



सत्यमेव जयते

पी. एस. कृष्णन्
P. S. KRISHNAN
TEL. : 6183190

सदस्य-सचिव
राष्ट्रीय पिछड़ा वर्ग आयोग

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

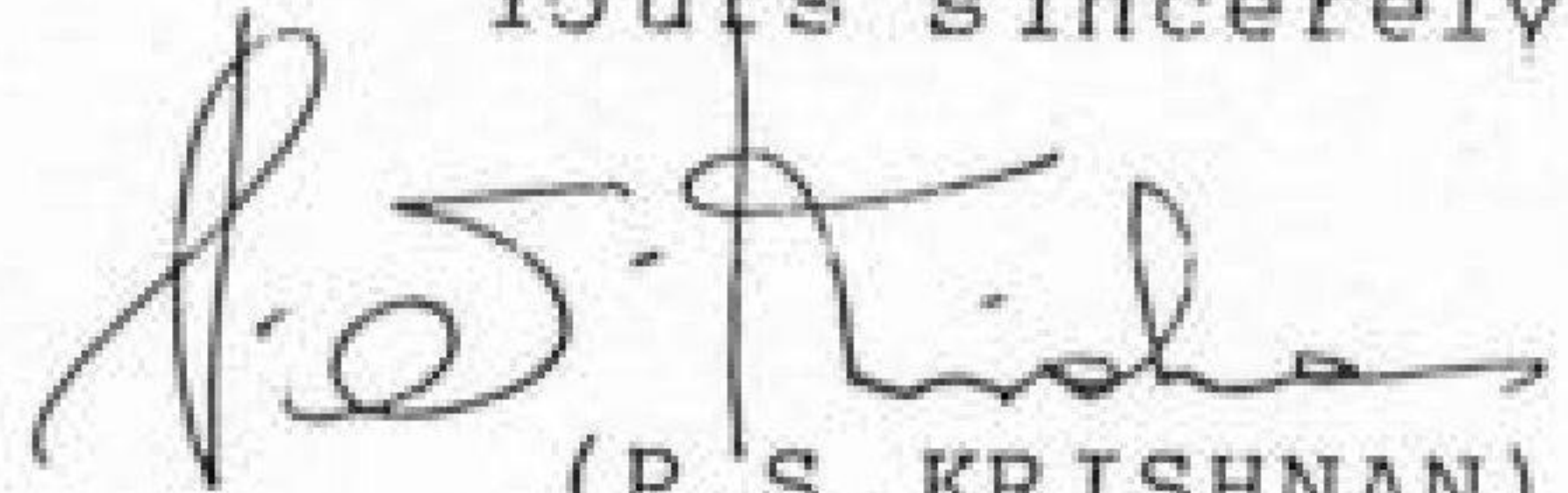
NCBC Advice No. West Bengal 67/2000

27. 01. 2000

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 "Rayeen(Kunjra)" caste/community in the Central List of Backward Classes for West Bengal, duly authenticated, for necessary action by the Central Government under Section 9(2) of the NCBC Act.

Yours sincerely


(P.S. KRISHNAN)

Encl: As stated

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

c/c

33240

28/1/2000

NCBC Advice No. West Bengal 67/9900

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR BACKWARD CLASSES

WEST BENGAL

FINDINGS

Case : Request for inclusion of "Rayeen" caste/community in the Central List of Backward Classes for West Bengal.

Per Shri U.P. Singh, Member

I. Request

1. This case arises from the Request received in the National Commission for Backward Classes from Shri Zafar Ahmad Rayeen, General Secretary, All India Jamiat-ur-Rayeen, Kanpur, U.P. for inclusion of "Rayeen" caste/community in the Central List of Backward Classes for West Bengal. Shri Raushan Ali, Hon. General Secretary, Jamait-ur-Rayeen, Calcutta also submitted a Request at the Public Hearing for inclusion of "Rayeen/Kunjra" community in the Central List of Backward Classes for West Bengal.

II. Public Hearing

2. The two-Member Bench of the of the Commission consisting of Hon'ble Members, S/Shri U.P. Singh and Sahu Akshaya Bhai held a Public Hearing at Calcutta on 18.11.1999 to examine this Request for inclusion in the Central List of Backward Classes for West Bengal. At the Public Hearing the State Govt. was represented by Dr. M.K. Chaudhari, Director and Dr. (Mrs.) R. Gupta, Cultural Research Officer from the Cultural Research Institute, Calcutta. The Request-maker did not appear at the Public Hearing. However, the caste/community was represented by S/Shri Raushan Ali, Md.

AUTHENTICATED


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

Ismail, Md. Mustaquim, Md. Mauzoor Alam, Noor Md. Rai and Md. Jan, all from Calcutta.

