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भारत सरकार
नई दिल्ली-110 066
MEMBER-SECRETARY
NATIONAL COMMISSION
FOR BACKWARD CLASSES
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
NEW DELHI-110 066

DO Case No. Maha 1/96

10. 1.1996

Dear Shri Saxena,

I am sending herewith the Advice of the National Commission for Backward Classes regarding inclusion of "Powar, Bhoyar Pawar, Bhoyar" in the Central List of Backward Classes for Maharashtra for necessary action under Section 9(2) of the Act by the Central Government.

Best wishes,

Yours sincerely

P.S. Krishnan
(P.S. KRISHNAN)

Shri K.B. Saxena
Secretary
Ministry of Welfare
Shastri Bhavan
NEW DELHI

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR BACKWARD CLASSES

MAHARASHTRA BENCH

CASE;

Inclusion of POWAR in the Central List of Backward Classes for MAHARASHTRA.

REQUEST;

Bhartiya Powar Sangh, Bhandara, Powar Samaj Mandal Ayog Arakshan Kruti Samiti, Akhil Bharatiya Bhoyar Pawar Mahasangh, Nagpur and others have made a request for inclusion of POWAR and its synonyms in the Central List of Backward Classes.

PUBLIC
HEARING

The two-Member Bench of this Commission consisting of Justice R.N. Prasad and Prof. D.L. Sheth, held a Public Hearing at Bombay on the 16th October, 1995.

The State Government was represented by S/Shri Ratnakar Gaikwad, Secretary (Social Welfare), A.M. Pawar, Director of Social Welfare, V.B. Kamble, D.S. (S.W), K.M. Rathod, Jt. Dir. (S.W), and other officers of the Social Welfare Department.

S/Shri Keshavrao Pardhi, President of Powar Samaj Mandal Ayog Arakshan Kruti Samiti and Ex. MP, Shri Vinod Harikhede Akodi, Secretary of the Kruti Samiti, Shri P.C. Bapache and H.H. Paradhi respectively President and Secretary of Bharatiya Pawar Sangh, Bhandara, Shri Khushal Bhapache, M.L.A; Shri P.K. Rahangadale, Advocate; Shri Dinesh Harikhode, Shri Rahangdale and Shri Katara of Goudia appeared before the bench on behalf of the Powar Community. Shri Praful Patel M.P (Bhandara Constituency of Maharashtra) also appeared before the Bench.

FINDINGS OF THE BENCH;

1. Powars are a peasant community also known as Bhoyar and Bhoyar Pawar. In the past the community was more commonly known as Bhoyar, but in recent years the names 'Powar' and 'Bhoyar Pawar' are being used more frequently for self-identification by its members.

2. The evidence presented before the Bench indicates that the community originally known as Panwar, Powars or Bhoyars had emigrated from the Malva region several centuries ago and have since settled in the Venaganga region, (i.e. on the banks of Venaganga river), a part of which today falls within the border of the state of Madhya Pradesh and the other part in the contiguous region of Vidarbha in the Maharashtra state. The community is thus largely concentrated in the Betul, Balaghat and Chhindwada divisions of Madhya Pradesh and in Bhandara, Nagpur, Wardha, Yavatmal and Chandrapur districts of the Maharashtra state.

3. This territorial bifurcation appears to be the result of formation of the new State of Madhya Pradesh on being carved out of the erstwhile Central Provinces and Berar regions. The Powar/Bhoyar community has regularly maintained marriage alliances and other forms of social intercourse among its members divided by State boundaries of Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh. Powars or Bhoyars living on both sides of the State border between Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh use the same household language or a dialect called Powari or Bhoyari. They share same historical memories and follow similar social practices, customs and occupational patterns as of one community living within common social and geographical area, albeit divided administratively in two states.

4. The Entries in the State list, Mandal list and the Central list of Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra are given below:

MADHYA PRADESH

State List:

Entry No.13 - Panwar, Powar, Bhoyar, Bhoyaar.

