big Tech's bad behaviour in India.

The need for reforms

Tackling Big Tech's dangerous violations of the DMRA should be an urgent priority in a country such as India which self-prescribes medicines and has an inherent bias toward "nationalist" tropes.

Registering criminal complaints before courts of competent jurisdiction against the management of these platforms would be a good first step. If Big Tech declines to produce its competent managerial personnel before an Indian court to face these charges, the government will be compelled to ensure reforms that will make Big Tech answerable to Indian sovereignty.

It is perhaps time for India to take a page from the new American playbook to regulate Tik Tok and create new regulatory mechanisms. This is to ensure that the managerial personnel responsible for creating and enforcing content and advertising related policies in India are Indian citizens who are based in Indian territory and answerable to Indian courts. Anything short of the threat of jail time for key managerial personnel will fail to ensure that Big Tech's complies with Indian law.

Further, a failure of Big Tech to comply with these legal requirements should result in a revocation of the immunity granted to Big Tech under Indian intermediary laws from legal action for user-generated content. Big Tech cannot be allowed to enjoy these benefits under Indian law if it does not enforce relevant Indian laws to protect public health in India.

Topic

Big Tech and Drug Advertisement Violations in India

Source

The Hindu Editorial – 28th October 2025

Relevance

- GS Paper 2 – Governance, Role of Big Tech, Regulation, Public Health Policy
- GS Paper 3 – Science & Technology, Cyber Governance

Linked Topics

- Drugs and Magic Remedies (Objectionable Advertisements) Act, 1954
- Intermediary Liability Rules (IT Act, 2000)
- Public Health & Misleading Advertising
- Regulation of Big Tech Platforms in India

Context

Big Tech platforms (search engines, social media, e-commerce) are routinely publishing **misleading drug advertisements** that violate the **Drugs and Magic Remedies (Objectionable Advertisements) Act, 1954 (DMRA)**, particularly for ayurvedic and homeopathic products claiming therapeutic cures. Despite strict rules, enforcement remains weak in India.

Curiosity Question

Why are Big Tech platforms more compliant with U.S. laws than Indian laws — even while operating within India's jurisdiction?

Analytical Overview

- **Historical Background:** Since 1927, drug advertisements have been debated; DMRA was passed in 1954 to prohibit promotion of drugs claiming cures for 54 diseases.

- **Digital Shift:** Rise of online advertising has outpaced India's regulatory capacity.
- **Violation Patterns:** Misleading ads for "miracle cures" for diabetes, cancer, and hypertension flood Indian search and social platforms.
- **Legal Loopholes:** Big Tech misuses the "intermediary" shield despite acting as **publishers** who approve and profit from ads.
- **Judicial Inefficiency:** Supreme Court PILs (e.g., against violations of PNDT Act) ended with weak enforcement.
- **Double Standards:** Same platforms follow stricter U.S. ad laws but flout Indian ones, exploiting enforcement gaps and jurisdiction issues.

Constitutional / Policy Linkages

- **Article 21:** Right to health and protection from deceptive practices.
- **Article 19(2):** Reasonable restrictions on freedom of expression in public interest.
- **Consumer Protection Act, 2019:** Prohibits misleading advertisements.
- **Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines) Rules, 2021:** Mandates accountability for content.

Way Forward / Recommendations

- **Criminal prosecution** of Big Tech's Indian management for DMRA violations.
- **Mandatory localisation** of key managerial personnel in India — answerable to Indian courts.
- **Withdrawal of intermediary immunity** for non-compliance.
- **Stronger digital ad screening** and coordination between health regulators and MeitY.
- **Public awareness** on self-medication and misleading claims.

Prelims Pointers

- **DMRA Act, 1954:** Prohibits advertisements for drugs claiming cures for 54 listed diseases.

- **Intermediary:** Entity hosting user-generated content; enjoys limited liability under IT Act.
- **Publisher:** Entity that controls or profits from content — not immune under law.
- **PNDT Act, 1994:** Prohibits sex-selection ads; past violation case involving Big Tech.