III. Facts

3. The State Government of West Bengal had no list of Backward Classes till after the Supreme Court Judgement in the Mandal Case delivered on 16th November, 1992. For this reason, the Expert Committee on Backward Classes could not, on the basis of the "Principle of Commonality", recommend a Central List of Backward Classes for West Bengal as done in the case of 14 other States, and therefore the Central Government also could not issue a Central List of Backward Classes for West Bengal in 1993. In the subsequent list of Backward Classes issued by the State Government by its Notification No. 346-TW/EC/M-6/82 (I) dated 13th July, 1994 in the Calcutta Gazette of the same date this caste/community did not find mention. The Government of India, Ministry of Welfare by its Notification No. 163 dated 19.10.94, published in the Gazette of India of 20.10.1994 issued a "common list" of OBCs for West Bengal also omitted this caste/community. Hence, the request by caste/community for non-inclusion in the Central List of Backward Classes for West Bengal.

4. The caste/community has been included in the Mandal List of Backward Classes for West Bengal as follows:-

"112. Kunjra, Rayeen"

5. The memorialist Shri Zafar Ahmad Rayeen stated that the Rayeens are a professional community engaged in growing, cultivation, purchase, sale and business of fruits, vegetables and fish. They are spread all over the country and are known by different nomenclatures such as Kunjra, Subzi-Farosh and Baghban. Their population in West Bengal is 25 lakhs and spread throughout the State and mainly concentrated in the districts of Calcutta, Howrah, 24 Parganas, Maldah, Murshidabad and divisions of Jalpaiguri and Vardhwan. It is also claimed that the Rayeens of West Bengal, in particular, are lagging far behind socially, educationally, economically and politically and

AUTHENTIC


R. S. KRISHNAN
Member Secretary
National Commission
for Backward Classes

deserve to be listed amongst the OBC. The Rayeens of West Bengal fulfil all the criteria of getting OBC status such as stigma of low occupation, tendency of others to look down upon the people of this caste, non-existent representation in public services, derogatory terms prevalent in the higher echelons of society in respect of the members of this community, very low percentage of literacy, etc. The community has been given OBC status in the States of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh and Baghban in the States of Karnataka and Maharashtra.

6. Shri Raushan Ali, Hon. General Secretary, Jamait-ur-Rayeen, Calcutta who was present at the Public Hearing made a Request for inclusion of Rayeen/Kunjra community in the Central List of Backward Classes for West Bengal and stated therein that among the Muslim minorities, people who are engaged in the profession of door to door selling of fruits and vegetables, hawking and vending are known as Rayeen and in common parlance known as Kunjra. It further mentions that due to acute poverty, majority of them prefer to send their children for earning instead of sending them to schools.
7. Shri Raushan Ali also made the Request that it would be appropriate to include the word "Kunjra" within bracket with "Rayeen" instead of "Rayeen/Kunjra" as a precautionary measure to avoid infiltration. The Bench acceded to his Request to put the entry as "Rayeen (Kunjra)" in the Central List of Backward Classes for West Bengal.
8. The representatives of the caste/community who were present at the Public Hearing stated that they were socially and educationally backward and the reasons being very low literacy rate and lack of opportunities. The traditional occupation of the community was fruit selling and hawking. They are Muslims called Rayeen (Kunjra) and their Hindu counterpart "Koiri" have already been included in the Central List of Backward Classes for West Bengal. It was further stated by them that they were more or less from the State of West Bengal, however, some of the members of the community migrated from Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Punjab.

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9. K.S. Singh describes "Rayeen" in the book "People of India – India's Communities" (National Series Volume IV-VI, Anthropological Survey of India, Oxford University Press, Delhi Calcutta Chennai Mumbai, 1998) under the following heads:-

"Rayeen : See Araian/Araeen/Reen/Rain/Rayeen." (Vol. VI, p. 3004)

