

1. Urdu in Distress: the case before the nation
2. Case before Parliament
3. Charter of Demands for the Restoration of Urdu's Constitutional Rights in Uttar Pradesh

1. Urdu in Distress: the case before the nation

Urdu, as established by facts, history, and the law of the land, is an Indian language. It originated, evolved, developed and has been used for centuries in the Subcontinent for all sorts of purposes---, literary, cultural, educational, official, judicial, journalism, cinema, oratory and reasonable speech. It is the mother tongue of millions of Indian people whose children are not guaranteed even primary education in their mother tongue in one of India's States where everybody speaks Urdu.. Its literature is world class. It is Subcontinent's most popular and the sweetest language, and is also known as the 'language of poetry' all over the world. Urdu is an integral part of India's great national heritage (of our Composite Culture universally known as Ganga Jamni Tehzeeb). It promotes 'harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood amongst all the people of India transcending religious, linguistic and regional or sectional diversities', and we all are constitutionally duty-bound 'to value and preserve the rich heritage of our composite culture', which is not possible without Urdu Language, Literature and Culture being its basic components. In the mid twentieth-century, when the country was in turbulence, it appears that some decisions were taken in a hurry and Urdu was very badly hit by one of these. As a result, its rights in its own country of birth and centuries old multiple usage were drastically slashed. However, on 26th of January 1950, the Secular Democratic Constitution of India came into force. Every citizen of India, without distinction of sex, caste, creed, race, language, color or culture, was assured that, from now on, the country would not be governed by 'majority cult' i.e., 'majority can do anything and get away with it,' or 'might is right' sort of thing, in other words, by the jungle rule, but it would be governed by Fundamental Rights as enshrined in the Constitution and by the Rule of Law. Hot on the Constitution's trail, Dr. Zakir Husain, who later became India's third President, submitted a Memorandum (may be designated Memorandum-1) with two million signatures of First Language Speakers and Supporters of Urdu to the then President of India demanding restoration of Urdu's constitutional rights lost in the turmoil of the big events of 1947.(By the way I had the honor of being a signatory to this Memorandum-1) **This was the beginning of a righteous, irresistible and, by all standards, a democratic movement for the restoration of the constitutional rights of Urdu, ironically in the country of its birth and centuries old multiple usage.** The members of the Urdu Speech Community and other Urdu lovers and users who had remained in a dilemma for a few years, started protesting and making representations to the Central and State Govts to provide for their children Urdu Medium Schools and, in addition, facilities for them to learn Urdu as a language in Non -Urdu -Medium Schools. They have also been demanding **Official Status for Urdu Language** like it had been in the past. There is no doubt that Govt.'s response in this matter has been disappointingly slow, and this has happened **despite the Constitutional Guarantees vide Articles 14&15, Articles 29 &30, Article345, Article 347, Articles 350, 350A and 350 B.** However, concerning the rights of Urdu, from all possible angles, the worst case scenario is the State of Uttar Pradesh where, since India's Independence, govt. after govt. miserably failed to fulfill their constitutional obligation to provide even Primary Education in mother tongue to the children of the State's Urdu Speech Community, totally overlooking its magnitude, its history and its expressed desire and oft repeated demand. Whenever a new govt. is sworn in, the parents of these unfortunate tiny citizens of Mother India have their faith renewed in the constitution and the law. They hope against hope that this govt. will certainly implement the Constitution for their children's education like all other children's education in their mother tongue. Anyways, nothing ever happens in this direction, What then can bring them comfort in this situation? Just a few tears that roll down their cheeks from the anguish of their grieving hearts when the Govt. defaults or renewal of hope against hope that someday, something may turn up itself. For more than 62 years,

they have made requests and representations in all possible democratic ways resulting in disappointment. Isn't waiting this long enough? Let the nation answer it as of now the case is before the nation. Hence the need for this Charter of Demands for the Restoration of the Constitutional Rights of Urdu in Uttar Pradesh. The objective of the Charter is first to help the Urdu Speech Community of Uttar Pradesh by defining their needs vis-à-vis their Mother Tongue/First Language, and trying to keep the issue in right perspective. And secondly, to facilitate the Central and State Govts to reformulate their Urdu Policy objectively i.e. without bias, without partisanship and without political barter. This movement is for a just cause. It has continued long and is going to continue as long as each one of Urdu's rights is not acknowledged and legally implemented to become a routine of our day today life.

