

National Commission for Backward Classes

ORISSA BENCH

FINDINGS

Case: Request for inclusion of the caste/community Tamuli in the Central List of Backward classes for Orissa.

I. Request

This case arises from the request received in the NCBC from Shri Prabhat Ranjan Dey, AT/PO, Benipur, DT/PS Kendrapara, Orissa for inclusion of the caste/community “**Tamuli**” in the Central List of Backward classes for Orissa.

II. Public Hearing

2. The Three-Member Bench of the Commission consisting of Hon’ble Justice R.S. Singh, Chairman, Smt. Neera Shastri and Dr. B. Baburao Verma, Hon’ble Members held a Public Hearing in respect of this request at Bhubaneshwar on 23rd September, 2004. At the Public Hearing, the State Government was represented by Sh. Loknath Mishra, Director, OBC, Sh. M.K. Mallick, Under secretary ST&SC/OBCs and other officers in the Department of ST & SC/OBCs, Govt. of Orissa. The State OBCs Commission was represented by Sh. R.K. Behera, Member Secretary, Sh. B.V. Ekka, A.O. and other officers from the OBCs Commission. The Caste/community **Tamuli** was represented by Shri Prabhat Ranjan Dey, AT/PO Benipur, DT/PS-Kendrapara, Orissa & Others.

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III. Facts

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

Mandal List	:	Nil
State List (Orissa)	:	Nil
Central List	:	Nil

4. Shri Prabhat Ranjan Dey, representative of the caste/community Tamuli, stated in his reply to the NCBC questionnaire stated that this caste/community is concentrated in the Kendrapara, Jagpur, Jagatsinghpur, Cuttack, Puri and Balasore districts of the State. They are socially and educationally backward as total number of Matriculation and graduates in their caste is 6000 and 4000 respectively. 2450 persons from their caste/community are employed in State government services, whereas only 300 persons are employed in Central services besides 100 professionals working in different fields. 60.0% population of the Caste/community live in Kachha houses and only 40.0% live in pucca houses. At present no representative from this caste/community is in the State Assembly or in Parliament.

At the public hearing, Shri Prabhat Ranjan Dey submitted that the caste/community Tamuli is in minority in Orissa and the total population is about 2.0 lakh. They have migrated from Bengal long ago. The main occupation of the caste/community is selling of betel leaves. Tamuli is socially and educationally most backward caste/community in the State. Less than 5.0% are educated upto plus 10 and very few are graduate out of total population of 2.0 lakh. Only few persons are service holders.

5. Prof. G.C. Das (Retd.) meanwhile stated that there is a particular caste "Tamburi" from which the word 'Tamuli' has been derived. Tamburi reside in Balasore, Puri and

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some other seashore districts of Orissa. They are cultivating as well as selling betel leaves.

6. Shri. M.K. Mallick, Under Secretary (SC&ST/OBC/Minorities), Welfare Department, Government of Orissa, stated that the Orissa State Commission for Backward Classes has recommended "Tamuli Caste" for its inclusion in the SEBC list to the State Government vide letter No.260 dated. 12.3.2004.

7. The Tamuli caste/community has been described in the ethnographic accounts as follows:

- (i) H.H. Risely in his book "The Tribes and Castes of Bengal – Ethnographic Glossary" (Firma Mukhopadhyay, Calcutta, 1981, Reprint, 1st Edition, 1891, (Vol. II, p.292-294) state that the "Tambuli, Tamuli, Tamli, is a respectable trading caste of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, whose original occupation is betel-leaf selling. It has been derived from Sanskrit word Tambula..... They are usually classed among the Nabasakha, and in most districts of Bengal Brahmans will take water from their hands. On this point, however, there seems to be some conflict both of ancient authority and of modern usage." The couplet of Parasara, which is usually cited as the locus classicus defining the Nabasakh or Nava-Sayaka group, makes no mention of the Tambuli." He further states that "the Brahmans of Bengal, while usually according to the Tambuli a place among the Navasakha, do not invariably allow them the privileges of attaching to this position; and a tambuli gentleman,, informs me that neither Brahmans not Rajputs will take water from their hands.

He describes the original occupation of the caste "to prepare and sell betel-leaf, which they buy from the cultivators, is believed to be the original occupation of the caste, which they still adhere to in Behar and Upper India, often adding thereto the business of a pansari or druggist. In Bengal, however, the Tambulis have long since abandoned this special business, and taken to dealing in grain and

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petty shop-keeping. Some sell lime, others are employed as gumshtas in large shops, a certain number hold land, and few are government servants, pleaders, mukhtiars, doctors, clerks in merchants' offices, and schoolmasters. No Tambuli will hold the plough himself, and those members of the caste who have taken to agriculture are zamindars, tenure-holders and occupancy raiyats cultivating their lands by means of hired labour."

- (ii) In Census year 1931, the earlier distribution of this caste / community is as follows:-

Calcutta and Mayurbhanj State.

8. 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 '**Tamuli**' in the Central List of Backward Classes for Orissa.

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IV. Findings

9. From the materials and evidences adverted hereinbefore, the Bench finds that the main occupation of the caste/community '**Tamuli**' is growing and selling betel leaves besides agricultural activities. This fact has also been corroborated by H.H.Risley, in his book "The Tribes and Castes of Bengal, Vol.11, p.292-294". They are socially and educationally backward. Also the total number of literate in their caste/community is low and their representation in the Central government Group A & B Post is nil, which is covered by para 5 of the Procedural Clarification on the NCBC's "Guidelines for consideration of requests for inclusion and complaints of under-inclusion in the Central List of Backward Classes". The Orissa State Commission for Backward Classes has also recommended "Tamuli" for its inclusion in the SEBC list of the State Government vide its letter No.260, dated. 12.3.2004. Therefore the Bench recommends that the caste/community "**Tamuli**" be included in the Central List of Backward Classes for Orissa at entry no. 194 as follows:

" 194. Tamuli"


(Justice Ram Surat Singh)


(Smt. Neera Shastri)


(Dr. B.R. Verma)

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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:-

Tamuli be included in the Central List of Backward Classes for Orissa at entry no. 194 as follows:-

“ 194. Tamuli”


(Justice Ram Surat Singh)


(M.S. Matharoo)


(Smt. Neera Shastri)


(Dr. B.R. Verma)


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