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सदस्य-सचिव
राष्ट्रीय पिछड़ा वर्ग आयोग
भारत सरकार
नई दिल्ली-110 066
MEMBER-SECRETARY
NATIONAL COMMISSION
FOR BACKWARD CLASSES
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
NEW DELHI-110 066
02. 02. 1998

NCBC Advice No. 72, 73 TN/98

Dear Shri Baksi,

I am sending herewith the Advices of the National Commission for Backward Classes under Section 9(1) of the NCBC Act, 1993 for rejection of the Requests for inclusion of

- (1) Vellala
- (2) Devendra Kula Vellalar

castes/communities in the Central List of Backward Classes for Tamil Nadu, for necessary action by the Central Government under Section 9(2) of the Act.

Kind regards,

Yours sincerely

(P.S. KRISHNAN)

Encl: As stated.

Shri K.K. Baksi
Secretary to Govt. of India
Ministry of Welfare
Shastri Bhavan
NEW DELHI

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR BACKWARD CLASSES
TAMIL NADU BENCH
FINDINGS

Per Justice Shri P.K.Shyamsundar, Chairperson

Case :- Request for inclusion of "Vellala"
caste/community in the Central List of
Backward Classes for Tamil Nadu.

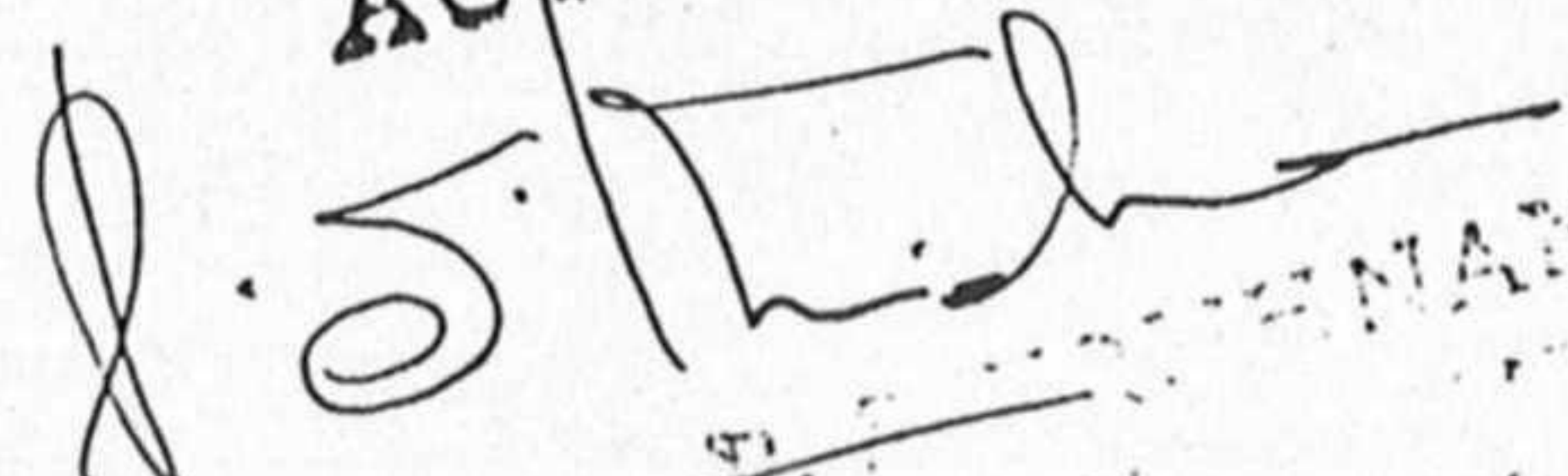
I. Request

1. This case arises from the Request received in the Commission from Shri M.Periasamy, General Secretary, Tamil Nadu Vellalar Federation, 7 Domodara Street, Kilpauk, Madras-600010, for the Inclusion of "Vellala" in the Central List of Backward Classes for Tamil Nadu.

