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सदस्य-सचिव
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भारत सरकार
त्रिकूट-१, भीकाएजी कामा प्लेस, नई दिल्ली - ११००६६

Member - Secretary
National Commission for Backward Classes
Government of India
Trikoot - 1, Bhikaiji Cama Place, New Delhi - 110 066

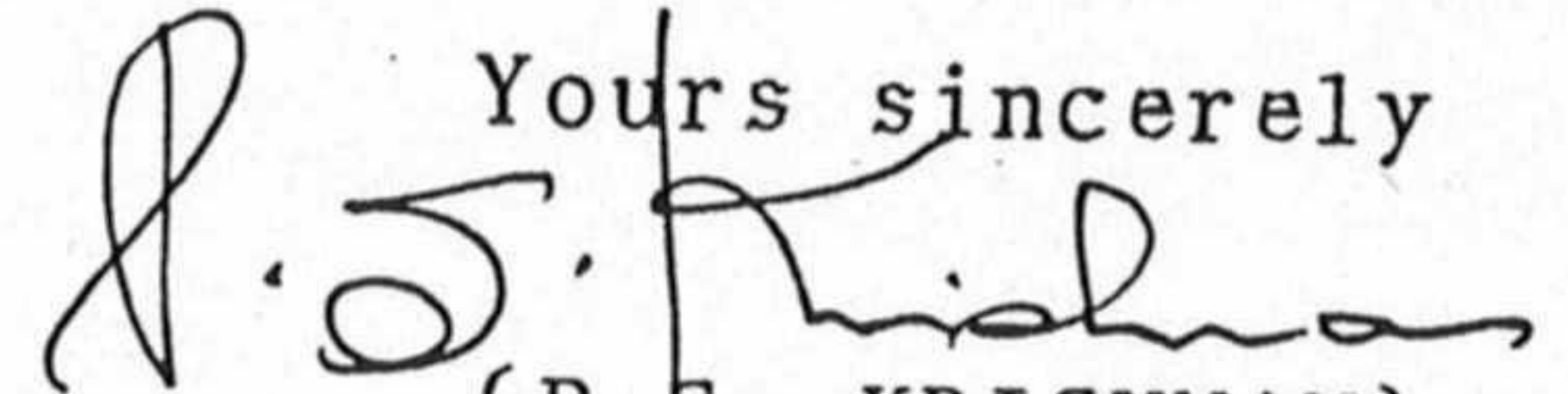
NCBC Advice No. Pondicherry 79/99

21. 10. 1999

Dear Smt. Das,

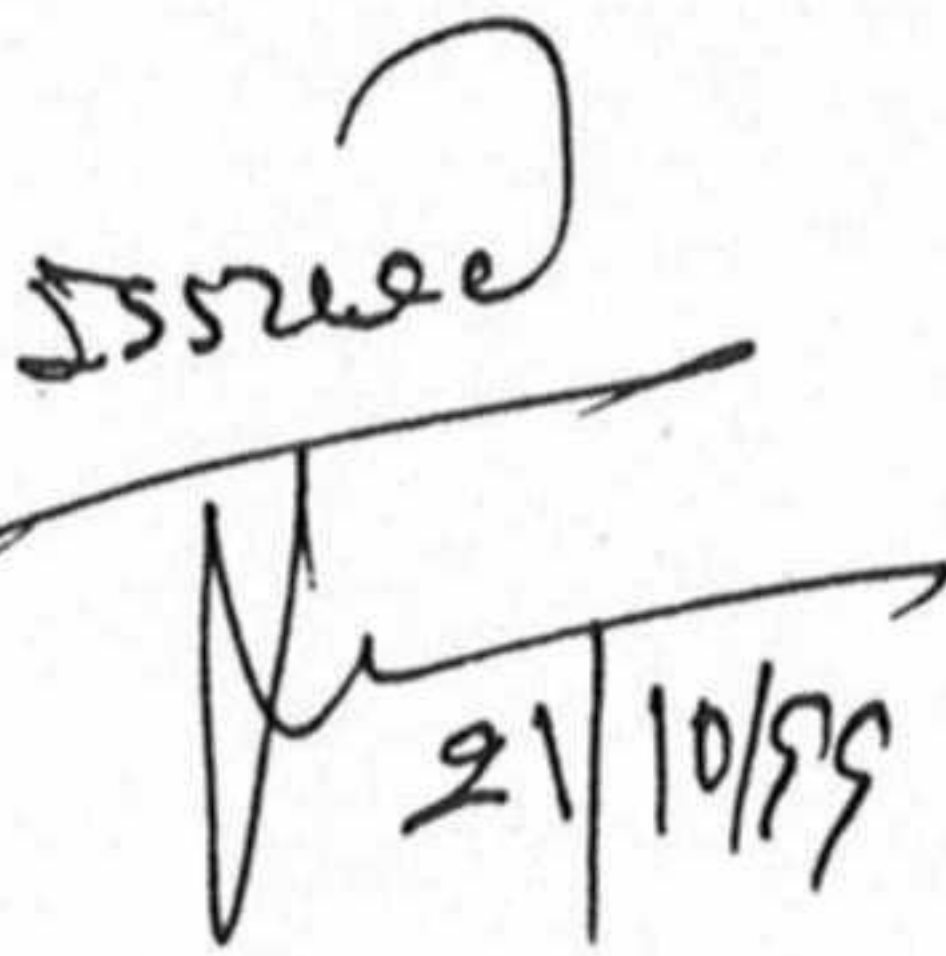
I am sending herewith the Advice of the National Commission for Backward Classes under Section 9(1) of the NCBC Act, 1993 for the Rejection of the Request for Inclusion of "Deekani Muslim" in the Central List of Backward Classes for Pondicherry, duly authenticated, for necessary action by the Central Government under Section 9(2) of the Act.