Mandal List:

Entry No. 229 - Powar
Entry No. 60 - Bhoyar

Central List:

Entry No. 12 - Powar, Bhoyar/Bhoyaar

MAHARASHTRA

State List:

Entry No.189 - Powar or Pawar (Persons having their surname as Powar or Pawar are not included in the list of OBC)

Mandal List:

Entry No. 39 - Bhoyar (Pawra)

Central List:

Left out

The entry relating to the POWAR community in the Maharashtra State list was made under Government Notification No. OBC/470/1339/CS dated 27th July, 1976. It appears that the entries for this community in the State list of Maharashtra and the Mandal list of that State did not appear to satisfy the principle of commonality and so the community was left out from being included, in the Central list for Maharashtra. Thus, it appears that the omission of the community from the Central list of Maharashtra was on the technical incompatibility of the names used for the same community in the State list and Mandal list for that State.

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M. K. K. K. K. K.

The representatives of the community pleaded that the bracketed entry in the Mandal list of Maharashtra has created the situation of under-inclusion for Bhoyar/Powar of Maharashtra, firstly because Powar (and not Pawra) is the synonym of Bhoyar-(a fact that was recognized in the Central List for M.P) and secondly, because the name Pawra put in the bracket by the Mandal Commission is a mis-spelling of the correct name of the community which is POWAR. They further contended that the name PAWRA cannot be bracketted with Bhoyar, as PAWRAS are a community of Bhils in Khandesh. It seems that the bracketed entry 'Pawra' in the Mandal list with Bhoyar was meant to refer to Powar and not PAWRA, for, Pawra are a scheduled Tribe, sub-community of Bhils and included in the State S.T. List of Maharashtra at entry No.8.

6. The Bench noted the fact that Bhoyar is in the Mandal list for Maharashtra and Powar is in the State list of Maharashtra and that both these names are synonymously used to describe the same community both in Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh. Bhoyar and Powar are included as such in the Central list of Madhya Pradesh which is the counterpart of the same community of "Powar" or "Bhoyar-Powar" of Maharashtra.

7. The name Bhoyar suggests that the community has been traditionally attached to land. The term 'bhui' in Marathi means 'land', usually the virgin land 'Bhoyar' would derivatively mean people who colonized the virgin land. Bhoyar and Powar seem, in the course of time to have become synonyms of each other. It seems this community of immigrants from the Malva region had colonized the virgin and rocky lands of the Venganga region and had settled there.

8. According to R.V. Russel and Hiralal The Tribes and Castes of the Central Provinces of India published by Macmillan, Bhoyars are a community of lapsed-rajputs, i.e. of Panwar Rajputs of Malva, pushed down in social hierarchy after their defeat and dispersal at the hands of Aurangzeb in the battle of Dhar. They then settled in the Central Provinces and took to tilling of land and

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National Commission
for Scheduled Castes

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to several other small and marginal occupations for survival. To quote: "Bhoyars were put out of caste by other Rajputs" (p.301) Bhoyars were divided into hundred kuls or exogamous sections. Names of some of these kuls as enumerated by Russel and Hiralal suggest the social composition and traditional occupational structure of the Bhoyar community. To quote: "Instances of such names are ONKAR (the god siva), Deshmukh and Chaudhari, headman, Hazari (a leader of 1000 horses), Core (fair coloured) Dongardiya (a lamp on a hill) Pinjara (a cotton cleaner), Gadoria (a shepherd) Khaparia (a tyler), Khawasi (a barber), Chiknya (a sycophant), Kinkar (a slave), Dukhi (penurious) Suplyatoplya (a basket and fan maker) Kasai (a butcher), Gohattya (a cow-killer) and Kalebhut (black devils).....Some sections have the names of Rajput sects, as Chauhan, Parihar and Panwar." Russel and Hiralal describing this list of Kuls as "curiously mixed list" comment that the Bhoyars incorporated among themselves some immigrant and 'out cast' rajputs and other imigrant communities from Malva. To quote: "Bhoyars originate from a small band of Rajputs who must have settled in the District about the fifteenth century as military colonists, and taken their wives from the people of the country. They may have been subsequently recruited by the fresh bands of immigrants who have preserved a slightly higher status. They have abandoned their old high position, and now rank below the ordinary cultivating castes like Kunbis and Kurmis who arrived later". (emphasis added) p.302.

