

NCBC Advice No.110/Tamil Nadu/2007

National Commission for Backward Classes

Tamil Nadu Bench

Case: Request for inclusion of "*Gajula Balija, Kshatriya Raju and Okkaliga Gowda as synonym of 'Vokkaligar'* castes/sub-castes/communities/synonyms in the Central List of Other Backward Classes for the State of Tamil Nadu

I. REQUEST

This case arises from the requests received in the National Commission for Backward Classes from the Backward Classes Associations for inclusion of the following/castes/sub-castes/communities/synonyms "*Gajula Balija, Kshatriya Raju and Okkaliga Gowda as a synonym of 'Vokkaligar'* in the Central List of Other Backward Classes for the State of Tamil Nadu.

II. PUBLIC HEARING

2. The Tamil Nadu Bench of the Commission consisting of Justice S. Ratnavel Pandian, Hon'ble Chairman, Dr. Subbha Somu, Shri Ram Awadhesh Singh, Hon'ble Members held a Public Hearing in respect of the requests received by the Commission at Chennai, on 06th August, 2007. At the Public Hearing, the State Government was represented by Shri R. Vasudevan, Secretary, Backward Classes and Most Backward Classes Minority Welfare Department, Justice Shri Arumugam, Chairman, Shri P.

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Annamalai, Member-Secretary, & other Members of the Tamil Nadu Backward Classes Commission, Shri R.S. Kannan, Director of Backward Classes and other officials. The caste/community was represented by the representatives of the community who appeared before the Bench.

III. Facts

3. All the above castes/communities/sub-castes/synonyms were not included in the first phase Central (Common) List of Other Backward Classes for the State of Tamil Nadu prepared and notified in 1993 on the basis of the principle of commonality (i.e. inclusion in the Central List of those castes/communities which were found included in the Mandal Commission's List for that State and as well as in the State Government's List.

4. Representations were received from the Associations of Backward Classes for inclusion of the above castes/communities in the Central List of OBCs for the State of Tamil Nadu.

1. Gajula Baliya

The entry in respect of the above caste/community/synonym/sub-caste is as under:-

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------|
| (a) Mandal List: | Not included. |
| (b) State List: | Not included. |
| (c) Central List: | Not included. |

Shri Sengalvarayan representing the 'Gajula Baliya' caste/community submitted before the Bench that their community is spread out in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Kerala. One of the Baliya

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groups, the Gajula live in Tamil Nadu. The traditional occupation of the Gajula Baliya is bangle selling. The term gajula means pertaining to bangle. Only a few of them depend on cultivation. Apart from bangle selling the members of the community also do petty business, work in shops, agricultural labourers and sell general items in petty shops or taking it around on head or cycles. The Gajula Baliya women have a role in financial assistance to the family by doing agricultural operations, animal husbandry and domestic work. They contribute to family income and control family expenditure. Only a few have their own land and majority of the members of the community work on others agriculture land on wages. The members of the community are also not able to continue the tradition of bangle selling, as big shops and artificial jewellery bangles have come out in the market. The education level is very low. Hardly they have any graduate or postgraduate in their community. Majority of the children drop out of school after the middle school. They do not know of anybody from their community in Administrative or Police service. They have only less representation in the Government Service at lower levels. Due to poverty they are also not able to send their children to schools. The members of the community are socially, educationally and economically backward and requested for inclusion of 'Gajula Baliya' in the Central List of OBCs for the State of Tamil Nadu.

The Ethnographic Accounts in respect of the caste/community "Gajula Baliya" are as under:-

(a) **"Communities, Segments, Synonyms, Surnames and Titles", by K.S. Singh**

Baliya-Gajul	-	POI Equivalent: Baliya, Gajula (sub-group of Baliya)
Census Year	-	1901
Earlier distribution	-	Bombay Presidency
Present distribution	-	

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Andhra Pradesh	-	Guntur, Prakasham, West Godavari
Tamil Nadu	-	Throughout the State
Synonyms	-	Baliya Naidu, Gajula Naidu, Valai Chetties [Kerala] Baliya Naidu, Kavarai [Tamil Nadu]
Titles	-	Chetty, Naicker, Naidu [Tamil Nadu]

