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सदस्य-सचिव
राष्ट्रीय पिछड़ा वर्ग आयोग
भारत सरकार
नई दिल्ली-110 066
MEMBER-SECRETARY
NATIONAL COMMISSION
FOR BACKWARD CLASSES
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
NEW DELHI-110 066

DO NCBC Advice No. Kerala 20-23/97

15. 12. 1997

Dear Shri Baksi,

I am sending herewith the Advice of the National Commission for Backward Classes under Section 9(1) of the NCBC Act, 1993 for Inclusion of "Thachan, Kalthachan, Kamsala, Kannan" in the Central List of Backward Classes for Kerala, for necessary action by the Central Government under Section 9(2) of the Act.

With Best wishes,

Yours sincerely

(P.S. KRISHNAN)

Encl: As stated

Shri K.K. Baksi
Secretary to Govt. of India
Ministry of Welfare
Shastri Bhavan
NEW DELHI

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR BACKWARD CLASSES

Kerala Bench

FINDINGS

Per Shri P.S.Krishnan, Member-Secretary

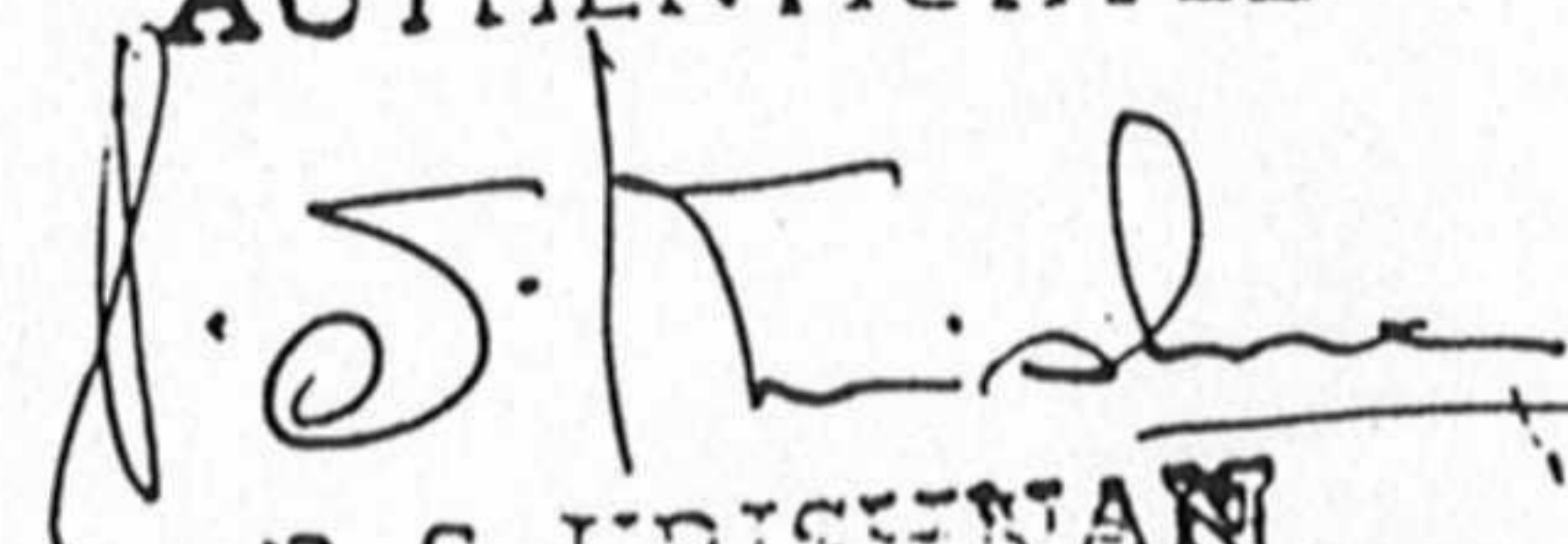
Case: Request for Inclusion of "Thachan, Kalthachan, Kamsala, Kannan" in the Central List of Backward Classes for Kerala.

