

National Commission for Backward Classes

Bihar Bench

FINDINGS

Case : Request for inclusion of 'Thakurai (Muslim)' caste/community in the central list of backward classes for Bihar.

I. Request

This case arises from the request received in this Commission from Shri Md. Maslehuddin, Secretary, Thakurai Welfare Association, District Champaran, Bihar for inclusion of 'Thakurai (Muslim)' caste/community in the central list of backward classes for Bihar.

II. Public Hearing

2. The Two-Member Bench of the Commission consisting of Hon'ble Justice R.S. Singh, Chairperson and Smt. Neera Shastri, Hon'ble Member of the National Commission for Backward Classes held a public hearing at Patna on 7th October 2004 to examine this request for inclusion of 'Thakurai (Muslim)' caste/community in the central list of backward classes for Bihar. At the public hearing, the OBCs Commission, Bihar was represented by Hon'ble Justice Dharampal Sinha, Chairperson and Shri. Motilal Prasad, S.O. The State Government was represented by Shri. N.K. Chaudhary, Dy. Secretary and other officers in the Department of Personnel, Government of Bihar. The Thakurai (Muslim) Caste/Community was represented by Shri Md. Maslehuddin, Secretary, Thakurai Welfare Association, District Champaran, Bihar and others.

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III. Facts

3. The entire with regard to this caste/community as reflected in different lists is as follows:-

Mandal List : **Sl. No.162**

State List (Bihar) : **Sl. No.100**

(List of Most Backward Classes, Annexure-I)

Central List : **Nil**

4. Md. Maslehuddin, Secretary, Thakurai Welfare Association has stated in the NCBC's questionnaire that Thakurai is a socially backward class and engaged in occupation of agriculture, dairy farming and poultry farming. 70% of their population is living in Kuchha Houses and the remaining in Puckka Houses. The total population of the caste/community is 45,000 which constitutes 0.05% of the Muslim population in the State. They are mainly concentrated in East Champaran and West Champaran districts of the State. The literacy rate of this caste/community is 32.6% (14,700) in the State. Out of which, 118 are high school passed, 98 graduates (male-90, female-8 as on December 2003) and 826 are equivalent to Matric. Only few persons are employed in the State Govt. services and other services and that too in clerical and peon post besides some teachers.

At the public hearing, Md. Maslehuddin submitted that they hold low social and educational status. Traditional occupation of the caste/community is poultry farming, goat rearing and farming on others land. Their total population in the State is 45,000 and they are mostly concentrated in the East and West Champaran districts of the State. They do not have inter-dining relations with Rajputs, Pandits and other higher castes. This caste belongs to Muslim community. All the caste members observe Muslim rituals and customs. Most of them send their children in Madarsas as they cannot afford to send them in good schools. 98 persons from this caste have studied up to graduation level and

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some of them are in State Govt. services. Only 20.0 to 25.0 percent members of this caste/community own pucca houses and rest of them lives in kuchha houses.

5. This caste/community has been described in the ethnographic accounts, which is as follows:

(i) K.S. Singh, in his book "India's Communities", Vol-VI, p.3485, has described that Thakurai is a little known community of Bihar, and the Thakurai believe that they are descendants of the Rajput of eastern Rajasthan who had been recruited by the emperor Aurangzeb in the Army. The word thakurai is derived from Thakur, i.e. Rajput. In Champaran district, they are concentrated in fifty-three villages. Urdu is their mother tongue and they use the Perso-Arabic script. They are conversant with the Bhojpuri and Hindi languages also and are familiar with the Devanagari script. They are non-vegetarian. Wheat is their staple cereal.

Primarily, the Thakurai are divided into a few endogamous clans like Baccha, Bharadwaj, Chouhan, Nafran, Kuchbaria and Mahdwar, which they usually do not disclose. On the sixth day of childbirth the chhatti ceremony is held and the baby is named. Circumcision (Sunnat) is performed for males between the age of two to five years. Marriage rituals (shadi) consist of parchawan, kalmaparhna and sindoordan. The dead are buried and death rites are performed as per the Muslim customs. The principal economic resource for the Thakurai is land, which is controlled by individual proprietors. They profess Islam. They accept from and exchange food and water only with the Hindu castes. They utilise all the government programmes extended in their region.

(ii) K.S. Singh, in his books (a) "Communities, Segments, Synonyms, Surnames and Titles, p.1822 (Appendix-B)" and (b) "Identity, Ecology, Social Organization" (POI), Vol-VII, p.26" has described the caste / community Thakurai as follows:

Surname: Thakurai

Exogamous Units/Clans: Bakcha, Chouhan, Kuchbaria, Madhwar, Nafran

Gotra: Bharadwaj

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6. During the public hearing, those present, who were from the different sections of society as well as the State Government representatives did not object to the proposed inclusion of the caste/community 'Thakurai (Muslim)' in the Central List of OBCs for Bihar.

IV. Findings

7. From the materials and evidences adverted hereinbefore, it emerges that the Thakurai (Muslim) is already included in the Mandal as well as the State Lists of backward classes for Bihar and are engaged in the occupation of agriculture, dairy farming and poultry farming. The principal economic resource for the Thakurai is land, which is controlled by individual proprietors. They profess Islam. They accept from and exchange food and water only with the Hindu castes. From the available facts and evidences, it is observed that they are socially as well as educationally backward. **Therefore, the caste / community 'Thakurai (Muslim)' should be included in the Central List of Backward Classes for Bihar at entry No.131 as follows:**

"131. Thakurai (Muslim)"

(Justice Ram Surat Singh)

(Smt. Neera Shastri)

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V. Advice of the Commission

8. The Commission considered and agreed in full with the above findings of the Bihar 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 Government under Section 9(2) of the Act.

‘Thakurai (Muslim)’ should be included in the Central List of Backward Classes for Bihar at entry No.131 as follows:

“131. Thakurai (Muslim)”

R.S. SL

(Justice Ram Surat Singh)

M.S. Matharoo

(M.S. Matharoo)

Neera Shastri

(Smt. Neera Shastri)

B.R. Verma

(Dr. B.R. Verma)

S.K. Purkayastha

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