9. According to a survey conducted by the Bhartiya Powar Sangh, Bhandara, in April-May of 1993 the population of the Powar/Bhoyar/Bhoyar Pawar community in Maharashtra is nearly six lakhs. The survey was confined to the Vidarbha region of Maharashtra where the community is largely concentrated. The community is known synonymously as Powar, Bhoyar and Bhoyar Pawar. While there are a few land-holders among them and about two to four percent are in Government jobs, the rest of the Powars are engaged in manual labour, working on land, in forests and in quarries. About 10 per cent among them are owner-cultivators and a vast majority is working for wages. About 87 per cent of Powars live in Kuccha houses. At present there is one MLA in the Maharashtra Assembly belonging to the Powar Community, and 11 members in the Zilla Parishads.

AUTHENTICATED

P. S. KRISHNAN

Member of the
N. C. C. for

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10. According to the same survey and the submissions made before the bench during the hearing, the over all literacy rate among Powars is 21% with female literacy rate being 6 per cent which are much lower than the State average. There are about 65,000 matriculates and nearly 6000 graduates in the six lakhs strong community of Powars. Higher education among females is negligible. Among the Powars while there are a few in the professions like medicine, law and engineering none is employed in the Class I and Class II services of the Government.

11. Thus considering the size of the Pawar community only a small percentage seem to have attained some level of social and educational upliftment. The majority among them are still socially, educationally, and also economically backward.

12. The Bench also inquired whether the Powar or Bhoyar Pawar and the Maratha Pawars have the same or different origins. The representatives of the Powar community denied any such social or historical connection of their community with the Maratha Pawars. According to M.V. Gujjar's Parmar Dharanyacha Itihas in Marathi, even if there was any such connection in the past between the Panwars who immigrated from Malva to Venganga region and the Maratha Pawars of Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra, it ceased to exist a long time ago. The social inter course and other connections between the Panwar of Venganga and Maratha Pawars had, according to Gujjar, stopped since twelfth century.. In any event, to day, by all accounts, the Powars of Vidarbha and the Maratha Pawars appear to be historically, socially and economically two distinct communities. Accordingly, the Government of Maharashtra notification of July, 1976 referred to earlier, notifying inclusion of Powar in the State List has added the clarification that Powar or Pawar in the list does not include those bearing the surnames 'Pawar' or Powar. The commission feels that similar clarification may also be made while recommending inclusion of Powar, 'Bhoyar', 'Bhoyar Pawar' in the Central list for Maharashtra.

FINDINGS:

AUTHENTICATED

P. S. KISHANAN
Member
N.S.
for L.A.

In view of the fact that Powar, Bhoyar/Bhoyaar of Madhya Pradesh and the Powar, Bhoyar Pawar of Maharashtra constitute one community and that they are included in the Central list of Madhya Pradesh, and that the Powar/Bhoyar Pawar/Bhoyar residing in the State of Maharashtra are a socially and educationally backward community, the Bench recommends inclusion of this community as "Powar, Bhoyar Pawar, Bhoyar in the Central list of Backward Classes for the state of Maharashtra.

"In the Central list of Backward Classes for Maharashtra Entry No.216 be added as given below:

Prasad
(JUSTICE R.N. PRASAD)
Justice R.N. Prasad
Chairman
National Commission for
Backward Classes
New Delhi.