I. Request

This case arises from the Request received in this Commission from the Government of Kerala vide its Memorandum sent with DO Letter No. 16156/C3/98/P&ARD dated October 25, 1993 of the then Chief Minister of Kerala for the Inclusion inter alia of "Thachan, Kalthachan, Kamsala, Kannan" castes/communities in the Central List of Backward Classes for Kerala. The Commission is also in receipt of separate Requests for Inclusion of "Thachan" in the Central List of Backward Classes for Kerala from

- (1) Kerala Thachan Mahasabha
Kottayam and Malevelikara
KERALA
- (2) Kammala Thachan Mahasabha
Central Committee
Karuvatta South, Karuvatta 690517
KERALA

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Member Secretary
National Commission
for Backward Classes

II. Public Hearing

2. The 2-Member Kerala Bench of the N.C.B.C. consisting of Shri P.S.Krishnan, Hon'ble Member-Secretary and Shri Navtej Puadhi, Hon'ble Member held a Public Hearing at Trichur on the 19th September 1997 to examine this Request. During the Public Hearing the State Government was represented by Shri R.K. Raghunathan, Joint Secretary to the Government of Kerala in the Scheduled Castes & Scheduled Tribes Welfare Department and Shri V.R.Padmanabhan, Director, Scheduled Tribes Development, Shri Viswanatha Menon, Director, Kerala Institute for Research Training and Development Studies(KIRTADS) and other officers. Kerala Thachan Mahasabha was represented by its General-Secretary Shri N.Krishnan and its Vice-President Shri P.G.Gopalan.

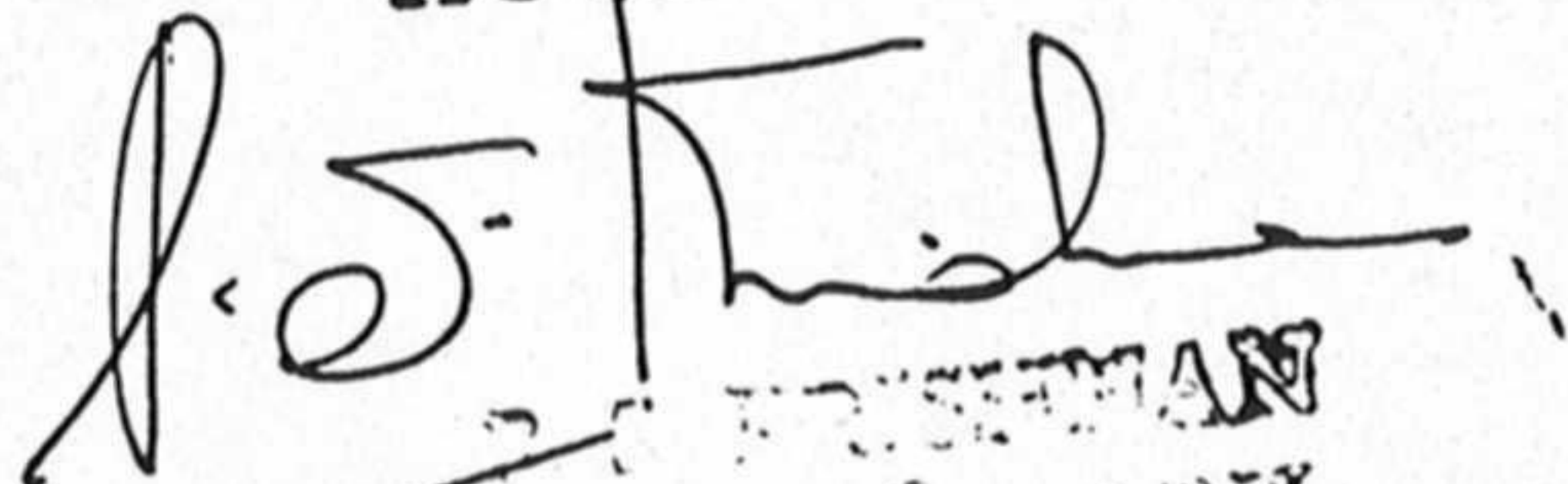
III. Facts

3. "Thachan, Kalthachan, Kamsala, Kannan" castes/communities are not included in the first-phase Central List of Backward Classes for Kerala prepared in 1993 on the basis of the principle of commonality because at that time these castes/communities were included only in the State List of Backward Classes and not in the Mandal List of Backward Classes for Kerala. The relevant entries in the State, Mandal and Central Lists of Backward Classes for Kerala are as follows:-

(i) State List

"30. Viswakarmas including Assari, Chaptegra, Kallasary, Kalthachan, Kammala, Kamsala, Kannan, Karuvan, Kitaran, Kollan, Malayala Kammala, Moosari, Pandikammala, Pandithattan, Perumkollan, Thachan, Thattan, Vilkurup, Villasan, Viswabrahmanan or Viswabrahmanar and Viswakarmala"

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Member-Secretary
National Commission for Backward Classes

(ii) Mandal List

"28. Chaptegra"

"72. Kammalas, Viswa Karmalas (Viswa Karma Karuvan, Asari, Moosari, Thattan, Vilkurup or Villasan, Viswabrahmanar, Viswam)"

