Languages of Lakshadweep
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About

One of the world's most spectacular tropical island systems, Lakshadweep Islands is tucked away at 220-240 kms off the Malabar Coast (Kerala). The islands comprise of 4200 sq.km. of lagoon rich in marine wealth ad 36 islands in an area of 32 sq.km. Each island in Lakshadeep is fringed by snow white coral sands. The crystal clear water and the rich marine flora and fauna enhance the mystique of these islands.

Against the vast blue sea the Lakshyadeep islands look like emeralds. The huge wall like reef bordering the outer side of the shallow lagoons blocks the incoming swells of the sea. The Lakshadweep islands are linked to the mainland by ships & passenger planes. Agatti island and Bangaram island can be reached by Air and the others by ship from Kochi (Cochin). The temperature increases from South to North; April and May are the hottest with temperatures averaging at 32°C. Each island of Lakshadweep or Laccadives, a tiny principality in itself, has existed from time immemorial, with little influence from the outside world.

The charm of Lakshadeep islands lies in their remoteness. Far off the beaten track, they attract no hordes of merry makers to its shores, or perhaps it is the beauty of the islands densely covered with coconut palms, and threaded by an unbroken line of creamy sand, each island serenely set in a sea whose waters range from palest aquamarine and turquoise to deepest sapphire and lapis lazuli.

Indian Scriptures

About Mahl Language

Dhivehi (Dhivehi), sometimes referred by alternative spelling Divehi - also known as Maldivian, is an Indo-Aryan language predominantly spoken by about 350,000 people in the Republic of Maldives where it is the national language. It is also the native language of nearly 10,000 people in the island of Minicoy in Union territory of Lakshadweep, India where the Mahl dialect of Dhivehi is spoken. As a whole, it is the mother tongue of the Dhivehis, who inhabit the historic region of the Maldive Islands comprising what is now the aforesaid places.

Malé (Standard), Huvadhu, Mulaku, Addu, Haddhunmathee and Maliku (Mahl) dialects are the major dialects of Dhivehi language. The mainstream or standard form of Dhivehi is Malé dialect spoken in the Maldivian capital, Malé. Maliku dialect spoken in Minicoy is officially referred as Mahl by the Lakshadweep administration. This have been adopted by many authors in referring to the variant of Dhivehi spoken in Minicoy.

Dhivehi is closely related to Sinhala. Many languages have influenced the development of Dhivehi through the ages, most importantly Arabic. Others include French, Persian, Portuguese, and English. There are some Dravidian influences too. The English words atoll (a ring of coral

islands or reefs) and doni (a vessel for inter-atoll navigation) are anglicized forms of the Dhivehi words Atou and Dni.

History of Mahl Language

Mahl is descended from Maharashtri, a Prakrit of ancient and medieval India and is based on Sanskrit foundations. But it developed in relative isolation, with little contact with the other Indo-Aryan languages until the 12th century C.E. However linguists agree that Mahl is an Indo-Aryan language which also has older Indic elements in it and also agree that Mahl (Divehi), Marathi and Sinhala must be “sister languages” that developed from a common Prakrit.

Mahl is closely related to Hindi, Marathi, Sinhala and Bengali. And one can see that it is also related to Punjabi, Gujarati and Oriya. Mahl has also borrowed many words from Arabic, Persian, European and Dravidian languages. Since the 16th century C.E., Mahl has been written in a unique script called Taana, which is written from right to left, like that of Hebrew and Arabic.

Mahl has a continuous written history of about nine hundred years. The earliest writings were on the Loamaafaanu (copper-plate grants) of the 12th and 13th centuries. Early inscriptions on coral stone have also been found. The oldest inscription found to date is an inscription on a coral stone, which is estimated to be from around 7th or 8th century C.E. Mahl represents the southernmost Indo-Aryan language and even the southernmost Indo-European language.

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