Yours sincerely


(P.S. KRISHNAN)

Encl: As stated

Smt. Asha Das
Secretary
Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment
Shastri Bhavan
NEW DELHI

Issued

21/10/99

O/C

NCBC Advice No.79/Pondicherry/99

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR BACKWARD CLASSES

Pondicherry Bench

Findings

Per Shri Sahu Akshaya Bhai, Member

Case: Request for inclusion of "Dekkani Muslim" caste/community in the Central List of Backward Classes for Pondicherry.

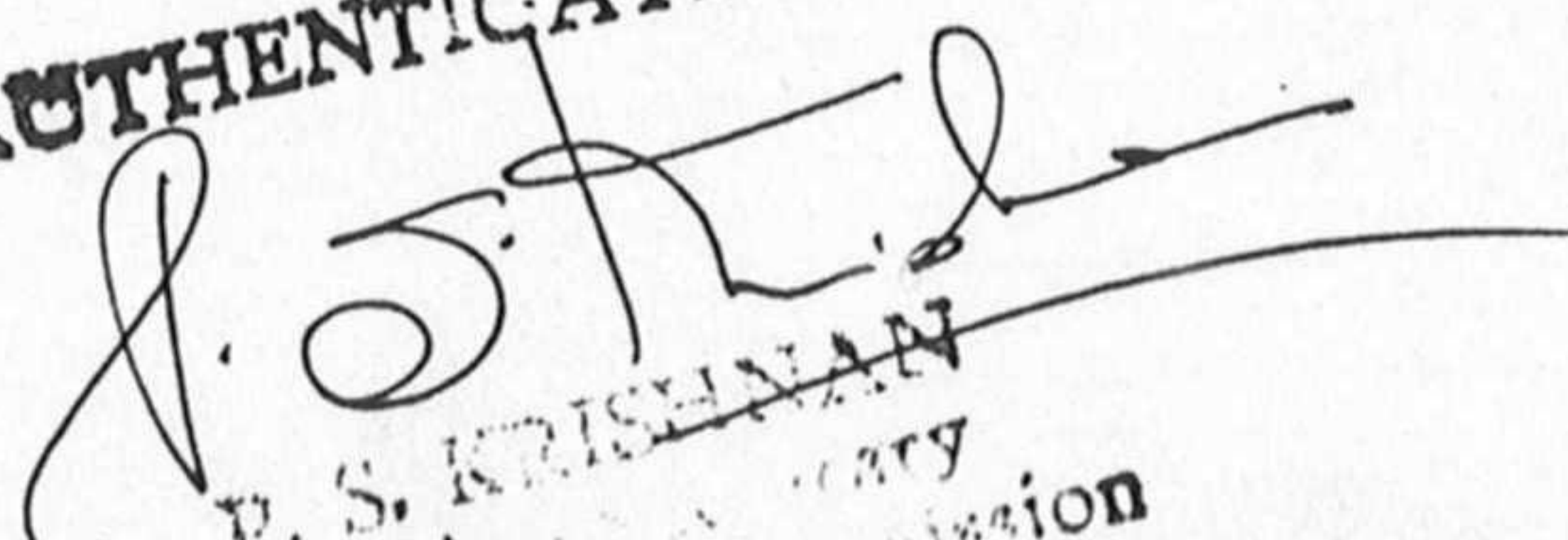
I. Request

This case arises from the Request received in this Commission from Shri S. Govindaraju, General Secretary, Pirpaduthapattor Nala Sangam, Pondicherry for Inclusion of "Dekkani Muslim" caste/community in the Central List of Backward Classes for Pondicherry.

II. Public Hearing

2. A two-Member Bench of the NCBC consisting of Shri Sahu Akshaya Bhai and Shri U.P. Singh Hon'ble Members held a Public Hearing in respect of this request at Pondicherry on 28-8-1998. At the Public Hearing, the U.T. Government was represented by Shri Felix Sequeira, Welfare Secretary, Shri A.Salvaraj, Deputy Director, Social Welfare, Shri V. Swaminathan, Research Officer, Social Welfare Deptt. And other Officials. "Dekkani Muslim" caste/community was represented by Shri M.A.Sirajoddin, President, Yanam Mosque Committee and others.

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P. S. KRISHNAN
Member
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Backward Classes