"87. Kitaran"

"157. Perumkollans"

(iii) Central List

"27. Viswakarma including Assari, Chaptegra, Kallasari, Kammala, Karuvan, Kitaran, Kollan, Malayala Kammala, Pandi Kammala, Moosari, Perunkollan, Thattan, Pandithattan, Vilkurup, Villasan, Viswabrahmanan or Viswabrahmanar and Viswakarmala"

4. The Memorandum of the State Government has stated that "Thachan, Kalthachan, Kamsala, Kannan" are artisan castes coming under the general head of "Viswakarma" which is a "generic sanskritized term of Kammalas denoting the artisan castes of the State". "These artisan castes", the Memorandum further states, "consider themselves as the descendents of the Viswakarmavu, the Hindu mythological architect of the Universe. Viswakarmas, the artisan castes, are sub-divided into further groups depending on the materials they work on. The artisan who work on wood are called 'Marassari' or 'Thachan'; those who work on stone are called 'Kallassary' or 'Kalthachan'; those who work on gold are called 'Thattan' or 'Kamsala'; those who work on copper and bronze are called 'Moosari', 'Chembotti' or 'Kannan'; those who work on iron are called 'Karuvan' or 'Kollan' etc. There are also grouping or maintenance of endogamy based on linguistic affinity." As per the Memorandum, there are also variations in the name of artisans castes according to the language they

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Member Secretary

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speak. Thus, "the Malayalam speaking artisans are called Malayala Kammalans and Tamil speaking artisans are called Pandi Kammalans, indicating that they originally hail from erstwhile Pandya territory, ie., Southern Tamil Nadu." In conclusion the Memorandum states that, since Thachan, Kalthachan, Kamsala and Kannan are artisan groups called by different names based on the material they work on, they deserve inclusion in the Central List of Backward Classes for Kerala along with the generic term 'Viswakarma'.

5. The State Government has filled up the NCBC's Questionnaire separately in respect of these four castes/communities. In the Questionnaires, the occupations on which the members of these castes/communities mainly depend for their livelihood are given as follows:-

Thachan . . .	Carpentry, wood sawing and wood cutting
Kalthachan . .	Stone masonry
Kamsala . . .	Goldsmithy
Kannan . . .	Bellmetal work and Coopersmithy

The Questionnaires also state that the above occupations are also the occupations on which these castes/communities are, in terms of the caste system, identified with. According to the Questionnaires "Kammala" is a synonym name common to all these four artisan castes/communities. The Questionnaire in respect of "Thachan" specifically states that there are two distinct communities with the name 'Thachan', viz., (1) Thachan with synonyms "Asari, Carpenter, Marassari, Viswakarma, Viswabrahmin", who are found throughout the State, and (2) Thachan with synonyms "Villasan, Villayan, Ircha Thachan", who are largely concentrated in Travancore-Cochin area.

6. In respect of the "Thachan" caste/community, the filled up Questionnaire has also been received from the Kammala Thachan

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[Signature]
P. S. KRISHNAN
Member, NCBC
for Kerala

Mahasabha. According to this Questionnaire, the main occupation on which the the members of the caste/community mainly depend for their livelihood is "Sawing". The members of the caste/community are also engaged in carpentry. Their children, as a general practice, for supplementing their family's income, "help their parents or elder male members of their family at their work".

7. Thachan, Kalthachan, Kamsala and Kannan as artisanal castes are attested to by Edgar Thurston and Rangachari ["Castes and Tribes of Southern India", Vol.III, Asian Educational Services, New Delhi, Madras, 1993, first published 1909] and L.K.Anantha Krishna Iyer ["The Tribes and Castes of Cochin", Vol. I, Cosmo Publications, New Delhi, 1981, first published 1909]. Under the head "Kammalan (Tamil)", Thurston and Rangachari writes as follows:-