2. CASE BEFORE PARLIAMENT:

Here, it may seem quite relevant to refer to an event that occurred on 5th of August 2010 in our Parliament. It was zero hour in Lok Sabha. With the permission of the Speaker, Janab Mulayam Singh Yadav, raising questions on govt. policy of discrimination against Urdu newspapers in the matter of Govt. ads, started to read out a full length statement pleading for the restoration of the rights of Urdu in its own land of birth and centuries old multiple usage. Gradually, the number of participants, with the Speaker, the government and opposition members including the honorable member of the BJP, representing all shades of political opinion in Parliament, swelled up. There was not a single voice of dissent. In fact, there appeared to be perfect consensus in favour of restoring the rights of Urdu by the Center and the States. Let us try to reproduce translated excerpts of the reported opinions expressed by different speakers as published by NCPUL's mouth piece "Urdu Duniya", in its issue of October 2010.

Janab Mulayam Singh Yadav: Madam Speaker, It is a very important question. The Urdu Language is a Hindustani language and it is the language of the entire society. To impose ban on ads to Urdu newspapers, to stop their publication and distribution is to destroy the Urdu Language...If we want to destroy a people, we first destroy its language,.....An idea is being imposed that Urdu is the language of Muslims, This is not at all the language of the Musclemen alone, It is the language of Hindustan. Urdu has been used in this country in the past as an official language.....Urdu is weakened today, whereas it is the sweetest and most popular language.....The govt. is conspiring to destroy this language. I can say so since the Govt. is not paying any attention to it. Urdu poets and leaders have played an important role in freedom struggle. Urdu and Hindi both together fought the war of independence...there are some people who want to finish it.... Urdu has played a great role in the freedom struggle. Urdu had created tremendous passion for self-sacrifice, whereas today efforts are being made to destroy it... ..In Uttar Pradesh 15% Urdu students are admitted. You can check it. Today Urdu Newspapers are being axed, I can call it only conspiracy to eliminate the language. Urdu teachers have been reinstated on a large scale. It is in thousands. There are some people who want to finish it. The Honorable members are sitting here. The clan to which they belong used Urdu most of all. Even today they read and write Urdu. Are they Muslims? They are a clan of very wise men of letters and are on the path of progress. Despite Urdu's great role in the struggle for Independence, Urdu correspondence is being finished, Urdu newspapers are shutting down, ads are banned. Why after all the ads are banned? We are putting before you a matter: The Central Govt. got Gujral Committee's Report passed by this very House with the express intention that Urdu language will be promoted. This very House had set up a committee under the Presidentship of the former Prime Minister Janab Inder Kumar Gujral. At that time too Urdu's importance vis-à-vis the entire country was emphasized. Both the houses put this language forward as an official proposal on 8 January 1968 and it was stressed that from educational and cultural points of view 14 Indian languages besides Hindi should be developed too. Tamil and Telgu also should be developed and in India's 14 languages Urdu is a very important language.on May 2,1972 Dr. Noorul Hasan moved a motion in Parliament, as a result, Urdu was acknowledged as a very important National Language If you take a look at the data of that period (1972), you will find that in India Urdu is the mother

tongue of 5,15,36,111 individuals. The Ministry of Education had received the Gujral Committee's Report on 8 May, 1975. We would like to know what action the Govt. has taken on this Report so far and what is it further going to do in future? (interruption.).....I will finish in two minutes. I want to say a lot. However I want that the subject be open for general discussion and then put to vote.I have already said that in India's freedom movement, Urdu's role was very important in which 'Delhi Urdu Akhbar's editor Molvi Mohammad Baqar too had achieved this honor (martyrdom) and in 1857 Sadiqul Akhbar's editor Jamaluddin was sentenced to three years imprisonment for abetting the mutineers. This was done by the British Govt. since he had used this language in the war of independence..... Govt's attitude towards Urdu is hostile, whereas in this country Urdu wallas are tax payers as well. They too pay their taxes... (.interruption)..... Urdu is acknowledged as the sweetest and the most popular language of this country.