Sheth 2-1-75
(PROF. D.L. SHETH)

AUTHENTICATED
P.S. Krishnan
P. S. KRISHNAN
Member Secretary
National Commission
for Backward Classes

P.S. Krishnan (P.S. KRISHNAN)
Dr. R. Prasanna (DR. R. PRASANNA)
Dr. D.S. Prasad (DR. D.S. PRASAD)

AUTHENTICATED
P.S. Krishnan
P. S. KRISHNAN
Member Secretary
National Commission
for Backward Classes

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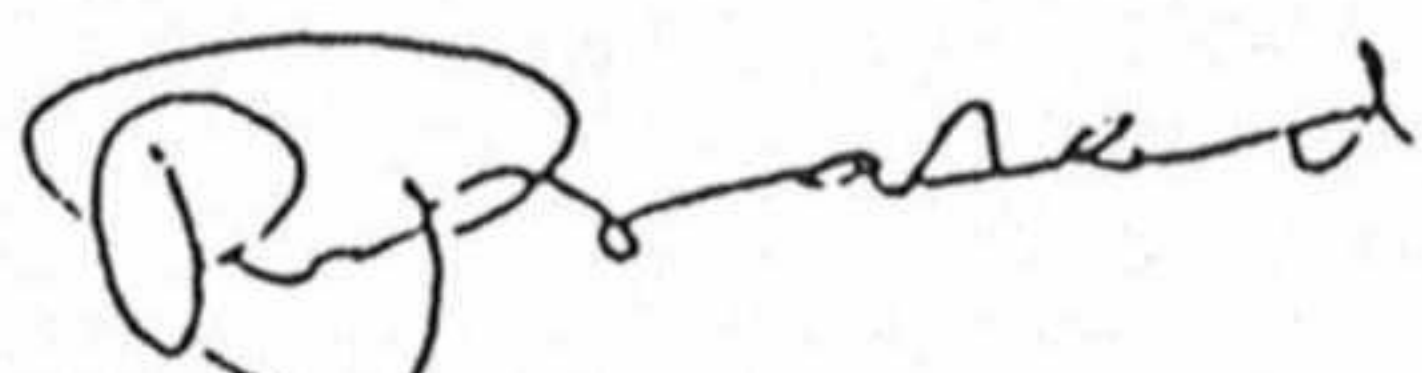
ADVICE OF THE NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR BACKWARD CLASSES
IN RESPECT OF CENTRAL LIST OF MAHARASHTRA

The Commission considered the findings of the Maharashtra Bench and formulated its ADVICE to the Government of India as follows:

"In the Central list of Backward Classes for Maharashtra Entry No.216 be added as given below:

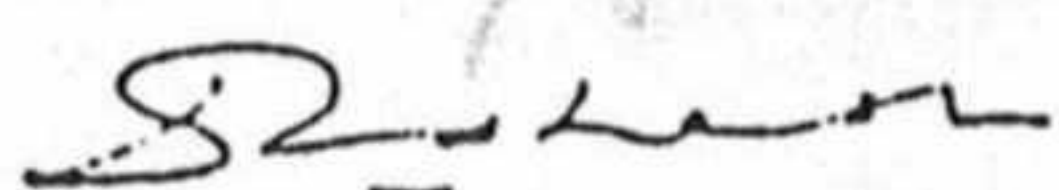
I am sending herewith the unanimous Advices of the National Commission for Backward Classes under Section 9(1) of the Act 1993 regarding "216. POWAR, BHOYAR PAWAR, BHOYAR" the Central list of Backward Classes for Maharashtra.

(Note: the entry 216 does not include persons having their surnames as Pawar or Powar but not belonging to the aforesaid caste/community)".

