CHAPTER 5
MAITHILI LANGUAGE AND THE MOVEMENT – II

Maithili language movement had entered into a phase of widening social base in independent India. It was no longer led by literary elite from the region alone. A number of mass leaders and political activists worked for the cause of Mithila and Maithili. There have been recurrent mass mobilisations, political agitations, protests and demonstrations for the rightful status of Maithili. Political parties and leaders of Mithila strategically used Maithili. Although the political parties did not have similar response to the issue of Mithila and Maithili, yet they could not overlook the issue any longer.

There have been different phases in this movement. In the first phase Separate statehood demand for Mithila became the central mobilising factor immediately after Independence of India in 1950s. The demand of separate statehood extended to claim *Mithila as a union republic* that stood as the envisaged goal. The second phase of the movement was highlighted with the issue of recognition of Maithili as a Modern Indian language in *Sahitya Akademi* and enumeration of correct number of Maithili speakers in the Census. It became the mobilising factor of the movement which also coincided with other demands like opening of a Mithila University, an exclusive radio station for Maithili at Darbhanga. The third phase witnessed the demand for inclusion of Maithili in the eighth schedule of the Indian Constitution. This Phase had also witnessed many other protests and demonstrations like for the removal from and re-inclusion of Maithili in BPSC and Secondary school examinations, demand for the implementation of Maithili as a medium of instruction at primary level, publication of the textbooks in Maithili and recruitment of the Maithili teachers, demand for the recognition of Maithili as an administrative language of the state of Bihar when Urdu was given the official status of the second language in the state under a Maithil speaking chief-minister Jagannath Mishra. The contemporary phase of the Maithili movement has been witnessing reassertion of separate statehood demand particularly after the recognition of Maithili in the eighth schedule of the Indian constitution in 2003. Such demand for separate statehood is not based on distinct language and culture factor alone but on the basis of poor economic development. However, language and culture continues to form
the very basis of the Maithili movement and the mass base of the movement are expanding within Mithila and outside.

Unique feature of the movement is that gradually this movement have been able to achieve most of its demands except the demand for separate statehood and use of Maithili as a medium of instruction at the primary level of education. Although the government of Bihar formally recognises Maithili as the medium of instruction at primary and secondary level of school education, but it has never been properly implemented.

In the present chapter an attempt has been made to examine the shifts and directions of the Maithili movement since India’s Political Independence from the colonial rule until the recognition of Maithili into the eighth schedule of Indian constitution in 2003. I will be discussing following questions in this chapter - What were the major agendas and issues of the Maithili movements? What was the nature of its leadership? What kind of Institutions and Organisations were involved? How political parties - national or regional - did perceive the Maithili movement? Why and how political and literary elite of the region co-operated and contested each other? What were their contributions in the development and recognition of Maithili?

5.1 State Reorganisation Commission: Demand for the Separate Statehood for Mithila

Demand for the separate statehood of Mithila received considerable support in the first decade after India’s political independence from the colonial rule. A great many number of Maithils were discontented with the constitution of India as their language – Maithili, did not find mention in the eighth schedule. Second when deliberate attempts were made to reduce the actual number of Maithili speakers and included into the census of 1951 as Hindi speakers, it infuriated them even more. And one congress M. L. A. of the Bihar Legislative Assembly from the University Constituency, Pt. Awadh Bihari Jha made it a subject of an adjournment motion in the assembly.¹ For them Maithili was not just independent of Hindi but much older to it. And finally when State Reorganisation

Commission (Hereafter SRC) was formed to look into the formation of new states in India on linguistic basis, they thought that it was an appropriate opportunity for the creation of separate Mithila State. Maithils were discontented with the affairs of the state of Bihar. Their claim was that under the government of Bihar the socio-economic condition of the region had deteriorated and its potential economic progress would be impossible to achieve unless it manages its own affairs. Under the leadership of Janaki Nandan Singh and other Congress workers of the region they worked vigorously for the creation of Mithila State. In a conference of Maithili Sahitya Parishad at Darbhanga on December 24, 1953, which was inaugurated by then chief minister of Bihar Dr. S. K. Sinha and presided over by the many ministers of Bihar including Pt. Harinath Mishra, a resolution was unanimously adopted in which demand for the early formation of Mithila state, was made. In this connection a meeting was presided over by Janakinandan Singh on January 9, 1954 at Darbhanga. In this meeting many leading congressmen, legislators, the members of local bodies, the members of Provincial Congress Committee and District Congress Committee participated. They passed a resolution which says - “In order to save the Congress organisation and its workers from losing popular support it is urgent that a separate Mithila State be formed, so that the long cherished aspirations of the people of this area be fulfilled”. However, Dr. S. K. Sinha was sceptical of the creation of separate statehood for Mithila and his anticipated co-operation with SRC against such demand led to a meeting presided over by Janaki Nandan Singh at Darbhanga on January 17, 1954. This meeting was attended by more than one thousand congressmen of different districts of Mithila. By the time the government made it stand clear and opposed with all its might to sabotage such claim. However in this meeting demand for separate statehood for Mithila was reiterated on the ground of ‘its glorious history, great traditions of culture, language, literature, script, way of life and philosophy’, and demand was made for the formation of Mithila Pradesh Congress Committee (Hereafter MPCC) and Bihar Pradesh Congress Committee (Hereafter BPCC) was requested to co-operate in such formation. It was decided that representation for it should also be made to the All India Congress Committee and its president Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru. In this regard a large number of

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2 Ibid., p. 103.
3 Ibid.
4 Ibid., p. 104.
Congressmen including Janaki Nandan Singh proceeded to Calcutta (now Kolkata) on January 22, 1954, to attend a conference and to present to Nehru, who was the Congress chief at its Kalyani Session, a memorandum for the creation of MPCC for the pending Mithila state. But before they could reach Calcutta 56 of them were arbitrarily arrested at the Asansol station.\(^5\) As soon as the news of arrest reached Mithila there was a wave of public resentment against the government of Bihar. Shortly they were released after the intervention of Pt. Nehru and the chief minister of Bengal Dr. B. C. Roy. BPCC made every effort to stop Pt. Nehru from having firsthand experience of these demands and in its meeting on January 11, 1954 called for the postponement of the work of SRC in Bihar. In the meantime a meeting at Kolkata under the presidency of Nageshwar Mishra, a huge number of Maithils reiterated the demand for separate statehood of Mithila and condemned the arrest of Janaki Nandan Singh and others at Asansol stations. Though, Janaki Nandan Singh could not reach Kalyani Congress to present the case of Mithila, he held a public meeting at Girish Park, Kolkata, on January 26, 1954 to mobilise the support for Mithila State. In this meeting a group by the name of Maithil Yuvak Sangh attempted to create some disturbances and opposed the demand for separate statehood. Later leaflets in which name of the person or organisation was not mentioned, printed and circulated in which personal attack was made against Janaki Nandan Singh.\(^6\) So, internal opposition to such demand for separate statehood was also there.

This period witnessed enthusiastic supports and demonstrations by the Maithils for the creation of Mithila state. A number of rallies and demonstrations were organised at Patna, Darbhanga, Madhubani and the other parts of Mithila in support of such demand. Janaki Nandan Singh proposed to set up a Mithila Rajya Kosha and within six months it

\(^5\) It was widely believed that such arrests were made by the Bengal Police on the instigation of the government of Bihar. However, the government of Bihar government its role in such arrests, though it accepted the fact that the C. I. D. had informed the Bengal Police that Janakinandan Singh with many other Maithils were proceedings towards Kalyani to demonstrate at the residence of the Bihar Chief Minister there, for the creation of separate Mithila State and present to Pt. Nehru a memorandum for the creation of separate Mithila Pradesha Congress Committee. Bengal government also made it position clear on the issue through a press release of January 29, 1954 in which it said that the Police authorities felt that to allow this group to reach Kalyani led by ex-Congressmen Janaki Nandan Singh might create disturbances and message of the C. I. D. of Bihar was for the purpose of warning the Bengal Police about the disturbances that this group might create; see Ibid., pp. 101 – 122.

\(^6\) This group was supposed to be the result of political rivalry and was working at the instigation of Bihar Government, for such purpose an influential minister of Bihar visited Calcutta; see Ibid., p. 108.
was supposed to raise Rs 2 crore through which a university and an academy of music in Mithila was to be set up, independently of government. But it failed to build pressure on the authorities and SRC did not even mention about such demand. Later on when Janaki Nandan Singh was reinstated in Congress he also stopped leading any agitation for it. Paul Brass and others who believed that the politicians have used the issue of Mithila for their political benefits appear to be true but there is no reason to dismiss the fact that such mobilisations and agitations gradually developed the consciousness among the masses about the issue of Maithili, Maithil and Mithila. The next phase of the movement was led by the literary elite again and the establishment of Mithila University, recognition of Maithili by the Sahitya Akademi and finally the inclusion into the eighth schedule of the constitution were some of the major achievements of the Maithili movement. In the last decade of twentieth century also witness the revival of the separate statehood demand in the Maithili movement.

5.2 Kolkata: ‘Mini Mithila’ and the Maithili Movement

Often it is said that keenness for the development and promotion of Maithili language and literature in modern times emerged mostly outside Mithila – in Jaipur, Banaras, Allahabad, Kolkata etc. However, Kolkata’s contributions in the Maithili movement are far more influencing and foundational in shaping the future course and nature of the Maithili movement, particularly after India’s independence in 1947. It was Kolkata University which first recognised Maithili as a subject of study at M. A. level in 1917. Prof. Ramanath Jha had called it ‘Mithilak teerthasthali’ (Sacred place of Mithila). Dr. Lakshman Jha a visionary thinker of Mithila, a socialist and who fought unsuccessfully in the first general election, contemplated that poverty, illiteracy, floods, famines and other socio economic and cultural problems of Mithila could not be solved by the present government of Bihar. So he demanded separate statehood for Mithila. He even went to the extent of calling Mithila a sovereign Union Republic. For the support of his demand he formed Mithila Mandal in Patna and got active support from Kolkata. Prabodh Narayan Singh, Babu Saheb Chaudhary, Devnarayan Jha and others actively

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7 Ibid., p. 115.
9 For the details on the contributions of Kolkata in all the spheres of the Maithili movement – literary, cultural or political; See, an special issue ‘Kolkata mei Maithili’, *Purvottar Maithil Samaj*, quarterly, issue – 5, Oct – Dec, Guwahati, Vidyapati Chetna Samiti, 2011.
supported his demand. Lakshman Jha also presented the case and problems of Maithili before the first prime minister of India, Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru at a meeting of All India Writers Association at Kolkata. Braj Kishor Verma ‘Manipadma’ and Harimohan Jha were also invited for this meeting. Babu Saheb Chaudhary played an active role in managing the invitation for these Maithils in Writers Association. He wanted that legitimate place should be given to Maithili language and its writers as well.  

**Figure 9: Cover Page of the Purvottar Maithil Samaj Kolkata mei Maithili**


*Girish Park* of Kolkata has been a ‘Mini Mithila’ for many decades, for all the castes and classes of Maithils. It has been a central place for a large number of events, activities, meetings, public speeches, and mobilisations for Maithili, Maithils and Mithila. Besides there is a gatherings of the large numbers of Maithilis every Sunday’s. It was from this park that Babu Janakinandan Singh tried to mobilise the supporters in Kolkata for the creation of separate statehood of Mithila. A number of Organisations

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have been formed in Kolkata for the promotion and development of Maithili and Mithila. These organisations had played an important role in shaping the all round development of Maithili language. Their contributions include in the field of research, book publications, organisation of cultural and literary activities, dramas, and political movement for the separate Mithila state. Most of these organisations did not play any significant role in the Maithili movement. Many of them were short lived and were the outcome of internal fractions within existing organisations. There were many organisations which contributed in almost all the aspects of Maithili and Mithila movement. However, on the basis of their functional specialities these organisations can be classified into three broad categories – Social and Cultural, Political and Economic, Maithili Natak and Drama.

One of the remarkable achievements of the Maithili movement in Kolkata was the publication *Mithila Darshan* by Prabodh Narayan Singh. Its main purpose was the development of Mithila and Maithili, and second, movement for the political rights. The first issue of *Mithila Darshan* was published in January 1953 as quarterly magazine from the *Singh Press*, Kolkata which was established by Prabodh Narayan Singh. From the very beginning this magazine remained fearless and confrontational. It attacked political establishments at Patna in its April 1953 issue. In its editorial the census enumeration of Maithili speakers was criticised and the Government of Bihar was accused of conspiring against the interests of Maithili –

> जनगणना करता जनता के बोले देश गेल जानी मे पटना रायक निरस्त्र हाथ छलैह। अधिकांश तथा सरल जनता अपने मातृभाषा मैथिली लिखने छल किन्तु लिखनिहार सम अपने प्रमुख आदेशादृश हिंदी लिख देने छलह...अतঃ ई ललकर पूर्ण हुनौति निर्देशक मैथिली देश जाय रखौ ज प्रभावक आकार पर कंइ रूप मैथिली के दवा नही रखौ अधिक...[13]

[At the time of census enumeration masses were cheated in which government at Patna certainly had an indirect hand. Illiterate and simple masses had written Maithili as their mother tongue but the enumerator complying with the order of their superiors used to write Hindi...therefore this provocative challenge could be given without any caution that on the basis of previous census no one can suppress Maithili]

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13 Cited in Ibid.
Prabodh Narayan Singh asserted through editorials of *Mithila Darshan* that wherever the geographical, political, historical, cultural, economic and linguistic factors like Mithila were available; and though deserve their states but were neglected, exploited and marginalised; and if their population are determined, new states had to be created.\(^{14}\) Similarly criticising the biased approach of *Akashwani* at Patna towards Maithili he wrote that if its policies was not remodified immediately then the officials would be compelled to do so through observing Radio boycott day in all parts of Mithila.\(^ {15}\) He was equally critical of Maithils and Maithili Society. In his opinion until and unless Maithils free themselves from the domination of Magadh through peaceful and nonviolence means till then we could not remain silent. In this connection he observed –

> सम्प्रति हमशा चाही राज्यवाच्यक उद्धोष, डा. लक्ष्मण ज्ञा तथा डा. लक्ष्मी नारायण शिक्षक लगन, बाबू जानकी नन्दन शिक्षक निर्मिता\(^ {16}\) [Today we need the pronouncement of Raghavacharya, dedication of Dr. Lakshman Jha and Dr. Lakshmi Narayan Singh, fearlessness of Babu Janakinandan Singh].

It is important to note that Raghwacharya was a great supporter of Mithila state and he was assaulted by the Bihar Police of Magadhan region at Mahendra Ghat, Patna for his support of Mithila State. He in one of his poems incited the Maithils – गीज्ञ लागि गेल छो, कृपाण के पिजा। [There have been rust, sharpen the sword]. Other figures like Dr. Lakshman Jha went as far as creating the separate sovereign Republic of Mithila.\(^ {17}\)

*Mithila Darshan* used to cover the social issues as of Mithila as well. In the June 1954 issue of *Mithila Darshan* a poem by Bachhe Lal Jha ‘Vimal’ minutely observe the social practices of the dowry system in Mithila and its ill impacts –

> …कन्या जन्म दय
> कसमित छछि
> आजाद सम्य मिथिला वासी।
> कस रहल नन्द भय
> नृत्य एतय


\(^{15}\) *Mithila Darshan*, Mar 1955; cited in ibid.

\(^{16}\) *Mithila Darshan*, May 1955; cited in ibid.

\(^{17}\) See Jha, Laksman Jha, *Mithila a Union Republic*, Darbhanga, Mithila Mandal, 1952. He even prepared the draft constitution for the Union Republic of Mithila, pp. 161 – 185.
Frightened are

Todays Maithils.

There is naked dance

Of the tradition of dowry from the groom’s side,

In today’s Mithila.

There is very open custom here,

of selling grooms as animals.

There are haats,

For the selling of humans,

Where groom come as ox

And his father as devil, in the form of human,

What to talk of shameless ghatak,

Whose religion has become rupee,

Taking oath has become their religion,

Where there is untruth, irreligion, injustice,
Surge in repression against the women,  
That Mithila-pride (mukut, headgear) due to these traders,  
Is known by the name of Sabhagachhee (assembly garden)]

Prabodh Narayan Singh also demanded that provision should be made for the primary education in Mithila compulsorily in its mother tongue Maithili (Dec 1955). *Mithila Darshan* was very radical and active in its support for the Maithili movement. From 1958 a provocative couplet of Kavivar Sitaram Jha have been used in the magazine, which says –

अछि सलाइ मे आगि बज़त की बिना रागड़ने।
पायार निज अधिकार कतहु कि बिना झगड़ने॥

[There is fire in the matchbox, but will it burn without rubbing;  
Similarly will we get our rights anywhere without fighting?]

In 1963 *Mithila Darshan Private Limited* was created for the economic firmness of the magazine and many people were its shareholders. Prabodh Narayan Singh became its chairman and Udit Narayan Jha (Basauli) it’s Managing Director. Rajnandan Lal Das was its secretary. But due to the difference between chairman and Managing Director the publication of *Mithila Darshan* was very soon stopped. Then Babu Saheb Chaudhary a committed activists of the Maithili movement, published it from his own *Mithila Art Press* from 1971 to 1974. But the proprietorship of the magazine was with Prabodh Narayan Singh, so he took the publication right from the Babu Saheb Chaudhary and published it again from his *Singh Press*. And he managed to publish it until 1978. However Babu Saheb Chudhary continued the publication by changing the name of the magazine – *Maithili Darshan* from July 1974. His editorials were radical and revolutionary. He writes in the issue of January 1981 –

मैथिली प्रेमी से हमर अनुरोध अछि जे सरकार जाहि भाषा के बुझए, ताहि भाषा मे हममा सम के  
बात करबक हेतु तैयार रहबक चाहि। जुलूस, सत्यमाय, विधायक एवं सांसद लोकनिक घेराव,  
आमरण अन्नसान, आलदाह, सम लें तैयार रहबक चाहि। एहि पक्षिक लेखक सम कित लेल  
तैयार छिि। मैथिली संग खाली भाषक प्रसन नहि छैि, मैथिली ते एकटा साधन धिि, साध्य  
अछि मिथिलाक सर्वणिन विकास।[18]

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[18] Cited in Das, Rajnandan Lal, 2011, p. 34.
[I request to the lovers of Maithili that we should be prepared to talk in a language which the government understand. We should be rady for everything - processions, Satyagraha, blocking the MLAs and MPs, hungerstrike until death, Selfimmolation. The writer of this sentene is ready for everything. With Maithili the question of language is not the only issue, Maithili is only a means, but end is allround development of Mithila. (Emphasis added)]

This last sentence in the above paragraph symbolises a clear shift towards political in the Maithili movement of this area, where the struggle was no longer for the recognition of the Maithili language alone. But it had become a tool for the allround development of the language and the region both. However, this magazine also proved to be very irregular and it could not be published after March – April 1981. Its publication was restarted by some activists of Akhil Bariiya Mithila Sangh in 2004. Its editor was Sri Ramlochan Thakur. But only nine issues could be published. Mithila Darshan was again restarted by Prof. Uday Narayan Singh from May – June, 2009. Since then it has been published regularly as bimonthly. Its executive editor is Sri Ramlochan Thakur. In its new form this magazine has been well managed, published and distributed with estimated circulation of more than four thousands. Establishment of Swasti foundation in 2000 at Kolkata and the beginning of Prabodh Sahitya Samman contributed immensely in the promotion of Maithili literature. The foundation is putting an effort to reward deserving non-Brahmins writers in Maithili as well and promote Maithili literature among them.

