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भारत सरकार
त्रिकूट-१, भीकाजी 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. Orissa 72/99

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 Inclusion of "Kalandi Baishnaba" caste/community in the Central List of Backward Classes for Orissa, duly authenticated, for necessary action by the Central Government under Section 9(2) of the Act.

2. With this, Advices on 759 (377 for Inclusion + 382 for Rejection) castes, sub-castes, synonyms etc. have been tendered by the NCBC, after its reconstitution in February 1997, of which 753 (371 for Inclusion + 382 for Rejection) are still pending with the Government for Notification (not taking into account those released by Cabinet yesterday was reported in TV yesterday night & newspapers this morning, of which we are yet to get particulars).
Yours sincerely

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

Encl: As stated

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

Issue
21/10/99

O/C

NCBC Advice Orissa 72/99

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR BACKWARD CLASSES

ORISSA BENCH

FINDINGS

Case :- Request for inclusion for **Kalandi Baishnaba** caste/community in the Central List of Backward Classes for Orissa.

Per Shri U. P. Singh, Member

I. Request

1. This case arises from the request received in this Commission from Shri Damodar Das, President, Utkal Kalandi Baishnab Sangha, Cuttack, Orissa for inclusion of 'Kalandi Baishnab' in the Central List of Backward Classes for Orissa.

II. Public Hearing

2. The two-Member Orissa Bench of the Commission consisting of Hon'ble Members Shri U. P. Singh and Shri Sahu Akshaya Bhai held a Public Hearing in respect of the request on 07.01.99 at Bhubaneswar. At the Public Hearing the State Govt. was represented by Shri Gurcharan Patnaik, Joint Secretary and Shri D. C. Pradhan, Under Secretary, Department of Welfare. The caste/community was represented by Shri Anadi Charan Das, Gopinath Das, Ranjan Kumar Das and others.

III. Facts

3. At the time when the Expert Committee on Backward Classes on the basis of the principle of commonality, i.e. listing castes common to both the Mandal List of each State and the respective State Lists and when, on the basis of the Expert Committee's

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Member Secretary

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Report, the Government of India notified the first-phase Central List in 1993, Orissa was one of the States which did not have a State List of its own. Therefore, no Central List of Backward Classes for Orissa was prepared at that stage. It was only after the Supreme Court's Judgement in the Mandal case that the State List of Orissa came into existence in 1994 on the basis of one man (Justice N. K. Das) Commission Report. - Thereafter the Central Government vide Ministry of Welfare's Resolution No. 12011/9/94-BCC dated 19.10.94 issued a "Common (Central) list" of Backward Classes for Orissa. Kalandi Baishnab was not included in the Central List of Backward Classes for Orissa as it was not included both in the Mandal Commission's List for Orissa and the State List. Even now, Kalandi Baishnab has not been included in the State List.

4. In their request for inclusion of the caste in the Central List of Backward Classes for Orissa Utkal Kalandi Baishnaba Sangha have stated that the population of the caste is about 30,000 spread over the State. This community is deprived of getting any facility in the society though most of them live below the poverty line without any landed property or service or any other source of livelihood.
5. At the Public Hearing the representatives of the caste stated that Kalandi Baishnabs are disciples of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Their traditional occupation was begging but now they are settled to cultivation. They wear sacred thread (Janeu).
6. H. H. Risley (The Tribes and castes of Bengal- Ethnographic Glossary Vol.-II, Firma Mukhopadhyay, Calcutta, Reprint 1981, First Published in 1891) has a mention of Vaishnaba, as follows :-

"Vaishnaba, Baishtab, Bairagi, a religious sect based upon the worship of Vishnu Under the incarnations of Rama and Krishna. -----"

Vaishnava, Colloquially Baistham, of Bengal, a class not very easy to define precisely, as the name Vaishnava includes (a) Ordinary Hindus who, without deserting their original caste, worship Vishnu in preference to other gods, (b) ascetic members of the Vaishnava sect, commonly called Bairagi, (c) Jat-Baishtam, Samyogi or Bantasi, an

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Secretary
National Commission
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endogamous group formed by the conversion to Vaishnavism of members of many different castes....."