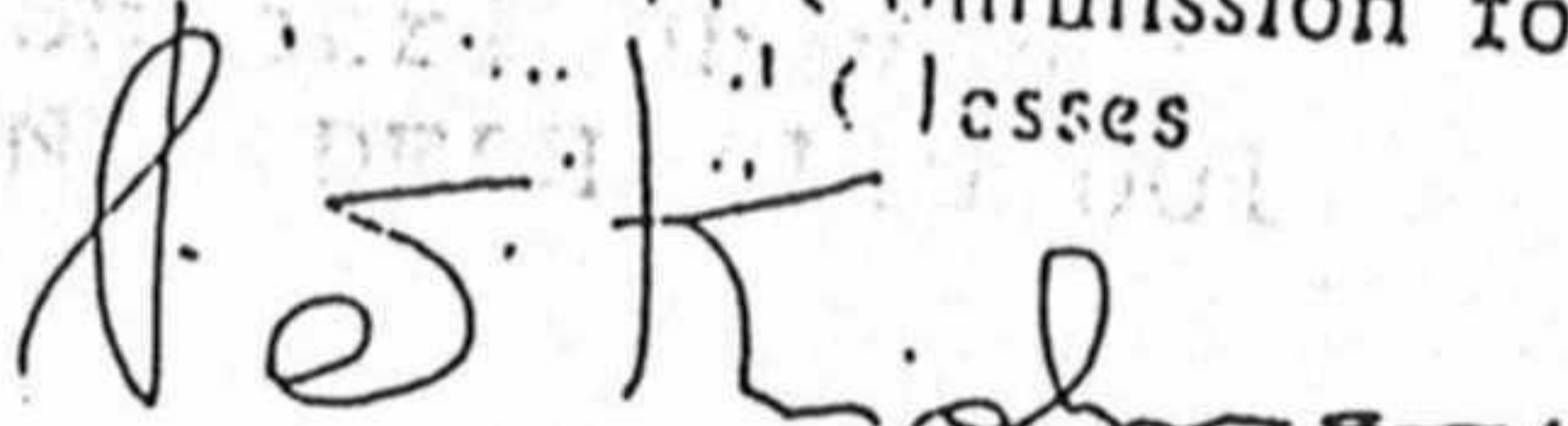

(JUSTICE R.N. PRASAD)