One of the oldest and most active organisations in Kolkata Akhil Bhartiya Mithila Sangha was formed in 1957 after the persuasion of Prof. Harimohan Jha, Dr. Brajkishor Verma ‘Manipadma’ and Dr. Lakshman Jha with the merger of Akhil Bhartiya Maithil Sangh (Hereafter, ABMS) and Maithil Lok Sangha. Its contributions in Maithili publications and journalism are enormous. It had published more than 50 books and orchestrated 13 dramas. Publication of Mithila Darshan was the greatest achievement of the Sangha. But soon due to internal differences and groupings a new organisation was formed in January 1959 as Mithila Sanskritik Parishad (Hereafter, MSP). It was formed exclusively for the social, cultural and literary developments. MSP since then

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19 In 2013 this prize was given to Subhash Chandra Yadav.
contributed in many ways in the progress and development of Maithili language and literature. It had celebrated its Golden Jubilee years in 2009. In its Smarika published on the occasion the purpose of the organisation is written as – all-round development of Mithila, discussions on Maithili language and literature, Maithil culture and the economic development of Mithila, preservation and propagation of Mithilakshar, preservation of manuscripts written in Tirhuta script, publications of books and magazines, providing help to schools, colleges, libraries and poor children, etc.\(^\text{20}\) There have been many achievements of MSP significant among them are – preparation of oil portrait of Vidyapati (1960, portrait was prepared by Ramanand Singh of Munger District in Bihar), release of postal stamp of Vidyapati by the department of post, government of India on November 17, 1965\(^\text{21}\), publication of more than 30 Maithili books of which many have been included in the syllabus of universities and Lorik Vijaya by Manipadma is included in Maithili’s syllabus of UPSC, and Naika Banijara by Manipadma was given Sahitya Akademi award. MSP also contributed in the recognition of Maithili by the Sahitya Akademi, Delhi and for such purpose it constantly wrote to the Sahitya Akademi since 1964.\(^\text{22}\) MSP has been a recognised literary association of the Sahitya Akademi since 1965. Similarly it had played an important role in the establishment of Akashwani at Darbhanga, recognition of Maithili as a subject of study at IGNOU, Delhi. Mahendra Narayan Jha was founding member of the Parishad but due to internal differences he was excluded from the Parishad.\(^\text{23}\) He formed a new organisation Maithili Prakashan Samiti (Hereafter, MPS). Its only purpose as the name suggests was the publication of books. It published around ten books\(^\text{24}\). It was an irregular journal and its publication was completely stopped by 1988.\(^\text{25}\) But some of its issues like issue – 17 of January 1975 were important in many ways. In it two major


\(^{21}\) See the exchange of letters between the Mithila Sanskritik Parishad and the government of India, Ibid., pp. 89 – 96.

\(^{22}\) Ibid., pp. 97 – 101.

\(^{23}\) Das, Rajnandan Lal, 2011, p. 38

\(^{24}\) Jha, Govind Jha, Maithilik Udgam O Vikas; ‘Shrutdhar’, Jayakant Jha, Vidyapati Saurabh; Chaudhary, Radha Krishna, Dhammapad; ‘Manipadma’ Raja Salhes and Lavahari – Kushahari; Singh. Arsi Prasad, trs., Meghdoot. Other important contribution of the MPS was publication of a research journal Maithili Prakash; see Das, Rajnandan Lal, 2011.

\(^{25}\) Ibid., p. 38.
issues concerning Maithili were highlighted – first, Maithili should not be used just for poetry, stories, dramas or novels but it must be used for writing texts like History, Geography, Commerce, Economics, Philosophy, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Mathematics and Engineering in Maithili as well; second, due to lack of uniformity of standard style in Maithili, writing style of Pt. Jeevnath Rai, M. M. Umesh Mishra, Prof. Ramanath Jha, Mahavaiyakaran Pt. Deenbandhu Jha, Kanchinath Jha ‘Kiran’ should be followed. This issue of ‘Maithili Prakash’ had the collection of eleven research articles analysing the different aspect of Maithili and Mithila.

There were a number of important magazines published from Kolkata that contributed in the growth of Maithili literature. Though, many of these magazines were short lived, remained irregular and had very limited circulation one major achievement of these efforts were that such magazine were published continuously one after the other since 1950s in almost all the branches of literature. The other major achievement in Kolkata for the Maithili movement was publication of Dainik Mithila Samad in Maithili by Rajendra Narayan Vajpayee. Its editor was Tarakant Jha. Although, this paper is no longer in circulation; its contribution has been significant in arousing the consciousness of Maithils about their language. Although, these magazines and dailies were shortlived and had very limited circulation yet there was an unbroken continuity in such publication.

In Kolkata there were many organisation formed for the political mobilisations of Maithils. One such organisation was Mithila Sangharsha Samiti (Hereafter, MSS). MSS

26 These are – a) Lalit, Lakshman Chaudhari, Vidyapati Padawali O Puran; b) Shrees, Durganath Jha, Sukavi Kamalnayan O Hunak Chari Got Pad; c) ‘Kiran’ Kanchinath Jha, Maithili Bhashak Vyakaran Par Ek Drishti; d) Jha, Amarnath, Mithila me Ram Kathak Parampara; e) Chaudhary, Radhakrishna, Vichar – Vimarsha; f) ‘Manipadma’,Braj Kishor Verma, Maithili Lokgathak Itihas; g) Jeevakant, Maithilik Adhunik Katha Sahitya; h) Jha, Ranjana, Patrahiin Nagna Gachhak Kavya Vaitbhav; i) Jha, Rajeshwa, Gam Saun Sambadh Pratyant Shabdak Vivechana; j) Thakur, Vishwanath, Darshanik Shiromani Vachaspati; k) Mishra, Jayakant Mishra, Katok Maithili Shabda Sahbh Rochak Byutpata, see, Ibid.

27 Like – Akhar (1967); Maithili Kavita (Apr, 1968); Lok Manch (Sept – Oct, 1969); Mi (1970, mini Maithili magazine its total shape was 10/6 cm); Agni Patra (Feb, 1973); Rangamanch (1974); Shikha (May, 1974); Shulfa (Handwritten, May 1975); Deskosha (May 1, 1981); Karnamrit (1981); Desil Bayna (Oct, 1981); Pravasak Bherent; Mithila Sangya (Apr, 1994); Mithila Samad (Sept, 1994); Mithila Chetna (Apr, 1997); Mithila Chamber Sanes (2000); Shri Mithila (2002); Bhorukba (Vaisakh, 2058); Dainik Mithila Samad (Aug 31, 2008); For details about these magazines contributions in Maithili literature see, Das, Rajnandan Lal, 2011, pp. 32 – 44.

28 Another daily Maithili newspaper has been published from Darbhanga by the name of Mithila Awaz (Dec, 2012). Although, the circulation of this newspaper is limited, however it ends the need for a daily newspaper in Maithili.
was formed in 1974 to politically strengthen the Maithili movement. There were internal tensions within the Maithili movement. There were groups like MSS which wanted to make the Maithili movement more and more political whereas other groups like MSP wanted to focus more on cultural and literary development of Maithili. This resulted in the fierce rivalry between the two groups. Once MSS planned to protest before the governor of Bengal against the decision of the Karpuri Thakur’s Government in Bihar to do away with Maithili from the syllabus of matriculations and expected that in a function of MSP at Vishudhanand School an announcement to this effect would be made. But many activists of the MSP were against such announcement and that resulted in major scuffle between the members of the MSP and MSS. However, on September 3, 1978 a protest march was organised by MSS. This protest march was started from Rajendra Chhatravas (hostel), and from Grace Cinema turned towards Mahatma Gandhi Road and from Chitranjan Avenue roundabout gathered at Girish Park. There were apprehensions that some member of MSP tried to misguide the protesters as well. However, according to Kamlesh Jha the protest was successful. From Girishpark some of the protesters went to Rajbhawan (Esplanade East) under the leadership of Mithlendu, Sharat Chandra Mishra, Srimati Prabha Mishra, kamlesh Jha etc. They gave the memorandum to the Secretary of the Governor and were assured by him that he would write to the central government for this mistake of the government of Bihar. The slogans of the protest were – बिहार सरकार मुद्दाबाद, संघर्ष समिति जिंदाबाद, मैथिली मान्यता देखवा पड़े।

[Government of Bihar down down, Longlive Sangharsha Samiti, Recognition of Maithili they would be compelled to give]

Then a delegation, consisted of Sharad Chandra Mishra, Kamlesh Jha, Shrideva Jha, Javed Athar went to Patna to meet the Chief Minister of Bihar, Karpuri Thakur and to present before him the grievances of Maithili. They presented a memorandum to Karpuri Thakur, then CM of Bihar. It is possible that this might be one of the reasons

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30 Ibid., p. 27.
for Karpuri Thakur to write a letter to the then Law minister of India, Shanti Bhushan. Karpuri Thakur recommended the inclusion of Maithili in the eighth schedule of the constitution in that letter.\textsuperscript{31} Kamlesh Jha in his memoirs also mentioned that in Patna they did not get the desired support from \textit{Chetna Samiti}, Patna. It reflects the lack of the coordination and cooperation among the Maithili organisations even they were all fighting for the cause of Mithila and Maithili.

In 1980 Jagannath Mishra became the chief minister of Bihar, though he was a Maithili speaker and well aware about the demand of Maithili for the recognition of the second official language in the state of Bihar, he recognised Urdu as the second language in the state. It created big uproar among the Maithili speakers. \textit{All India Maithil Sangh} (Hereafter, \textit{AIMS}), \textit{ABMS}, \textit{MSP} and \textit{MSS} came together and formed a new organisation \textit{Maithili Mukti Morcha}. Its co-ordinator was Ramlochan Thakur and deputy co-ordinators were Kamlesh Jha and Ashok, Kishori Kant was treasurer.\textsuperscript{32} It was a new shift in the Maithili movement where so many organisations came together on a common platform and participated in a huge rally at Patna on December 9, 1980. Police resorted to lathicharge and many Maithils like Shushil Jha and Vijay Kumar were seriously injured. The major achievement of the protest was that the issue of Maithili and Mithila became politically very charged since then. Many political parties particularly \textit{Bhartiya Janta Party} (Hereafter, \textit{BJP}) took very keen interest in the issue. Similarly \textit{Communist Party of India} (Hereafter, \textit{CPI}) under Bhogendra Jha and to a certain extant even \textit{Indian National Congress} took interest in Mithila and Maithili issue. I shall discuss this in later part of this chapter. Though, Maithili and Mithila had always been a political issue but since 1980s it acquired strength of a different kind. Even some parties were formed solely for the purpose of Mithila and Maithili. Like during general election of 1980 \textit{MSS} supported Vishnu Deva Jha ‘Vikal’ of \textit{Mithila Congress}, as a candidate for Bihar Legislative Assembly from Ghanshyampur region of Darbhanga District in Bihar. In this election \textit{MSS} published ‘\textit{ghoshnapatra}’ (Declarations) for the candidate and workers of the \textit{MSS} under the leadership of Sharad Chandra Mishra did

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{31} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{32} Ibid., p. 28.
\end{flushright}
campaigning for the candidate. Another Political Parties formed for the sole purpose of promoting the cause of Mithila and Maithili is Akhil Bharatiya Mithila Party. Another shift in the movement since 1980s is to mobilise the masses on the agendas and issues concerning them. In this connection Rail Roko, Rasta Rekho, Sansad Gherao, Bihar Band, Mithila Band and many such methods has been used. One of the most important protest and mobilisation in this period was concerning better and standard rail facility for Mithila. On Dec 6, 1981 a huge protest was registered at Howrah station. In 1986 under the leadership of Dr. Jayakant Mishra a public awareness campaign was launched to persuade the teachers of Mithila for the implementation of Maithili as a medium of instruction at the primary schools in Mithila. A Maithil Mahasangh was also constituted at Patna in 1983 at the initiative of Mritunjaya Narayan Mishra with the active participation of Pitambar Pathak and many Maithili activists and organisations from Kolkata. Its chairman was Mritunjaya Narayan Mishra, and pro-chairmen were Acharya Surendra Jha ‘Suman’, Babu Saheb Chaudhary, Dr. Jayakant Mishra. From Kolkata four organisations registered with the Mahasangh – ABMS, AIMS, MSS, and Navajagaran Maithil Sangh. The very constitution of the Mahasangh reflected the willingness among the Maithili organisations to work together. It was able to organise a protest in Patna. It also published a magazine – Koshi–Kusum a brief period. However, this was a short lived organisation and became completely inactive after 1985.

It was also a period when Mithila Vikash Parishad (Hereafter MVP) was formed by Ashok Jha in 1983. It has been a very active organisation since then. It played an important role in the recognition of Maithili in the eighth schedule of Indian constitution. It was due to the persuasion of this organisation that Trinmul Congress MP Sunil Bandopadhyaya first raised the question in Indian parliament then other members like C. P. Thakur and others from Mithila took up the issue. In this connection the role of Vidyapati Seva Sansthan (Hereafter, VSS) and Baidyanath Chaudhary Baiju was remarkable. I will discuss VSS role

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33 Ibid.
34 Ibid.
36 Ibid., p. 29.
37 Ibid.
in the latter part of the chapter. Other important achievement of the MVP is installation of Vidyapati and Nagarjuna statue in public parks of Kolkata.

Other remarkable achievement of Kolkata’s organisation was presenting a memorandum to then Prime minister of India V. P. Singh for the inclusion of Maithili in the eighth schedule of the Indian constitution. Bhogendra Jha took the initiative and invited Babu Saheb Chaudhary, leader of the ABMS to present the memorandum. A delegation led by Babu Saheba Chaudhary visited Delhi.\textsuperscript{38} Under the leadership of the MPs – Bhogendra Jha, Hukumdeva Narayan Yadav, Devendra Yadav the representatives of ABMS, Delhi – Vijay Chandra Jha, Ashutosh Kumar Jha and others presented the memorandum to then Prime Minister of India, Vishwanath Pratap Singh.\textsuperscript{39}

The unique feature of the Maithili movement in Kolkata was that it was able to cut across caste and class hierarchy. Although the organisations and leaderships were dominated by the upper caste Brahmins and Kayastha but in the events and the celebrations there were participation from all the Maithili speaking caste and class residing in Mithila. There was participation from university professors, to journalists to bus conductors to taxi drivers. It is possible that away from the Maithili speech area Kolkata provided the space for the Maithili speakers to not to observe the social division based on caste and class in the same form as they used to observe it in the mainland. Maithili might have become the only basis for their social interaction. It is also possible that observing the social and cultural activities of the Bengalis Maithili speakers have also realised the importance of Maithili literature, culture and lifestyle, which otherwise they would not have cared in mainland Mithila. The major achievements of Kolkata’s Maithili organisations were not only a large number of literary publication and cultural celebrations but also their attempts to mobilise the Maithili speaking masses politically. For many decades and more actively since Indian independence Kolkata became the centre of Mithila’s and Maithili’s activities.

\textsuperscript{38} Other members of the delegaton were were – Pitambar Pathak, Kamlesh Jha, Mithilesh Kumar Jha, Lokeshnath Jha, Vijay and some representatives of Mithila Udaya Sangh, see, Jha, Kamlesh, 2011, p. 30. 
\textsuperscript{39} Ibid.
5.3 Maithili’s Enumeration and the Census: the Contributions of Akhil Bhartiya Maithili Sahitya Parishad

Census has played a critical role in the classification of languages and ‘dialects’ in India. It seriously affected the prospect of a language or ‘dialect’. The language and ‘dialect’ distinction has always been contentious. Since the first Census in 1872 language was a matter of great interest, not as a phenomenon in itself, rather as an index of nationality and a measure of population change. In the case of Maithili, though both Grierson and Census commissioner agreed that Maithili was a regional ‘dialect’; they differed, however, in what it was a dialect of. For Grierson, Maithili was a dialect of Bihari, but for census commissioner it was a dialect of Hindi. The issue of language was important for the colonial administrators in order to classify the communities in India according to the number of the speakers of a particular language. About 1881 Census Richard Burghart writes that it ‘retains a keen interest in nationalities, but more for the control of the populations than for glorification of the Raj. Language and birthplace were taken as the key indicators by which nationality might be determined’.40 The issue of language and ‘dialect’ has been far from settled in census enumerations. In the 1911 census Maithili was Hindi in its wide sense because it was not Bengali; from 1951 Maithili is Hindi in its wide sense because it is important that the national language be the main language in as many areas as possible. According to Burghart ‘the institutional continuity of the census and language policy in the colonial and the post colonial India, including the unchanging classification of Maithili as dialect, implies that census has to do with the way in which modern states construct society as they monitor and control it’.41 ‘The 1951 census’ writes Burghart ‘is of interest as it was the first census of independent India. The ruling Congress Party found itself, however, in a linguistic dilemma. Although the Indian National Congress had committed itself in 1921 to the idea of linguistic provinces in the belief that this was the only way to reach the mass of people in such a culturally diverse land, by the time the Congress Party had assumed power in 1949 the need for a common language to strengthen national unity was also recognized. The language of the former imperial rulers was an inappropriate symbol of national unity and Hindi was the most obvious candidate for elevation of that

41 Ibid., p. 801.
role. Thus there was little reason for the state to recognize Maithili, for such recognition would exacerbate claims for regional autonomy and diminish the officially uncontroversial area where the ‘main language’ and the national language were one and the same. Yet the non-recognition of regional languages by Congress would betray the trust of those people who had fought to free the country of imperial rule’ (see Government of India, 1956). Then to solve this dilemma it was decided that ‘if Hindi was to function as the national language it would have to be the subsidiary language of those region where it was not the main language’. According to Burghart 1951 census returns marked the nadir of the Maithili language movement. It deeply enraged the Maithili speakers. They promoted an unsuccessful attempt to have the residents of Darbhanga and Bhagalpur districts entered ipso facto as Maithili speakers. Does not it shows how Maithili language and its speakers were taken for-granted and assimilated within Hindi fold, both by British administrative policy in colonial times and afterthat Post-colonial government in India?

However, these attempts of the government could not demotivate Maithili speakers. They gradually organised themselves to get their language recognised as an independent language of India. A delegation of Chetna Samiti which was comprised of Srikant Thakur ‘Vidyalankar’ (MLC), Dr. Chetkar Jha (MLC), and Amresh Pathak (Organising Secretary, Chetna Samiti) met Mr. B. L. Das on January 15, 1971 to request him to get the speakers of Maithili language correctly enumerated in the census of 1971. They complained that Maithili speakers could be 50 lakhs only due to the false enumeration of the 1961 census in which most of the Maithili speakers were enumerated as the Hindi speakers by the census officials.

Table 2: Census Figures for Maithili (1971 - 2001)

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<tr>
<td>Maithili Speakers</td>
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<td>7, 522, 265</td>
<td>7, 766, 921</td>
<td>12, 179, 122</td>
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[Source: Census of India 2001, Paper 1 of 2007 Language India, States and Union Territories, Table C-16, Office of the Registrar General, India, p. 13, It is to be noted that Census figure of 1971 – 1991 for Maithili was extracted from Hindi within which Maithili was enumerated as a mother tongue]

42 Ibid., p. 787.
43 Indian Nation, Jan 1, 1971.
Seventeenth session\textsuperscript{44} of the Akhil Bhartiya Maithili Sahitya Parishad (Hereafter, ABMSP) of Darbhanga was imperative in various ways. Nature and the directions of the Maithili movement thoroughly discussed in this session and the uneasy relationship in the Maithili movement between political leaders and the literary elites of the region resurfaced. In his welcome address Dr. Vishwambhar Jha expressed that had Maithili and Mithilakshar been used as the language of administration even in Raj Darbhanga, the consciousness about the language among the masses would have been developed much earlier. He lamented Maithil Mahasabha for not passing even a single resolution for such purpose. Though, he believed that language consciousness was developing more and more but expected it to be duly channelized and organised. He thought of language as a public property that requires the contribution of every groups and classes. He also felt the threat from the caste and class based struggles and hoped that ABMSP would be spared from those divisive politics.\textsuperscript{45} He also regretted that the session of the ABMSP was not held for nine years. He regretted even more the inactiveness of ABMSP when it comes to the question of Maithili’s recognition in the eighth schedule, political conspiracy in Bihar for the recognition of Urdu and not of Maithili, and the imaginary naming of the language of Bhagalpur as Angika.\textsuperscript{46} Maithili Sahitya Parishad (Hereafter, MSP) used to conduct examination in Maithili literature. It was first started by Parmakant Chaudhary and Dr. Subhadra Jha used to be its examiner. Then Prof. Shrikrishna Mishra shouldered that responsibility when Dr. Subhadra Jha went to Paris for research. This examination was conducted till the premiership (The main office bearer of the Parishad were called Pradhanmantri) of Kanchinath Jha ‘Kiran’. Mahavaiyakaran Pt. Deenbandhu Jha was its Pariksha Mantri (Minister of examination). Thereafter such examination was stopped. Prof. Shrikrishna Mishra believed that it was important for Maithili to become a medium for the subjects like history, geography, Politics, economics, philosophy, science. For such purpose Maithili

\textsuperscript{44} Though it is also considered as the thirty seventh session of the Parishad, as it was the thirty seventh year of its existence and it was supposed to hold a session annually. But many annual sessions were not held at all. See, ‘Amar’, Chandranath Mishra, Maithili Sahitya Parishadak Sankshipta Ithias, and Smarika, Akhil Bhartiya Maithili Sahitya Parishad, Lakshmiwati Nagar (Sarisab Pahi) session, chief ed., Sadan Mishra, Laheriasarai, Nav Bharat Press, 1968.