II. Public Hearing

2. A three-Member Bench of the NCBC consisting of Hon'ble Justice P.K.Shyamsundar, Chairperson, NCBC, Shri P.S.Krishnan, Hon'ble Member-Secretary, NCBC and Shri U.P.Singh, Hon'ble Member, NCBC held a Public Hearing in respect of this Request at Chennai on 22.10.97. At the Public Hearing the State Government was represented by Shri P.Shanmugam, Director of Most Backward Classes and Denotified Communities, Shri A.Elangovan, Director of Backward Classes and Minorities and other officers of the Backward Classes Welfare Department.

AUTHENTICATED


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

III. Facts

3. "Vellala" caste/community was not included in the first-phase Central List of Backward Classes for Tamil Nadu prepared in 1993 on the basis of the Principle of commonality because at that time it was not included both in the State List of Backward Classes and in the Mandal List of Backward Classes for Tamil Nadu.

4. The Request-making party have not furnished detailed data/information regarding their community by filling-up NCBC's Questionnaire, though they were asked to do so. The party also did not appear before the Tamil Nadu Bench on 22.10.97 in the Public Hearing held at Chennai, inspite of publicity given through media and also personal intimation sent to the party by the Commission.

5. The NCBC's Questionnaire filled-up and furnished by the State Govt. in respect of this caste states that "Vellala" caste/community is socially not Backward. Only 39.76% of this community depend on manual labour. The Percentage of women and children engaged in manual labour are less than the state average. Number of households living in K⁺acha houses is 30% . The literacy rate of this community in the State is 81.31%, which is more than the state average.

6. Thurston and Rangachari ("Castes and Tribes of Southern India", Vol.VII, Asian Educational Services, New Delhi, Madras, 1993, first published 1909) quote Mr. H.A.Stuart as writing that "The Vellalas are the great farmer caste of the Tamil country, and they are strongly represented in every Tamil District. The word, Vellelan is derived from Vellanmai (Vellam, water, anmai, management ?) meaning cultivation,

Chitillage. Thurston and Rangachari further write about the community as follows:-

"At the time of the census, 1871, some Vellalas claimed that they had been seriously injured in reputation, and handled with great injustice, in being classed as Sudras by the Municipal Commissioners of Madras in the classification of Hindus under the four great divisions of Brahmans, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas, and Sudras. In their petition it was stated that 'we shall first proceed to show that the Vellalas do come exactly within the most authoritative definition given of Vysias, and then point out that they do not come within the like definition of Sudras..... In the course of the petition, the Vellalas observed that 'it is impossible to imagine that the Vellalas, a race of agriculturists and traders, should have had to render menial service to the three higher classes; for the very idea of services is, as it needs must be, revolting to the Vellalas, whose profession teaches him perfect independence, and dependence, if it be, upon the sovereign alone for the protection of his proper interests. Hence a Vellala cannot be of true Sudra or servile class. Besides that the Vellalas are recognised as a respectable body of the community.....

In 'Tamils eighteen hundred years ago', Mr. V. Kanakasabhai writes that "among the pure Tamils, the class most honoured was the Arivar or Sages. Next in rank to the Arivar were the Ulavar or farmers. The Arivars were ascetics, but, of the men living in society, the farmers occupied the highest position. They formed the nobility, or the landed aristocracy, of the country. They were also called Vellalar, 'lords of the flood', or 'Karalar', 'lords of the clouds', titles expressive of their skill in controlling floods, and in storing water for agricultural purposes. The

Chera, Chola and Pandyan King, and most of the petty chiefs, of Tamilakam, belonged to the tribe of Vellalas. The poor families of Vellalas who owned small estates were generally spoken of as the Veelkudi-Uluvar or 'the fallen Vellalas', implying thereby that the rest of the Vellalas were wealthy landholders.