7. People of India (National Series volume V, India's communities, K.S. Singh, Anthropological Survey of India, Oxford University Press, Delhi 1998) has described kalandi Vaishnab as follows :-

"They are a community of Orissa, who belong to the Vaishnab sect. According to a legend recalled in oral tradition, a person named Madhab Das belonging to the Kondora community adopted the Vaishnab sect and became a sage. He had one disciple to whom the Kalandi Vaishnab trace their origin. Some express the view that Kalandi is a synonym of Kondara, a community of Orissa, but this is not widely accepted. They live in different areas of Puri and are sporadically distributed in the Cuttack district of the state. They speak Oriya and use its script. They are non-vegetarians who eat fish and egg and their staple cereals include both rice and wheat. This endogamous community is divided into a number of clans (gotra), like Nagasya or Nagaswa and Bharadwaj. They all use Dasa as their surname. Adult marriage, arranged through negotiation, is prevalent among them, and though monogamy is the usual form of marriage, polygyny (both sororal and non-sororal) also occurs. Divorce is either socially or judicially approved. Remarriage of widows, widowers and divorced males and females is permitted. Male equigeniture is the rule of inheritance, but the succession right is transcended to the eldest son. The dead are buried and the pollution period lasts for twenty-one days.

Both the traditional and primary occupation of the Kalandi Vaishnab is settled cultivation. Some of them are engaged as sharecroppers, wage labourers and industrial workers while some of the educated persons are employed in different organizations including government offices. A few of them have established businesses of their own. Making of bead necklaces is a source of income for some of them. They have a traditional caste council jatiano which is

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responsible for maintaining social norms within the community. They strictly follow the Vaishnava sect and a priest from within the caste is invited to perform their rituals. They do not traditionally accept cooked food and water from the Dom, Dhoba, Pano, Bhoi, Bauri, Hadi and Kondora. The majority of them live in separate hamlets but share public places with others....."

8. In a recent study of the caste 'Kalandi Vaishnab' by Swapna Chowdhury (People of India, State/Union Territory Series – Orissa, Chief Editor K. S. Singh, office of the Director General Anthropological Survey of India, New Delhi, Unpublished) the following description of the caste is given:-

"One of the least known community in Orissa is Kalandi Vaishnab. They are agriculturists by profession. There is no synonym and sub-group of the community ----- At present they are living in Puri and Cuttack districts of Orissa, though their distribution is very sporadic in Cuttack. -----.

Social division exists on gotra (clan) level which indicates ancestry and regulate marriage alliances. The gotras like Nagasya and Bharadwaz are found among them. They all use Dasa as their surname. They are aware of Varna system and recognise their place among the Sudras. The people place themselves in the middle position in local social hierarchy but by others they are treated as equal with Scheduled caste people i.e., they are placed in the lower stratum of social hierarchy-----"

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Member Secretary
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IV. Findings

9. From the foregoing, it becomes clear that the traditional occupation of the 'Kalandi Baishnaba' caste is agriculture. The representatives of the caste could not provide any evidence in support of their statement that their traditional occupation was begging. The ethnographic literature (as in para-7) indicates that the members of the caste trace their origin as disciples of Madhab Das belonging to the Kondora community (now found in the list of Scheduled Castes of Orissa at Sl. No. 42 as Kandra, Kandara) who adopted the Vaishnava sect and thus became a sage. Performance of rituals and other religious functions is done by the priest of their own caste and not by a Brahmin is again indication of their low social status. A recent study by Swapna Chowdhury (referred to in para 8) also affirms the social status of the caste being quite low in the social hierarchy. The Bench holds unhesitatingly that the 'Kalandi Baishnab' caste is socially backward. As in the ethnographic literature, Baishnaba and Vaishnab have been used as interchange terms, therefore, the Bench recommends inclusion of the caste in the Central List of Backward Classes for Orissa as a new entry at Sl. No. 194 as follows:-

"194. Kalandi Baishnaba/Kalandi Vaishnab"

U. P. Singh
(U. P. Singh)

Akshaya Bhai
(Sahu Akshaya Bhai)

NOTIFIED
P. S. KRISHNAN
Member Secretary
National Commission
for Backward Classes

V. Advice of the Commission

10. The Commission considered and agreed in full with the findings of the Bench for Orissa 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:-

'Kalandi Baishnaba' be included in the Central List of Backward classes for Orissa as a new entry at Sl. No. 194 as under:-

"194. Kalandi Baishnaba/Kalandi Vaishnab"

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