\textsuperscript{45} Ibid., Welcome Speech of Dr. Vishwambhar Jha, pp. 2 – 7.

\textsuperscript{46} Ibid., p. 7, it is well established fact by the many philologists including Grierson, Subhadra Jha and others that language spoken in the Bhagalpur and its adjoining areas are the dialect of Maithili. Now it is a recognized subject of study at Tilaka Manjhi Bhagalpur University from 10 June, 2002.
Vidyapeeth was established. And the examination was restarted. He claims that despite the lack of fund, without even a single permanent employee, without a proper office, without the recognition of government or of any University, in 1963 and in 1965 twice examination were held successfully at 15 and 19 centres respectively. In 1965 for Prathma 290, for Madhyama 88, and for Uttma 6 students were appeared for the examination.\(^{47}\) Principal of Chandradhari Mithila College Dr. Lakshmikant Mishra and Prof. Prabodhnarayan Singh of Kolakata University actively supported this initiative. And it was believed that Maithili Vidyapeeth would play a critical role in the acceptance of Maithili as a medium of education in Mithila.\(^ {48}\)

In terms of making representation to the government a delegation of Minister and MLA Prof. Shri Ramakant Mishra and Shri Bachha Thakur in February 1960, on behalf of MSP met the visiting commissioner of minority language at Patna and informed him that the government of Bihar was not providing the facilities available for a minority language to Maithili, a language of majority of speakers in Bihar. The language commissionary merely assured help but nothing actually came out of it.\(^ {49}\) Similarly during the Census of 1961, MSP played an important role in convincing the masses to get Maithili written in the column of mother tongue. And a delegation which included Shri Ramanath Jha and Pt. Shri Surendra Jha ‘Suman’ met the commissioner of Indian Census at Laheriasarai Circuit House and presented before him the anguish of Maithils for Maithili not being enumerated accurately in Census enumeration. They were assured by the commissioner that the census staff would be instructed to not to fill the column of mother tongue on their own volition. In this regard many letters were written to the government of Bihar as well.\(^ {50}\) In the February of 1961 Prof. Nalin Vilochan Sharma, Chairman of Bihar Hindi Sahitya Sammelan (Hereafter, BHSS) made some statements which infuriated many Maithili speakers. Similarly Seth Govind Das and chairman of BHSS Shri Ramdayal Pandey in a meeting of Hindi Prachar Sabha at Darbhanga in January 31, 1968 made a statement about Bihar being a Hindi province and Maithili as a sub-language (Uppbhasha) of Bihar. It was challenged by the Maithili

\(^{47}\) Ibid., pp. 21 – 23.
\(^{48}\) Ibid., pp. 23 – 24.
\(^{49}\) Ibid., p. 25.
\(^{50}\) Ibid., pp. 25 – 26.
supporters and they asserted that such imposition of Hindi would make Maithils, otherwise supporter of Hindi, anti Hindi. Surprisingly Seth Govind Das did not oppose to Maithili being the medium of education at proposed Mithila University but he was opposed to Maithili’s demand for inclusion in the eighth schedule of the constitution.51

Maithili protagonists were unhappy with the conduct of the Bihar Rashtra Bhasha Parishad (Hereafter, BRP). Its project of conducting linguistic survey in Bihar was opposed by them. They wanted it to be conducted by the impartial scholars. They also objected to the policies of BRP which was not only propagating Maithili as the ‘dialects’ of Hindi, but was trying to divide Maithili by classifying the language spoken in Bhagalpur and Muzaffarpur (or Vaishali?) as Angika and Bajjika respectively.52 In the Sarisab session of the ABMSP a discussion was organised on Maithili Andolanak Ruprekha53 (An Outline of the Maithili movement). The main theme of the discussion was whether the Maithili movement should become political or not? Many scholars – Jayadhari Singh, Dr. Braj Kishore Verma, Harinath Mishra, Prof. Kanchinath Jha ‘Kiran’, Prof. Madhava Narayan Jha, Ugranarayan Mishra ‘Kanak’, and Pradeep ‘Maithili Putra’ believed that for the Maithili movement to grow the political support was inevitable. While there were others like Ramanath Jha, who believed that politics and literature being two separate domains should not be mixed. He urged that the platform of MSP should not be used for the politics. While there were others – Narendranath Das ‘Vidyalankar’, Devnarayan Jha, Prof. Chetkar Jha who focused on the need for the publication of one or two daily newspapers in Maithili, proper arrangement on the part of government and the guardians in Mithila region to implement Maithili as a medium of instruction at primary level of education. They also reminded Maithils to use Maithili in public confidently and with passion.54

5.4 **Sahitya Akademi: Maithili’s Recognition as a Modern Indian Language**

Recognition of Maithili by the Sahitya Akademi in 1965 was a major achievement in the history of the Maithili movement. The fear among the Maithili protagonists of being

51 Ibid., pp. 26 – 28.
52 Ibid., p. 27.
53 Ibid., pp. 69 – 87.
54 Ibid.
appropriated within Hindi disappeared somewhat and there have been recurrent agitations for the other demands on the basis of Maithili and Mithila. The central demand however was inclusion of Maithili in the eighth schedule of the Indian constitution. Maithils were disappointed by not finding the name of Maithili in the eighth schedule of the Indian constitution. It was far more disappointing for them when even *Sahitya Akademi* did not find it necessary to recognise Maithili as an independent modern Indian language. In the *Sahitya Akademi* confusion prevailed over a long time regarding the status of Maithili. In its Annual Report 1961 some classics of Maithili is regarded as Hindi and Bengali simultaneously.\(^55\) In a meeting of its executive Board in 1957 a decision was taken in which it was said that “language like Maithili and Rajasthani did not need a separate programme as they could be well covered by the Akademi’s programme in Hindi”.\(^56\) Jayakant Mishra was of the opinion that if Maithili representative were present in the Board such erroneous decision could have been rectified. It was due to sheer confusion and vagueness about Maithili that *Sahitya Akademi* undermined its independent existence, which has a literary tradition of over 700 years. However, the *Akademi* tried to promote Maithili within Hindi programme and translations of the some to the classics of Maithili were included into its translation programmes. Similarly a small prize of Rs. 500 was awarded to renowned Maithili poet Kavichudamani Kashikant Mishra ‘Madhup’ for his poem *Kobar-gita*.\(^57\) But *Sahitya Akademi* could not do much to promote Maithili as an independent Modern Indian Languages on the par with – Bengali, Marathi, Oriya, Hindi, Gujrati, Assames etc. Its argument was that unless it was recognised by the eighth schedule of Indian Constitution, it could not be treated as a separate language. But according to Jayakant Mishra, though that was an unfortunate mistake but to rectify them was a political matter and required political mobilisation and consensus. However, *Sahitya Akademi* being a literary body could recognise it as it had done in the case of Sindhi and English.\(^58\) Jayakant Mishra when elected to the General Council of *Sahitya Akademi* in 1963, moved following resolution for the recognition of Maithili – “Resolved that, like


\(^{56}\) Quoted in Ibid., p. 18.

\(^{57}\) Ibid., p. 3.

\(^{58}\) Ibid.
English and Sindhi, Maithili be recognised as an independent regional modern Indian language of the state of Bihar on a par with Gujrati, Assamese, Oriya etc., and not mixed up with Bengali and Hindi as at present (vide: “Sahitya Akademi Report” for 1961 Hindi version pp. 4-5 and programme of translations form Hindi including Vidyapati p. 109 and that of translations from Bengali including selections from Vidyapati p. 113).”\(^{59}\) Then he went on to quote Grierson’s and Suniti Kumar Chatterjee’s expressions on Maithili to support its claim as an independent language. For Grierson – “Maithili is a language and not a dialect...It differs from Hindi and Bengali both in vocabulary and in grammar, and is as much a distinct language from either of them as Marathi or Uriya.”\(^{60}\) Similarly for Suniti Kumar Chatterjee – “Maithili is a language by itself, with its own special characteristics. It is a language which has got a character of its own....*By any stretch of imaginaction it cannot be described as a dialect of Hindi.* It has a literature which goes back to at least the beginning of the 14\(^{th}\) century and down through these centuries it has never ceased to be cultivated by its speakers.”\(^{61}\) (Italic in original)

Jayakant Mishra challenged those for whom recognition of languages like Maithili may weaken the unity and integrity of India. In this connection he quotes the presidential address of the Non Local Language Section of the All India Oriental Conference, 1941 Dr. Babu Ram Saxena, - “I believe that it is very much more convenient to have a neighbouring literary form of language as the medium rather than give the position to an international language, 6000 miles away from our land. With this belief, I put forward the suggestion in all humility that the people of Bihar should consider the plea for Hindi to replace English and the people of Assam should consider the advisability of having Bengali. I know the strength of sentiment in Mithila and Assam in favour of the mother tongue, but whether Assam with 20 lacs of speakers of Assames and Mithila with a small proportion of speakers of Maithili in comparison with the numerous speakers of the other two dialects, Bhojpuri and Magadhi, in the province of Bihar, could press their claims with any practical advantage is for them to consider.”\(^{62}\)

\(^{59}\) Cited in Ibid., p. 2.
\(^{60}\) Grierson, George A., *Maithili Grammar*, p. 2; cited in Ibid., p. 5.
\(^{61}\) Cited in Ibid., p. 6.
\(^{62}\) Ibid., p. 10.
Dr. Jayakant Mishra considered such argument as unfortunate and citing the recognition of Assames by the *Sahitya Akademi* asserted that such argument could not be held. For him it was the absence of recognition that might weaken the unity of the nation and not the other way round. Though he rejected the ‘violent and agitational approach’ and Maithils were very much against such move, he believed that ‘reasonable and equitious attitude’ was always better. Though, he warned that it would be a mistake to underestimate the feelings of Maithili speakers because of their peaceful approach for the recognition of their language.63

Two other important events that helped in the recognition of Maithili by the *Sahitya Akademi* were – *Postcard movement* and *New Delhi Book Exhibition of Maithili Books and Manuscripts*. New Delhi Book exhibition which was held at Indraprastha Estate’s Azad Bhawan from Dec. 09 – 11, 1963 for three days, was organised by Dr. Jayakant Mishra and was inaugurated by the Prime Minister Jawahar Lal Nehru. It was exceptionally successful exhibition and Nehru was personally impressed by the sweetness of the Maithili language and its rich literary tradition. In his remarks he said –

“I was happy to inaugurate yesterday the Maithili Book exhibition and to see the large collection of books and manuscripts in Maithili. This demonstrates that Maithili has been for a long time and is today a living language among the people of this area. The language deserves encouragement and this can best be done by good books being written in it.  
Dec. 10, 1963

*Sd/- Jawahar Lal Nehru*”64

This paved the way for the recognition of Maithili by the *Sahitya Akademi* as one of the modern Indian Languages in 1965. The role of Dr. Jayakant Mishra was significant in the recognition of Maithili by the *Sahitya Akademi*, though other individuals and organisations were also pressing this demand for the long time. One of such organisations was *MSP*, Kolkata. Mahendra Narayan Jha, the Secretary of *MSP* had written a series of letters to the *Sahitya Akademi* since May 8, 1964. Its contributions

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63 Ibid.
were recognised by the *Akademi* as a literary body of Maithili.\(^{65}\) Internal rivalry also came at the fore once again and it is believed that due to personal reason Dr. Subhadra Jha, whose work *Formation of Maithili Language*, is considered foundational work on the study of Maithili language and grammar, was not very supportive of Maithili’s recognition by the *Sahitya Akademi*. However, due to persuasion and requeste Dr. Subhadra Jha did not object and Maithili was finally recognised by the *Akademi* as a modern Indian language (1965). This was a major victory for the Maithili protagonists. Now they were no longer as anxious about the independent status of Maithili as the used to be a decade before. In the next phase of the movement emphasis was shifted towards more and more space for Maithili – its inclusion in the eighth schedule of the Indian constitution, its use as medium of instruction at primary level of education in Maithili speaking area, and finally there were revival of the demand for the separate statehood of Mithila.

### 5.5 A Deeper Struggle within: Political Leadership of the Region and the Maithili Movement

Maithili organisations and its leaderships were fighting not just anti-Maithili forces in Bihar and other parts of India, but a more intricate practice was also being followed to tackle the internal challenges within the Maithili movement. One of such challenges was assertion of *Angika* and *Vajjika* as a separate language, though it was considered as a part of southern Maithili. A number of Maithili supporters and scholars still believe that *Angika* and *Vajjika* are dialect of Maithili. According to them was promoted to weaken the social base of the Maithili movement. In a meeting of TNB College *MSP*, Bhagalpur on February 11, 1966 in his presidential address Kumar Taranand Sinha said, ‘that B(r)ajika a regional language of Muzaffarpur and Angika of Bhagalpur have been the part of Maithili and as such it required progress and development’.\(^{66}\) Although for the Maithili protagonists the issue of *Angika* and *Bajjika* have been supported and promoted by the government of Bihar and *Bihar Rashtrabhasha Parishad* to weaken the Maithili movement, one can only understand the niceties of such developments historically. In the beginning, people of the region where *Angika* and *Vajjika* are


\(^{66}\) *Searchlight*, Feb 16, 1966.
spoken, were in favour of Hindi to be used as medium of education. They did not support the Maithili leaders when the demand for the use of Maithili as the medium of instruction at primary education was raised in the beginning of twentieth century in Bihar.\textsuperscript{67} Besides the geographical division of Mithila into \textit{Pubairpar} and \textit{Pachhabairpar} – with cultural and social division attached to it, the people of these two regions were already cautious of each other. And when attempts were made to standardise Maithili with a consideration to make the speech form of one particular region \textquote{Punchkoshi}\textsuperscript{68} as standard and undermining the speech form of other regions, it further disconnect them from the Maithili movement. Now with the direct or indirect support of the government of Bihar the speakers of \textit{Angika} and \textit{Vajjika} are making demand for the recognition of their \textquote{language} as independent language.

However, the recognition of Maithili by the \textit{Sahitya Akademi} gave momentum to the Maithili movement. And a number of political parties and leaders began to take interest in Maithili issue. Laying the foundation for the \textit{Maithili Writers Conference} building under the auspices of \textit{Vaidehi Samiti}, Mr. Satyanarain Sinha, former Union Minister for Communication and Parliamentary Affairs and the leader of the Lok Sabha, commended the decision of \textit{Sahitya Akademi} to recognise Maithili as an independent language. According to him the Maithili Book Exhibition, Delhi in 1963 and its inauguration by Jawahar Lal Nehru and also the release of Vidyapati postal stamp by the government of India played a critical role in the recognition of Maithili. He pointed out the step-motherly treatment of Maithili by All India Radio at Patna and exclaimed that the new radio station at Darbhanga alone could solve the problem. He also demanded that text books should be published for primary classes and requested the Education Minister of the Government of Bihar to take necessary steps for the same.\textsuperscript{69} A delegation of students on March 19, 1967 met then education Minister of Bihar, Karpoori Thakur and pressed the demand for the inclusion of Maithili as an optional paper in the competitive examinations of \textit{Bihar Public Service Commission} (Hereafter, \textit{BPSC}). They also told him that delay in the inclusion of Maithili recommended by an expert group constituted by former chief minister of Bihar, Shri Krishna Sinha ‘cause resentment among a large number of Maithili graduates’.\textsuperscript{70}

\textsuperscript{67} For details see chapter – 3. \\
\textsuperscript{68} The region of Darbhanga and Madhubani are generally considered as part of \textit{Panchkoshi}. \\
\textsuperscript{69} \textit{Searchlight}, July 13, 1966. \\
\textsuperscript{70} \textit{Indian Nation}, Mar 20, 1967.
There were interesting developments taking place among the political parties in Bihar with regard to language issue. When non-congress coalition government was formed for the first time in Bihar there were near unanimous consenus among all the political parties in Bihar including Congress, except Janasangh to recognise Urdu as the second Language of the state. This move was opposed by a large number of individuals and groups in Bihar. They believed that such politics on the basis of language may damage the secular framework of society and would be a step further in communalising the language. They asserted that language belongs to everyone inhabiting the region and it did not divide them on the basis of religion or caste. They cited the example of Bengali spoken by Bengali Hindu and Muslim alike. They also asserted that Muslims living in the villages, away from urban areas speak the same language as other villagers do. Those languages in Bihar are Maithili, Magahi, Bhojpuri, Santhali and other Tribal languages. Second opposition was that it would lead to same kind of demand by the Maithils, Bengalis, Bhojpuris, Magadhis and other people of Bihar. So if Urdu was to be recognised as the second language of the state then these other languages should be granted the same status too. Madan Prasad Srivastava, Secretary of the Nagar Vidyarthi Parishad, Darbhanga ‘vehemently opposed the coalition Government’s proposal to recognise Urdu as second official language, and pleaded that only that language should be allowed that honour which was spoken by majority of the people of the state. He claimed that Maithili was the language of more than half of the total population of the state of Bihar and as such Maithili alone deserve to occupy the place of second official language’. The demand for the recognition of Maithili as the second official language in the state of Bihar was also put forward by the All India Maithil Mahasabha (Hereafter, AIMM) in its meeting on March 19, 1967 at Laherisarai. This meeting was presided over by Krishnanandan Singh of Raghopur Deorhi and most of the participants were lawyers and University teachers and professors. Meanwhile a new organisation was formed at Darbhanga by the name of Mithila Maha Parishad with a broader outlook. This meeting was presided over by Dr. Shailendra Mohan Jha and many university teachers and advocates besides others also presented their views. They believed that a broader outlook was needed in the movement as it was limited to the

71 Indian Nation, May 4, 1967.
72 Searchlight, Mar 24, 1967.
issue of Maithili alone and this keep a large section of the population in the region indifferent to the development of Mithila and Maithili. Many new proposals also came in during this period like the newly constituted AIMM in a meeting under the chairmanship of Rajkumar Subheshwar Singh proposed to establish a Maithili Anusandhan Samiti, (Maithili Research Committee) similarly on the occasion of the annual Vidyapati festival at Bisfi on June 15, 1967 the Commissioner of the Tirhut Division, N. P. Sinha urged for the construction of a Research Institute on Vidyapati.

In the meanwhile a statement of the then education minister of Bihar, Karpoori Thakur, himself a Maithili speaker, in Bihar Assembly on July 10, 1967 caused uproar among the speakers of Maithili and its supporters. During the question hour session replying to the question put up by Nagendra Jha, the minister said ‘there were practical difficulties and complications in making Maithili as second language as the Government would have to concede to the demands and claims of other dialects’. He further said that the government was considering the demand of Urdu for other reason to fulfil the constitutional obligations to protect the language and culture of the minority. More than his rationale it was the facts and figures about the Maithili speakers that he presented in the Vidhan Sabha that infuriated Maithili speakers. According to him – ‘In Bihar there were 78 lakh Bhojpuri speaking people, 28 lakh Magahi speaking, 49 lakh Maithili speaking, 41 lakh Urdu speaking, 11 lakh Bangla speaking and 2.5 crore Hindi speaking people’.

This stand of Karpoori Thakur was ridiculed by scholars like Ramanath Jha, Member of Sahitya Akademi, Dr. Upendra Thakur, Magadh University, Gaya, A group of eleven scholars and a separate essay in protest was published by Purushottam Jha, General Secretary, All India Maithili Mahasabha.
Darbhanga.\footnote{See Indian Nation, July 29, 1967.} It reflects the unanimous protest by the scholars across the disciplines against the anti Maithili stand of the government of Bihar. Similarly a memorandum was submitted by \textit{Maithili Sangram Samiti}, Calcutta to the members of Parliament through the speaker explaining the biased approach and the conspiracy of the government against Maithili.\footnote{Indian Nation, July 21, 1967.} Prof. Purushottam Jha, Secretary, \textit{All India Maithil Mahasabha} complained regarding the discriminatory practices of the state government with regard to the Maithili speaking people of north Bihar.\footnote{Indian Nation, May 5, 1967.}

\textbf{Table 3: Regional Disparities between North and South Bihar}

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>North Bihar</th>
<th>South Bihar</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Radio Station</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universities</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Medical College</td>
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<td>Engineering Colleges</td>
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<td>Veterinary Colleges</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agricultural Colleges</td>
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[Source: Indian Nation, May 5, 1967]

Similarly with regards to road and rail communication north Bihar was lagging behind. ‘It was not possible for a person to travel by road from Purnea to Champaran...while the whole of south Bihar was linked with broad gauge railway line in north Bihar...cover only a length of 60 kilo metres...’\footnote{Ibid.} So now they tried to mobilisations and agitations was not limited to the issue of Maithili language alone.