Madam Speaker: The Honorable Members, who are interested in this discussion, send their names.

(interruption)

Madam Speaker: Janab Lalu Prasad, Janab Ram Kishan, Janab Rakesh Sachan, Janab Dharmaindr Yadav, Janab Namanageshwar Rao, Janab Abdur Rahman, Janab Shilendra Kumar and Janab M.B.Rajesh are interested in this matter.

Janab Sudeep Bandopadhyae: Madam Speaker, I fully support what Mulayam Singh ji said about Urdu. We want that Urdu get a status in the entire country. If Urdu is not given protection, then all of us will fight for it.

Madam Speaker: Honorable Members, Those among you who want to join in this most important matter, that is, wish to associate with the importance of Urdu Language may send their names.

Janab Gopi Nath Munde: Madam Speaker, What Mulayam Singh ji said is right. Urdu language belongs to the country. It is not the language of any religion. Therefore, we should give importance to Urdu. Injustice against Urdu should be undone.

Janab Darasingh(Ghosi): Madam Speaker, It is true Urdu is a very sweet language....I want to convey through you that the Uttar Pradesh Govt. should give its fullest support to the promotion of Urdu.(interruption).

Madam Speaker: Lajuji, sit down.Let Janab Mehboob Sahib speak..Lajuji,don't raise volume.You are speaking with a loud voice.....(interruption).....What's this happening? Don't make such a loud noise while supporting such a sweet language. Bring sweetness to your words. Beg Ji, speak.

Dr. Mirza Mahub Beg: Madam, I associate my feelings with the feelings of the House. However, mere words won't do. Please pay attention to this problem. This language is an integral part of our culture and Tehzeeb. We have deep roots in this language. I pray that justice be done to Urdu. The whole House is demanding that Urdu get justice.

Madam Speaker: For this there should be direction from your side. This is the concern of the entire House that injustice has been done to this language. It has been discriminated against.. This language must be treated as integral to our Civilization and Culture and all steps should be taken right from today for its promotion, so that this language of India get honor that is its due.

Dr. Farooq Abdullah: Madam. I want to tell this especially to Shatrughan Sinha Sahib, since he represents the film world: What has kept Urdu alive is Film Industry, otherwise, it would have died.....I thank the industry for that with all my heart and hope that Urdu will shine in India as all other languages are doing. I am sure it will be so.

Janab Ghulam Nabi Azd: Madam Speaker, It is first time when all sections of the House, more especially the Deputy Leader of the BJP, have together given their support to Urdu.

Janab Ganesh Singh: We never opposed Urdu.

Janab Ghulam Nabi Azad: I am not calling names. I am rather praising you that even BJP leader gave his support to Urdu, which is a matter of happiness.... Only Central Govt.'s support for Urdu is not enough, all the State Govt'.s have to support Urdu in their respective States.

Janab Hakeem Dev Narayan Yadav: The Govt. is yours. Why not you do it yourself? Why tell us?

Janab Ghulam Nabi Azad: I had said that yesterday. You were not there when I had replied. Yesterday I and the Finance Minister had said that let it be any policy the Central Govt cannot

implement it alone.....(interruption) ...it is not seventies when in the Center and the States there was one party rule.....Therefore along with the Central Govt all the State Govts too will have to help Urdu.

Janab Shatrughan Sinha: Madam Speaker: Urdu is our language. It is not of any particular religion. Urdu belongs to every religion. Urdu is the language of humanity. It is the language of progress. Urdu is the language of Hindustan. Firaq Gorakhpuri(Ragupati Sahae) after Ghalib dedicated his entire life to Urdu. Urdu and Hindi are our own languages. Indian movies have done their best in protecting and promoting them. There is no province in India where Urdu is not used, and there is no citizen of ours who does not use Urdu in his daily life. Alone or in public, the common man or the elite, all that is Urdu. (All speak Urdu}. Urdu is such a fine meeting ground for all of us that we call it Ganga Jamni Tehzeeb. This is our language, India's language. Let us see what the Govt. is doing for empowering and promoting it. Urdu newspapers are publishing in all parts of India. Not only here, in all corners of the world. Are Urdu Papers getting support from the govt. that is due to them? Is Urdu getting importance in our schools and colleges which it is entitled to? If not, then, why not?.....I believe the Govt. has to do something tangible. Urdu should be taught in every school and college. Urdu should get the same if not more importance that is being given to Hindi and Sanskrit. Thanks.