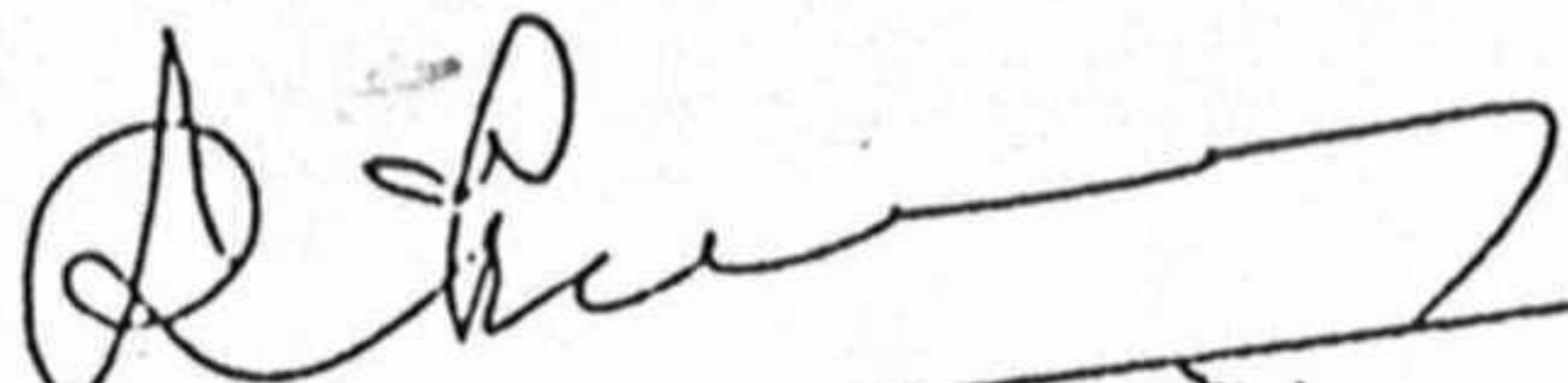
Justice R. N. Prasad

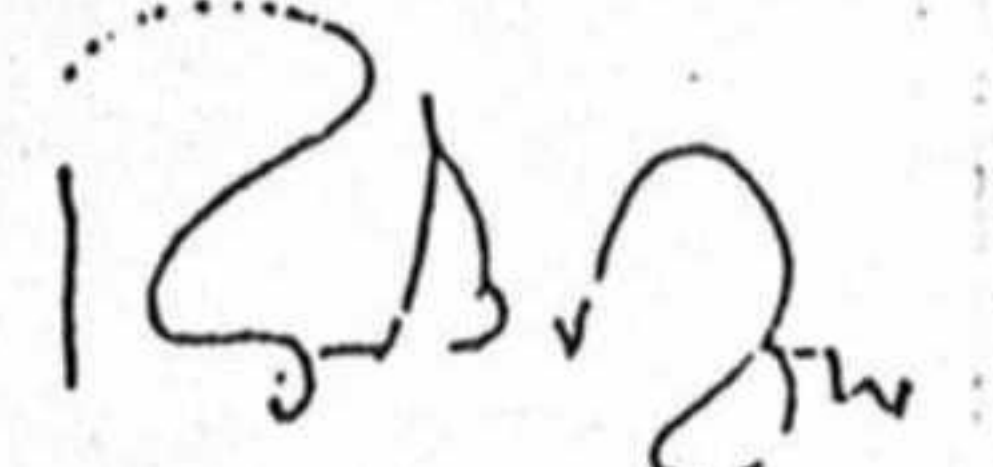
Member, National Commission for Backward Classes


(D.L. SHETH)

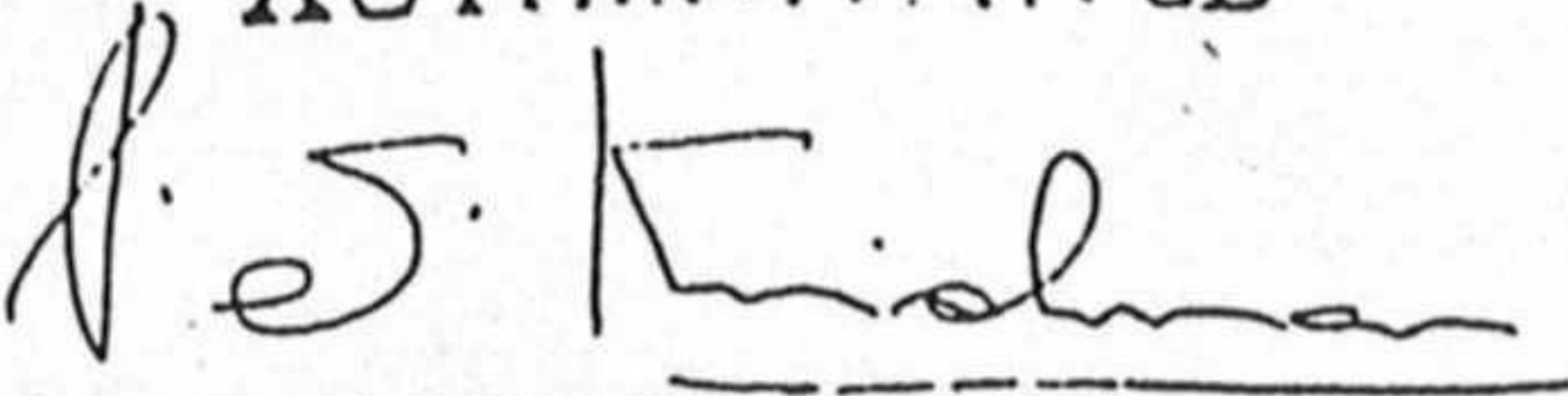
10-1-96


(P.S. KRISHNAN)


(DR. R. PRASANNAN)


(Dr. D.S. YADAV)

AUTHENTICATED


P. S. KRISHNAN

Member Secretary

National Commission for Backward Classes