The move of the government to recognise Urdu as the second language of the state of Bihar was opposed in a public meeting organised at the Town Hall at Monghyr. Expressing about the complication of having two official languages principal Kapil of R. D. College Monghyr said that recognition of Urdu would not even benefit all the Muslims. He asserted that Muslims living in Mithila and Bhojpur speak Maithili and Bhojpuri and not Urdu. Hence the move of government to yield to the communal threat
would result in stiff opposition from the Maithili and Bhojpuri speakers.\textsuperscript{84} Similarly in meeting at Rajendra Bhawan, Darbhanga organised under the auspices of \textit{Maithili Pracharak Sangh} the demand was repeated for the status of Maithili as the second language of the state. The meeting also demanded for the inclusion of Maithili as an optional subject by the \textit{BPSC}, establishment of Radio station and a University at Darbhanga and the facilities of teaching up to middle standard in Maithili medium.\textsuperscript{85}

\textit{Mithila Chatra Sangh}, Muzaffarpur organised \textit{Maithili Bhasha Vikas Sammelan} on August 13, 1967 at Theosophical Hall in Muzzafarpur. The \textit{Sammelan} was chaired by Kumar Ratneshwari Nandan Sinha. He stressed on the importance of the Maithili language and demanded its inclusion in the eighth schedule of the Indian constitution. The Secretary of the \textit{Mithila Chatra Sangh} said that ‘non-recognition of Maithili by the Government would cause upheaval among the youths of this part of country and it must be placed on the 8\textsuperscript{th} Schedule of the Indian Constitution’.\textsuperscript{86} Speaking on the occasion Dr. Braj Kishore Verma ‘deprecated the mentality of the Hindi protagonists to superimpose Hindi on the people of Mithila residing in the vast region extending from the Himalayas to the Gangetic belt and Purnea to Motihari’.\textsuperscript{87} Binodanand Jha was also present on the occasion and in his speech ‘declared that Maithili had been the source of inspiration to Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore and poet Sankardeo of Assam.’\textsuperscript{88} Demand for the inclusion of Maithili in the eighth schedule of the Indian constitution was also supported by about 100 legislators of the Maithili speaking area in a conference at Patna on July 27, 1967 organised by \textit{Chetna Samiti}. The conference was chaired by the speaker of the Bihar Assembly, Dhanik Lal Mandal. ‘By another resolution the conference urged the government to make Maithili an optional subject in Bihar Public Service Commission examinations. It also urged the Government to implement its earlier decision without further delay to make Maithili compulsory subject of study at primary stages’.\textsuperscript{89} According to Dhanik Lal Mandal, Maithili would be able to get its due on its own merits, as it was spoken by more than two crore people of Bihar.

\textsuperscript{84} \textit{Searchlight}, Aug 17, 1967.
\textsuperscript{85} \textit{Searchlight}, Aug 12, 1967
\textsuperscript{86} \textit{Searchlight}, (unclear Aug 15, 1967; but Paul Brass has written Aug 18, 1967)
\textsuperscript{87} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{88} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{89} \textit{Indian Nation}, July 28, 1967.
Harinath Mihsra, former cooperative minister of the government of the Bihar regretted that Dogari spoken by not more than forty to fifty lakh people was going to be included in the eighth schedule but Maithili being spoken by more than two crore of people of Bihar had been left out. Raj Kumar Purbe of CPI demanded that Maithili should be compulsorily taught in the primary stages in Maithili speaking area.\footnote{Ibid., some important figure who supported the demand of Maithili were – M. P. Sinha, then leader of Opposition in Bihar Assembly, Tej Narayn Jha (Communist Party), Dumar Lal Baitha, Ramesh Jha, Shrimati Kishori Devi, Brinda Pd, Rai Birendra, Mahabir Prasad Yadav, Sami Nadis, Chandreshwar, Narayan Prasad Singh, Basistha Narayan Singh, Rama Kant Jha, Saffikulla Ansari, Kedar Pandey, Badri Mehra, Pramod Kumar Mishra, Ram Krishna Mahto, Prof. Anirudh Jha and others. This clearly signifies that Maithili was gaining its ground among the political leaders of all the parties and all the castes of Maithili speaking area.} In another attempt in a meeting of over 400 Maithili speaking students at Patna, \textit{Bihar Prantiya Maithili Bhashi Chhatra Sangharsha Samiti} was formed on July 22, 1967. It urged its member to be prepared for the sacrifice for the due recognition of their mother tongue Maithili. They believed that then non-congress government of Bihar like the Congress government was apathetic to the demands of Maithili. Their twofold demands were – recognition of Maithili as an optional subject by the BPSC; and second, recognition of Maithili as the second official language of the state.\footnote{Its office-bearers were – President – Dinesh Chandra Mishra, Vice-President – Indranath Thakur, Secretary – Shyama Nand Mishra, Joint-Secretary – Kamla Kant Mishra, Publicity Secretary – Maithili Saran Prasad Karm, Treasurer – Prabodh Jha and Jayanand Jha; see \textit{Indian Nation}, July 24, 1967.}

Considering the linguistic complexity of the state and dubious enumeration by the Census officers the government of Bihar undertook the task of a fresh linguistic survey of Bihar. The Board of Control of \textit{Bihar Rashtrabhasha Parishad} in its meeting on July 28, 1967 ‘decided to conduct a systematic and scientific survey of all the languages and dialects of Bihar... A subcommittee under the chairmanship of Dr. L. N. Sudhanshu was set up to guide the survey work.’\footnote{\textit{Indian Nation}, July 29, 1967.} There were opposition to the conduct of this survey like Purushottam Jha, General Secretary; \textit{All India Maithil Mahasabha} expressed that instead of promoting the languages of Bihar by opening up academies for them ‘the state government has taken up the impossible task of linguistic survey and dividing the people into various groups which will not contribute anything either to the unity or to the general well-being of the state’.\footnote{\textit{Searchlight}, Jan 16, 1968.} Similarly Bhagya Narayan Jha, Joint Secretary, \textit{Chetna Samiti} opposed the appointment of Dr. Lakshmi Narayan Sudhanshu – former
speaker of the Bihar Legislative Assembly, as the chairman of the subcommittee. He expressed that L. N. Sudhanbshu – a Maithili speaker himself was famous for his anti-Maithili stand and was a strong protagonist of Hindi. Further he asserted that L. N. Sudhanshu was a controversial figure on the language issues and was not a recognised linguist but a politician and known protagonist of ‘Angika’. Bhagya Narayan Jha asserted that it ‘arouses suspicion and confusion among the Maithili speaking people of the state’ and went on to say that ‘we Maithili speaking people do not know what is Angika or Bajjika. This is definitely an attempt to damage the cause of Maithili which is spoken in Purnea, Saharsa, Muzaffarpur, north Monghyr, north Bhagalpur, Darbhanga and Santhal Pargana districts with slight variations in the accent’. He wanted the linguists of repute either from West Bengal or from South India should be entrusted with the task of linguistic survey. He demanded that until such persons were appointed the Linguistic Survey in Bihar should be stopped.

There was also a growing belief among the Maithili speakers that agitation alone would force the government to include Maithili in the eighth schedule of the constitution and not the promises by the politicians. Nagarjun, a well known Hindi poet demanded on the occasion of Vidyapati Parv at Bhagalpur in February, 1968 that Maithili needed all the help and cooperation from the government and the people to develop. He also said that Hindi cannot flourish so long as regional languages were not developed. During the third All India Maithili Writers Conference at Darbhanga they apprehended that anti Maithili agitations were still active in Bihar. Inaugurating the Conference Kumar Ganganand Singh then the V. C. of Kameshwar Singh Sanskrit University, Darbhanga stressed the need for combined effort to produce standard books in Maithili for the proper growth and development of Maithili language. Jayakant Mishra, President of All India Maithili Sahitya Samiti, Allahabad urged the Maithili speakers ‘to face the anti Maithili agitations boldly’. Deva Narain Jha of All India Maithili Lok Sangha, Calcutta (now Kolkata) similarly urged the people ‘to fight for the rightful existence and development of Maithili

94 Searchlight, Jan 11, 1968.
95 Ibid.
96 Searchlight, Jan 23, 1968.
97 Searchlight, Jan 22, 1968.
99 Ibid.
Ramanath Jha lamented the non-implementation of Maithili medium at the primary stage by the Bihar government. There was stress on the revival of Maithili script by Krishnanandan Singh, who presided over the conference.

In another meeting organised by *Mithila Seva Sangh*, at Rajendra Bhawan, Darbhanga under the chairmanship of Bhola Nath Mishra the need for strong agitation was reasserted. They warned the government that if the long standing demands like – inclusion of Maithili in the eighth schedule of the constitution, Maithili as a subject in BPSC and imparting of education at the primary stage through the medium of Maithili – were not met ‘a strong mass agitation had to be organised for the purpose throughout the Maithili speaking region...’ Demand for the inclusion of Maithili in the eighth schedule to the constitution was reiterated by Ramanath Jha, Representative of Maithili in *Sahitya Akademi*. He was agitated by the decision of then Minister of Education, government of India, Prof. Sher Singh, to not to give Maithili representation in *Bharatiya Bhasha Samiti-* a committee constituted for the development of Indian languages, as Maithili was not included in the eighth schedule of the Indian Constitution. Though, Ramanth Jha presented a memorandum in this regard which was ‘backed by the thirteen legislators of Bihar and recommended by Sahitya Akademi’ still the memorandum was not accepted. He expressed in the memorandum that it may further agitate the speaker to launch mass movement for their legitimate demand. He exclaimed that ‘recognition by Sahitya Akademi has turned out to be without any substance, only a sop to satisfy and quieten us for the time being.’ In a rally on August 09, 1968 to be organised by *Akhil Bharatiya Maithili Mahasangh* at Patna and decided to present signatures of one lakh Maithili speakers to the state government in support of its eleven point demands. However it is reported that *ABMM* submitted a memorandum to the Governor of Bihar on August 10, 1968 in support of their eleven

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100 Ibid.
101 Ibid.
102 *Searchlight*, June 9, 1968.
103 *Indian Nation*, July 1, 1968.
104 Ibid.
point demands. The other demands were – Maithili as one of the state language along with Hindi as its speakers were more than fifty percent of the population in the state of Bihar, scrapping of Linguistic Survey under the auspices of Bihar Rashtrabhasha Parishad, acceptance of government documents in Maithili. They also “described the appointment of Language Survey Commission headed by Dr. L. N. Sudhanshu as ‘political conspiracy’ against Maithili”. They demanded that if the government was honest about the linguistic survey than such task should be allotted to “an eminent and impartial linguist and philologist”. It lamented the government apathy towards the publication of Maithili medium books.

Language controversy again erupted in Bihar when a Language Seminar was organised at Patna by the Bihar Citizens Council on Education, Patna. In the seminar it was alleged that sufficient representation was not given to the minority languages – Maithili, Urdu, Bengali, Bhojpuri, Magahi, Oraon and Oriya. Against these move Abdul Moghni of the Deptt. of English, Patna University proposed that an immediate meeting should be organised by these minority languages in Bihar in order to counter the threat that such language seminar had posed to their language and culture. He also alleged that language issue became for these ‘selfish secterians’ to enter the public life of Bihar through the ‘back door’. He also proposed that as a matter of policy ‘mother tongue as the one and only medium of all the public activities and educational pursuits’ should be accepted. Babu Bhola Lal Das as the chief guest of the two day Vidyapati Parva celebration of Chetna Samiti demanded that the need of the hour was establishment of Maithili Akademi besides a modern University and a Branch of A.I.R. in Darbhanga. He asserted that ‘mass awareness’ was needed ‘to secure rightful place to Maithili in the family of languages of the Indian Union’.

There was one interesting episode during this period about the language controversy in Bihar. Seth Govind Das, then M.P. and the ‘President of the All India Hindi Sahitya

106 The delegation was comprised of Prof. S. N. Chaudhary, President, Pt. Dev Narain Jha, Vice-President, Babu Saheb Chaudhary, General Secretary of the ABMM and Bindeshwar Mandal; see Indian Nation, Aug 11, 1968.

107 Ibid.


109 Indian Nation, Nov 4, 1968, During the Prva there were consensus on the demand of a Maithili Akademi on the line of Bihar Rashtrabhasha Parishad. Baidyanath Mishra ‘Yatri’ i.e. Baba Nagarjun also supported such demand; see Indian Nation Nov 3, 1968.
Sammelan opined that except Punjab there was no other state in the country which could claim to have a second language. He said that for such claim it was necessary that speaker of such language should be more than 40 percent of the total population in that state. Thus, regarding the declaration of Urdu as the second language of the state, he opined that though the language deserved all encouragement but its recognition as the second language of the state ‘did not fulfil the criteria laid down in the constitution’. He further said that Maithili and other dialects of Hindi should be encouraged from the literature point of view but it should not be included in the eighth schedule of the constitution.  

Nagarjun was very critical of such statements of Seth Govind Das particularly his stand against the demand of Maithili to be included in the eighth schedule of the Indian constitution. Nagarjun stated that “it was a pity that Seth Govind Das is ignorant about a rich and developed language like Maithili”. He urged Das ‘to become acquainted with the views of the former (elected) President of the Akhil Bharatiya Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, the late Dr. Amarnath Jha about Maithili’.

There was also an attempt to link the growth and spread of language and literature to the economic prosperity of the region. Bihar Congress leader Lokesh Nath Jha on November 02, 1968 on the occasion of Vidyapati Parva at Vidyapati Nagar said that ‘unless economic dynamism was generated in the Maithili speaking areas in North Bihar, the traditional, intellectual and moral values were bound to disappear in this region. Comprehensive economic activities and financial spurt were essential to retain and promote language and culture in Maithili region’. Inaugurating a Ramawatar Munideo Hostel of D. B. College, Jayanagar, Union Minister of State for Education, Bhagwat Jha Azad stressed the need for education through mother tongue.

However, anti Maithili stand of the Bihar Government was once again caused a lot of tension among the Maithili speakers. Indradeep Sinha, Revenue Minister made a statement in Bihar Legislative Council on June 11, 1968 that ‘Maithili could not be a regional language in this state as the Maithili speaking people constituted only 10.7 percent of the population. He also said that government was unable to make Maithili

110 Indian Nation, Nov 7, 1968.
111 Indian Nation, Nov 13, 1968.
112 Searchlight, Nov 8, 1968.
113 Indian Nation, Dec 1, 1968.
medium of examination in the Public Service Commission.”

‘With a view to carry our an intense campaign for the use of Maithili language in day to day work by the Maithili speaking population of Darbhanga, Saharsa, Madhubani, Purnea and parts of Muzaffarpur and Monghyr districts, an organisations named as Maithili Prachar Sena has been formed....with Mr. A. C. Deepak as its convenor. The organisation has already enrolled 200 members...’

The leader of the organisation still believed that region’s development was dependent on the development of regional language Maithili. He regretted that very little had been done in this direction and asserted that Sena was formed for this purpose ‘with a militant spirit to take direct action if needed’. He also criticised the government for not publishing any textbooks in Maithili despite the provision of the government to impart primary and middle school education in Maithili speaking area in Maithili. “He appealed to all sections of people living in Mithila, irrespective of caste and creed, to help the movement started by the ‘Mithila Prachar Sena’ as Maithili language did not belong only to Maithil Brahmins but to all sections of the people living in the area.”

Lalit Narayan Mishra, Former Union Minister of State for Defence Production, at Kalidas Samaroha at the Saurath Sabha on June 07, 1969 surprisingly put forward the demand for a separate Mithila state. He said “when states have been created and are being created on the basis of language there is no reason why there should not be a separate state for Mithila. Mithila has its own language with its own script and rich literature. If such a state is created it would be economically viable unit and geographically compact unit both (with) a population of more than two and a half crores”. He also expressed that Maithili language was not given fair deal by the framers of Indian constitution and demanded that it was high time that it should be now included in the eighth schedule of the Indian constitution. Shiva Chandra Jha of SSP even introduced a Constitutional (Amendment) Bill in Loksabha seeking recognition of Maithili in the eighth schedule of the constitution.

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114 Searchlight, June 12, 1968.
116 Ibid.
117 Ibid.
118 Searchlight, June 10, 1969.
119 Ibid.
The government of Bihar had always had a dubious stand with regards to language policy. Replying to a question of Raj Kumar Purbe (C.P.I.) then Chief Minister of Bihar Sardar Harihar Singh told the Vidhan Sabha on March 24, 1969 that the question of including Maithili in the schedule of languages as medium for public service commission examination, and also the question of recommending to the Union Government for the inclusion of Maithili in the eighth schedule of the Indian Constitution was under consideration of the government.\footnote{\textit{Indian Nation}, Mar 25, 1969.}

There was an attempt to Sanskritise Maithili for its proper development. The Lieutenant Governor of Delhi, Dr. Aditya Nath Jha inaugurating a literary Journal \textit{Sahitya Patra}\footnote{A journal first published by Ramanath Jha in 1930s now being restarted by the Ramanath Jha Abhinandan Grantha Samiti, with the remaining fund of the Samiti.} at Darbhanga expressed that without Sanskrit the glory of Maithili would be lost. He said “Maithili has a glorious record of literary achievement not less important than any of the languages of the country only because Maithili has followed the traditions of Sanskrit literature since the days of Jyotirishwara”.\footnote{\textit{Indian Nation}, Feb 23, 1969.} He also said that a liberal stand should be taken in reconsidering the regional dialects so that every dialect might feel proud of Maithili.\footnote{Ibid.} Similarly, Prof. Ramanath Jha in his presidential address at the \textit{Pavas Parva Samaroha} organised by \textit{Mithila Sanskritik Prishad}, Sitamarhi explained ‘that tough Maithili was spoken differently in this region it was Maithili all the same. He said marks of great persons like Haladar Das and Mangani Jha who belonged to Muzaffarpur district were slowly finding place in Maithili literature’.\footnote{\textit{Indian Nation}, Aug 3, 1969.} He urged the \textit{Prishad} to collect more such works written by the people of that region. Jayadhari Singh in his speech exhorted the organisers of the \textit{Prishad} and people of that subdivision to think in terms of developing Maithili language. ‘Quoting from Dr. Subhadra Jha’s ‘Dialects of Maithili Language’ he said that it was not a fact that people of Muzaffarpur district spoke distorted form of Maithili. In fact they spoke Maithili like the people of Madhubani, and only difference was that the dialect of Madhubani was considered and regarded as the standard form of Rastra Maithili. He deprecated the move of \textit{Bihar Rashtra Bhasha Parishad} and other such institutions to separate
Muzaffarpur in the name of so called Vajjika language’. The protagonists of the Maithili movement made various attempts to take along the varieties of Maithili speakers, but such attempts were met with very little success.

However, there had been unbroken attempts to mobilise and educate the masses about Maithili language and the movement. Mithila Sahitya Sansthan of Patna came out with a quarterly research journal of Maithili which was formally inaugurated by Dr. Sudhakar Jha Shastri, Research Professor at Patna University. This is considered one of the most quality and research based journal in Maithili. However the journal was short lived and only three issues could be published. Mithila Mandal, Bombay had organised an all India Maithili Writers Conference for three days – 18th, 19th, and 20th of October, 1969. The Conference demanded the inclusion of Maithili in the eighth schedule of the Indian constitution. In another resolution it urged the census authorities to not to mark Hindi as the mother tongue for the Maithili speakers. Other demands that it put forward was – establishment of all India Radio at Darbhanga, introduction of Maithili as a compulsory medium of instruction at the primary stage in Maithili speaking areas and emancipation of Maithili speaking womenfolk. Speaking at the conference Lalit Naryan Mishra, former Minister of state for defence production, Government of India urged that for Maithili to flourish as a living language efforts should be made to mobilise public opinion. For such efforts he said a fund should be raised in which he wanted to contribute Rs. 50, 000. Dr. Umesh Mishra said that there was no clash between Hindi and Maithili and former ‘had its own role to play in the emotional integration of the country’.