Mains Keywords

Drug Regulation • Misleading Advertisement • Big Tech Accountability • Intermediary Liability • Public Health • Regulatory Reform • Digital Sovereignty

Mains Practice Question

"Big Tech's control over digital advertising has outpaced India's regulatory framework." Examine the challenges posed by online advertisements in enforcing the Drugs and Magic Remedies (Objectionable Advertisements) Act, 1954, and suggest policy reforms.

Dimensions:

- Legal Loopholes
- Role of Judiciary
- Digital Advertising Ecosystem
- Global vs Local Accountability
- Policy Reforms

One Line Takeaway

Big Tech's disregard for India's public health laws reveals the urgent need for stronger digital sovereignty and enforcement reforms.

UPSC PYQ

(2019, GS 2): "Discuss the role of non-state actors in governance and the challenges they pose to accountability in India."

A start for North-South carbon market cooperation

On September 17, 2025, the European Union (EU) and India set out a new comprehensive strategic agenda in their joint communication. Called the New Strategic EU-India Agenda, it primarily addresses five pillars on which their partnership will be enhanced: prosperity and sustainability; technology and innovation; security and defence; connectivity and global issues, and enablers across pillars. Buried in the section on clean transition is a critical line that the EU will link the Indian Carbon Market (ICM) with the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM).

In plain terms, carbon prices paid in India will be deducted from CBAM levies at the EU border. This is a breakthrough. It could prevent Indian exporters from being penalised twice and reward early decarbonisation. However, major barriers still plague its operationalisation. Unless addressed, they will stall this integration before it delivers real gains.

Shashank Pandey

is a lawyer and researcher working on environmental law and climate finance

The linking of the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism with the Indian carbon market is significant but there are hurdles to cross

Underdeveloped Indian carbon market

India's Carbon Credit Trading Scheme (CCTS), commonly referred to as ICM, is still an evolving architecture. Unlike the EU Emissions Trading System (ETS), which has a two decade record of robust auction structure, cap-setting processes, and independent verification, India's scheme is built on fragmented foundations. Current credits are often based on intensity improvements or project-based offsets, not absolute caps on emissions, wherein the ICM is moving. The CBAM, however, requires a tonne-for-tonne accounting of embedded carbon in goods. Without legally binding caps and strong penalties for non-compliance, EU regulators will treat Indian credits as second class.

There is also no current institutional equivalent in India to the EU's independent regulators or emissions registries that guarantee market integrity. In effect, the EU cannot "deduct" Indian carbon prices unless it is confident that the underlying system delivers environmental integrity. Bridging this institutional gap is not a technical fix. It requires a structural redesign of the ICM to mirror the compliance-grade features of the EU's ETS. Imagining this substantive pivot within the Indian our bureaucratic understanding and operation anytime soon is challenging.

CBAM also relies on a clear and stringent carbon price. In the EU's ETS, the price floats around €60 to €80 a tonne. In India, initial carbon credit prices hover in the range of €5 and €10. Unless the carbon price is comparable and enforced across covered sectors, European regulators will not deduct much, if anything, at the border.

Worse, exporters may end up facing both the Indian compliance cost and the EU's full CBAM levy. This creates political risk inside India, where industries may resist a "double burden" and they could lobby to water down India's scheme, i.e., compliance parameters under ICM. Bridging the price gap requires either targeted sectoral carbon contracts or a negotiated floor price that aligns with CBAM expectations. Both are politically difficult options to negotiate.

Fundamental nature of CBAM

Even if technical and price issues are solved, CBAM remains controversial. India and other developing countries have consistently opposed it at the WTO and international dialogues as being a unilateral and protectionist measure. Agreeing to a linkage between India's carbon market and CBAM, therefore, creates a political contradiction that India would be legitimising a mechanism it has formally resisted.