III. Facts

3. The U.T. of Pondicherry had no list of Backward Classes till after the Supreme Court Judgement in the Mandal case, delivered on 16th November, 1992. For this reason,, the Expert Committee on Backward Classes could not, on the basis of the principle of commonality, recommend a Central List of Backward Classes for the U.T. of Pondicherry as it could do for 14 other States, which already had their respective lists of Backward Classes, and therefore, the Central Government also could not issue a Central List of Backward Classes for the U.T. of Pondicherry in 1993. The Government of U.T. of Pondicherry issued its list of Backward Classes by its Notification No. G.O. MS.No.2094-Wel(SW)-II dated 6-7-1994 (pending finalisation of the Backward Classes List). The List issued by the Government of U.T. of Pondicherry is a mechanical repetition in toto of the Mandal Commission's List. All the entries in the Mandal List, except entry at Sl.No. 161 "New Buddhists, Nov Buddhists" appears in the Backward Classes List of U.T. of Pondicherry. Thereafter, the Central Government vide Ministry of Welfare's Resolution No.120119/94-BCC dated 19-10-1994 issued a Common (Central) List of Backward Classes for the U.T. of Pondicherry purportedly on the basis of the principle of commonality between the Mandal List and the State List, but which in fact is seen to be a repetition in toto of the U.T. List of Pondicherry, and thus is in effect a repetition of the Mandal List except for New Buddhists (it should really be Neo-Buddhists or Nav-Bauddha, who had been included in the list of SCs in the period between the Mandal Report and the drawing up of BC Lists).
4. During the Public Hearing the State Government stated that "Dekkani Muslim" caste/community is found in Pondicherry but has not been recommended for inclusion in the U.T. List of Backward Classes by the State level Committee for Backward Classes (First Report, dated 11th September 1995) as they are not found Socially Backward.

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National Commission
Backward Classes

5. During the Public Hearing the representative of the 'Dekkani Muslim' stated that their caste/community is included in the Central List of Backward Classes of the adjoining State of Tamil Nadu and has been omitted from the BC list of Pondicherry. They are socially, educationally and economically backward. The occupation of the members of the community are Leatherwork, repairing utensils, Embroidery, Butchery, Carpentry, Dyers etc. At present they are also engaged in all sorts of manual work for their living. Their literacy and representation in Government job is very low. Majority of the members of the community live in kachha house. On specific query by the Bench, the representative submitted that 'Dekkani' is a wide term used to refer to all Muslims belonging to the Deccan territory.

6. People of India, Pondicherry, Vol. XXXVI, General Editor K.S. Singh, Anthropological Survey of India, Affiliated East-West Press Pvt. Ltd., Madras, New Delhi, Bangalore, Hyderabad (First Published 1994) under the title 'Dhakkani' describes it as under:

"The Dhakkani are an Urdu-speaking Muslim community who prefer to be called Musalmans or Muslims, while others refer to them as Sahebs or Bais. They are distributed in the Pondicherry and Karaikal regions of the Union Territory. They are believed to have originally inhabited the Deccan Plateau, from where they migrated to their present habitats – hence their name, Dhakkani Muslims.....

The Dhakkani belong to the Sunni sect of Muslims. They are an endogamous group. Of late, the Urdu-speaking Kasai Muslims, and the Tamil-speaking Sonavar and Panjikutti Muslims who are endogamous, have also been claiming to be Dhakkanis so as to enjoy the concessions and other privileges extended to them by the Union Government.....

The traditional occupations vary among the four Dhakkani groups – business, mattress-making, selling vessels, selling meat and toddy. Some of them run petty businesses, retail shops and cycle shops. Some work for daily wages,

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P. S. KRISHNAN
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Union

some are employed in government service and private factories. A negligible number are engaged in agriculture....”

“India’s Communities, People of India, National Series Volume IV, General Editor K.S.Singh, Anthropological Survey of India, Oxford University Press, Delhi, Calcutta, Chennai, Mumbai, 1998, under the title ‘Dhakkani Muslim/Dkkani Muslim’ describes it as under:

“In Pondicherry, the Dhakkani Muslim speak Urdu among themselves and Tamil with others. The scripts used are the Perso-Arabic and Tamil. Some of them also know French. Women wear a veil while going out. The traditional dress of a male is a lungi and a cap. They are non-vegetarian. Traditionally they are said to be an endogamous group, but some of them have marital relations with other Muslim groups like the Shaik and Syed. The Urdu-speaking Kasai, and the Tamil-speaking Sonavar and Panjikutti are endogamous groups with customs and traditions similar to those of the Dhakkani. Nowadays, all these three groups claim that they are a part of the Dhakkani community so as to enjoy the benefits extended to the latter by the Union Government. Parallel and cross-cousin marriages are preferred. Though polygyny is permitted, they are by and large monogamous. The practice of mehar is prevalent. Divorce and widow remarriage are permitted. Either spouse can initiate divorce. Male children are given equal shares in the family property, while succession is by the eldest son. A child is named on the day of its birth, while aqiqah is usually performed on the fortieth day. A male child undergoes circumcision (Katna or pulpenli). A puberty ceremony is performed for girls at the onset of menarche. The marriage rituals include betrothal (Magna) reception of the marriage party and tying of the thali. The dead are buried.

Largely landless, the Dhakkani are engaged in various occupations. Traditionally, the Kasai are butchers and meat-sellers, the Sonavar are businessmen, and the Panjikutti are dealers in cotton and are expert beedi-rollers. The majority of them are still pursuing their traditional occupations, however, some are engaged as