Janab Guru Das Gupta: Madam, We want to say that Urdu is the language of toiling masses of India.....Govt. must do something for its promotion...Urdu should be given its due place side by side with Hindi.

Janab Basu Dev Acharya: Urdu is an Indian language,...After independence, Urdu didn't get from the govt. as much support as was its due.

Kumari Mamta Benarji: Madam Speaker,I never saw in this House the kind of discussion about the Urdu Language that is going on today. For this I wish to congratulate Janab Mulayam Singh Ji and every Member (of the House). Urdu is a sweet language. I love this language. Let me say that whatever poetry is composed in Urdu is in every mouth. Our tongues re-echo each and every word of this language. Like Hindi is an important language of our country,, every state has a language of its own, especially Urdu.....I would love to say: "Khudi ko kar baland itna ke har taqdeer se pahle/Khuda bande se khud poochhe bata teri raza kya hai." In our country.there are many areas where more than 10% of people speak Urdu.....but there are no language teaching specialists in schools. Therefore, where there are 10% people who read and speak Urdu, Urdu should be made compulsory at schools and universities. I want Urdu universities too where Urdu students should get more sponsorship. To provide protection to Urdu the Central Govt. needs to give generous aid..... all the regions have very large numbers of Urdu Speaking people. In my State about 30% people speak Urdu, which includes the Minority-fraternity as well.....Madam, I mean to say the province that has not done any work for Urdu yet, it ought to do it now. For the promotion of Urdu, for giving it protection and making it compulsory, a comprehensive and integrated project has to be in place, so that the minorities feel their languages are progressing too. Madam, when I became Railway Minister, I got a chance. For Railway Recruit Board Examination, I made, then and there, Urdu compulsory along with English and Hindi, and brought into it all other regional languages too. Likewise, Urdu may be advanced by giving protection.....One more thing, we did not fight the war of independence, but for those who fought it, we have a tradition of remembrance. May it be Gandhi Ji or Neta Ji or Abul Kalam Azad or Ambedkar or Lal,Bal,Pal or Rajendra Prasad. Also there were others like Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Jhansi ki Rani Laxmi Bai, Teepu Sultan and Bahadur Shah Zafar as well. When the Britishers murdered his two sons, he composed (Urdu) poetry: 'Kitna hai badnaseeb Zafar dafn ke liye/ Do gaz zameen bhi na mili kooe yaar men..This we should remember.....We like Urdu language. Therefore I say we should not destroy it. We must protect it. The Film does it .The people want it. And in the end I say:

Sarfarooshi ki tamanna phir hamare dil men hai/ Dekhna hai zor kitna baazue qaatil men hai."

Madam Speaker: As all the members have expressed concern for the worrisome condition of Urdu Language and its newspapers, I draw the attention of the Govt. towards it.

Janab Parnab Mukharji: Madam Speaker, I am in full agreement with the sentiments expressed by the Hon'ble members of the Cabinet along with other Hon'ble members of Parliament.....I

fully agree that we are Custodians of a Great Cultural Heritage and Urdu is an integral part of it. I can, therefore, assure you that for the stability of this language which is part of the great national heritage, the Govt. will certainly do what is needed..... When matters are discussed in the House, differences of opinion surface routinely. However, this is an occasion when the entire House is found unanimous, and the entire House has expressed perfect unity (on the issue of Urdu). Keeping this in mind, Madam, I assure you, and through you the entire House, that all appropriate steps will be taken in this matter.