This tension will resurface in disputes. For instance, if the EU deems India's carbon price to be "insufficient" and refuses full deductions, exporters will cry foul, and New Delhi will be forced to escalate the issue politically or legally. There is also a sovereignty issue because carbon pricing is a domestic policy tool, but CBAM effectively gives Brussels a say in whether India's measures are "good enough". For a country that guards its policy space, this could become a red line. Beyond trade law, there is a strategic risk wherein CBAM deductions will work only if India maintains a steady, transparent carbon market. Any domestic political backtracking, for example, rolling back compliance under industry pressure, would immediately expose exporters to full CBAM costs, destabilising trade flows. In short, the linkage is hostage not only to WTO legalities but also to domestic political economy and EU-India trust.

Looking at optimistic resolutions

The Indian carbon market and CBAM linkage is one of the most significant agreements under the strategy agenda by the two big global economies. If it works, it shields Indian exporters, accelerates industrial decarbonisation, and creates a model for North-South carbon market cooperation. But weak domestic architecture, misaligned carbon prices, and political contradictions may sink it. There is an underlying case to be made for more comprehensive collaboration. India can strengthen its market design, and the EU can offer clarity and technical support for a smooth transition. Otherwise, this "breakthrough" will remain on paper, while Indian exporters continue to pay at the border.

Topic

EU–India Carbon Market Linkage under the New Strategic Agenda (2025)

Source

The Hindu Editorial – 28th October 2025

Relevance

- **GS Paper 2:** International Relations — India–EU relations
- **GS Paper 3:** Environment, Climate Change, Carbon Markets, Sustainable Development

Linked Topics

- Indian Carbon Market (ICM) / Carbon Credit Trading Scheme (CCTS)
- EU Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM)
- EU Emissions Trading System (ETS)
- WTO & Trade-Environment Nexus
- Sustainable Industrial Policy

Context

India and the European Union (EU) announced a **New Strategic EU–India Agenda (2025)** on **September 17, 2025**, establishing cooperation across **five pillars** — Prosperity & Sustainability, Technology & Innovation, Security & Defence, Connectivity & Global Issues, and Enablers across pillars.
A major development is the **linking of India's Carbon Market (ICM)** with the **EU's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM)** — allowing carbon prices paid in India to be **deducted from CBAM levies** imposed at EU borders.

Curiosity Question

How can linking India's carbon market with the EU's CBAM both protect exporters and potentially limit India's policy sovereignty?

Analytical Overview

Opportunity — The Breakthrough

- Indian exporters will not face **double carbon penalties** — carbon paid domestically will reduce the CBAM levy at the EU border.
- Encourages **early decarbonisation** and **industrial competitiveness**.
- Symbolises **North–South cooperation** in climate-linked trade.

Challenges — Why It's Difficult

a. Weak Indian Carbon Market:

- India's **CCTS** is still evolving; based on **intensity improvements** and **project-based offsets**, not **absolute emission caps** like the EU's ETS.
- Lacks strong **verification mechanisms**, **auction systems**, and **independent regulators**.

b. Price Gap:

- EU carbon price: €60–€80/tonne
- Indian carbon price: €5–€10/tonne
- Without parity, **deduction at EU border will be minimal**, leaving exporters to bear double costs.

c. Institutional Mismatch:

- EU has independent emission registries and regulators ensuring environmental integrity.
- India lacks such compliance-grade systems, making EU recognition difficult.

d. Political Contradiction:

- India has opposed CBAM at the **WTO** as a **protectionist and unilateral** measure.
- Linking ICM to CBAM indirectly legitimises what India earlier criticised.

e. Sovereignty Concerns:

- EU may judge India's carbon pricing adequacy.
- Could pressure India to maintain policies favourable to EU expectations, challenging domestic policy autonomy.

Constitutional / Policy Linkages

- **Paris Agreement (2015):** Article 6 — voluntary carbon market cooperation.
- **National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC):** promotes low-carbon transition.
- **Perform, Achieve and Trade (PAT) Scheme:** precursor to India's CCTS.
- **WTO Law:** Disputes possible under "Most Favoured Nation" and "Non-Discrimination" principles.