Various mechanism and strategies were applied in order to broaden the mass base of the Maithili movement.

In other developments the central executive committee of the Akhil Bhartiya Mithila Maithili Pracharak Sangh decided to go for hunger strike to press the demand for the inclusion of Maithili in the eighth schedule and a place for Maithili in the examinations of

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126 Ibid.
127 Indian Nation, Aug 18, 1969.
128 Searchlight, Sept 18, 1969.
129 Indian Nation, Dec 30, 1969.
Union and State Public Service Commission. In the two day annual session of the All India Maithil Mahasangh at the Town Hall, Darbhanga on November 30, 1969, it was demanded that the ‘government should treat Maithili at par with other major languages of the country’. It warned the government if such place was not accorded to Maithili the Mahasangh would launch mass agitation. Bibhuti Bhusan Mukhopadhyaya, an eminent Bengali novelist, inaugurating the session said that ‘all of us living in the Mithila region, irrespective of caste and creed, were Maithils’. Similarly, Radha Krishna Kejariwal, President of Mithila Chamber of Commerce, who was the chief guest of the session said ‘that people living in Mithila whether they were Hindus or Muslims, Marwaris or Bengalis, were Maithils and their language was definitely Maithili which they used at home and outside’. Prof. S. N. Chaudhary, president of the Maithili Mahasangh said that there were twenty one affiliated organisations to Mahasangh working in different parts of the country to serve the cause of Maithili. Speaking at the session Bhola LalDas appealed to the masses to respond to the call of Mahasangh for a mass movement. A number of resolutions were passed, demanding – ‘inclusion of Maithili in the eighth schedule of the Indian constitution, provision for teaching in primary and secondary schools through the medium of Maithili, publication of text books in Maithili, provision of Maithili in the Union and State Public Service Commission competitive examinations, etc’. A delegation on behalf of the Mahasangh met the District magistrate of Darbhanga a submitted a memorandum demanding various measures to raise the status of Maithili, after successfully organising ‘a big demonstration and a public meeting at the Polo ground.

The Maithili movement in this period also witness the involvement of villages and leaders of the Panchayats. In a meeting of Mukhiyas of Gram Panchayats of Madhubani subdivision organised by Akhil Bhartiya Maithili Vikas Sangha on Tuesday, March 17, 1970 they demanded the inclusion of Maithili in the eighth schedule of the Indian constitution. This meeting was inaugurated by Prof. Ramakar and presided over by

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133 Ibid.
134 Ibid.
135 Ibid.
educationist Chandradhari Singh. Mr. C. S. Jha, a former representative of India at United Nations sent a message supporting the endeavour of the conference.\textsuperscript{137} Similarly addressing the \textit{Vidyapati Jayanti} at Sidgora renowned Maithili and Hindi poet ‘Yatri’ or ‘Nagarjun’ threatened to go on hunger strike for the recognition of Maithili language. ‘He demanded immediate inclusion of Maithili in the eighth schedule of the constitution, its proper place in the public service commission, Maithili news broadcast from All India Radio, primary education in Maithili in Maithili speaking area, and establishment of a Sahitya Akademi for the development of Maithili’.\textsuperscript{138} All the speakers on this occasion which included Babu Saheb Chaudhary, Rajkumar Jha, Madhab Mishra, Rameshwar Sharma, Akhileshwar Jha, Laxmi Nidhi and Dinraj, ‘favoured direct action for the recognition of Maithili as they felt that it was only the language of agitation that could draw the attention of the authorities towards the long standing legitimate demands of the Maithili speaking people’.\textsuperscript{139} Former chief minister of Bihar, Daroga Prasad Rai replying to a question of Rajkumar Purbe (CPI) said in the Bihar Assembly that the ‘government was actively considering the proposal for opening Mithila University at Darbhanga’\textsuperscript{140}. He said that “it is long cherished desire of lakhs of sweet-tongued Maithili speaking people whose culture, civilization and sentiments had their own place”.\textsuperscript{141} Interestingly ‘replying to the another question of Rajkumar Purbe, Niteshwar Prasad Singh, Minister of State for Education said that Maithili was a part of Hindi and therefore it did not deserve special favour of the government’.\textsuperscript{142} He also said that the government of Bihar had written to the Union government for the recognition of Maithili in the eighth schedule of the Constitution.\textsuperscript{143} ‘Karpoori Thakur took a serious view of the state Minister’s version that the Maithili was not different from Hindi. He assured that Maithili was an independent language and it should be given due recognition’.\textsuperscript{144} Prof. Chetkar Jha professor of Political Science

\textsuperscript{137} \textit{Searchlight}, Mar 23, 1970.
\textsuperscript{138} \textit{Indian Nation}, Mar 3, 1970.
\textsuperscript{139} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{140} \textit{Indian Nation}, Mar 18, 1970.
\textsuperscript{141} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{142} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{143} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{144} Ibid.
at Patna University also objected to such observation of Niteshwar Prasad Singh. Similar views against the minister were expressed by many Maithili speakers like Bhaskara Jha, Vidyapati Samiti, Ranchi. Vidyapati Samiti went on to consider the statement of the minister Niteshwar Prasad Sinha ‘deliberately mischievous, provocative and politically motivated’ and it also criticised those Maithili speaking legislators who did not protest against such statement in the house.

Dr. Subhadra Jha presiding over the concluding session of the two day Vidyapati Jayanti at Ranchi, Jan 1970 urged the Maithili speaking people to wage a relentless war against the Government for neglecting Maithili. Pandit Harinath Mishra, former Bihar Minister, inaugurating the conference on minority language of Bihar at the two day twelfth Bihar State Bengali Conference asserted that ‘our national language Hindi was not the mother tongue of any considerable section of the people of Bihar’. He also said that conspiracy to enrol people speaking different languages as the speakers of Hindi was the real cause for the increased number of Hindi speakers in Bihar. He also suggested that an Institute of Minority Language should be immediately established for the proper development of these languages. Harinath Mishra was also of the view that it was due to under developed stage of their mother tongues that speakers of the some languages of the state continue to have the tendency to be enumerated as a Hindi speakers. He expressed that while Bengali and Oriya enjoy patronage of their native state and Urdu has the support of at least two Universities – Aligarh and Hyderabad, Maithili alone was the native language of Bihar and thus had special claim on the state government. Meanwhile a Non-Official Bill moved by an M. P., Yamuna Mandal for the inclusion of Maithili in the eighth schedule of Indian constitution. It was supposed to come up for the discussion on February 27, 1970. AIMM, MSP, Maithili Sahitya Samiti, Writers Conference, Vaidehi Samiti and Navartna Goshthi pressed for such demand. Dozens of telegrams, resolutions and memoranda were sent to the President,

145 Indian Nation, (Brass has marked on it Mar 29, 1970; but it should be Mar 19, 1970?).
146 Indian Nation, Apr 2, 1970.
147 Indian Nation, Apr 6, 1970.
148 Ibid.
149 Indian Nation, Jan 15, 1970.
150 Indian Nation, Feb 17, 1970.
151 Ibid.
the Prime Minister, the Speaker of Parliament, Union Ministers and others requesting
them to fulfil the demand of about three crores of Maithili speakers in the country.\textsuperscript{153}

In another development in the language debate in Bihar now gradually Hindi supporters
began to accept Maithili was an independent language. One of such acceptance came
from the eminent Hindi scholar Hazari Prasad Dwivedi. While inaugurating the first \textit{All
India Maithili Conference} at Varanasi in April, 1971 he said that Maithili was an
independent language and deserved patronage. He also urged the Maithili literati to
produce quality and standard books in Maithili. In this conference some important
resolutions with regards to women, like education of Maithili girls, no dowry in
marriage etc, were passed by the women delegates – Smt. Vidya Jha and Harmaya Devi
of Kanpur and Haripur respectively.\textsuperscript{154}

In his address to the 35\textsuperscript{th} annual session of the \textit{Maithili Sahitya Parishad}, Patna
University on May 9\textsuperscript{th}, 1970 Subhash Chandra Sarker, editor of the Searchlight,
highlighted the need for the more and more use of Maithili by its speakers themselves
even for serious communications. He said that despite the large number of population ‘the
state of contemporary Maithili literature and Maithili journalism is extremely weak for
lack of readership support. The total circulation of Maithili periodicals in Bihar in 1968
was 2,674 only. There were two newspapers published from Calcutta with a combined
circulation of 981 copies. In other words, the combined circulation of all the Maithili
newspapers in India was only 3,655\textsuperscript{1}.\textsuperscript{155} Then he connected this state of readership crisis
to the low level of literacy rate among the men and women in Bihar, particularly in
Maithili speaking area where this was even worse than other parts of Bihar. Similarly in
annual meeting of \textit{Maithili Sahitya Sansthan} on the premises of \textit{Bihar Research Society}
at Patna on May 15, 1970 Prof. R. C. Haldar expressing the connections between Mithila
and Bengal lamented that during the last fifty years Maithils have more or less forgotten
Maithili scripts. Other blunder committed by a sections of Indian was the belief that
Maithili as a dialect was spoken by Maithil Brahmins alone.\textsuperscript{156}

\textsuperscript{153} \textit{Indian Nation}, Feb 27, 1970.
\textsuperscript{154} \textit{Indian Nation}, May 23, 1971.
\textsuperscript{155} \textit{Searchlight}, May 14, 1970.
\textsuperscript{156} \textit{Searchlight}, May 19, 1970.
A delegation comprised of – Gunanand Thakur, Jamuna Prasad Mandal, Shivachandra Jha (all M.Ps.), Kameshwar Singh, Bhadesh Mishra, Tulmohan Ram and Babu Saheb Chaudhary met the Prime Minister Indira Gandhi for the inclusion of Maithili in the eighth schedule of the Indian Constitution. It was claimed that they were assured by the Prime Minister about the inclusion. ‘A meeting in this connection was held at the residence of the Mr. Lalit Narayan Mishra, Minister for Forest, Trade when a committee was formed to facilitate inclusion of Maithili in the eighth schedule during the budget session of the Parliament’.\(^{157}\)

It was certainly a new development in the Maithili movement. The issue of Maithili was no longer a concern for the Maithili writers and scholars alone. Even the politicians of almost all the parties, administrators, social leaders and students were increasingly participating in the Maithili movement. \textit{Vidyapati Parva Samarooha} became a tool for the mobilisation of Maithils and for pressing the political demands for Maithili and Mithila.

\textbf{5.6 The Maithili Movement in 1970s and its Challenges}

The Maithili movement and its challenges during 1970s are very well described in a play – \textit{Santo} by a prominent Maithili activist Rajanandan Lal Das. It is considered as an original Maithili revolutionary play. It was written in December 1968 and published by \textit{Akhil Bhartiya Mithila Sangh}, Kolkata in 1990.\(^{158}\) The play begins with the problems that students in Maithili speaking region had to face in the beginning of their school education in the comprehension of Hindi terminology. When the students were forced to speak in Hindi they mixed Maithili words in their sentences. It is quite clear in this conversation:

\begin{quote}
(Rama is a student and had been asked by her teacher to write an essay on cow which she had not written)

“शिक्षक – इतना भी नहीं जानती? क्या तुमने कभी गाय नहीं देखी है?

[Teacher – Don’t you know even this? Have you not seen a cow?]

रमा – जी हैं।
\end{quote}

\(^{157}\) \textit{Indian Nation}, Dec 24, 1970.

\(^{158}\) It was later published by Karnagosthi, Kolkata in 2009.
[Ram – Yes, I have seen.]

शिक्षक – तो बोलो! एक गाय का वर्णन करो।

[Teacher – Ok then say! Describe a cow.]

रमा – गाय एक जानवर है। उसके चारिटा टीम होता है। एकटा नॉंगरी होता है।

[Rama – Cow is an animal. It has four legs (in the sentence the word that is used for this is not Hindi). It has on tail (again the word that is used is Maithili)]

शिक्षक – (लम्बाई करूँ) तुम्हारे पास लेख की किताब है न?

[Teacher – (with anger) do you have a book of writing, don’t you?]

रमा – जी हीं।

[Rama – Yes, I do.]

शिक्षक – पढ़ो तो!

[Teacher – Read it.]

रमा – (गाय पर लेख पढ़ैं) गाय एक पशु है गाय को चार टीमें तथा एक लम्बी पूछ होती है।

(प्रश्न करैं) मास्टर साहेब पूछ कक्ष कहैं है?

[Rama – (reading an essay on cow) cow is an animal. The cow has four legs and one long tail. (Asking) Teacher what is tail? (here the word that is used is not Maithili which is used by the child earlier but Hindi)]

शिक्षक – पूछ नहीं समझती हो?

[Teacher – don’t you understand tail?]

रमा – जी नहीं।

[Rama – No sir.]

शिक्षक – अरे, दुम समझती हो, दुम!

[Teacher – Arre, do you know tail, tail (using other similar word for tail)]

रमा – जी नहीं।

[Rama – No Sir.]

शिक्षक – तुम्हारों को समझाना बड़ा कठिन है। 159

[Teacher – It is very difficult to make you people understand]

159 Das, Rajnandan Lal, Santo, Kolkata, Akhil Bhartiya Mithila Sangh, 1990 (later reprinted by Kolkata, Karnagosthi, 2009) pp. 4-5: This play was written in 1970s and was staged at various places before publication.
The paragraph shows inevitable use of Maithili words in Hindi by the student and their difficulty in understanding Hindi. It also shows teacher’s difficulties to make them understand. Later on in this play the teacher has accepted that they have been instructed to teach in Hindi alone. So even if it is difficult for the students to comprehend in Hindi, teachers had to teach in Hindi. It indicates the violation of three language formula and violates the rights of the Maithil children to be taught in their mother tongue. Another irony with Maithili is that it is not used at primary schools. Only in high school it is used and that too as an optional. But there are a number of students who undertake Maithili as honours subject in B. A. and M. A. There also many Ph.D. Scholars in Maithili. They find it very difficult to get a job after completion of their studies. So gradually there is lack of enthusiasm among the students to undertake Maithili as a subject of study at the higher level.

The main character of this play Santo Mahto – rightly the title of play is based on this character – is one of such student who has a first class first in B. A. in Maithili. He was ill treated everywhere for his subject of study. He could not sit for even commission’s (BPSC) exam as till then Maithili was not recognized as a subject. It is important to note here the main character of the play is a non Brahmin and non Kayastha. It tells, at least symbolically, that non-Brahmins and non Kayasthas have also turned to the study of Maithili. Santo went on to organise the movement in different villages of Mithila. He was inspired by Rekha – another character in the play who was studying English literature in Kolkata but was committed to the cause of Maithili. She had vowed to carry forward the work done by her late father under Mithila Sangh. Play also shows the attitude of different sections towards Maithili. It portrays the sad state of Maithils and their detachment with their language, particularly of educated lot, who abandoned Maithili as they move out of Mithila. They hesitated to use it even with their fellow Maithils. So Maithili was facing an indifferent attitude of not only the government but also of the businessmen, traders, professionals, learned teachers and professors who were Maithili speakers themselves. So, for Santo and Rekha only hope was masses and Students groups. They tried to work together with the member of different political parties as well. After initial objections from the masses, (as they thought that it may give rise to language problem in the nation and it will be detrimental to Hindi) all
agreed to fight together under the leadership of Rekha and Santo. Together they launched a strong political movement but were cracked down by the government and Santo was arrested and sent to jail for a year, as first rate political prisoner. The play end with the hope – ‘जा धरि एकोटा मैथिल संतान जीवैत रहल, मातुपापाक खाक लेल जड्ठत रहल।’ (as long as even a single Maithil child is alive fight for the protection of the mother tongue shall be continue).

Significance of this play is that it shows for the first time that the leadership of the movement can be provided by non Brahmins and the women as well. Other important indication in the play is the focus on the necessity of the political movement for the development of the Maithili and Mithila. Next phase of the Maithili movement witnessed more and more political participation. There were increasing number of public processions, protests and demonstrations.

There was another serious examination of the Maithili movement and its challenges in a report – Nation Building in a North Indian Region (The case of Mithila). In this report Hetukar Jha has critically investigated the sociologically limitations, constrains, and possibilities of Nation building exercise in Mithila. He has looked at the construction of nation building in terms of togetherness between elite and masses and following Paul Brass believed that in Mithila the elites have failed in ‘transmitting their sense of regional identity to the mass of the Maithili speaking people’.

Hetukar Jha mentions that ‘the nation building of a society has to be understood in the light of the nature of elites, the mass of people, and the relationship in terms of togetherness and separation between them’. In his studies he finds that there have been at least three objective bases for the identity – what is Mithila? These are common language, common territory and finally common cultural heritage. According to Jha, “before 1960 ‘territory’ seems to be most emphasised base of Maithil identity. But after that ‘language’ takes the lead.” He also finds that the there is greater stress on the

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160 This unpublished report of Hetukar Jha, then a Lecturer in Sociology at Patna University was conducted under the supervision of Sachidananda and it was a project on the study of some aspects of micro civilization in Mithila which was submitted to A. N. Sinha Institute of Social Studies, Patna in 1976.

161 Ibid., p. 5.

162 Ibid., p. 25.
issue of what is Mithila? after 1960 and language becomes the crucial component in it. Hence he believes that the elites were becoming more conscious of their regional identity. But they cared very little about the socio-economic condition of the people. That was the region why masses did not participate vigorously in Maithili language movement? Further, he classified the elites in three groups:-

(a) Political elites – M. L. As., M. Ps. and M. L. Cs.
(b) Organisational elites – ‘those who occupy or once occupied the key positions such as President or Secretary of the organisations working for the cause of Mithila’.
(c) Cultural elites – ‘those who are journalists and intellectuals (authors of important books on Mithila which have had an influence on some)’

The masses of Mithila mostly landless agricultural labourers and poor peasants largely reside in the rural areas. They remained somewhat indifferent to the whole issue of Mithila and Maithili. And the situation have not changed much today. Elites have done very little to mobilise the rural masses. They had completely neglected the rural masses. And more importantly the alliance of political elites ‘with the non Maithil Bihari elites and their neglect of the Maithils causes are held as important factors, working against the interest of Mithila.’

With regards to the cultural elites which he studied indirectly through Maithili magazines, he concludes that for the cultural elites the issue of Maithili literature, art and culture remained more significant than the socio-economic condition of the masses. Organisations and Organisational elites from Darbhanga, Patna and Kolkata were studied and Hetukar Jha was of the opinion that they were engaged much more in occasional activities and were mostly urban centred. Almost all the organisations were overwhelmingly dominated by the Brahmins alone and they give more priorities to language, art and culture then the socio economic condition of the masses. Among themselves they didn’t have cordial relations. In these organisations decisions were taken by very few influential persons and even by a single person. According Hetukar Jha these organisational elites and their involvement in any activities were driven more by their personal interest and ego instead of the common cause of Mithila and Maithili. Particularly the Political elites seem to have largely

163 Ibid., p. 35,
neglected Mithila. Even among them it was Brahmins who have shown some concern with Maithili and its problems. The non-Brahmin political elites have shown very little or no concern at all with the issue of Maithili language and culture. Almost all the elites had very weak orientation towards actions and mobilisation of masses. There prevails a very strong sense of separateness between the elites and the masses. Lack of cooperation, instead presence of hostility even among theses elites made the situation even worse. Their actions were oriented more towards the central and state government than the concerns of the masses. This did not allow the spread of the consciousness of Maithili identity among the masses of Mithila. This certainly shows the indisputable dominance of Brahmins in the Maithili movement and their indifferent attitude towards the socio-economic cause of the masses.

Though, in this report there has been a thorough attempt to study the organisations, their leadership, their base and membership, demands and decision making processes and empirical study of some of the villages to assess the nature and condition of the masses but most of the conclusions that he draws reaffirm the assertion of Paul Brass study of the Maithili movement in north Bihar. He did not take different phases of the Maithili movement comprehensively in his study. In the phase of 1970s, which he undertook for the study, the Maithili movement was taking a shift towards recognition of the Maithili in the eighth schedule of Indian constitution. In the previous phases of the movement under the leadership of Janakinandan Singh and Lakshman Jha demand was more political in terms of separate statehood to an extent of forming Mithila as a union republic. He completely missed these aspects of the movement. More fundamentally the main constrains in his studies, like Brass, is ahistorical approach towards the movement. Awakening in Mithila about its language, culture and identity arises in a context when Hindi and along with that Indian nationalism had been already making a strong inroads into Mithila. So any understanding about the limitations or weaknesses of the Maithili movement is incomplete, unless it is studied historically in its particular social and political context.

