

## The Kannada Language Comprehensive Development Bill

The Kannada Language Comprehensive Development Bill was tabled at the Karnataka Legislative Assembly.

### Key facts

- The Kannada Language Comprehensive Development Bill gives preference to Kannadigas in government jobs and provides reservations to locals in private jobs generated in the state.
- The Bill defines Kannadigas as individuals whose parents have resided in Karnataka for a minimum of 15 years with the knowledge of reading and writing Kannada.
- Under this Bill, practical and functional knowledge of Kannada will be taught in higher, technical and professional education courses.
- Students who have studies in Kannada Medium schools will get reservations in higher education.
- It will deny land concession, tax rebates and other incentives to private companies that do not recruit at least a minimum percentage of Kannadigas.
- Government jobs in the state will be provided only if a Kannada language exam is passed. This exam is not required for individuals who have passed Class 10 with Kannada as first or second language.
- The Bill proposes the use of Kannada language for all official and administrative correspondences in the state and by local authorities. Earlier, the state government was criticised for using only English language for correspondence.
- Kannada is also made mandatory in subordinate courts, tribunals, banks and other financial institutions.
- Shops, industries and commercial establishments who violate this proposed legislation will incur a fine of Rs.5,000 to Rs.10,000, including suspension of license.

### Sarojini Mahishi Committee

The Sarojini Mahishi Committee had provided 58 recommendations to provide job security for Kannadigas in Karnataka. However, these recommendations were not adopted because they were highly stringent. Among them are the 100 per cent reservation for Kannadigas in all public sector units, 100 per cent reservation for Kannadigas in group C and D jobs in central government departments and PSUs in Karnataka and minimum 80 per cent and 65 per cent reservation in Group B and A jobs respectively. These recommendations were not adopted as they may cause several constitutional challenges and violate fundamental rights.