Way Forward / Recommendations

- **Strengthen ICM architecture:** introduce binding emission caps, robust monitoring & verification.
- **Establish an independent carbon regulator** with transparent registries.
- **Align carbon prices** through phased floor pricing and sectoral carbon contracts.
- **Negotiate a formal CBAM–ICM deduction mechanism** under WTO-compatible frameworks.
- **Build domestic consensus** to prevent industry pushback and policy reversal.
- **EU technical & financial support** for India's market design and decarbonisation roadmap.

Prelims Pointers

- **CBAM:** EU mechanism imposing carbon price on imports to prevent "carbon leakage".
- **CCTS (ICM):** India's domestic carbon trading framework for emissions reduction.
- **EU ETS:** World's largest carbon market — cap-and-trade system with over two decades of implementation.
- **Carbon Leakage:** Shifting of emissions-intensive production to countries with lax climate rules.
- **Carbon Credit:** Tradable certificate representing one tonne of CO_2 (or equivalent) reduced/removed.

Mains Keywords

Carbon Market • CBAM • Climate Diplomacy • Trade–Environment Nexus • Carbon Pricing • Decarbonisation • Green Industrial Policy

Mains Practice Question

"The proposed linkage between India's Carbon Market and the EU's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism represents both an opportunity and a strategic risk." Examine.

Dimensions:

- Economic and trade implications
- Institutional and pricing challenges
- Sovereignty and policy autonomy
- WTO and global governance aspects
- Future of climate cooperation

One Line Takeaway

The EU–India carbon market linkage is a bold climate-trade experiment — but its success depends on India's ability to build a credible, compliance-grade carbon pricing system.

UPSC PYQs - Prelims

Which one of the following statements best the term 'Social Cost of Carbon'? (2020)

It is a measure, in monetary value, of the -

(a) long-term damage done by a tonne of CO_2 emissions in a given year.

(b) requirement of fossil fuels for a country to provide goods and services to its citizens, based on the burning of those fuels.

(c) efforts put in by a climate refugee to adapt to live in a new place.

(d) contribution of an individual person to the carbon footprint on the planet Earth.

Ans: (a)

Regarding "carbon credits", which one of the following statements is not correct? (2011)

(a) The carbon credit system was ratified in conjunction with the Kyoto Protocol

(b) Carbon credits are awarded to countries or groups that have reduced greenhouse gases below their emission quota

(c) The goal of the carbon credit system is to limit the increase of carbon dioxide emission

(d) Carbon credits are traded at a price fixed from time to time by the United Nations Environment Programme.

Ans: (d)

Consider the following statements: (2023)

Statement-I: Carbon markets are likely to be one of the most widespread tools in the fight against climate change.

Statement-II: Carbon markets transfer resources from the private sector to the State.

Which one of the following is correct in respect of the above statements?

(a) Both Statement-I and Statement-II are correct and Statement-II is the correct explanation for Statement-I

(b Both Statement-I and Statement-II are correct and Statement-II is not the correct explanation for Statement-I

(c) Statement-I is correct but Statement-II is incorrect

(d) Statement-I is incorrect but Statement-II is correct

Ans: (b)

Mains

Should the pursuit of carbon credits and clean development mechanisms set up under UNFCCC be maintained even though there has been a massive slide in the value of a carbon credit? Discuss with respect to India's energy needs for economic growth. (2014)

Is the Dogri language losing resonance in India?

Is the Dogri language declining at the same rate across rural and urban landscapes in the Jammu region?

Rohan Qurashi
Heena Chaudhary

The story so far:

Human society is rapidly moving towards the extinction of its linguistic heritage. According to one report by UNESCO, India has topped the list of countries with the maximum number of dialects on the verge of extinction. According to D.G Rao, former Director of the Central Institute of Languages, India has lost over 220 languages in the last 50 years.

Is Dogri in decline?