(b) **"India's Communities", by K. S. Singh, Vol.-IV, p.220-221**

Baliya, Gajula- One of the Baliya groups, the Gajula live in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. The term gajula means pertaining to bangle. In Tamil Nadu, there are two groups of the Baliya, Gajula Baliya and Gavarai Baliya. The Gajula group has titles like Naidu, Chetty and Naicker. In addition to Tamil Nadu, they also live in some parts of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. While selling bangles and cultivation are their traditional as well as present-day occupations, government service, business, self-employment, agricultural and industrial labour, etc. are some of the other occupations of the Gajula. The community has an association by name, Naidu association at the district level to maintain unity among its members and promote education and other welfare measures. They participate in village festivals and fairs and share wells, schools, temples, crematoria, etc. with other communities. They accept water and cooked food from most communities. The community utilizes the basic facilities of education, health, communication and media, and banking. Those living in rural areas have also been benefited by the IRDP and self-employment schemes.

The Baliya Naidu in **Kerala** have synonyms like Gajula Naidu, Baliya Naidu and Valia Chetty. While Telugu is their mother tongue, they speak Malayalam as well. Mainly a landowning community, besides their traditional occupations, namely settled cultivation, business and trade, they are also employed in government and private service, animal husbandry and in making jewellery. The Baliya in **Karnataka**, have synonyms Naidu and Banajiga. While Telugu is their mother tongue, they also speak Kannada. The Baliya have four subgroups based on occupations and territories, namely Dasa Baliya, **Gajula Baliya**, Dundi Baliya and Goni Baliya. In the villages they are mainly agriculturists and agricultural wage labourers, while in urban areas they are petty traders. They sell flowers, bangles, black beads, betel leaves, cotton, rice, silk thread, marriage chaplet (basina), vermilion, etc. A considerable number of them are employed in private or government service. They avail themselves of the facilities of modern medical treatment and family welfare. In **Andhra Pradesh**, the Gajula or Gajula Baliya are distributed from Tirupati to Bhadrachalam. While a small section among them have retained their traditional occupation of selling bangles, most of them have taken up cultivation, government and private service and business.

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(c) **"People of India - Andhra Pradesh", by K. S. Singh, Vol.-XIII (Part One), p.243-246**

- (i) **Baliya/Gazula Baliya** - Baliya means born of Bali (Sacrifice), as their progenitor was born (Ja) in the course of a yagna performed by Gauri (Parvati). The Gazula Baliya are said to be the descendants of a person, created by Lord Siva bearing a number of bangles to adorn Parvati. The Gazula Baliya are also known as Gauriputra, Banajiga, Kavarai and Baliya Naidu. The Gazula Baliya is a subgroup of Baliya. Naidu and Nayudu are their titles.
- (ii) The Baliya are described in the Madras Census Report (1901) as being "The chief Telugu trading caste, scattered throughout the Presidency. It is said to have two main subdivisions Desa and Peta, to the second belong those like the Gazula (bangle sellers) and Perika (salt sellers), who live by trade. The Gazula Baliya are distributed throughout the state, with concentration in Rayalaseema region.
- (iii) The Gazula Baliya women have a role in agricultural operations, animal husbandry, social functions, rituals and religious spheres, though their status is low. They contribute to family income and control family expenditure.
- (iv) The traditional occupation of the Gazula Baliya is bangle selling. They are mostly dependent on trade. Only a few of them depend on cultivation.
- (v) The Gazula Baliya traditionally accept water and food from the upper castes like the Brahman and Vysya, but not from the Madiga and Mala, the Scheduled Castes. The share civic amenities with other communities.
- (vi) The Gazula Baliya favour formal education for boys and girls. A few male students have come up to graduate level. They make full use of modern and traditional medicare. The community practices family planning, couples preferring three children. Available communication facilities and Government-provided amenities within their reach are made use of.

(d) **"Castes and Tribes of Southern India", by Edgar Thurston and K. Rangachari, p.134-145**

- (i) **Baliya** - The Baliyas are described by Mr. Francis (Madras Census Report, 1901) as being "the chief Telugu trading caste, scattered throughout all parts of the Presidency. It is said to have two main sub-divisions, Desa and Peta, to the

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second belong those, like the Gazulu (bangle sellers) and Perike (salt-sellers), who live by trade. In the Tamil districts Balijas are known as Vadugans (Telugu people) and Kavarais."