Another, important reason for the weakness of the movement was the internal hierarchy among the Brahmins themselves – the most vocal castes in the Maithili movement.
Rabindra Ray\textsuperscript{164} in his report on \textit{The Indianization of the Maithils} states that Maithils, of course by which he means Maithil Brahmins alone, superior Srotiyas to lesser respectable Yogya and Panjibadha and their genealogical history is recorded in the Panjis. Then below them were the Jaibars Brahmins much inferior in ranks and respects among the Brahmins. Brahmins were further divided into two groups within Mithila – Pubairpar and Pacchvairpar. And as a rule Brahmins who resides in Pubairpar or Mithila heartland of Darbhanga and Madhubani were considered superior to Pacchvairpar Brahmins living outside Mithila heartland (i.e. in Bhagalpur). This division of society into different castes and hierarchy within a caste remained the single most obstacles in the development of any consciousness in the region whether it is based on language i.e. Maithili, or region i.e. Mithila or nation. So it seems a common selfhood on the basis of any of these \textit{symbolic} identities did not develop sufficiently in Mithila. According to Ray ‘nationalism has never been politically significant or a popular politics in Mithila. Maithils who associated with the Congress party in the heyday of nationalist agitation dissociated themselves from the mainstream of Maithil culture and indeed practiced their politics outside Mithila’.\textsuperscript{165} So Mithila has a peculiar condition in terms of its self awakening. Here, first emerged national consciousness among the elites and they willingly adored and propagated Hindi at the cost of Maithili. Although, since the beginning there were individuals like Chanda Jha, Raghunandan Das, and Babu Bhola Lal Das who championed the cause of Maithili and worked for the preservation and promotion of Maithili culture. But their voices were weak and marginal even in Mithila. For the large Maithili speakers initially these issues were nonexistent and they had indifferent attitude towards the issue of language. But through school education and newspapers and Magazines Hindi gradually became the language of public space with certain degree of social prestige attached to it. And Maithili was started to be levelled as a \textit{Gawanru Bhasha} (language of the illiterates) driving it more inwards even in a household, also called as \textit{Janana Bhasha} (feminine language). Thus there were enormous challenges that the Maithili movement was facing in this period. Throughout, its struggle the Maithili movement had gone through different phases. And gradually but undeniably it has expanded its social and political base both among the elites and among the masses.


\textsuperscript{165} Ray, Rabindra, 1987, p. 31.
5.7 Struggles for the Implementation of Maithili as a Medium of Primary Education

Looking at the functioning of the government of Bihar regarding making provisions for the implementation of Maithili as the medium of instruction at primary schools in Maithili speaking area, Jayakant Mishra observed that despite ‘in 1949 (vide D.P.I’s Circular No. 3189/400-49 dated 22nd March, 1950) the Chairman of District Boards in the Maithili speaking areas (Districts of Darbhanga, Saharsa, Purnea, Muzaffarpur, etc.) issued letters to Chairmen Local Boards, Chairmen Town Committees and the Presidents Union Boards and the Headmasters of all Middle Schools asking them to adopt “Maithili as medium of instruction in the schools under them”....syllabus for the primary classes was also got translated into Maithili by the D.P.I. But no steps were taken to implement these circulars or print the Maithili version of the syllabus’.166 Again ‘in 1953 (vide Government of Bihar’s Resolution No. 645 Ranchi, August 10, 196(5?)3) the government of Bihar made a decision regarding mother tongue to be adopted as a medium up to the eighth class. But when it came to publication of textbooks no such books were printed. Thus while on paper the government now recognise the rights of Maithili children to get education in their mother tongue, nothing was done to let them exercise such right. Reprimanding the claim of the government that it could not be published because of the shortage of demand Mishra argues that ‘the actual facts are that again and again the inspector of Schools and Headmasters and guardian have been demanding for printing at least 2 lakh text books of all varieties and for all classes but the Government is consistently refusing to do anything about the matter. In 1966 the state Government made it known that they propose to publish some text books on experimental basis whose number might be raised with the increase in demand. But this is 1969 and not a single text book properly speaking has come in the market of the Maithili speaking areas’.167 He also expressed the biasness of the government with regard to Maithili language. He alleged that Bihar Text Book Publishing Corporation Ltd. (BTBPCL) has been printing text books in Bengali, Urdu, Oriya, Oran and other languages with much less number of speakers than Maithili.

166 Indian Nation, Feb 7, 1970.
167 Ibid.
Even on the basis of the Census of 1961 according to him the number of the speakers of the different languages in Bihar was:

**Table 4: Speakers of Different Languages in Bihar**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Languages</th>
<th>Number of their Speakers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maithili</td>
<td>49,82,615</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urdu</td>
<td>41,49,245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bengali</td>
<td>11,64,047</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oriya</td>
<td>3,02,951</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oraon</td>
<td>32,725</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santhali</td>
<td>16,59,225</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Source: Indian Nation, Feb 7, 1970]

Jayakant Mishra alleged that though some languages were not the language of Bihar yet texts were published in these languages, while Maithili was not even given the position of a minority language even in its home districts. B. N. Chaudhary, Superintendent of Education Saharsa issued a circular for all primary and middle schools of the district to impart education through mother tongue, namely, Maithili.  

**Figure 10: Government of Bihar Order Regarding the Adoption of Maithili as the Medium of Instruction at the Primary Pevel**

[Source: Miathili Samachar, year 27, Jan – Dec, 1990, p. 23]

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There was revival of the demand for the primary education in Maithili. In his letter of Sept. 13, 1973 Kailash Bihari Sharma, Director of Education (Primary Education) and Deputy Secretary, to the District Education Officers of Darbhanga, Saharsa, and Purnea passed an order to implement on priority basis the government of Bihar decision to impart primary education in Maithili. He also expressed in the letter that this was due to indifference of the teacher that the decision could not be implemented properly, even when books were prescribed in syllabus for class one to seven. He ordered the officials to ensure the required Maithili books were available and teachers should teach those books. He wanted those teachers to be punished who did not comply with the order. But nothing could be done with regards to the implementation of Maithili as the medium of instruction at the primary level. On the contrary, the government of Bihar under a Maithili speaking chief minister, Karpoori Thakur removed Maithili as a subject of study from the matriculation. It infuriated Maithili speakers particularly the students at Patna University. Interestingly this happened after the JP movement and students were already agitated. Maithili speaking students at Patna University had already formed a *Maithili Bhashi Chhatra Sangh* to press their demands. When the decision for the removal of Maithili from the matriculation was taken by the Karpoori Thakur government the *Sangh* was transformed into *Nikhil Bharatiya Maithili Bhashi Chhatra Sangh*. It played a crucial role in the protest movement and two day hunger strike was held at Dak Bangla Chauraha (Churaha) in Patna. It also participated in the huge protest march in Patna from Gandhi Maidan to R Block Chauraha in which around 15,000 people participated. These protests were successful and government restored the status of Maithili in the matriculation.

This clearly reflects the increasingly agitative modes of protest in the Maithili movement. There was a persistant demand for the implementation of Maithili as the medium of instruction in the primary education. In this regard again in a letter to

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170 Personal Interview with one of the participant and the active member of *Nikhil Bharatiya Maithili Bhashi Chhatra Sangh*, Bibhuti Anand, Darbhanga, June 29, 2011.
Sangam Lal, Managing Officer, Bihar State Textbooks Publication Ltd. Patna, Bhaskar Banerjee, Secretary to the Government, Department of Education, Government of Bihar asked him to immediately publish textbooks in Maithili for the class three to ten. Committee were formed, textbooks were published also. Even the District Education Office of Saharsa B. S. Vaishyak ordered the entire Education officers at the Bolck (Prakhand) level and the Inspector of schools of Saharsa to ensure that from 1987 education to be imparted through Maithili medium at primary and middle level. But it is surprising that nothing could be done to implement this order, despite the repeated demands for the same by the protagonists of the Maithili movement. By now there developed unenthusiastic attitude towards Maithili among the parents, besides the status-quoist attitude of the teachers. Parents when incapable of sending their children to English medium schools prefer Hindi medium schools over Maithili. How to understand this attitude of Maithils? Why this feeling germinated about their own language? Would the condition have been same had employment opportunities were made available in Maithili? Or had Maithili as a medium been implemented since the beginning of school education in Mithila? It appears that this attitude towards their mother tongue developed in a particular Historical and Political context of nationalism in India. In such a context one particular language was preferred over many other independent languages and the growth of any other languages was considered as impediment for the progress and social expansion of national language Hindi. But such design of Hindi supporter was challenged by the Maithili speakers though at the same time they accepted Hindi as the national language of India. This threat from the Hindi supporters was felt by the Maithili speakers through different mechanisms of the state as late as during the census of 1991. Chetna Samiti, Patna had urged the Maithils to be

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172 Personal Interview with Prof. Amresh Pathak, Patna, July 17, 2011. He was also a member of the textbook committee; see also Maithili Samachar, p. 16, which says that Maithili Text Books were published by the government of Bihar and was ready for sell.
174 Jeevakant Letter to Jayakant Mishra, Date not mentioned; cited in Ibid., p. 11.
aware of the anti Maithili stands of the census officials. It requested them to ensure that Maithili was written in the census of 1991 as their mother tongue.\footnote{Ibid., p. 12.}

5.8 Political Attitude towards Maithili and Demand for the Constitutional Recognition of Maithili

Using Article 347 of the Indian constitution a delegation of Member of Parliament led by Bhogendra Jha, Hukumdev Narayan Yadav, Rajendra Prasad Yadav and Ziaur Rahman gave a memorandum to the President demanding the declaration of Maithili as the state language of the Bihar.\footnote{Mishra, Panchanan, ‘Samvidhan aa Maithili Battis Barakhak Upabandha Kahiya Dhari Mook Rahat?’, in Mithila Mihir, Jan 30, 1983, p. 7.} But nothing came out of this. But this proved that now political representative of the region could no longer undermine the aspirations of the people. In other words more and more political parties and their leaderships were aligning themselves with Mithila and Maithili issues. However, there were contradictory views as well, like for Chturanand Mishra, M. P. recognition of Maithili would not be of much use except getting a place on currency note. He went on to say that –

\begin{quote}
हमर निर्दिष्ट विचार आदि जे कर्तव्य राजनीतिक संदर्भ में मैथिलीक खासकर उच्च जातिक बच्चा सबकी मैथिली में समय नहीं दिया विज्ञान, तकनीकीय, संस्कृत, हिंदी, अंग्रेजी दिश जेबक बाही कारण मैथिली आब हुआ है।भविष्यके बिना सहयोग आब नहीं दय सकतीह।
लाख लाख मैथिली लोक तक जातिक मैथिली(क' अन्वरकर्ताला पीछा दशक तक छुर्क से दिल्ली, पंजाब, हरियाणा, उतर यूँ पी आदि वित्तस्वाम्य क्षेत्र से मैथिली मे जोरदार रूप हिंदी के लड जा रहत आदि जाहि से मैथिली-हिंदी के विलयन दिशा खुकाव किन्ही दशाबद्ध मे जायस।\footnote{Letter to Prof. Amresh Pathak, date mentioned as 13/8 (possibly Aug 13, 1992?)}

[It is my definite view that in the present political context the children of Mithila particularly of uppercastes instead of spending time in the study of Maithili should go for the study of Science, Technology, Sanskrit, Hindi, English because Maithili can no longer help them in their future. Lakhs and lakhs of the people for whom Maithili was compulsion until the last decade are taking Hindi at the large scale in Mithila and due to this there will be shift in Hindi-Maithili assimilation in some decades.]
\end{quote}

It clearly reflects that Mishra was more interested in the use of a language then preservation and growth of Maithili. But it also indicates the use of Maithili or Hindi by
different castes of Mithila. He suggested that Maithili may not be helpful for the upper castes students in future. But for those for whom Maithili’s use was compulsory now carrying Hindi un-proportionately from their work-places in Delhi, Punjab, Haryana, North U.P. etc. However, Chaturanand Mishra demanded that the language recognised by the Sahitya Akademi should be included in the UPSC exam. And while supporting the bill for the recognition of Manipuri, Konkani and Nepali in the eighth schedule of the constitution he meekly expressed that such inclusion should be based on the criteria of Sahitya Akademi so that no scope should be left for any accusations.\textsuperscript{178}

Maithili protagonists had to constantly fight against the government of Bihar biased and disconcerting attitude towards Maithili. In an order of 12 – 08 – 1988 the government replace Maithili from the place of mother tongue at the proposed syllabus of middle and secondary schools. This created misconception among the Maithili speakers as Prof. Nageshwar Jha was the education minister of Bihar then and it was believed that such order was passed in consultation with him, but later on it was discovered that such decision was taken at the level of officials.\textsuperscript{179} Similarly when Maithili was excluded from the BPSC by the Rashtriya Janta Dal Government of Bihar, Maithili speakers was shocked and agitated.\textsuperscript{180} There was huge protest march and demonstration in Patna.

Another important development in the Maithili movement of this period was increasing support of Maithili speakers from the United State of America, particularly Manikant Thakur and Amarnath Jha ‘Bakshi’. They remained a firm supporter of the Maithili movement. And they suggested that for the development of the region it was important

\textsuperscript{178} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{179} Amresh Pathak letter to The Commissioner of Education, Government of Bihar, July 24, 1989. This letter of Prof. Pathak was signed by the sixteen MLAs of Mithila Region. Prof. Pathak also wrote a letter to K. P. Umnikrishnan, Minister for Surface Transport and Communication, Govt. of India on Sept 5, 1990 reminding him about his sympathetic view on Maithili and requesting him to ‘put legitimate pressure on the central government for the inclusion of Maithili in the eighth schedule of the constitution of Indian’. His letter to Dr. Shakilur Rahman, M. P. (Janta Dal) on July 14, 1990 was also to request him to work for the inclusion of Maithili in the eighth schedule of the constitution. Also see Dr. Shakilur Rahman leeter to Prof. Pathak on Jan 20, 1990, in which he said that he wrote a letter to the Prime Minister regarding the inclusion of Maithili in the eighth schedule and it was directed to MHA ‘to examine the matter’. Interestingly, in this letter he mentioned that there was a proposal from S. Ganguly to Human Resource Development Minister, GOI regarding creation of permanent Vidyapati Chair at Delhi University. This proposal was referred to MHRD and UGC ‘for action and consideration vide Government of India, Ministry of Human Resource Development, (Department of Education) F. No. N – 2/5/88-Desk (U) New Delhi, dated Jan 29, 1988’; see Prof. Pathak letter to Shri L. P. Shahi, MSHRD, GOI, and Secretary UGC on Mar 29, 1988. This clearly expresses the increasing collaboration between the Maithili protagonists and the political leadership of the Maithili speaking region.

\textsuperscript{180} Prof. Pathak letter to the then Chief Minister of Bihar, Mar 27, 1992; this letter was signed by Prof. Pathak as the Co-ordinator of Maithili Sanygharsha Samiti and counter signed by Jatashankar Das, Secretary, Chetna Samiti, Patna and Narayan Jha, Chairman, Maithili Bhashi Chhatra Sangh, Patna.
that the focus of the movement should be Mithila in the place of Maithili. They believed that protection and promotion of Maithili was not possible within the province of Bihar. So they also supported the demand for the separate statehood of Mithila.  

Maithils were demanding for the inclusion of Maithili in the Indian constitution since its inception. They thought that exclusion of Maithili form the eighth schedule was a mistake on the part of the members of constituent assembly and it should be immediately rectified. Devanarayan Yadav presented a recommendation in the Bihar Assembly in which he requested the government of Bihar to recommend to the central government to include Maithili in the eighth schedule of the Indian constitution. A relentless demand for the same had been made since the recognition of Maithili by the Sahitya Akademi in 1965. Maithili supporters were still suspicious of the motives of the protagonists of ‘Hindi Imperialism’. Dr. Jayadhari Sinha representing the case for Maithili for the inclusion in the eighth schedule thus expressed that – ‘Maithili-speaking people are not very conscious of politics, it may be submitted with apologies that our sense of respect towards Hindi, and the pious motive behind, are very tragically misunderstood and exploited by some diehard protagonists of Hindi Imperialism’. Looking at the details about the structural independence, literary history of past and present, popular recognition by cultural and academic institutions and finally census position of Maithili, Dr. Sinha made a strong plea to Indira Gandhi government to include Maithili in the eighth schedule of the Indian constitution. Yamuna Prasad Mandal, M.P., Congress (I), brought an unofficial Bill in the parliament to include Maithili in the eighth schedule of the Indian constitution along with Sindhi in 1967. Thereafter Karpuri Thakur, then Chief Minister of Bihar made a formal representation to the central government for the recognition of Maithili.  

There was a formal discussion on the issue of Maithili in Bihar Legislative Council on December 21, 1978 and a resolution was passed and sent to the Central government.

181 Amarnath Jha letter to Prof. Pathak, n. d.  
183 Sinha, Jayadhari Sinha, Claims of Maithili for Indian Constitution, (Darbhanga, Maithil Mahasabha, 1967?)  
184 Ibid., pp. 8 – 24.  
186 Karpuri Thakur letter No. 3/R-1-1914/78 to Shanti Bhusan, Minister of Law dated 22 – 12 – 1977(?).  
187 Bihar Vidhan Parishad, Satra (Session) – 73, Vadvreet, No. 4, Friday, dated 29 December, 1978, pp. 61 – 63 (attached in memorandum May 07, 2003)
March 27, 1992 is a memorable day in the history of the Maithili movement. Once again Maithili speakers had to protest against the unfair attempts of the government of the Bihar to undermine the independent existence of the Maithili language. Laloo Prasad Yadav’s Rashtriya Janta Dal government in Bihar excluded Maithili from the examination of BPSC. His argument was that Maithili was the language of Brahmins only and it was not even recognised by the Indian constitution. Second, in his opinions it unduly favours the Maithili speaking people in the competitive examinations. He believed that it was against the social justice programme of the government of Bihar. Against this policy of the government around twenty five thousands Maithili speakers cutting across caste, class, gender and region protested in a big rally in Patna on March 27, 1992. Women and youth participated in great numbers in this protest. Maithili leaders asserted that a language does not belong to a particular caste but to a region and the people inhabiting it. Second, they argued that Santhali and Nepali were also not included in the eighth schedule of Indian constitution but Santhali was recognised as a subject of examination by BPSC, and Nepali was recognised in Bengal. Thirdly, they asked that BPSC recognised Bengali, Oriya, Santhali, and Urdu. If these languages were not against the social justice programmes then why such accusations levelled against Maithili? They believed that it was just a baseless and biased stand of the government of Bihar to diminish Maithili.

5.9 Communist Party of India, Bhogendra Jha and the Maithili Movement

Bhogendra Jha was an active member of the communist party of India and Member of Parliament for many times since independence of India from the Madhubani constituency. He always raised the issue of social and economic deprivations of toiling masses of Mithila region in the parliament. He was also well aware of Maithili language movement and its various demands. Time and again he supported the demands like opening up a modern university in Mithila, a branch of A.I.R. at Darbhanga, broad gauge line between Darbhanga and Samastipur. Indeed it was he and the Communist Party of India in Mithila region that used Maithili in its official proceedings. Their

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189 Ibid.
cadres in the region use Maithili in their speech and discussions. Bhogendra Jha made a difference between a spoken language and an understandable language in any region particularly in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Madhya Pradesh except its tribal areas and Rajasthan. According to him in these regions Hindi is understood but not spoken. Hindi is not the mother tongue of the masses in these regions. He says –

... bolne wali bhasha nahi, samajne wali bhasha. Yeh jo hua hain, yeh hua aaj tak hindi ke bhook se vidhan samaj na pa rahe hain. Kaha hain yeh hindi bhashi rajya hai. Lekin ye hindi bhashi nahi hain, ye hindi samajne wale rajya hain. Pura uttar pradesh, kuch adhivasi ilaj samaj ko chor hog kar pura madhya pradesh, pura bihar, rajasthan, ye sab hindi samajte hain, hindi bol na hain sakte. Aam lal-lal kina maatmabhasha hindi nahi hain.  