In recent years, growing concern has emerged over the gradual decline of the Dogri language in the Jammu region. Globalisation, migration, and the pursuit of economic opportunity often encourage speakers to prioritise widely used languages, while regional ones fade into disuse. Political choices and a lack of active interest among native speakers further deepen this crisis. Against this backdrop, Dogri finds itself at a crossroads. Although the J&K Official Languages Bill, 2020 gave it the long-overdue recognition as one of the Union Territory's five official languages, its status on paper has not translated into meaningful presence on the ground. Unlike other regional languages that have secured space in school curricula or administrative use, Dogri remains largely absent from formal education.

Why is Dogri not being spoken?

The decline of Dogri in the Jammu region can be looked at through three critical lenses – government policy, generational perspectives, and the rural-urban divide.

One of the central reasons for the decline of Dogri lies in the absence of sustained government support. Unlike Urdu, Kashmiri, and Hindi, Dogri had to wait until 2003 for constitutional recognition. This long delay meant that by the time Dogri gained official status, it had already fallen behind in terms of institutional backing and visibility. A survey conducted by the authors further underscores this policy gap. The research employed a random sampling method, selecting households at intervals of three to four units to ensure representativeness. The sample was distributed across 20 different locations in the Jammu region; 130 people filled the survey form completely.

Nearly half of the respondents (48%) from the Jammu region believe that the government has failed to provide adequate policy support for Dogri. Another 43.2% felt that the language offers little relevance for employment prospects or career advancement. Additionally, the survey revealed a stark generational divide in Dogri proficiency. The oldest respondents, those aged 60 and above, displayed the strongest connection to the language, with full proficiency in speaking and an intermediate score in reading and writing. However, among respondents aged 41-60, writing proficiency dropped sharply to just 0.25%, reflecting the gradual erosion of literacy in the language. Respondents under 20 years of age show 0% proficiency in reading and writing Dogri.

The survey also revealed a striking contrast between rural and urban populations in terms of Dogri language usage. Approximately 56% of respondents from rural areas actively speak Dogri, with around 15% demonstrating the ability to write it. In contrast, among urban respondents, only 45% reported speaking Dogri, and only 4% had any proficiency in writing it.

What is the way ahead?

To address India's linguistic crisis, two challenges must be addressed. First is technical – with the 2021 Census on hold, one lacks updated data on how many languages are endangered, and where urgent intervention is needed. Without this knowledge, both awareness and policy remain adrift. Secondly, one must shed the mindset that equates English alone with progress. The decolonisation of linguistics is the larger task at hand.

Rohan Qurashi is a research student at St. Stephen's College, Delhi. Heena Chaudhary is a Phd scholar.

THE GIST

- Globalisation, migration, and the pursuit of economic opportunity often encourage speakers to prioritise widely used languages, while regional ones fade into disuse.
- The decline of Dogri in the Jammu region can be looked at through three critical lenses — government policy, generational perspectives, and the rural-urban divide.
- The survey also revealed a striking contrast between rural and urban populations in terms of Dogri language usage.

Topic:

Decline of Dogri Language in Jammu Region

Source:

The Hindu – "Dogri's silent decline in Jammu"

Relevance:

GS Paper 1 – Indian Society (Diversity of India, Regional Languages);

GS Paper 2 – Governance (Policy for Minorities and Cultural Preservation);

Essay & Ethics – Cultural identity and linguistic diversity

Linked Topics:

- Endangered Languages in India
- Constitutional Protection for Regional Languages
- UNESCO Atlas of World's Languages in Danger
- J&K Official Languages Bill, 2020
- Globalisation and Cultural Homogenisation

Context:

India is witnessing rapid erosion of linguistic diversity. UNESCO reports India has lost over **220 languages in the last 50 years**. Dogri, despite being recognised as one of Jammu & Kashmir's official languages, is gradually fading from everyday use and education systems due to lack of policy support and generational disconnect.

Curiosity Question:

Why does Dogri continue to decline even after receiving official status in Jammu and Kashmir?

