

The New Indian Express 04.11.2009

Ombudsman for local bodies switches to Malayalam [Express News Service](#)

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: Taking a cue from Chief Minister V.S.Achuthanandan's 'Keralappiravi Day' speech, the Office of the Ombudsman for Local Self Government Institutions has switched over completely to Malayalam from November 1.

Ombudsman M.R.Hariharan Nair said in a statement that all orders issued by his office will henceforth be in Malayalam. However, there is no objection to a petitioner filing his complaint, or other documents, in English, he said.

Under the Ombudsman for Local Self Government Institutions (Enquiry Trial and Conditions of Service) Rules, 1999, the administrative language for the Ombudsman can be either English or Malayalam.

While this is a new experiment for a quasi-judicial institution, petitioners could face a slight problem. An Ombudsman's orders can be questioned only in the High Court or the Supreme Court. So the petitioners will have

to translate their petitions into English. ``But since such cases comprise only a small fraction of the total cases (handled by the Ombudsman), we feel that this slight inconvenience is irrelevant considering the benefit to the majority,” the statement said.

Chief Minister V.S.Achuthanandan had pointed out that if Malayalam were to become the administrative language in the fullest sense, then all government officials should be able to handle the language well.