[...not the language of speech, but the language that one understand. This dialectics has not been understood by the many scholars of Hindi. They say it is a Hindi speaking state. But these are not Hindi speaking states, but states where Hindi is understood. All of Uttar Pradesh, excluding some tribal areas all of Madhya Pradesh, All of Bihar, Rajasthan, these all understand Hindi, but cannot speak Hindi. Hindi is not the mother language of the common man.]

Bhogendra Jha were aware of the compulsions of using mother tongue Maithili by the illiterate and marginalised agricultural labourers, who may understand Hindi but could not speak in it. So, he stressed the need for using Maithili in the official proceedings of CPI. He also mentioned about the internal divisions within congress about the use of Hindi or Hindustani as the national language of India. For Gandhi, Hindustani should be the national language and for this purpose he supported Dr. Rajendra Prasad as his candidate in the presidential election of Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. In this election besides Gandhi, Jawahar Lal, Communists, Bhogendra Jha and Congress Socialists like Jay Parakash supported Rajendra Prasad. But Rajendra Prasad was defeated by Purushottam Das Tandon and with that Gandhiji’s projection of Hindustani as the national language of India was also defeated. However in the state like Bihar attempts were made to propagate Hindustani. One such incident was the publication of textbooks during the Congress

190 Interview with Mohan Jha (Member of Parliament, Communist Party of India) by Usha Prasad on 6 – 6 – 1996, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library Oral History Transcripts, Acc. No. 775, Shri Mohan Jha, pp. 69 – 70.


192 Ibid. p. 319.
ministry in 1937. Dr. Saiyad Mahmood was the education minister, following Gandhiji’s formula he published the textbooks in both the script in which Ram and Sita was mentioned as Badshah Ram and Begum Sita. It gave rise to huge social tensions and particularly Hindu Mahasabha strongly objected to such publications and people were not ready to read such texts.\textsuperscript{193}

Bhogendra Jha was of the opinion that formation of state on the basis of languages in India was not yet complete. And he was in support of formation of smaller states on the basis of language or economic development.\textsuperscript{194} He consistently raised the issue of Maithili and the economic development of Mithila region of north Bihar in the parliament of India. He also introduced a Bill in the Parliament to include Maithili, Bhojpuri and Rajasthani in the eight schedule of the constitution under private member Bill on July 23, 1971. The bill was debated in the parliament and many MPs supported the Bill too. But the debate was adjourned by a motion introduced by S. M. Banerjee seeking a reply on the matter by the government and the government was of the opinion that Schedule eight of the constitution was meant to promote Hindi and not the languages listed in it, so the development of a language would not be affected by its inclusion or non inclusion in the eighth schedule and urged Bhogendra Jha to withdraw the Bill as government was contemplating a comprehensive Bill to deal with the recognition or non recognition of the languages.\textsuperscript{195} In 1980s and 1990s he became very vocal for the rightful claims of the Maithils. To draw his attention to the neglect of Maithili ABMS and its Secretary Pitambar Pathak played a critical role.\textsuperscript{196} ABMS wrote a letter to Mufti Mohammed Sayeed, MHA, Government of India, demanding constitutional recognition of Maithili. In this letter it is also mentioned that then P.M. of India V. P. Singh also met a Maithili delegation on September 07, 1990 and assured them about the ‘sympathetic consideration and suitable decision at the earliest’.\textsuperscript{197} ABMS wrote a letter to P. V. Narsimha Rao as

\textsuperscript{193} Ibid., p. 322.
\textsuperscript{194} Ibid., p. 334.
\textsuperscript{195} Gazette of India, Extra Ordinary, Part III, Section 2, dated 5 – 8 – 1971, there are other pages also attached with this which seem to be the Gazette papers but its date and the place of publication is not comprehensible. Copies are attached in the memorandum May 07, 2003.
\textsuperscript{196} Pitambar Pathak letter to Bhogendra Jha, June 2, 1990.
\textsuperscript{197} Pitambar Pathak letter to Mr. Mufti Mohammed Sayeed, MHA, GOI, dated Oct 12, 1990; the letter was forwarded to Bhogendra Jha as well for his consideration;
well for the recognition of Maithili in the eighth schedule of the constitution. Bhogendra Jha in his letter to the Secretary General, Lok Sabha on 31 – 5 – 1990 wrote about the neglect of and discrimination against the Mithila region of the north Bihar. He said that ‘even the existing industries like the Ashoka Paper Mills, Thakur Paper Mills, fruit processing factories of Madhubani and Darbhanga and OCM are languishing and the old sugar mills of Raiyam, Lohat, and Sakari are not being modernised. The completion of Western Koshi canal is being delayed...per capita power consumption is less than one fifth of that of Bihar which itself is less’.

Bhogendra Jha was also contemplating an ‘All-Party Conference to discuss and demand solutions of problems like, flood, drought and electricity crisis of this region’. Even the union government of India continued to believe that main language of the Mithila region was Hindi. It reflected in a reply to Bhogendra Jha’s question about the news broadcasting in Maithili from the Darbhanga Akashvani Station, Minister of state for Information and Broadcasting K. P. Singh Dev stated that ‘a news summary in Maithili of five minutes duration is broadcasted from AIR Darbhanga thrice a week. There is no proposal either to increase the duration or frequency of this News summary as adequate number of news bulletins are being broadcast by the station in the principal language of the station which is Hindi (Emphasis mine).’

Bhogendra Jha raised the issue of upgradation of the capacity of the Television centre at Madhubani, Enhancing transmitting capacity of Darbhanga Station of AIR, broadcasting of Vidyapati serial produced by Tridip Kumar Films from Doordarshan, News bulletins in Maithili language at Mithila (Darbhanga Station of AIR),

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198 Pitambar Pathak, General Secretary, ABMS, to P. V. Narasimha Rao, Prime Minister of India, dated Dec 24, 1991.
199 Bhogendra Jha to the Secretary General, Lok Sabha, New Delhi, May 31, 1990.
200 Dhanik Lal Mandal, Governor, Haryana Letter No. 2-HRB-SSG-90, dated June 12, 1990 to Prof. K. K. Mishra, Secretary, All India Maithili Writers Conference, Darbhanga, Vaidehi Samiti.
201 Lok Sabha, Unstarred Question No. 1770 Bhogendra Jha (To be answered on Mar 7, 1994), Bhogendra Jha private files.
enumeration of correct number of Maithili speakers in the Census report\textsuperscript{206} to the concerned authorities. In a letter to Ajit Panja then Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Bhogendra Jha mentioned about the peaceful demonstration of the thousands of Maithili speakers for the inclusion of Maithili in the eighth schedule of the Indian Constitution on 21 July, 1992 and hunger strike since July 29, 1992. He complained about the non coverage of these protests by AIR or Doordarshan and urged to minister to ‘ensure that AIR and doordarshan adequately cover hereafter particularly the demonstration rally of 6\textsuperscript{th} August, 1992’.\textsuperscript{207} It was a massive demonstration and rally by the Maithili speakers. Bhogendra Jha wrote a letter to the then Prime Minister of India Shri P. V. Narsimha Rao and the Minister of Home Affairs S. B. Chavan for the inclusion of Maithili in the eighth schedule of the Indian constitution.\textsuperscript{208}

\textbf{Figure 11: Prime Minister P. V. Narsimha Rao Letter to Bhogendra Jha, Dated July 9, 1992}

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\footnotesize{[Source: NMML, New Delhi]}

\begin{footnotesize}

\textsuperscript{207} Bhogendra Jha letter 196/92 to Ajit Panja, MIB, GOI, Aug 4, 1992.

\end{footnotesize}
Figure 12: Minister of Home Affairs Shankar Rav Chawhan Letter to Bhogendra Jha, Dated July 13, 1992

Figure 13: Minister of State for Home Affairs P. M. Sayeed Letter to Bhogendra Jha, Dated Jan 10, 1994

In his another letter to S. B. Chavan, Bhogendra Jha proposed that all the remaining six languages recognised by the Sahitya Akademi i.e. Maithili, Manipuri, Nepali, Konkani,
Rajasthani, and Dogri should be included in the eighth schedule of the Indian constitution. He also expressed that exclusion of Maithili might be ‘mistaken as a punishment for the Maithili-speaking people because of their remaining peaceful in their demand and agitations’.  

He also demanded that immediate steps should be taken to ‘provide the use of Maithili language for all or some of the official purposes in the Maithili speaking area of Bihar under Article 347 of the constitution of India’. He also provided a report on Maithili language which was made available in the Lok Sabha for the perusal of Member of the Parliament about the case of Maithili language for the recognition in the eighth schedule of the Indian constitution. Here he elaborated on various constitutional provisions – Art 210 (1), 341(1), 345, 347, 351 and institutional support for the promotion of regional languages.

In his reply to a question of Bhogendra Jha about the plan of government regarding inclusion of Maithili and other languages recognised by the Sahitya Akademi in the eighth schedule of the constitution, M. M. Jacob, Minister of state for Home Affairs in Lok Sabha replied that ‘the Government are of the view that inclusion of more languages in the Eighth schedule to the constitution would create other repercussions and reactions. However, it will continue to be the endeavour of the Government to develop cultural and literary heritage of all the languages irrespective of their being included in the Eighth schedule or not’.

A memorandum for the recognition of Maithili in the eighth schedule was presented to the Prime Minister and its copy was made available to members of both the houses of the Indian Parliament by Prof. Amresh Pathak as a representative of Maithili Sangharsha Samiti, Patna, Bihar on 16 – 5 – 92. In this memorandum Prof. Pathak also supported the demand of Manipuri, Nepali, Rajasthani, Dogari, and Konkani along with Maithili. He asserted that once a language fulfils the criteria of the Sahitya Akademi then such language should also be included in the eighth schedule of the constitution. He also

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212 Bhogendra Jha, Unstarred Question No. 3923, Lok Sabha, (To be answered on the Dec 16, 1991).
213 Memorandum to Honourable Prime Minister, Government of India, For Inclusion of MAITHILI and other Recognised by Sahitya Akademi, in the 8th Schedule of Indian Constitution, Maithili Sangharsha Samiti, Patna, Bihar; Similarly one memorandum was submitted by Vidyapati Seva Sansthan, Darbhanga to the President of India on Aug 6, 1992.
expressed that the recommendation for the inclusion of Maithili in the eighth schedule of the Indian Constitution was first made in 1977 by then Chief Minister of Bihar, Karpuri Thakur to Shanti Bhusan the former Law Minister, Government of India. Similar recommendations were also made during the Chief Ministership of Dr. Jagannath Mishra and Bhagwat Jha ‘Ajad’.\footnote{Ibid., though he attaches the letter of Karpuri Thakur along with the memorandum but do not attach anything in support of these other Chief Ministers of Bihar recommendation for the same.} A combined memorandum was also submitted to the Prime Minister of India for the inclusion of Maithili in the eighth schedule of the constitution. It was signed by Vidyapati Seva Sansthan, Darbhanga, Akhil Bharatiya Maithili Sahitya Parishad, Darbhanga, Mithilanchal Vikas Parishad, Laheriasarai, and Akhil Bharatiya Mithila Sangh, Delhi.\footnote{A MEMORANDUM FOR INCLUSION OF MAITHILI IN THE EIGHTH SCHEDULE OF THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION SUBMITTED TO THE HONOURABLE PRIME MINISTER GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, NEW DELHI, date and year not mentioned; Another such memorandum was submitted to the Prime Minister P. V. Narsimha Rao collectively by Pitambar Chaudharay, Mahamantri, Maithili Bhashi Chhatra Sangharsha Samiti, Ranchi, Ram Ikbal Singh, President, Maithili Vikash Parishad, Ranchi and Vindeshwar Jha date not mentioned; one more memorandum was submitted to the Government of India, by Mithilanchal Bhasha Sangharsha Samiti, Darbhanga; Mithila Dal, Darbhanga; Mithila Chhatra Sangh, Darbhanga; Mithila Sanskritik Parishad and Vaidehi Kala Manch, Kolkata; and Mithila Sangharsh Samiti, Darbhanga. All these files are contained in Bhogendra Jha’s private files.}

Bhogendra Jha raised the demand for the inclusion of Maithili in the Parliament again on 6 – 8 – 92 and proposed its inclusion along with five other languages – Rajasthani, Nepali, Manipuri, Konakani or Dogari, recognised by Sahitya Akademi in the eighth schedule of the Indian constitution.\footnote{KSP/S-3/6.8.‘92/Nishi, (Perhaps Loksabha Proceedings, Uncorrected not for publication, Bhogendra Jha (IV to VI), Subject File No. 13 Part II.} The stand of the government of Bihar exposed again when it did not responded to the repeated reminders of the Ministry of Home Affairs regarding its view on the matter of Maihtili’s inclusion in the eighth schedule of the Indian constitution. In a comment MHA on the representation of Bhogendra Jha pointed out that ‘the Bihar State Government was requested to give their comments on the points raised in the representation as they were primarily concerned with this matter. However, the State Government has not furnished any views on this matter, despite reminders. Home minister has also written a letter to Chief Minister, Bihar in the matter.’\footnote{Comments dated Apr 8, 1994 furnished by the Ministry of Home Affairs on the Representation of Shri Bhogendra Jha, M. P., regarding inclusion of Maithili language in Eighth Schedule to the Constitution, etc. and also a letter no. 53/C1/92/R-46, dated Aug 4, 1994 from S. P. Jain, Under Secretary, Loksabha to Bhogendra Jha.} The comment further elaborated on Article 345 of the Indian constitution
which empowers the state to make any language of the state for partial or full official purpose. And also that inclusion in the eighth schedule of a language does ‘not by itself confer a constitutional duty on the state Government to direct its use for a particular purpose’. Finally the Government of India through Seventy Eighth Constitutional Amendment included Manipuri, Nepali and Konkani in the eighth schedule of the constitution and Maithili was left out.

Support for the Maithili was widening in this period as many M. P.s across the party supported the rightful claim of Maithili. Expressing Maithili as having rich classical and modern literature Syed Sahabuddin also supported the demand for the inclusion of Maithili in the eighth schedule. Political demand for the separate statehood for Mithila was also being re-asserted and Mithila Rajya Sangharsa Samiti was formed with Jayakant Mishra as its Chairman. Jayakant Mishra was also contemplating to form a new party altogether for this purpose with Bhogendra Jha as its leader. Lallo Prasad had become critical of Bhogendra Jha which was because of Bhogendra Jha’s open support for Maithili. It distressed the Maithils even more. Dr. Dhanakar Thakur, being himself a supporter of BJP acknowledged the role of Bhogendra Jha (C. P. I. MP) in the Maithili movement. For Dr. Thakur without the creation of separate state of Mithila, Maithili could not survive.

1992 was a crucial year in the the Maithili movement as ABMS systematically protested, demonstrated and launched hunger strike at Boat club before the parliament of India from March 1992 to December 8, 1992. Shri Jagannath Mishra courted arrest for the inclusion of Maithili in the eighth schedule. Similarly a dozen of students participated in a cycle procession from Darbhanga to Delhi in support of the demand for Maithili under the leadership of Ranabir Kumar Chaudhary. They started from Darbhanga on 25 – 11 – 1994 and reached Delhi on 6 – 12 – 1994. They also presented the memorandum in support of Maithili to the Prime Minister, Home Minister, many Cabinet Ministers and Members of Parliament.

218 Ibid.
220 Dr. Jayakant Mishra letter to Bhogendra Jha, dated May 09, 1996.
221 Ibid.
222 Dr. Dhanakar Thakur letter to Bhogendra Jha, May 8, 1996.
224 Ibid.
Despite his staunch support for Maithili’s demand Bhogendra Jha was well aware of the different problems of the movement. He considered that treaty of Sugauli by the Englishmen politically divided Maithili speaking people, river Koshi geographically divided the region, social division of Mithila does not allow all the castes and communities of Mithila to come together on a single platform and finally the Maithili movement was divided at the level of organisation as well as supporter of Maithili very often forms new association refusing to come together to form and strength one organisation for the purpose.\textsuperscript{225}

5.10 Contributions of Vidyapati Seva Sansthan and Antarashtriya Maithili Parishad

\textit{Vidyapati Seva Sansthan}\textsuperscript{226} is one of the most vocal and active organisation in the contemporary phase of the Maithili movement along with \textit{Mithila Vikas Parishad} and \textit{Antarashtriya Maithili Parishad}. Its main objective is to awaken the masses through movements, protests, demonstrations and memorandums. This organisation is politically oriented and has played a critical role in bringing Mithila and Maithili speaking region of India and Nepal together. It came into being on October 07, 1980. Braj Kishor Verma ‘Manipadma’ was the main motivator besides Kumar Subheshwar Singh, Baidyanath Chaudary ‘Baiju’, Dayanand Jha and Umakant Jha.\textsuperscript{227} Presently this organisation works under the leadership of Baidyanath Chaudhary ‘Baiju’. Every year it organises \textit{Mithila Vibhuti Parva} and on this occasion it commemorates and celebrates Maithili speaking personalities and their contributions. Its contributions are duly recognised in implementation of Maithili as a medium in primary education in some parts of Darbhanga, Madhubani, Saharsa, and Purnia. It has fought for the broadcasting of all the programmes at Aakaswani (All India Radio) Darbhanga and Bhagalpur in Maithili. For the all round development of Mithila it launched a persistent movement since 1984. Among them important were: - \textit{Rail Roku Aandolan} (Stop

\textsuperscript{225} Bhogendra Jha letter to Premkant Nov 9, 1993.
Railway Movement) on 16 December, 1985, throughout Mithilanchal the same movement was launched on January, 07, 08 and 09, 1986 in which more than five thousand people were arrested, on January 18, 1986, Darbhanga Samahartak Gherao (Encirclement of the collector of Darbhanga) in which women also participated, on January 27, 1986 throughout Mithilanchal Band (closed) was observed, on February 24 Baat Chhek Aandolan (Obstruct the Road Movement). On August 13, 1986 a big mass procession was organised in Delhi where Janta Party leader of the parliament Prof. Madhu Dandwate, Member of Parliament Shri Vijay Kumar Mishra, Former Member of Parliament Shri Hukumdev Narayan Yadav and then Chairmen Vidyapapti Seva Sansthan and former Member of Parliament, Surendra Jha ‘Suman’, Shri Babu Saheb Chaudahary, Shri Dev Narayan Jha, Shri Pitambar Pathak and others were part of the rally. These are the following thirteen point’s demand of the Sansthan for the all round development of Mithila:

1. Immediate construction of big gauge railway line from Samastipur via Darbhanga to Jayanagar, Nirmalli and Narkatiyaganj, along with the beginning of work for the small gauge line between Sakari – Hasanpur.
2. Solutions for the distresses like floods, raudi (draught), and electricity.
3. All the ailing mills of Mithilanchal must be modernised and there should be the industrialisation of the region. There should be immediate beginning and production work of Ashok Paper Mills, Samastipur Paper Mills, Baijnathpur Kagaj Mill, Thakur Paper Mill, Samastipur, Jute Mill, Katihar, Jute Mill, Forbesganj. Also Glucose Mill of Pandaul, Raiyam- Lohat-Sakari Sugar Mill, and Samastipur Railway Coach Factory must be expanded.
4. Establishment of University in Saharsa, Medical College in Purnea, and Petrochemicals in Begusarai, along with the establishment of Graphite factory in Samastipur.
5. Keeping in mind the cultural and linguistic unity there should be direct connection between Darbhanga and Saharsa through rail and road; and immediate completion of National High lateral road which is of strategic importance.

6. There should be strengthening and expansion of rail and road transportation throughout Mithilanchal – (a) Sakari – Hasanpur, (b) Nirmali – Bhatiyahi, (c) Big Gauge Railway line between Samastipur-Udaipur-Mepal (d) Muzzafarpur – Sitamadhi (e) Simari – Bakhtiyarpur – Bihariganj (f) Madhepura – Triveneeganj – veerpu (g) Farbesganj – Thakurganj (h) Nirmalli – Jaiyanagar.

7. Throughout Mithilanchal Maithili should be used as a medium of education till high school.

8. Maithili should be recognised in the state as an official language.

9. There should be immediate inclusion of Maithili into the eighth schedule of the Indian constitution.

10. Opening of Doordarshan centre in Darbhanga.

11. There should be provision for the broadcasting of all the programmes of Aakaswani Darbhanga and Bhagalpur in Maithili.