Analytical Overview:

- **Policy Gap:** Dogri received constitutional recognition only in 2003 and official status in J&K in 2020. Delayed institutional support has weakened its spread.
- **Generational Disconnect:** Older speakers (60+) have fluency, but literacy among youth (<20) is almost zero.
- **Rural-Urban Divide:** 56% of rural vs. 45% of urban respondents speak Dogri; writing ability is even lower in both groups.
- **Socioeconomic Factors:** Perception that Dogri offers limited career relevance; English/Hindi preferred for upward mobility.
- **Cultural Impact:** The weakening of regional languages undermines local identity and intergenerational heritage transfer.

Constitutional / Policy Linkages:

- **Article 29 & 30:** Protection of cultural and linguistic rights of minorities.
- **Article 343–351:** Language provisions, especially Article 351 (promotion of Hindi and other languages).
- **Eighth Schedule:** Dogri added through the 92nd Amendment Act (2003).
- **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020:** Promotes use of mother tongue/regional language as medium of instruction till Grade 5.

- **J&K Official Languages Act, 2020:** Recognised Dogri as one of five official languages of the UT.

Way Forward / Recommendations:

- **Institutional Support:** Integrate Dogri into school curricula and administrative use.
- **Digital Promotion:** Encourage Dogri content in media, social platforms, and digital archives.
- **Incentivise Learning:** Scholarships, competitive exam options, and publishing in Dogri.
- **Community Initiatives:** Cultural festivals and intergenerational language clubs.
- **Census Inclusion:** Update endangered language data for evidence-based policy action.

Prelims Pointers:

- Dogri belongs to the **Indo-Aryan family** of languages.
- Included in **Eighth Schedule** in **2003** (92nd Amendment).
- One of **five official languages** of Jammu & Kashmir (along with Kashmiri, Urdu, Hindi, English).
- **UNESCO report:** India lost ~220 languages in 50 years.

Mains Keywords:

Linguistic diversity, cultural erosion, regional identity, language policy, Dogri, NEP 2020, constitutional protection, decolonisation of linguistics

Mains Practice Question (with Dimensions):

Despite constitutional and statutory recognition, many Indian regional languages like Dogri face a risk of extinction. Analyse the reasons and suggest a multi-level strategy to preserve linguistic diversity.

Dimensions:

- Historical neglect and delayed recognition
- Educational policy & medium of instruction
- Economic incentives and employability
- Role of digital media and globalisation
- Constitutional & community-level interventions

One Line Takeaway:

Official recognition alone cannot preserve languages — sustained institutional, societal, and cultural efforts are essential to prevent India's linguistic extinction.

People running from pillar to post over 'digital arrests': SC

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday orally mooted tasking the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) with probing the menace of "digital arrests" orchestrated by fraudsters posing as judges and police officers using forged documents.

Appearing before a Bench of Justices Surya Kant and Joymalya Bagchi, Attorney-General R. Venkataramani said the cybercrimes originated from across the border, and were fashioned by "money-laundering gangs".

'Scam compounds'

The organised cybercrimes were generated from "scam compounds" at a large-scale level, Solicitor-General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre, submitted. "People are running from pillar to post. Digital arrests are happening in several States... Considering the magnitude and nature of the crime, we want to give the FIRs (first information reports) to a Central agency like the CBI," Justice Kant remarked at the start of the hearing.

Top court asks if the CBI has the resources to investigate a huge volume of cybercrime cases. PTI

The top court had originally taken *suo motu* cognisance of a case of the digital arrest of a senior citizen couple in Haryana's Ambala on the basis of forged orders of the court and probe agencies by fraudsters to extort ₹1.05 crore.

However, during the course of the hearing, the court was informed that there were numerous cases across the country in which innocent people, especially senior citizens, had been threatened with "cyber arrests" by criminals who misused artificial intelligence and other advanced technology to morph courtrooms and police stations, unless their victims coughed up huge sums of money.

Justice Bagchi asked if the CBI had the human and technological resources to investigate such a huge volume of cybercrime cases. The CBI had approached the top court in the past for permission to offload Ponzi cases on State authorities, unable to deal with the pressure of the volume of the cases, he said.