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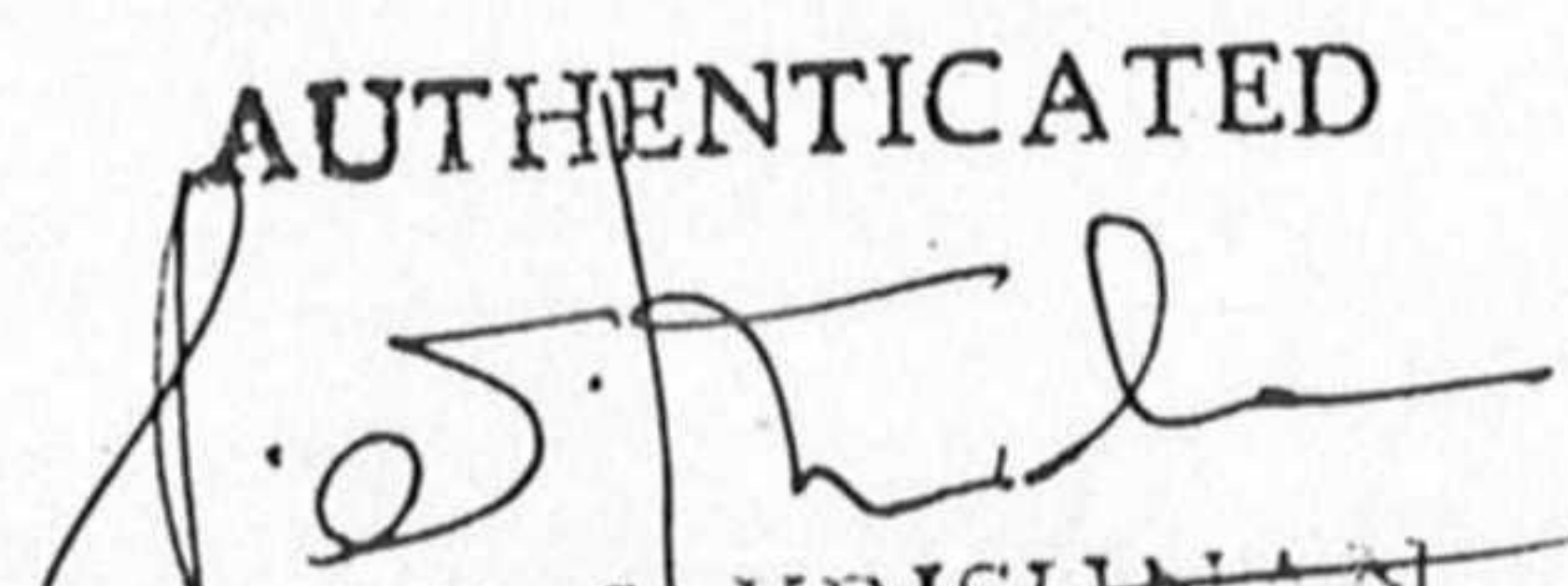
agricultural and daily-wage casual labour, while a few others run petty shops. They have a jamat led by a mutavalli and azi. They belong to the Sunni sect of Islam. They visit the Nagor mosque on pilgrimage. Each of the subjects has an exclusive mosque. They accept both cooked and uncooked food from Muslim communities such as the Rauther and Labbai. They have developed good relations with the neighboring Hindu communities and participate in their religious festivals. They share burial grounds and water sources with other Muslim groups. There are businessmen, teachers, administrators, engineers and defence personnel in the community. Political leadership has emerged at the regional level. Formal education is encouraged for both girls and boys. Their attitude towards modern medicine and family planning is positive."

8. The Report of the Tamil Nadu Second Backward Class Commission, 1985 under the head 'Dekkani Muslims' write as under:

"This is one among the Muslims sects included in the list of Backward Classes after the First Backward Classes Commission. During 1901 census 'Dakani or Deccani' is defined as "territorial name meaning a Musalman of the Decaan" and also 'name loosely applied to converts to Islam'. The muhammadans who spoke Hindustani and claim pure Muhammadan descent are spoken of Dakkanis, distinguishing them from the Liabbais and Marakkayars.

"Literally interpreted", 'Dekkani Muslims' would mean, Muslims in Dekkani. Tamil Nadu is a part of Dekkani, i.e. Southern region. Belonging to Tamil Nadu, who trace their origin to Dekkani, distinguished from those whose ancestors came from Northern India or were domiciled in other countries, would be termed as Dakkani Muslims, whether they speak Tamil or Urdu."....

No representation or evidence has been received by this Commission, specifically under the name's Dekkani Muslims'. But this has been covered in the representations received from the Muslims"

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 P. S. KRISHNAN
 Member Secretary
 National Commission
 Backward Classes

9. No evidence whatsoever has been produced before the Bench by the request-making parties for their Social Backwardness. U.T. Government stated that this community was not found Socially Backward in the U.T. of Pondicherry on the basis of the State Level Committies findings. The 'Dekkani Muslims' is a territorial name meaning Musalman of the Deccan and also a name loosely applied to converts to Islam. Of late, the Urdu speaking Kasai Muslims and the Tamil speaking Sonavar and Panjikutti Muslims, who are themselves endogamous, have also been claiming to be Dhakkanis so as to enjoy concessions. The inclusion of this community in the Central List of Tamil Nadu cannot be a ground for their inclusion in the Central List of Pondicherry because the inclusion of 'Dekkani Muslim' in the Central List of Tamil Nadu was based merely on the basis of Principle of Commonality and there was no objective analysis of data & information to establish its backwardness. In view of this, the request for inclusion of 'Dekkani Muslim' in the Central List of Backward Classes for the U.T. of Pondicherry should be rejected