3. Charter of Demands for the Restoration of Urdu's Constitutional Rights in Uttar Pradesh:

Uttar Pradesh is the home of Urdu, one of Urdu's other names was Hindi once. 'Wish it had remained forever. We have seen a time when the only difference between Hindi and Urdu was of script. The language more or less was the same. Urdu is even today, as it always was, the mother tongue of millions in the entire state of UP and is used freely by all sections of the State population for mutual communication. Anyone wishing to ascertain for himself the truth of this statement, may go around any town big or small only to discover that the common people all around are speaking only one language, not two. And Urdu is the modern and the most popular standard form of the same spoken language. For over a hundred years it was the Official Language of the State with English, and was Medium of Instruction at Primary and Secondary levels. Urdu with its journalism, poetry and rhetoric participated in India's freedom struggle at least 4 times: first on the side of Sirajuddaula in 1757, secondly with Tipu Sultan in the last decade of the 18th century., for the third time in the freedom struggle of 1857 and the 4th time in the long non-violent struggle for freedom that ended the British rule in India in 1947. The irony is that the very Freedom for which Urdu had done its best, when it became a reality, no time was lost in giving Urdu a bad name to hang it. In these circumstances, Urdu was forced to start its 5th non-violent struggle for its own survival and independence in its own country of birth against its own democratic Govt. Anyways, the bad days are over. The nation is prepared to undo the injustice done to one of India's national languages. The secular and democratic Constitution of India has been long in force, which secures to all its citizens Justice, Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. Urdu is by all means an Indian language and its historically determined region is Uttar Pradesh. It has waited too long for the restoration of its rights in this State. Here is a point for very special consideration: Urdu Wallas have been paying all kinds of taxes to the Central and the State Govt. for the past 65 years, whereas these Govts have miserably failed to provide even Primary Education to their kids in their Mother Tongue like they did for the kids of all other sections of the population. Is it not now the moral duty of the Govt. to allocate double the normal sum of funds for next 65 years for their kids' primary education in their Mother Tongue? However, situated as we are today, we need to have a solution of this grave problem. Let it be declared that UP is a Bilingual State which has two regional languages, Hindi and Urdu .This can be easily done by the State Govt. itself by amending the Uttar Pradesh Language Act 1951/1989 (based on Article 345 of the Constitution of India).The other obvious choice may be that the President of India use Article 347 of the Constitution which states:

“On a demand being made in that behalf the President may, if he is satisfied that a substantial proportion of the population of a State desire the use of any language spoken by them to be recognized by that State, direct that such language shall also be officially recognized throughout that State or any part thereof for such purpose as he may specify.”

Thus the President of the Republic of India satisfying himself by assessing the desire and demand of Urdu Speakers who certainly constitute a substantial proportion of the population of the State may be pleased to direct the State of Uttar Pradesh that the use of Urdu in its original script along side Hindi shall be officially recognized throughout the State of Uttar Pradesh for the purpose of education both as a Medium of Instruction as well as Teaching of Urdu as a Subject only. Further, Urdu shall be used freely in all govt. and semi-govt. institutions, Legislative Bodies, Judiciary, Local Bodies, for Gazettes and Notifications, oath taking and all manner of Art and Cultural

Activities all over the State, and in Correspondence with Govt. Institutions and oath taking etc. For taking the benefit of this choice, it may be necessary for the Urdu Speech Community to submit to the President another Memorandum to be designated Memorandum-2 with at least 2 million signatures of a representative cross section of Urdu Speakers, Users of Urdu as Contact Language and Supporters and Lovers of Urdu living in Uttar Pradesh, to be collected through the auspices of Anjuman Taraqqi-e-Urdu-e-Hind or some other reliably reputed Urdu Organization of the same standard. The text of the Memorandum-2 may be as follows:

The Urdu Speech Community of Uttar Pradesh, as equal citizens and tax payers in the State, demand the following facilities and provisions to enjoy the same constitutional rights for their mother tongue, Urdu, which all other national languages have been enjoying without prejudice or hindrance of any kind:

