



Authoritative Text of the Constitution in Hindi Language

CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS

Originally, the Constitution of India did not make any provision with respect to an authoritative text of the Constitution in the Hindi language. Later, a provision in this regard was made by the 58th Constitutional Amendment Act of 1987¹. This amendment inserted a new Article 394-A in the last part of the Constitution i.e., Part XXII². This article contains the following provisions:

1. The President shall cause to be published under his authority :
 - (i) The translation of the Constitution in Hindi language. The modifications which are necessary to bring it in conformity with the language, style and terminology adopted in the authoritative texts of the Central Acts in Hindi can be made in it. All the amendments of the Constitution made before such publication should be incorporated in it.
 - (ii) The translation in Hindi of every amendment of the constitution made in English.
2. The translation of the Constitution and its every amendment published shall be construed to have the same meaning as the original text in

English. If any difficulty arises in this matter, the President shall cause the Hindi text to be revised suitably.

3. The translation of the Constitution and its every amendment published shall be deemed to be, for all purposes, its authoritative text in Hindi.

REASONS FOR THE 58TH AMENDMENT

The reasons for adding the above provisions in the Constitution by the 58th Constitutional Amendment Act of 1987 are as follows:

The Constitution of India adopted by the Constituent Assembly on November 26, 1949, was in the English language. A Hindi translation of the Constitution, signed by the members of the Constituent Assembly, was also published in 1950 under the authority of the President of the Constituent Assembly³. There had been a general demand for the publication of an authoritative text of the Constitution in Hindi incorporating in it all the subsequent amendments. It has also been imperative to have an authoritative text of the Constitution in the Hindi language for facilitating its use in the legal process. Further, any Hindi version of the Constitution should not only conform to the Hindi translation published by the Constituent Assembly in 1950, but should also be in conformity with the language, style and terminology adopted in the authoritative texts of the Central Acts in Hindi. It was, therefore, proposed to amend the constitution so as to empower the President of India to publish under his authority the translation of the Constitution and its every amendment in Hindi language.

In pursuance of Article 394-A, the President published in the Gazette of India, an authoritative text of the Constitution of India in the Hindi language.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. The 56th Constitutional Amendment Bill of 1987, after being passed by both the Houses of Parliament and assented by the President, finally emerged as the 58th Constitutional Amendment Act of 1987.
2. Part XXII is entitled as 'Short Title, Commencement, Authoritative Text in Hindi and Repeals'. Originally, this part consisted of three Articles only – Article 393 (short title), Article 394 (commencement) and Article

395 (repeals).

3. In accordance with a resolution adopted by the Constituent Assembly.