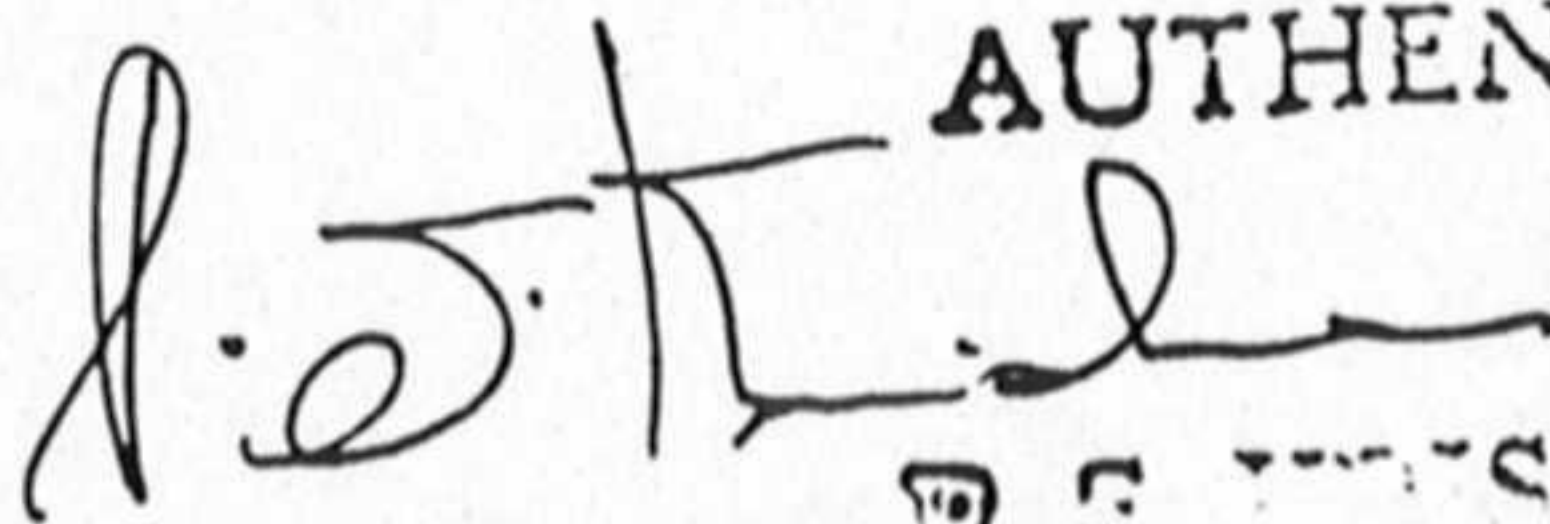
"The Kammalans are made up of five occupational sections, viz., Tattan (goldsmith), Kannan (brass-smith), Tacchan (carpenter), Kal-Tacchan (stone-mason), and Kollan or Karuman (blacksmith). The name Panchala, which is sometimes used by the Tamil as well as the Canarese artisan classes, has reference to the fivefold occupations. The various sections intermarry, but the goldsmiths have, especially in towns, ceased to intermarry with the blacksmiths...."

Quoting Mr. Francis [Madras Census Report, 1901], they further write under the head "Kammalan(Malayalam)" as follows:-

"The Kammalans of Malabar... are artisans....but they take a lower position than the Kammalans and Kamsalas of the other coast, or the Panchalas of the Canarese country. ...and they accept the position of a polluting caste, not being allowed into the temples or into Brahman houses..."

According to L.K.Anantha Krishna Iyer, the Kammalans "are, strictly speaking, one caste, the members of which are divided into six occupational groups or sub-castes, namely, (1) Marasaris or workers in wood (carpenters), (2) Kallasaris (stone-masons), (3) Kollans (blacksmiths), (4) Moosaris (bell-metal workers), (5) Thattans (goldsmiths), and (6) Tolkollans (leather workers).