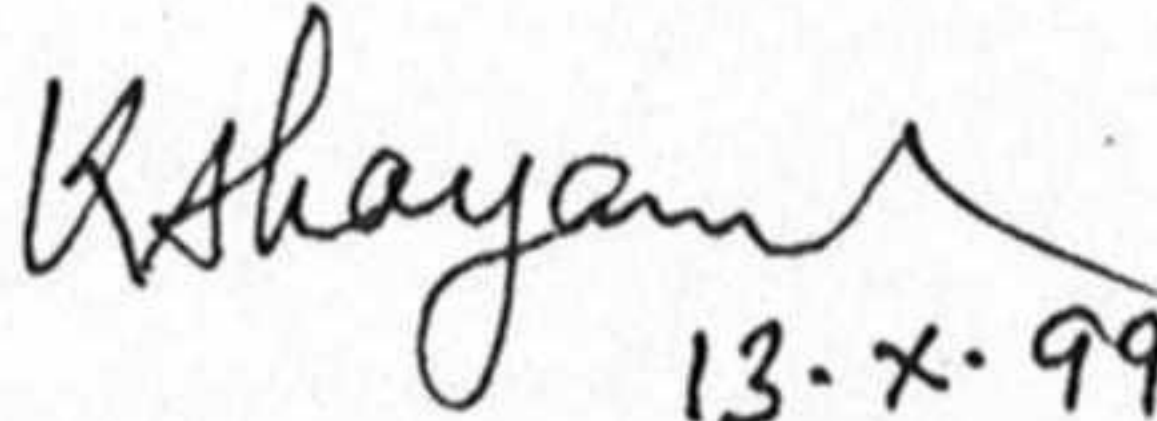
IV. Findings

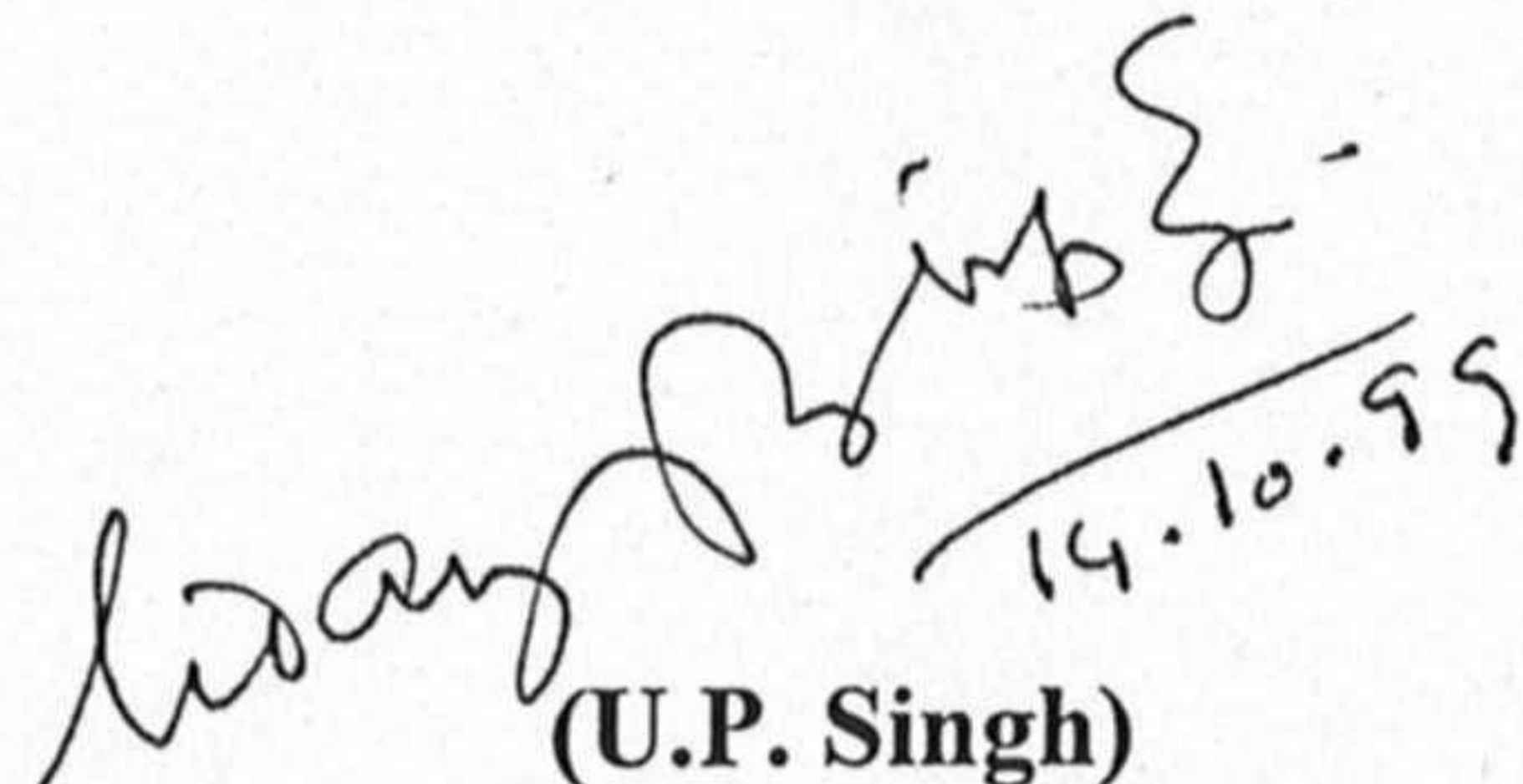
- 10 From the description of "Dekkani Muslims" in the ethnographic accounts quoted above, it is seen that the name Dekkani is derived from the fact that they migrated from the Deccan Plateau. The accounts refer to their claim to be an endogamous group, but at the same time also mention that some of their members have martial relations with the Shaik and Syed. Beside, certain specific Muslim communities like Kasai, Sonavar and Panjikutti also claim to belong to Dekkani. From these and also from the references found in the Report of the Tamil Nadu Second Backward Classes Commission, 1985 that 'Dekkani' is defined as a territorial name meaning a Musalman of the Deccan" and also a 'name loosely applied to converts to Islam" or "Mujammadans who spoke Hindustani and claim pure Muhammadan descent... distinguishing them from the Labbais and Marakkayar", it is not clear whether they can be considered as a single social class. However, irrespective of whether they are a single social class or not, from the facts mentioned in the "People of India Vol.IV India's Communities" regarding the