- (ii) "The Balijas," Mr. H.A. Stuart writes (Madras Census Report, 1891) "are the trading caste of the Telugu country, but they are now found in every part of the Presidency. The bulk of the Balijas are now engaged in cultivation, and this accounts for so many having returned Kapu as their main caste, for Kapu is also a common Telugu word used for a ryot (farmer). It is not improbable that there was once a closer connection than now between the Kapus and Balijas, and the claim of the Balijas to belong to the Kapu caste may have a foundation in fact. In their customs there is very little difference between the Kapus and Balijas. It is noted in the Bellary Manual that the Balijas "have by common consent obtained a high place in the social system of South India. Some are land-owners, residing on and working their own property with the help of members of inferior castes; but the majority live by trade."
- (iii) Of the numerous sub-divisions of the Balijas, the following may be noticed:-

Gazula, glass bangles. Valaiyal or vala (bangle) Chetti is the Tamil equivalent. By some the sight of a Gazula Balija with his pile of bangles on his back is considered a good omen.

The State Government/Tamil Nadu Backward Classes Commission officials who were present at the hearing stated that the representation of the 'Gajula Balija' for inclusion in the State List of Backward Classes is pending before the State Commission.

2. **Kshatriya Raju**

The entry in respect of the above caste/community/synonym/sub-caste is as under:-

- | | | |
|------------------|---|--------------|
| (a) Mandal List | : | Not included |
| (b) State List | : | Not included |
| (c) Central List | : | Not included |

Shri Venkatarama Raju, President, Kshatriya Raju Association and K. Desingu, Advocate appearing on behalf of Shri V. Moorthy, Founder of

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Vanniyakula Kshatriyar & Disabilities Educational Social Welfare Development Federation, representing the 'Kshatriya Raju' caste/community submitted before the Bench that their community is spread out in the State of Tamil Nadu. The community is included in the list of BCs in Karnataka State. The total population of the community is near about 1% of the total population of Tamil Nadu. The traditional occupation of the community is mainly agricultural labourers and labourers. Except few, majority of the members of the community are landless. Their community is spread out in the country in various names. Only very few are educated and are in employment. Hardly there is anybody in their community who has had higher education. They do not have much representation in Government jobs or in politics. Their community is socially, educationally and economically backward and have requested for inclusion in the Central List of OBCs for the State of Tamil Nadu so that their children can come up in the mainstream of the society.

The representationist Shri K.K. Desingu Raja, President, Rajapalayam Kshatriya Rajus Mahasabha, 284, Sakkaraja Kottai Street, Pudupalayam, Rajapalayam - 626 117, Virudhunagar District, Tamil Nadu has stated in his representation to the Commission that

- (i) The Kshatriya Raju community originally belonging to Andhra Pradesh, migrated to Tamil Nadu during the regime of King Krishnadevaraya of Vijayanagaram;
- (ii) Basically they depend on agriculture for livelihood;

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- (iii) The total population of the community is less than 1% of the total population of Tamil Nadu;
- (iv) Only very few ladies and children go out seeking employment and for education;
- (v) The community is included in the list of BCs in Karnataka State.

The Ethnographic Accounts in respect of the caste/community "Kshatriya Raju" are as under:-

(a) **"Communities, Segments, Synonyms, Surnames and Titles", by K.S. Singh**

Kshatriyalu - POI Equivalent: **Kshatriya Raju/Raju**

Reported as Malayalam caste name in 1881 census

Present distribution -

Andhra Pradesh	-	Adilabad, Hyderabad, Karimnagar, Khammam, Mahbubnagar, Medak, Nalgonda, Nizamabad, Rangareddi, Vizianagaram, Warangal
Karnataka	-	Bidar, Gulbarga, Raichur
Maharashtra	-	Aurangabad, Beed, Jalna, Latur, Nanded, Osmanabad, Parbhani
Tamil Nadu	-	Throughout the State

Synonyms -

Andhra Kshatriya, Kshatriya [Andhra Pradesh]
Kshatriyaraju, Musugu Rajulu, Rachevor, Ravikula Kshatriya, Suryavamsa
Kshatriya [Tamil Nadu]

Titles -

Raja, Raju [Tamil Nadu]
Raju, Singh, Varma [Andhra Pradesh]

(b) **"India's Communities", by K. S. Singh, Vol.-V, p.1853, 1856-1858**

- (i) **Kshatriya-** A varna category, there is no Kshatriya jati as such. However, a number of communities claim the status of Kshatriya and the number of such communities apart from the Rajput is very small. They are the Raju (Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu), Raghuvamsi Kshatriya (Karnataka), Kshatriya (Kerala),

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Koteyar (Tamil Nadu, Karnataka), Dal Kshatriya (Bihar), Aguri (West Bengal) and Kshatriya (Orissa and Assam) - in all eight communities.