12. There should be repeal of the decision about the transferring of Sanjay Gandhi Diary Technology – temporarily coordinated by Rajendra Prasad Agricultural University from Darbhanga which was proposed for Darbhanga. It should be established in Darbhanga.

13. One third of the property of the Raj Darbhanga should be set aside for public welfare.

Vidyapati Seva Sansthan is also trying to coordinate between different organisations of Mithila and Maithili throughout India to chart out the strategy of the movement and to work together for the cause of Mithila. It also celebrates Janaki Navami as Maithili Diwas. Till 1986 it had thirty two branches in the different villages of Darbhanga, Samastipur, Muzzafarpur, Saharsa, and Purnia
Figure 14: Protest for the Constitutional Recognition of Maithili - 1

Figure 15: Protest for the Constitutional Recognition of Maithili - 2
Figure 16: Protest for the Constitutional Recognition of Maithili - 3

Figure 17: Protest for the Constitutional Recognition of Maithili - 4
Figure 18: Protest for the Constitutional Recognition of Maithili -5

Figure 19: Protest for the Constitutional Recognition of Maithili -6
Figure 20: Protest for the Constitutional Recognition of Maithili -7

Figure 21: Protest for the Constitutional Recognition of Maithili -8
June 19 and 20, 1993 proved to be a milestone in the history of the Maithili movement with the organisation of first *International Maithili Conference* at Ranchi. Besides its support from India and Nepal many people from the US also supported its formation. The conference was inaugurated by Jayakant Mishra and Babu Saheb Chaudhary of Kolkata and Amresh Narayan Chaudhary, chairman of ‘Nepal Maithili Samaj’ was chief guests. Subhadra Jha suggested that if Maithili was to develop it was necessary for all the people inhabiting Mithila to declare themselves Maithil, as they are all the children of Mithila and their language is Maithili and not Hindi or English. He also considered the condition of Maithili would have been different had Maithili and its script Tirhuta been respected in the courts of Darbhanga Raj, Betiya Raj, Banaili Raj and in Nepal King’s court. It was also stressed that Maithili’s biggest enemy were Maithils themselves and combined with the political divide of the region on the basis of caste, the very existence of Maithili had been threatened. In the *conference* it was declared that Maithili was an international language and the purpose of the *AMP* was
the development of Maithili. Besides the demand for social and economic development of Mithila, AMP demanded that on the basis of population Maithili must be declared the second language of the state in Bihar under Article 347 of the Indian constitution. Second, a Bill should be introduced in the parliament for the inclusion of Maithili in the eighth schedule of the constitution. The AMP has been organising conferences and various training camps at regular intervals for preparing the Maithili volunteers in different parts of Mithila. It is important to remember that this conference was organised in a background when Laloo Prasad Yadav’s Government in Bihar excluded Maithili from BPSC. And there was discourse at the centre about the expansion of eighth schedule of the constitution of India. So the conference was organised under politically charged background.

5.11 Bhartiya Janta Party, Tarakant Jha, C. P. Thakur and Inclusion of Maithili in the Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution

Bhartiya Janta Party also supported the Maithili movement particularly when Tarakant Jha, a renowned advocate at Patna High Court and long term associate of BJP since the days of Jana Sangh, was the President of Bihar State BJP in 1990s. Tarakant Jha was associated with Rashtriya Swamyasevak Sangh since the very beginning. He was its Pracharak for fifteen years. Thereafter he pursued his legal profession at Patna High Court with distinction and went on to become the Advocate General in 1976. Later he joined BJP after the formation of BJP in 1980. He was a very close observer of the Maithili movement and shaped the growth of Chetna Samiti. He actively participated in its activities and events. He also played a key role in the establishment of Maithili Akademi in 1976 at Patna. In the later years of his life he openly give leadership to Mithila and the Maithili movement and after the creation of Jharkhanda in 2000, launched an extensive campaign for the separate statehood of Mithila.

228 Antrashtriya Maithili Parishad, Maithili, Year 10, Issue 2, 1993 (Published from California, US), some of the organizers of the conference were – N. K. Gami, Bharati, MECKON-SAIL Pariwar; Ram Iqbal Singh ‘Vinit’, Maithili Vikash Parishad, Ranchi; I. N. Jha, Videh, CCL Pariwar; Lakshman Rawat, Vidyapati Samaroha Samiti, H. E. C. Pariwar; Shankar Jha, Vidyapati Samarak Samiti, Ranchi; Lakshmi Narayan Singh ‘Suman’; Murlidhar Jha; Purnanand Pathak; Rajkumar Mishra; Rani Jha; Vindeshwar Jha; Dr. Dhanakar Thakur. The conference also proposed the celebration of Janaki Navami as ‘Maithili Deevas’; Its organizing members were – Nepal Maithili Samaj; Maithili, California, USA; Akhil Bharatiya Mithila Sangha, Delhi and Kolkata; Mithila Seva Samiti, Kanpur; Chetna Samiti, Patna; Vidyapati Seva Sanshan, Darbhanga; Mithila Sanskritik Parishad, Bokaro; Bharati, MECKON-SAIL, Ranchi; and three more organization was supposed to be added two from Nepal and one from West/South India; see Pamhlets Pratham Antarashtriya Sammelan, Ranchi, Ashadhi Amawashya, Saal 1400 (June 19-20, 1993), by Dhanakar Thakur.
He was elected as the Member of Legislative Council of Bihar on July 22, 1992. When the then government of Bihar led by Laloo Prasad Yadav removed Maithili from the BPSC on 27 February, 1992, Bihar BJP organised a Band on March 1, 1992 throughout Mithilanchal and this was supported by NSUI’s President Premshankar Mishra as well.\textsuperscript{229} Pt. Tarakant Jha also led a protest march in Patna.\textsuperscript{230} It is important to note here that Maithil was recognised by the government of Bihar in 1972 as an optional paper in the BPSC examination, conceding to the long standing demand of the Maithili speakers.\textsuperscript{231} When Laloo Yadav government refused to restore the previous status of Maithili in the BPSC many cases were filed in Patna High Court\textsuperscript{232} and Pt. Tarakant Jha played an active role in it. High court in its judgement lamented the government of Bihar for excluding Maithili on the pretext of a case pending in the High court,\textsuperscript{233} and expressed that ‘merely because a matter was pending at the High court could not offer ready excuse to the state to withdraw Maithili language as a subject in the examinations conducted by the Bihar Public Service Commission. This was an exercise in politics’.\textsuperscript{234} The court further added that ‘(l)inguistic identities are not quirks of history. As heritage, a language lives with a civilisation and passes out with it. A language flourishes with patronage and recedes into disuse with lack of it. State hostility to language will be its death knell. (A) hostility to a language is hostility to the

\textsuperscript{229} Mishra, Uday Shankar, ‘Mithila Putra Pt. Tarakant Jha’, in \textit{Mithila Tradition and Change Essays in Honour of Pt. Tarakant Jha}, ed., Sureshwar Jha, Darbhanga, Tarakant Jha Felicitation Committee, 2008, p. 58. A letter to the effect of removal of Maithili from the BPSC was written by Harsha Bardhan, Joint Secretary of the Government to the Secretary of the BPSC dated Feb 29, 1992, in which it was claimed that a case against Maithili was filed in the Patna High Court by Rakesh Kumar and others in which it was claimed that in the census of 1990-91 the speaker of Maithili were lesser than the speakers of Bhojpuri, Tribal and Magahi language, therefore it was not proper to include Maithili as an optional paper in BPSC exam. Hence the government of Bihar took the decision to remove Maithili from the BPSC. The letter was included in the Memorandum May 07, 2003.


\textsuperscript{231} The Bihar Gazette, Patna, Wednesday, Aug 9, 1972, p. 723, In a meeting of Minister chaired by the Chief Minister on 13 June, 1972 the proposal regarding inclusion of Maithili in the examination of BPSC was accepted.

\textsuperscript{232} C.W. J.C. No. 2263 of 1992, Binay Kumar Mishra Versus State of Bihar and others; C.W. J.C. No. 3379 of 1992, Praveen Kumar Jha and others Versus The state of Bihar and others; C.W. J.C. No. 3624 of 1992 Indra Kumar Thakur Versus the state of Bihar and others; C.W. J.C. No. 3669 of 1992 Chetana Samiti Versus the state of Bihar and others; C.W. J.C. No. 5160 of 1994, Narayan Jha and others Versus the state of Bihar and others; C.W. J.C. No. Navchetna through its secretary Satish Chandra Jha Versus the state of Bihar and others, Patna High Court Judgement dated October 30, 2000.

\textsuperscript{233} C.W. J.C. No. 6582 of 1991 Rakesh Kumar Versus the state of Bihar and others, Patna High Court Judgement dated October 30, 2000.

\textsuperscript{234} Patna High Court Judgement dated October 30, 2000, Present were The Hon’ble Chief Justice Sri Ravi S. Dhavan and The Hon’ble Mr. Justice Aftab Alam, p. 3.
people who use it. Even a dominant language, thus, recedes into the background\textsuperscript{235} (emphasis added). Thus the High Court quashed the order of the Government dated 29 February, 1992 and directed the government ‘to insert Maithili language in the syllabi of the Bihar Public Service Commission as it was before ... if the state may like to take any other decision on the inclusion of other languages, it may, but it will have to be within the framework of law and the constitution of India’.\textsuperscript{236} Here the court was referring to Bhojpuri particularly. Against this judgement the RJD government of Bihar took the case to Supreme Court but when the case was still pending in Supreme Court, Pt. Tarakant Jha was able to successfully persuade Nitish Kumar government to restore the status of Maithili in the examination of BPSC in 2006.\textsuperscript{237} He was so much involved in the issue of Maithili and Mithila that some leaders within BJP started to criticise his move. This was the case when he organised Mithilanchal Jagaran Yatra in 1995. He had also get a resolution passed in the executive meeting of Bihar BJP at Madhubani on July 8, 9 and 10, 1994 regarding Maithili to be included in the eighth schedule of the Indian constitution. In the election manifesto of BJP for 1995 Assembly election in Bihar, it was included that if voted to power BJP would restore the previous status of Maithili in BPSC and pressurise the central government to include Maithili in the eighth schedule of the constitution.\textsuperscript{238} It was a historic incident in the history of the Maithili movement as for the first time a political party included the demand for Maithili in its election manifesto. When these moves were making grounds in Mithila and people came in its support Tarakant Jha was expelled from the BJP for six years on November 20, 1998.\textsuperscript{239} He still continued his work for the recognition of Maithili and development of Mithila. On May 12, 2000 he submitted a memorandum to the President of India for the recognition of Maithili in the eighth schedule of the Indian constitution signed by twenty seven lacs people.\textsuperscript{240} When a Bill for the creation of Jharkhand, Uttaranchal (now Uttarakhand), and Chhatisgarh was passed in the Parliament on August 3, 2000 very next day on August 4, 2000 he organised a press conference and demanded for the separate statehood of Mithila. However, he rejoined BJP by the end of 2003.

\textsuperscript{235} Ibid, p. 5.
\textsuperscript{236} Ibid, p. 8.
\textsuperscript{237} Mishra, Uday Shankar, ‘Mithilik Putra Pt. Tarakant Jha’, p. 58.
\textsuperscript{238} Excerpts and translated into Hindi from the resolution of Executive Committee Meeting of Bihar BJP at Madhubani, 8, 9, 10 July, 1994 originally in Maithili; see the Memorandum May 07, 2003.
\textsuperscript{239} Jha, Ratish Chandra, ‘Pandit Tarakant Jhak Jeevangatha’, p. 6.
\textsuperscript{240} Ibid.
There was an overwhelming support for the inclusion of Maithili, Bodo, Santhali and Dogari in the eighth schedule of the Indian constitution. Regarding Maithili’s inclusion in the constitution a question was raised in the parliament by the All India Trinmul Congress MP Sudip Bandopadhyaya on 03 – 12 – 2002. After that almost all the M.P.s of Mithila supported such demand across the caste and party line. Ramchandra Paswan MP from Rosara during the zero hour session of the Loksabha on 15 – 12 – 2003 lamented the government for their lukewarm attitude towards Maithili despite repeated assurance. He even cautioned the government that the issue of Maithili was related to four and half crore of the people, and they eagerly waiting for the government to introduce a Bill for the inclusion of Maithili in the parliament at the earliest. And on December 22 – 23, 2003 the Parliament passed the constitutional amendment Bill including Maithili in the eighth schedule of the Indian constitution. Pt. Tarakant Jha was present among the audience on the both days in the parliament. And Maithili along with Bodo, Dogari, and Santhali was included in the eighth schedule of the Indian constitution by the ninety second constitutional amendment to the constitution.

5.12 Mithila: Revival of Separate Statehood Demand

One very important shift taking place in the Maithili movement was its focus from the issue of Maithili language to economic backwardness and poverty of the region. It has now become the central agenda for political mobilisation. In two day conference at

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241 Loksabha, Matter Under Rule 377, Sudip Bandyopadhyaya, Dec 03, 2002, (A copy of it was compiled in the memorandum submitted to the Prime Minister of India on May 07, 2003 by Vidyapati Seva Sansathan, Darbhanga, Akhil Bhartiya Mithila Sangh, Delhi and Mithila Vikas Parishad, Kolkata) other memorandum for the same purpose was submitted by Antarshtriya Mithili Parishad, on Apr 20, 2000; Vidyapati Seva Sansathan, Darbhang in Mar, 2001.
242 A copy of the proceeding is attached in the Memorandum of May 07, 2003. It is also to be noted that Ramchandra Paswan also provided leadership to the protesters marching towards the parliament on December 19, 2002 and courted arrest along with hundreds of other Maithili supporters for the recognition of Maithili in the constitution.
244 The Gazette of India, Extra Ordianry, Part II – Section I, Ministry of Law and Justice (Legislative Department), No. 8, New Delhi, Jan 8, 2004. The role of C. P. Thakur Minister of North East Development and Small Industry in National Democratic Alliance government and some central government’s Maithili speaking officials acknowledged by the Maithili leaderships besides acknowledging the role of the Vajpayee led NDA government. In this Bill it was also mentioned that there were 33 other languages for which demands were made for the recognition in the eighth schedule of the constitution, important among them were – Rajasthani, Brij Bhasha (spoken in Rajasthan, K. Natwar Singh’s area) Bhojpuri, Bundeli, khasi, Kok, Barak, Tulu, Rajbanshi, Pahadi, Nicobari Tribal languages, Koran, Malbani etc. (papers related to these are attached in the Memorandum, May 07, 2003).
Muzzafarpur when some people tried to pass the resolution for making Maithili as the medium of education Pt. Tarakant Jha according to Kamlesh Jha had said that *Mithila Rajya Abhiyan* would discuss the issue of poverty and development. Dr. Ayodhyanath Jha in his support of Mithila statehood demand did not even mention the name of Maithili –

विदेहसुल्ता जानकीकी ई क्षेत्र अपन उपेक्षा आ अपमानसी मुक्तक लेल, दरिद्रता एवं विपन्नता दूर करबाक लेल, विकासक गति के तीब्र करबाक लेल, देशक सूक्ष्म आ अलंकारक के अलूल स्थान लेल, रौद्र–दांही सी जान एवं बाक लेल आ अपन प्राचीन गरिमा के प्राच करवाक लेल पृथक मिथिला राज्यक संस्थान आहार करेत अछि।

[This region of the daughter of Videh – Janaki pronounces the struggle for the Mithila state, to free itself from neglect and contempt, to eradicate absolute poverty and vulnerability, to increase the pace of development, to keep the security and integrity of the country intact, to protect itself from draught and floods and regain its past glory.]

To discuss the viability of separate Mithila a two day meeting was held on October 21 and 22, 2000 at J. N. College, Madhubani in which 181 people participated out of 250 invited. In this meeting leader like Devendra Prasad Yadav, MP (JDU), Jhanjharpur, Ramashish Yadav, MLA, Benipatti, Rajkumar Yadav, MLA Phulparas were present.

Inaugurating the Central Head Quarter of *Mithila Rajya Abhiyan* on November 11, 2000 at Gauri Niwas, Raham Ganj, LaheriaSarai, Prof. Chetkar Jha, renowned Political Scientist and former Vice Chancellor of Lalit Narayan Mithila University, Darbhanga expressed that earlier he was opposed to Mithila movement based on Maithili language but he now supports the demand for Mithila state as it was based on development demand.

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245 It was established in Nov, 2000 at Madhubani, which claims to have its unit in 20 districts out of then proposed 22 districts of Mithila; see Mishra Uday Shankar, 2008, p. 59.
248 Ibid., pp. 74 – 76.
249 Ibid., p. 77.
In February Janaki Rath and Ganga Gandak Rath Yatra was organised to mobilise the masses across the length and breadth of the Mithila. In these Yatras a slogan coined by Mohamad Hazi Iliya became quite popular and also reflect the growing discontent among all the caste and religious groups of Mithila — आगां आगां टीकीवाला तकर पाछा टोपीवाला, तखन बनते मिथिला राज्य [in front line tikiwala (referring to Hindu), behind them topiwala (referring to Muslims), Only then Mithila state can be created]

In two day programme at Saharsa on May 25 – 26, 2001 representative related to Mithila Rajya Abhiyan of all the districts of Mithila participated. In the meeting it was decided to launch Koshi Rath Yatra to mobilise the masses of Saharsa, Madhepura, Supaul and Purnea. But it could not be organised. However it shows the growing interests among the Maithils for the demand of separate statehood. Similar events were held in Samastipur, Devghar, Khagariya, Patna and other places in Mithila as well. They had also started the publication of Jai Mithila- mouth piece of Mithila Rajya Abhiyan. Its editor was Prof. Sureshwar Jha. Mithila Seva Trust was also registered in 2001 for raising funds for the separate statehood movement for Mithila. A successful Nakabandi in the support of their demand was organised for four hour on June 22, 2002.

In the meanwhile a judgement of Patna High court on September 26, 2002 in which the Bihar government was reminded that it was the duty of the state government to provide education at primary level in the mother tongue Maithili in Mithila, gave considerable encouragement to Mithila movement. In a two day programme at Darbhanga on February 28 – 29, 2004 to celebrate the inclusion of Maithili in the Indian constitution Pt. Tarakant Jha reiterated that his priority was Mithila and Maithili even after joining the BJP and he would fight for the realisation of Mithila state.

One of the interesting developments of the movement in this period was increasing belief among the people of the region that without the political mobilisation and mass agitations

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250 Ibid.
251 Ibid., p. 78.
252 Ibid.
253 For details see Ibid, pp. 73 – 87.
254 Ibid., p. 79.
255 Ibid., p. 81.
256 Ibid., p. 86.
the region could not be developed economically and separate statehood is vital for that. And only through separate and independent statehood of Mithila, Maithili culture and language could be protected and promoted. Another interesting development in the movement is growing assertion of the non Brahmins and non-Kayastha castes and their opposition to the Brahminical dominations over the language and culture of Mithila. And these contestations will shape the future course of the Maithili movement.

Leaders of all the political parties of Mithila had raised the issue of Maithili and Mithila at one point or the other. They are doing so even more actively since 1980s. It is alleged that they use the issue of Maithili and Mithila for their own personal progress within their respective political parties. But it had certainly led to the development of tacit consensus among all the political leaders of Mithila that issue of Maithili and Mithila could not be undermined. Now there are formations of political parties like ABMP with the sole purpose of development of Mithila and Maithili. In the other words issue of Mithila and Maithili has become strong political issue in the region.

Other remarkable development of the period is greater willingness among the organisations and the individuals to work together for the cause of Maithili. Internal fractions and social division of Maithili organisations was one of the biggest reasons for the slow development of the Maithili movement. Though, it is true that it had worked against the extremely odd conditions and fought against the Hindi, supported by emerging nationalism in India. Maithili language movement has been successful in meeting almost all its demands but failed in many ways to connect and sufficiently mobilise the masses on the issue of Maithili, despite a century of the history of the movement. It is still, its biggest challenge.

The social base of the movement has certainly increased, perhaps because of the growing number of middle class among the Maithils. The participation of non Brahmins and non Kayasthas castes are increasing. And the issue of Mithila after recognition of Maithili in the eighth schedule of the Indian constitution is bound to become the political issue in the region. However, the characteristic of the movement itself remains far from a mass based movement, perhaps the biggest contradiction of the Maithili movement.