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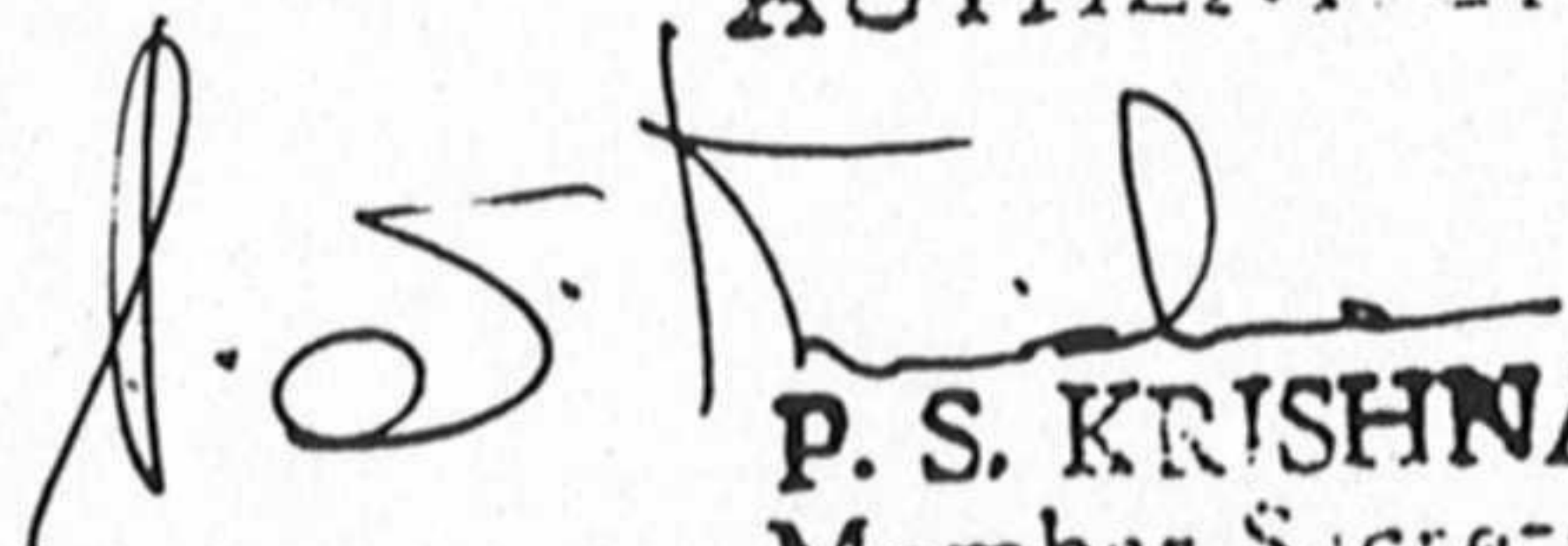
The Marasaris are again sub-divided into Thachans (wood-cutters), Avens, Poozhi Asaris, Ettila Parisha, Ircha Thachans (sawers of wood), and Kolli Vetties.... The Kammalans of Cochin and Malabar.... take a lower position of a polluting caste below the Sudras. They are, I believe, the very early immigrants from the Tamil districts, and the early epigraphical records point to the existence of five classes of Kammalans in Malabar in the beginning of the ninth century...."

8. Thachan, Kalthachan, Kamsala, Kannan have already been included in the Central List of Backward Classes for Tamil Nadu. Kamsala is also found included in the Central List of Backward Classes for Karnataka. During the Public Hearing, all those present who were from different sections of society not only did not object to the proposed inclusion of "Thachan, Kalthachan, Kamsala, Kannan" castes/communities in the Central List of Backward Classes for Kerala, but also supported it.

IV. Findings

9. From the above evidence, it is the Finding of the Bench that "Thachan, Kalthachan, Kamsala, Kannan" are artisanal communities coming under the generic term "Viswakarma", which is already included in the Central List of Backward Classes for Kerala at entry no. 27, and are Socially Backward. They come under the Fast-Track category as they are covered by guideline 2(e) of the NCBC's "Guidelines for Consideration of Requests for Inclusion and Complaints of under-Inclusion in the Central List of Backward Classes" and also by para 7 of the Procedural Clarification on the same Guidelines. Synonyms of an already existing caste/community in the Central List are covered by para 9 of the Procedural Clarifications. Therefore, "Thachan, Kalthachan, Kamsala, Kannan" should be included in the Central

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National Commission
for Backward Classes

List of Backward Classes for Kerala as a synonym of "Viswakarma" at the existing entry no. 27, so that the amended entry no. 27 read as follows:-

"27. Viswakarma including Assari, Chaptegra, Kallasari, Kammala, Karuvan, Kitaran, Kollan, Malayala Kammala, Pandi Kammala, Moosari, Perunkollan, Thattan, Pandithattan, Vilkurup, Villasan, Viswabrahmanan or Viswabrahmanar and Viswakarmala, Thachan, Kalthachan, Kamsala, Kannan"

L. S. Kishan
3.12.97

P. S. Krishnan
3.12.97

V. Advice of the Commission

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

"Thachan, Kalthachan, Kamsala, Kannan" be included in the Central List of Backward Classes for Kerala as a synonym of

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Member Secretary
National Commission
Backward Classes

"Viswakarma" at the existing entry no.27, so that the amended entry no. 27 reads as follows:-

"27. Viswakarma including Assari, Chaptegra, Kallasari, Kammala, Karuvan, Kitaran, Kollan, Malayala Kammala, Pandi Kammala, Moosari, Perunkollan, Thattan, Pandithattan, Vilkurup, Villasana, Viswabrahmanan or Viswabrahmanar and Viswakarmala, Thachan, Kalthachan, Kamsala, Kannan"

P. S. Krishnan Secretary
3.12.97

Shayam
03.11.97

Secretary 10.12.97

P. S. Krishnan
11.12.97

JUSTICE P. K. SHYAMSUNDAR
Chairperson
National Commission For
Backward Classes
Government of India
New Delhi.

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Member Secretary
National Commission
for Backward Classes