- (ii) **Kshatriya Raju/Raju-** A community distributed through out **Andhra Pradesh**, they have titles like Varma and Singh. The term raju has been derived from the word rajyamu (kingdom) and the one who ruled a kingdom came to be called raju. It is said that the Raju migrated from northern India and settled in various parts of Andhra Pradesh. A number of Raju families migrated to the Tamil-speaking areas like North Arcot during the fifteenth century as they were employed in the Vijayanagar (Hampi) armies (Stuart 1891). Thurston (1909) also states that '*a colony of Razus settled in and around Rajapalayam in the Tinnevely district. They are said to have migrated four or five centuries ago with a younger brother of the king of Vizianagaram, who belonged to the Pusapati sept*'.
 - (iii) In **Tamil Nadu**, the Kshatriya Raju are synonymously known as Kshatriya, Suryavamsa Kshatriya, Ravikula Kshatriya, Musugu Rajulu, while Raju and Raja are their titles. They are distributed throughout the state. The Raju of the southern districts are popularly known as Rajapalayam Raju.
 - (iv) Historical evidence reveals that they migrated to their present habitat from Andhra Pradesh. Telugu is their mother tongue but they also speak Tamil and use the Telugu and Tamil scripts.
 - (v) The Kshatriya Raju are mainly a landowning community. Their traditional and present occupations are settled cultivation and animal husbandry. Some of them are presently employed in business, trade, industry and government and private services.
 - (vi) They are Hindu and belong to the Vaishnava sect. Political leadership has emerged from among them at the regional level. Their attitude towards formal education and traditional and modern medicines is favourable.

The State Government / Tamil Nadu Backward Classes Commission officials who were present at the hearing stated that the representation of the 'Kshatriya Raju' for inclusion in the State List of Backward Classes is pending before the State Commission.

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3. Okkaliga Gowda

The entries in respect of the above caste/community/synonym/sub-caste is as under:-

- | | | |
|-------------------|------------|---|
| (d) Mandal List: | 282 | Vokkaligar (including Gounder, Gowda, Kappiliya, Kappliyar, Okkaligar, Okkaliya, Vakkaligar) |
| (e) State List: | 137 | Vokkaligar (including Vakkaligar, Okkaligar, Kappiliyar, Kappiliya, Okkaliga Gowda , Okkaliya, Gowda, Okkaliya Gowder, Okkaliya Gowda) |
| (f) Central List: | 166 | Vokkaligar (including Vakkaligar, Okkaligar, Kappiliyar, Kappiliya, Okkaliya, Gowda, Okkaliya Gowda, Okkaliya Gowder) |

Shri V. R. Thimmarayappan, President, Tamil Nadu Vokkaliga Mahajana Sangam, appearing before the Bench on behalf of 'Okkaliga Gowda' submitted that their community 'Vokkaligar' along with its synonyms/sub-castes have been included in the State List. But in the Central List it has been included omitting one of its synonyms 'Okkaliga Gowda'. They have been living in Tamil Nadu for the past several centuries and are spread out in the State in Coimbatore, Erode, Dingukal, Theni, Dharmapuri, Krishnagiri, Salem, Cuddalore, Thirunelveli, Tuticorin and Vellore Districts. The traditional occupation of the community is agriculture. They derive their name from the term *okkalu* meaning cultivation or agriculture. Majority of them are landless and work as labourers. Apart from this they have also started rearing sheeps and cattles. Many families are living in the villages which are situated down hills. Most of them are uneducated and are unemployed. They do not have much representation in Government jobs or in

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private sectors. It was requested to include 'Okkaliga Gowda' as synonyms of Vokkaligar in the Central List of OBCs for the State of Tamil Nadu, as has been included in the State Governments Backward Classes List.