The court scheduled the case for November 3.

Topic:

Supreme Court Moots CBI Probe into “Digital Arrest” Cybercrime Scams

Source:

The Hindu – “Supreme Court moots CBI probe into ‘digital arrests’ by cyber fraudsters”

Relevance:

- GS Paper 3 – Internal Security (Cybersecurity, Cybercrime, Role of Agencies)
- GS Paper 2 – Governance (Judiciary, Inter-agency Coordination)
- Ethics Paper – Misuse of Technology and Public Trust

Linked Topics:

- Cybersecurity and AI misuse
- Jurisdiction of CBI and inter-agency coordination
- Suo motu cognisance by the Supreme Court
- Money laundering and digital frauds
- Senior citizen safety and digital literacy

Context:

The Supreme Court has taken suo motu cognisance of a growing cybercrime trend called **“digital arrests”**, where fraudsters impersonate judges or police officers using forged documents and AI-generated visuals to extort money. The Court suggested entrusting the CBI with the investigation due to the national and cross-border scale of these crimes.

Curiosity Question:

How can India strengthen its legal and institutional mechanisms to counter emerging cyber frauds like “digital arrests”?

Analytical Overview:

- **Nature of the Scam:** Fraudsters use **AI morphing, fake documents, and video manipulation** to simulate arrests or summon victims.
- **Scale of the Problem:** Crimes originate from "scam compounds," often operating across borders and linked to money-laundering networks.
- **Judicial Concern:** The SC expressed alarm at the spread of such crimes across multiple States, affecting particularly **senior citizens**.
- **Institutional Capacity:** Justice Bagchi questioned whether CBI has sufficient manpower and tech resources to handle the huge cybercrime load.
- **Broader Implications:** Reflects the growing misuse of **AI and deepfake technology** in cyber extortion and the urgent need for coordinated central response.

Constitutional / Policy Linkages:

- **Article 32 / 142:** Supreme Court's suo motu powers to ensure justice.
- **Information Technology Act, 2000 (amended 2008):** Legal framework against digital fraud and identity theft.
- **Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002:** Relevant for tracing financial flows.
- **CBI under the Delhi Special Police Establishment Act, 1946.**
- **National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal (MHA).**
- **Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023** – framework for data security and consent.

Way Forward / Recommendations:

- **Specialised Cyber Crime Units** – Build dedicated AI-forensics wings under CBI and state police.
- **Cross-border Cooperation** – Strengthen INTERPOL coordination to target foreign "scam compounds."

- **Judicial & Public Awareness** – Campaigns warning against digital impersonation.
- **Technology Upgradation** – Invest in AI-based fraud detection and digital forensics.
- **Legal Reforms** – Amend IT Act to cover emerging threats like deepfakes and AI manipulation.

Prelims Pointers:

- **CBI** derives power from **Delhi Special Police Establishment Act, 1946**.
- **"Digital arrest"** – a cyber extortion method using fake judicial/police visuals.
- **Supreme Court Suo Motu Cognisance** – Court acts on its own motion to protect citizens.
- **AI deepfakes** increasingly used in cyber frauds.
- **MHA's Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C)** – national nodal agency for cybercrime prevention.

Mains Keywords:

Digital arrest, cyber fraud, AI misuse, deepfake, CBI, Supreme Court suo motu, cybersecurity, money laundering, data protection

Mains Practice Question (with Dimensions):

Q: "The rise of 'digital arrests' exposes critical vulnerabilities in India's cybercrime governance architecture." Discuss the causes and suggest reforms.

Dimensions:

- Nature and scale of emerging AI-enabled cyber frauds
- Institutional limitations (CBI, State Police, CERT-In)
- Legal inadequacy under IT Act 2000
- Public digital literacy and awareness
- Global cooperation and AI ethics regulation

One Line Takeaway:

“Digital arrests” highlight how AI-driven deception is outpacing India’s current cybercrime response mechanisms, demanding centralised investigation and stronger legal safeguards.