1. That Urdu be given status of an official language as one of the two official languages of the whole State of Uttar Pradesh.
2. That the State Govt. provide Education from Class I to 12 for the children of the Urdu Speaking families through Urdu Medium Schools in all parts of the State.
3. That the Urdu Medium Schools may be two kinds: (A) Government-run schools that shall be opened in all Minority-concentrated areas, both urban and rural (B) Private Urdu Medium Schools enjoying the same facility and ease of recognition as Hindi or any other language-medium schools, and operate under the same or similar authority.
4. That the Govt. may provide in all Govt. and Aided Hindi and English Medium schools in the State for teaching Urdu as a subject to all those students whose First or Second language is Urdu.
5. That there should be provision that the State Govt. supply Standard Urdu Text Books in all subjects to all Urdu Medium Schools whether Govt. or Private (recognized), at reasonable price, and on the First Day of the School Session. The Govt. may seek cooperation of the National Council for the Promotion of Urdu Language or any other reliable Urdu Promotion Agency for writing and publishing these Text Books.
6. That It would be the responsibility of the Govt. to provide really qualified and trained Urdu teachers for both types of Urdu Medium Schools.
7. That the State Govt. will facilitate constructing residential quarters for teachers of Govt. Urdu Medium schools by providing sufficient funds.
8. That the criteria of standards in all educational matters like selection of books and their contents, syllabus, and teachers' qualification and training etc. may be determined only by well known secular educationists.
9. That the Govt. may be required to provide land for opening a Govt. school in those villages and towns where the local people may not be able to offer land for it.
10. That Sanskrit or any Classical Language whatsoever, in no case, be included in the Three Language Formula (Mother tongue, State's official language and English). In no case shall a classical language including Sanskrit be made compulsory for all students. A classical language may be prescribed only as an optional language. With due respect for classical languages, they should not be allowed to deprive children belonging to any standard modern Indian language community of studying their First Language.
11. That keeping in mind the main purpose for which they were provided, Articles 29 and 30 of the Constitution of India should be religiously implemented for the protection of Culture, Language, Script and Educational Institutions of 'All Minorities' 'whether based on religion or language' If ever a lacuna is discovered by the Judiciary that may lead to a wide divergence of opinion over interpretation of these provisions, then the great Parliament of India may unanimously rise to the occasion in order to help the Minorities by amending the language of the provision/provisions to remove the lacuna at the earliest possible opportunity, so that the Articles may continue to be used for the original purpose for which they were enshrined in the Constitution by the Founding Fathers of the Indian Republic.
12. That the section 80 of the State Govt. Education Code states that in all govt. recognized schools, medium of education will be Hindi in Devnagri script. It may kindly be changed to 'in all the

govt. recognized schools, the medium will be Hindi or Urdu in their respective scripts.’ It is necessary to amend this code, otherwise only Hindi Medium schools will be entitled to State recognition as now. Is it not against the spirit of the Article 350A?

13. That according to Regulation No.282 (framed on the basis of Article 208 of the constitution) the Business of the Legislative Assembly is conducted in Hindi in Devnagri script. Speaker’s Direction No.161 says that the language of the Business of the Assembly is Hindi in Devnagri script. As long as this rule is there, the work in the Secretariat will not be done in any other language or script .Are these rules not against the spirit of Article 350 of the Constitution?
14. That the Rajya Sookna Ayog (sanchalan) niyamawali 2008 is against the spirit of the Right to Information Act 2005 .The section 4 of the Act says that RTI application may be made in Hindi or English or the Regional Official language. Since the 2nd official language of UP is Urdu, the rule should change.
15. That in Judiciary, from the year 1900 onwards, Hindi was used with Urdu. Similarly now Urdu should be allowed to be used with Hindi. Now, it is Hindi’s turn to reciprocate the civility. Further, according to UP Services Rules from 1951, Urdu had 40 Marks Syllabus out of 100 Marks, which was stopped in 2001. Urdu is still needed to decode the pre-Hindi period records. Therefore, the Urdu part of the test needs to be restored.
16. It is the responsibility of the State Government to curb the anti-Urdu mentality in its administration.

Aziz Ahmad
Director
Al-Ameen Urdu Markaz,
Al-Ameen IIT,
BSR Road,
HAPUR-245101
Uttar Pradesh
Email: azizahmad80@gmail.com