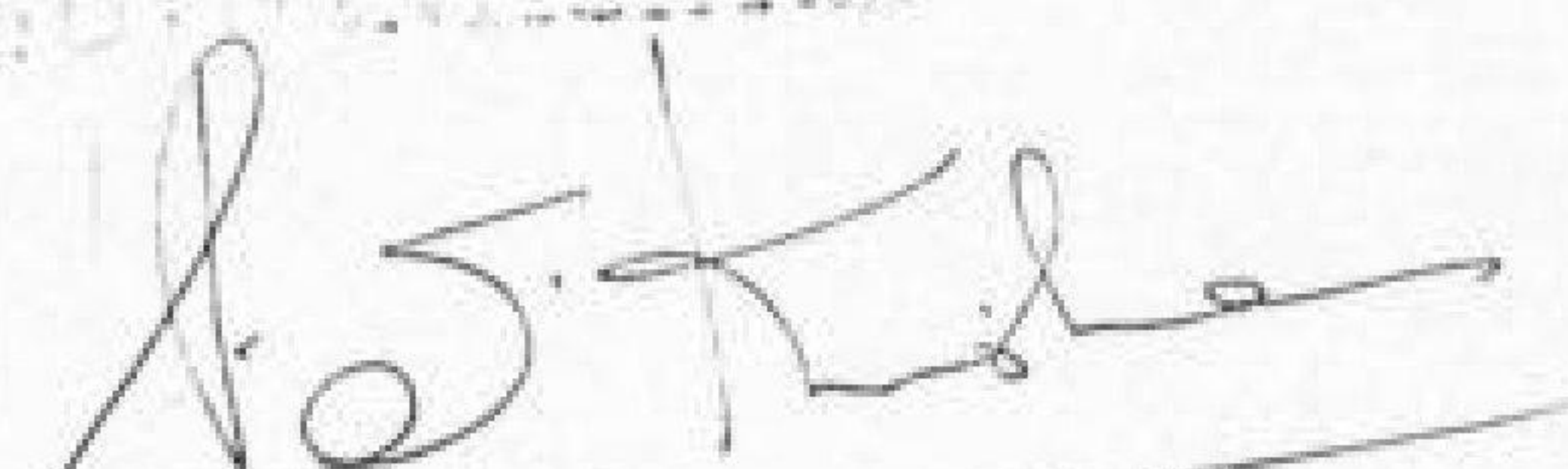
"Arain/Raean/Rain/Rayeen : Largely settled in Delhi, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and Bihar, the Arain are variously known as Raean, Rain, Baghban, Kunjra, etc. Crooke (1896) describes them as 'a gardening and cultivating caste found in the Meerut and Rohilkand divisions, with both a Hindu and Muhammadan branch'. Rose (1919), opines that 'The nucleus of this caste was probably a body of Hindu Saini or Kamboh cultivators who were converted to Islam at an early period'." (Vol. IV, p. 112)

"Kunjra : Also referred to as the Rayeen, they claim that their ancestors inhabited the Rayee mountain. They consider the name Kunjra as derogatory. In Sanskrit, the work kunj means a bower, an arbour. According to Crooke the Kunjra are a caste of green-grocers, who sell vegetables and fruits. They inhabit Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal."

10. K.S. Singh in his book "People of India – Communities, Segments, Synonyms, Surnames & Titles" (National Series Volume VIII, Anthropological Survey of India, Oxford University Press, 1996) shows Rayeen as a synonym of Kunjra in Uttar Pradesh and Raie in West Bengal. (p. 1493) and the present distribution of "Kunjra" in Bankura, Burdwan, Calcutta, Hoogli, Howrah, Malda, Twenty-four Pargana and Purulia districts of West Bengal. (p. 597-598)

11. "Rayeen or Kunjra (Muslim)" and "Kunjra or Rayeen" have already been included in the Central List of Backward Classes for Bihar and Uttar Pradesh respectively.

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

12. The NCBC has tendered its Advice for inclusion of "Bagban/Rayeen" as synonyms of Mali in the Central List of Backward Classes for Gujarat and Maharashtra and "Raine" as synonym of "Kunjra" in the Central List of Backward Classes for Madhya Pradesh.

13. During the Public Hearing, those present who were from different sections of the society as well as the representatives of the State Govt. did not object to the inclusion of "Rayeen (Kunjra)" in the Central List of Backward Classes for the State, but supported it.

IV. Findings

14. From the foregoing material, the Bench holds that "Rayeen (Kunjra)" is a gardening and cultivating caste belonging to Muslim community. Their Hindu counterpart "Keori/Koiri" have already been included in the Central List of Backward Classes for West Bengal. Though the Request-maker made the Request for inclusion of "Rayeen" in the Central List of Backward Classes, the Representatives of the community who were present at the Public Hearing requested to insert "Kunjra" within bracket with "Rayeen" so as to avoid infiltration and flow of benefits only to the bonafide members of the community, which was agreed to by the Bench. The Bench therefore holds that "Rayeen(Kunjra)" is a Socially Backward Class and deserves inclusion in the Central List of Backward Classes for West Bengal at entry No. 53 as follows:-

"53. Rayeen (Kunjra)"

(Sahu Akshya Bhai)

AUTHENTICATED

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

(U.P. Singh)

V. Advice of the Commission

15. The Commission considered and agreed in full with the above Findings of the West Bengal Bench and decided to tender the following Advice to the Central Government under Section 9(1) of the National Commission for Backward Classes Act, 1993 for necessary action by the Central Government under Section 9(2) of the Act:-

"Rayeen (Kunjra)" caste/community be included in the Central List of Backward Classes for West Bengal at entry No. 53 as follows:-

"53. Rayeen (Kunjra)"

Kshayam
18.01.2000

Madhupratap Singh
14.1.2000

P. S. Krishna
19.1.2000

Dr. S. H. Anwar
27/1/2000

He is a member of the
27.1.2000

P. S. Krishna
27.1.2000