

# Govt's intervention sought to make sign language 'official'

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**New Delhi:** The launch of the second edition of the Indian sign language dictionary in the capital saw the demand for making sign language "official", resurface as representatives of the deaf and hearing-impaired sought the government's intervention in the matter.

Pointing that there was no immediate plan to do so, minister for social justice and empowerment, Thaawarchand Gehlot said the matter was under "examination" as any

such move must be backed by resources in terms of adequate interpreters and trainers to make it a widely used medium of communication.

At the release of the 6,000 word dictionary, National Association of Deaf, president A S Narayanan reiterated that the social justice ministry must work towards making sign language an official language. The demand has been raised by NAD repeatedly.

As per census 2011, there are 50, 71,007 deaf people and 19, 98,535 with speech disabilities in India. However, data

shows that as of now there are just about 325 Indian sign language interpreters listed with the government's Indian Sign Language Research and Training Centre (ISLRTC). This directory of ISL interpreters has been compiled from lists of various organisations. The directory has been put out on the ISLRTC website for those who need interpreters. Of the 325 interpreters 263 are categorised as active interpreters, 47 as non-active interpreters and 15 as uncertified interpreters.

*Full report on [www.toi.in](http://www.toi.in)*