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P. S. KRISHNAN
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National Commission
for Backward Classes

Dekkani Muslims of Pondicherry that there are businessmen, teachers, administrators, engineers and defence personnel in the community, it appears that they are not a socially backward community. The State Level Committee for Backward Classes in Pondicherry has also found this community as Socially not backward. In view of these, it is the Finding of the Bench that "Dekkani Muslims" should not be included in the Central List of Backward Classes for Pondicherry and the Request should be rejected.

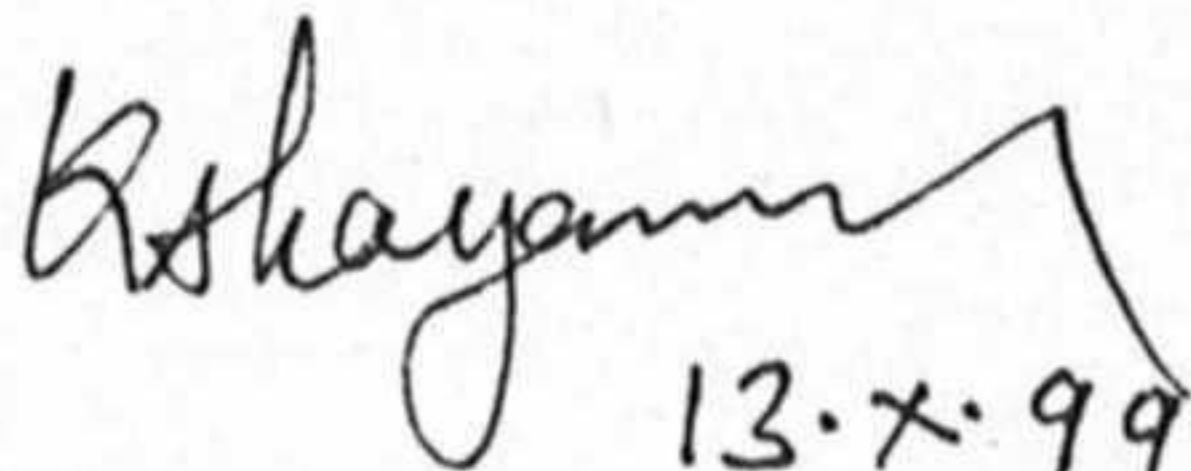

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(Sahu Akshay Bhai)