The Ethnographic Accounts in respect of the caste/community "Okkaliga Gowda" are as under:-

(a) **"Communities, Segments, Synonyms, Surnames and Titles", by K.S. Singh**

Vokkaliga

Groups/subgroups: Beralakoduva (Morasu), Gangadikara, Gauri (Siva's consort), Gudi (temple), Hallikara (village man), Kamati (foolish), Kire, Kunchu, Lattikar, Nonaba, Sanu [E. Thurston]

Titles: Gaudu, Gowda [E. Thurston]

Vokkaliga, Gudi Vokkaligar

Synonyms: Gudi Okkaliga, Okkaligar, Okkaliga, Okkaliya Gowder, Okkiliyan, Vakkaliga [Tamil Nadu]

Titles: Gowder [Tamil Nadu]

(b) **"India's Communities", by K. S. Singh, Vol.-V, p.3666, 3670-3671**

(vii) **Vokkaliga-** The Vokkaliga are a major land owning community of Karnataka. Some of their groups are also distributed in the adjoining areas of Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh.

(viii) **Vokkaliga, Gudi Vokkaligar-** A Kannada-speaking community in Tamil Nadu, they are known by different synonyms like Vakkaliga, Okkaligar, Okkaliya Gowder, Gudi Okkaliga, Okkiliyan, Okkaliga, Vokkaligar and Okkaliya Gowder. Gowder is their title. Thurston (1909) has mentioned them as Canarese cultivators. They derive their name from the term okkalu meaning cultivation or agriculture.

(ix) The literal meaning of gudi is temple. Their oral traditions indicate that they were the officiating priests and pujaris of minor Hindu temples in the past, hence they acquired the name Gudi Vokkaligar.

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- (x) They perceive their distribution to be in the Coimbatore, Nilgiris, Periyar, Anna, Salem and Dharmapuri districts of Tamil Nadu. Besides Kannada they also speak Tamil and Telugu.
- (xi) The Gudi Vokkaligar are basically a landowning community. Cultivation and animal husbandry are their traditional and present-day occupations. Sericulture, business, trade, industry, government and private services, self-employment are some other occupations they follow.
- (xii) They maintain traditional inter-community relations in social, ritual and occupational spheres, such as commensal relations with the local agricultural communities, sharing water sources, patronizing clan and village deities and participating in the local fairs. They also receive the services of other village communities and maintain patron-client relationship with them.
- (xiii) There are entrepreneurs, scholars, administrators, professionals and political leaders among them. Being an agricultural community, they make use of the facilities provided by the government for the development of agriculture. Facilities pertaining to health, education, media and communication, and banking, etc. are being utilized.

During the Public Hearing , those who were present from different sections of the society/associations/organizations and the State Government officials did not object to the inclusion of above caste/sub-caste/synonym. In fact they justified the inclusion of this synonym/caste/sub-caste in the Central List of OBCs for the State of Tamil Nadu.

The State Government/Tamil Nadu Backward Classes Commission officials who were present at the hearing stated that the 'Okkaliga Gowda' is included in the State List of Backward Classes along with 'Vokkaligar' and this sub-caste/synonym is socially and educationally backward.

In the Report of Second Backward Classes Commission, generally known as Mandal Commission Report, Para 12.10 under Chapter XII – "Identification of OBCs" reads as under:

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“Whereas the Commission has tried to make the State-wise lists of OBCs as comprehensive as possible, it is quite likely that several synonyms of the castes listed as backward have been left out. Certain castes are known by a number of synonyms, which vary from one region to the other, and their complete coverage is almost impossible. In view of this, the Commission recommends that if a particular caste has been listed as backward then all its synonyms whether mentioned in the State Lists or not should also be treated as backward”.

The cases under consideration are covered under the NCBC's Guidelines for consideration of Requests for inclusion and Complaints of under-inclusion in the Central List of OBCs. Para.9 of Procedural Clarification on Guidelines reads as under:

“In case of synonyms/sub-castes/different names of the same caste or community/local variants of the same caste or community, if and after it is established that, they are, in fact, such synonyms/sub-castes/different names of the same caste/local variants, etc. and if there are no contrary views expressed and data furnished before or otherwise available to/in the notice of the bench/Commission and the bench/Commission does not find any ground to take a contrary view, such synonyms/sub-caste/different names of the same caste/local variants of the same caste, such cases may be included, and findings/advice formulated to that effect.”

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IV. FINDINGS

The Bench after considering the submissions made during the Public Hearing by the representatives of the caste/community, the State Government and the Tamil Nadu Backward Classes Commission, the ethnographic accounts, documents and other available informations observed that:-

1. The main caste/community 'Vokkaligar' along with its sub-caste find place in the Mandal and State List. The synonym 'Okkaliga Gowda' is included in the State List of Backward Classes along with 'Vokkaligar'.
2. The main caste/community 'Vokkaligar' along with its sub-castes/synonyms, except 'Okkaliga Gowda' appears in the Central List of OBCs for the State of Tamil Nadu. But it is also noticed that 'Okkaliya Gowda' appears in the Central List as well as in the State List.

