



# Martin Luther Christian University

Nongrah, Dongkatieh, Block-1, Shillong-793 006, Meghalaya, India

☎ 0364-253 5420, 253 5437

e-mail: admin@mlcuniv.in, www.mlcuniv.in

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## Promotion of Local and Regional Languages

In accordance with the provisions of the MLCU Act, 2015, Chapter 2, Section 7 (e) of the MLCU Act, 2005 and as per approval of the Board of Governors in its meeting held on March 2, 2020, the policy on the Promotion of Local and Regional Languages is hereby notified

The New Education Policy 2020 calls for the promotion of Indian languages in the education system at all levels and for local/regional languages to be brought into the teaching-learning programs in all educational institutions. This is a noteworthy and admirable component of the policy and is welcomed by this University. It has been announced that IITs and NITs will embark on offering technical degree courses in local languages. Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi recently tweeted: "Taking inspiration from the National Education Policy, it will now be tried to teach all technical courses including medical, engineering in mother tongue."

In a recent balanced statement the Union education minister has stated:

Teaching in the mother tongue/ regional language will help in building an equitable education system. The ministry of education will work to develop an equitable system based on the principles of fairness and inclusion. For the system to be fair, we should ensure that the personal and social circumstances of students should in no way be obstacles to realising their full academic potential. At the same time, to ensure inclusion through the use of the mother tongue/ regional language, we should set up a basic minimum standard of education which eliminates all disparity. While it is necessary to strengthen Indian languages as medium of instruction while enhancing the principle of equity in education to improve educational standards, it is equally imperative for students to have a good command over the English language since they are global natives in the 21st century. But this cannot be at the cost of Indian languages as a medium of instruction. Indian languages must be supplemented by English.

Clause 22.10 of the National Education Policy states that "More Higher Education Institutions, and more programmes in higher education, will use the mother tongue/local language as a medium of instruction, and/or offer programmes bilingually, in order to increase access and GER and also to promote the strength, usage, and vibrancy of all Indian languages. Private HEIs too will be encouraged and incentivized to use Indian languages as medium of instruction and/or offer bilingual programmes. Four-year B.Ed. dual degree programmes offered bilingually will also help, e.g. in training cadres of science and mathematics teachers to teach science bilingually at schools across the country.

Apart from this clause the NEP 2020 contains numerous approaches, strategies and processes for the implementation of learning practices in the mother tongue/local language. These sweeping recommendations will entail a systematic approach that will include preparation of learning materials in local languages, incorporation of language in pedagogy and assessment, re-orientation and motivation of teachers, and amendments to the statutes and rules of universities.

MLCU recognizes that its student body is comprised of students of many mother tongues from across the Northeast region and even from other parts of the country and abroad. Such diversity presents challenges to conceptualization and implementation of a coherent policy.

MLCU will embark on a phasewise implementation which will include the following steps:

#### Immediate and short-term

1. A welcoming statement in the prospectus, website and other promotional materials, to all applicants and students, irrespective of language background, that their language and culture will be respected and appreciated in the university.
2. While English will be the primary language of instruction, given the language diversity in the classroom, undergraduate and postgraduate students may submit assignments, project reports and other text requirements in their mother tongue. Each such submission must contain a summary/abstract in English.
3. UG and PG students who experience difficulty or have failed an assessment may request a re-assessment in their mother tongue.
4. PhD candidates may submit the thesis in their mother tongue, but providing an abstract/synopsis in English. This provision is subject to approval by the Doctoral Committee, which may consider adequacy/translatability of technical terms and other scientific issues.
5. Preferential recruitment of teachers who are proficient in the local languages.
6. Co-curricular and extra-curricular events that feature local languages
7. These provisions may be restricted, if there are logistics problems or unavailability of suitable translating resources, provided that the university/department has made appropriate efforts.

#### Medium term

1. Preparation of mainstream and ancillary learning materials in the main languages of the state.
2. Updating of glossaries and dictionaries
3. Academic programs in local and regional languages to be offered in the department of English and Communication, which may be suitably renamed. The department will also offer courses in major Indian languages.
4. Appropriate linguistic and translation services to be provided in the University.
5. Conferences and seminars which provide platforms for local languages, with translation facilities.
6. Publication of scholarly articles in local languages with English abstracts in the University journal(s)



Dr R. Jennifer War  
Dean Academics