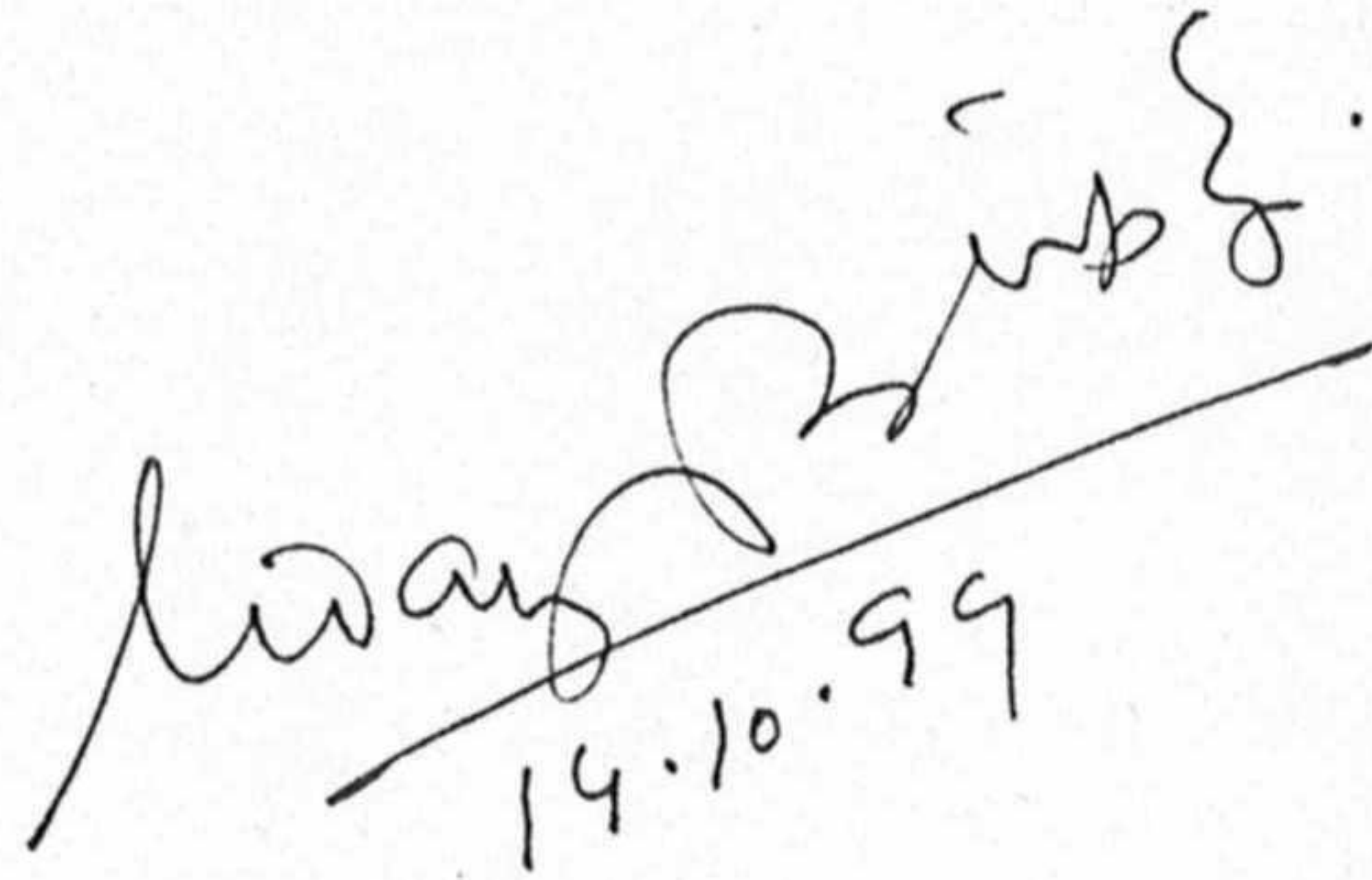

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(U.P. Singh)

V. Advice of the Commission

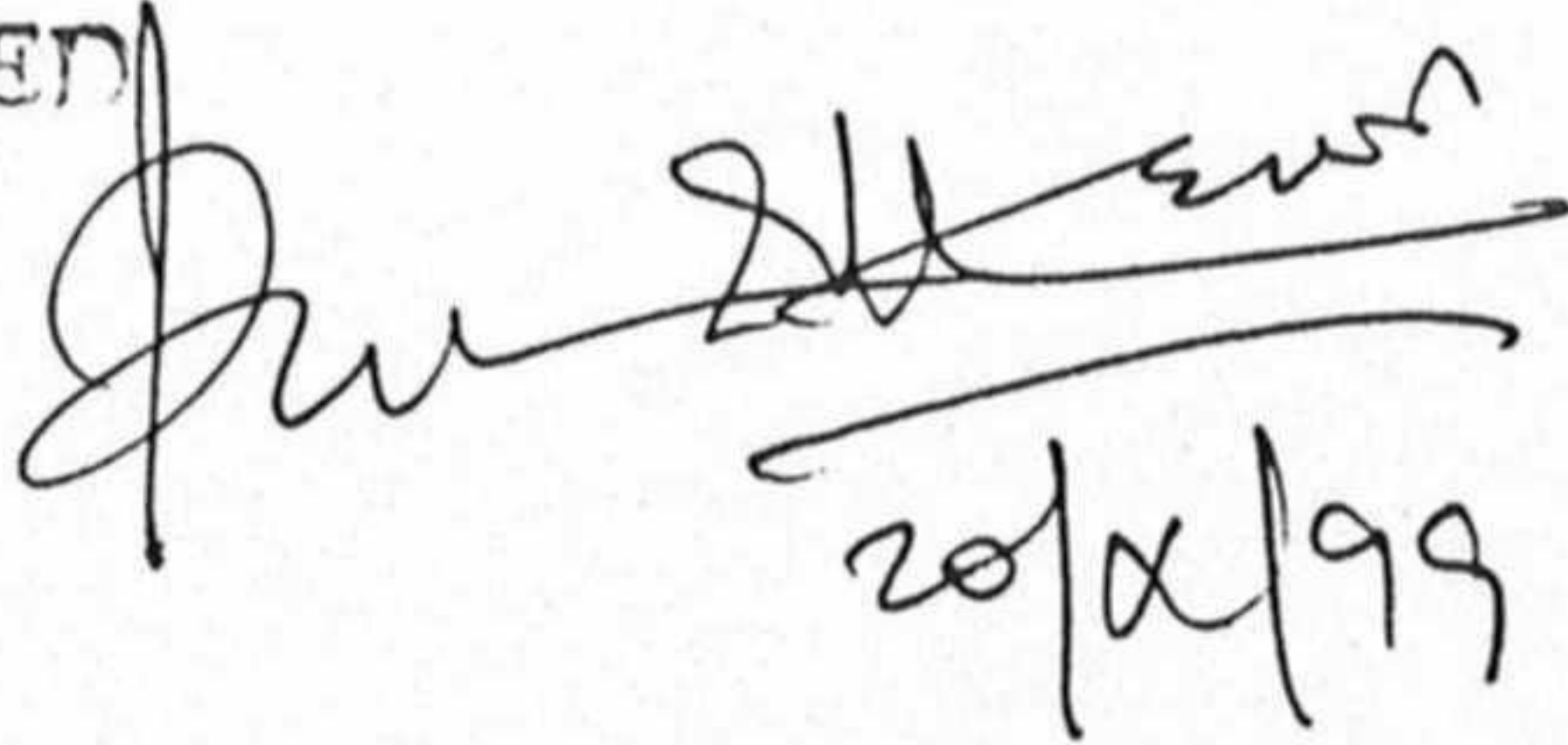
11. The Commission considered and agreed in full with the above Findings of the Pondicherry Bench and decided to tender the following Advice to the Central Government under Section 9(1) of the NCBC Act, 1993 for action by the Central Govt. under Section 9(2) of the Act:-