It seems that 'Okkaliga Gowda' is only a regional spelling/pronunciation variation of 'Okkaliya Gowda'. The traditional occupation of 'Okkaliga Gowda' community is agriculture/agricultural labour/cultivation and animal husbandry. It seems that the members of the community are also educationally backward. This community is socially and educationally backward.

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The Bench is of the considered view that the following caste/sub-caste/synonym is socially & educationally backward and should be included in the Central List of OBCs for the State of Tamil Nadu as under:-

“Okkaliga Gowda” as synonym of Vokkaligar.

After the inclusion of the above in the existing entry in the Central List of OBC for the State of Tamil Nadu, the respective entries will read as under:

166. Vokkaligar (including Vakkaligar, Okkaligar, Kappiliyar, Kappiliya, Okkaliya, Gowda, Okkaliya Gowda, **Okkaliga Gowda**, Okkaliya Gowder)

The Bench after hearing the submissions of the representatives appearing on behalf of ‘Kshatriya Raju’ and ‘Gajula Baliya’ and took note of the following

1. The caste/community ‘Gajula Baliya’ and ‘Kshatriya Raju’ does not find place in the Mandal List, nor in the State List of Backward Classes.
2. The representation of the caste/community ‘Gajula Baliya’ and ‘Kshatriya Raju’ for inclusion in the State List of Backward Classes are pending with the Tamil Nadu Backward Classes Commission.
3. After migration from Andhra Pradesh/Karnataka to Tamil Nadu, the caste/community ‘Gajula Baliya’ and ‘Kshatriya Raju’ are still continuing their traditional occupation and their population in Tamil Nadu as per their submission is to be ascertained. It is

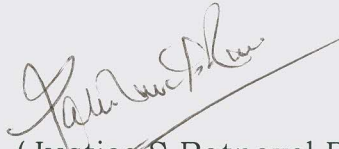
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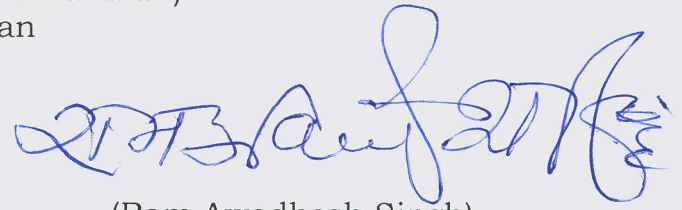
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also doubtful whether they are continuing cultivation/trade and whether they are land-owning community in Tamil Nadu.

Therefore, the representatives of the 'Kshatriya Raju' and 'Gajula Balija' were asked to submit detailed representation/information and also to make representation to the State Backward Classes Commission in case they have not represented. The Bench further decided that these cases will be considered after getting further information from the representationists, State Government and State Backward Classes Commission.


(Justice S. Ratnavel Pandian)
Chairman


(Dr. Subbha Somu)
Member


(Ram Awadhesh Singh)
Member

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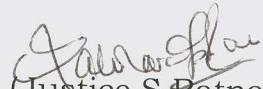

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V. ADVICE OF THE COMMISSION

9. The Commission considered and agreed in full with the above findings and decided to tender the following Advice to the Central Government under section 9(i) of the NCBC Act, for necessary action by the Central Government under section 9(2) of the Act:-

‘Okkaliga Gowda’, synonym of ‘Vokkaligar’ is socially and educationally backward. Therefore, ‘Okkaliga Gowda’ be included as synonym of Vokkaligar in the Central list of OBCs for the State of Tamil Nadu. After the inclusion of the above in the existing entry in the Central List of OBCs for the State of Tamil Nadu, the respective entry will read as under:-

“166. Vokkaligar (including Vakkaligar, Okkaligar, Kappiliyar, Kappiliya, Okkaliya, Gowda, Okkaliya Gowda, **Okkaliga Gowda**, Okkaliya Gowder)”


(Justice S. Ratnavel Pandian)
Chairman


(Dr. Subbha Somu)
Member


(Ram Awadhesh Singh)
Member


(Abdul Ali Azizi)
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