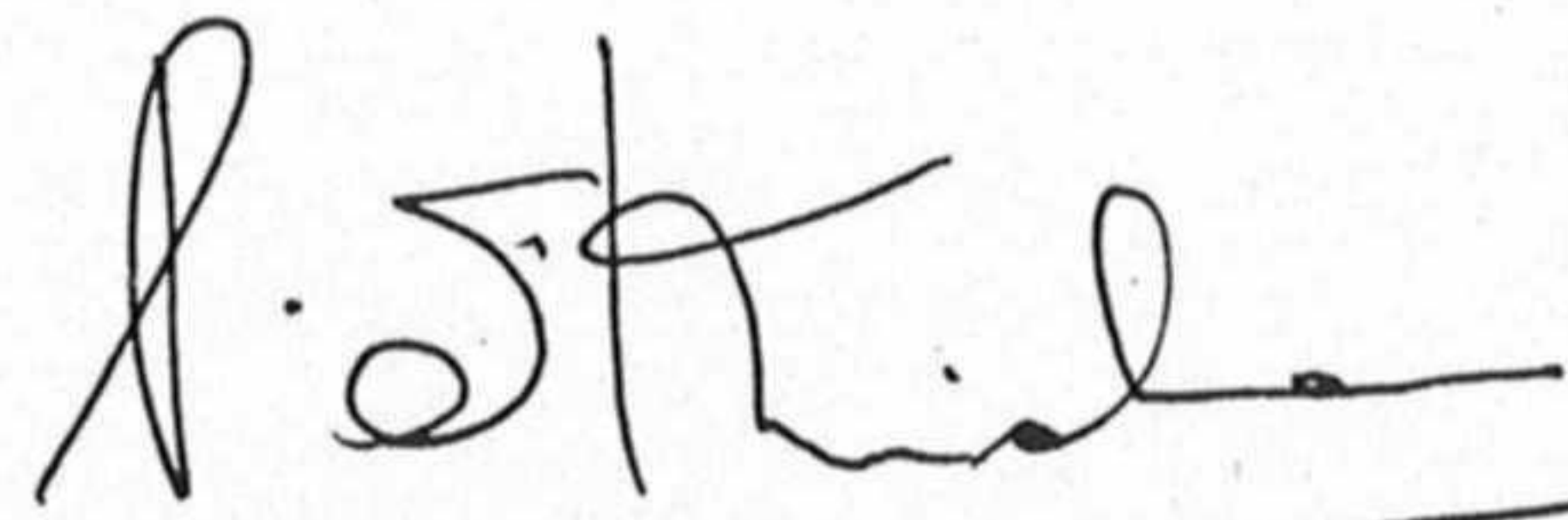
The Request for inclusion of "Dekkani Muslim" caste/community in the Central List of Backward Classes for the U.T. of Pondicherry be rejected as they are not socially backward.

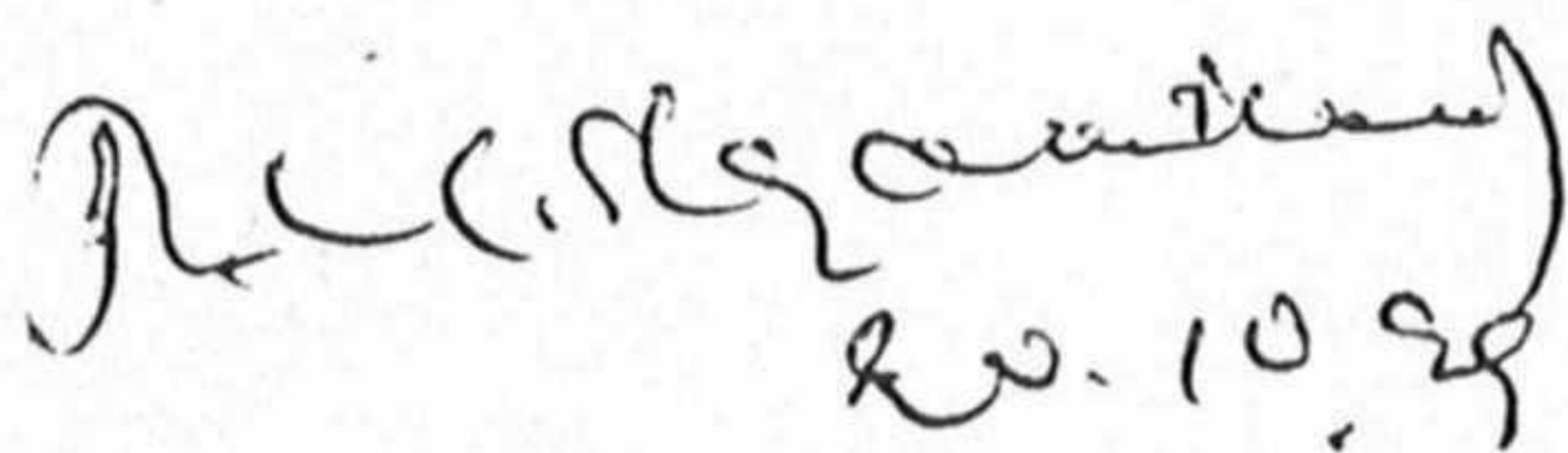

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