In the Madras Census Report, 1871, the Vellalas are described as "a peace-loving, frugal, and industrious people and, in the cultivation of rice, betel, tobacco, etc.; have perhaps no equals in the world. They will not condescend to work of a degrading nature. Some are well-educated, and employed in Government service, and as clerks, merchants, shopkeepers, etc. but the greater part of them are the peasant proprietors of the soil, and confine their attention to cultivation." In the Madura Manual, it is recorded that "most Vellalans support themselves by husbandry, which, according to native ideas, is their only proper means of livelihood. But they will not touch the plough, if they can help it, and ordinarily they do everything by means of hired servants and predial slaves...." In the Coimbatore Manual, the Vellalas are summed up as "truly the backbone of the district. It is they who, by their industry and frugality, create and develop wealth, support the administration, and find the money for imperial and district demands. As their own proverb says:- The Vellalar's goad is the ruler's sceptre. The bulk of them call themselves Goundans..... In an excellent summary of the Vellalas (Madras Census Report, 1901) Mr.W.Francis writes as follows:- "By general consent, the first place in social esteem among the Tamil Sudra castes is awarded to them...."

7. The account of this community by Thurston and

Rangachari clearly shows that it is primarily an agricultural caste/community with an indisputable high social status.

IV. Findings

8. From the above evidence, it is the Finding of the Bench that 'Vellala', is not Socially Backward but is an Advanced class. Every piece of evidence and every word cited from authoritative sources above clearly brings out this fact. The inclusion of such castes/communities in the list of Backward Classes is not only counter to the fact the social realities, but also deprive the classes which are genuinely backward of their due and thus seriously distorts the Constitutional and National policy on Backward Classes. The inclusion of such Advanced castes/communities in the list of Backward Classes also confers on them an un-Constitutional and un-conscionable advantage over other Advanced castes/communities who are, correctly, not included in the list of Backward Classes and with whom the former ought to compete on equal terms. Therefore, the Request for Inclusion of "Vellala", in the Central List of Backward Classes for Tamil Nadu should be rejected as it is a Socially advanced community.

P. K. Shyamsundar

(Justice P.K. Shyamsundar)

P. S. Krishnan

(P.S. Krishnan)

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(U.P. Singh)

P. S. Krishnan

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9. The Commission considered and agreed in full with the above Findings of the Tamil Nadu 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:-

The Request for Inclusion of 'Vellala' in the Central List of Backward Classes for Tamil Nadu be rejected, as it is a socially advanced community.

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NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR BACKWARD CLASSES

TAMIL NADU BENCH

FINDINGS

Case:-Request for inclusion of "Devendrakula Vellalar" the Central List of backward Classes for Tamil Nadu.

Per Justice Shri P.K.Shyamsundar, Chairperson

I. Request

1. This case arises from the Request received in this Commission from Shri Guruswami Siddhan, President and Genl. Secretary, Devendra Kula Vellalar Sangam, Coimbatore, for inclusion of Devendra Kula Vellalar in the Central List of Backward Classes for Tamil Nadu.

II. Public Hearing

2. A three-Member Bench of the NCBC consisting of Hon'ble Justice P.K.Shyamsundar, Chairperson, NCBC, Shri P.S.Krishnan, Hon'ble Member-Secretary, NCBC and Shri U.P.Singh Hon'ble Member, NCBC held a Public Hearing in respect of this Request at Chennai on 22.10.97. At the Public Hearing the State Government was represented by Shri P.Shanmugam, Director of Most Backward Classes and Denotified Communities, Shri A.Elangovan, Director of Backward Classes and Minorities and other officers of the Backward Classes Welfare Department. Shri Guruswami Siddhan, President

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& Genl. Secretary, Devendra Kula Vellalar Sangam, Coimbatore, who made the request did not appear in the Public Hearing. However, the Community was represented by Prof. M.Muthiah, President Tamil Nadu Ambedkar Mission and others .

III. Facts

3. The caste/community is included in the scheduled caste list at Sl.No.17 as "Devendra Kulathan"

4. The Request-making Party in his representation has inter-alia stated that the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes be included in the Backward Classes also so that the SCs & STs can compete for the posts reserved for Backward Classes which will enable them to attain equality at a faster rate.

5. During the Public Hearing the representatives of the community submitted that they have neither represented to the Government, nor to any Commission for inclusion ^{of} "Devendra Kula Vellalar" in the Backward Classes list or for exclusion of this community from the Scheduled caste list. Devendra Kulathan, Pallan and Pannadi and Devendra Kula Vellalar are Synonymous castes/communities which form a class of homogenous section of people grouped together because of certain likeness or common traits which are identifiable by common attributes such as status, rank, occupation etc. and it has been included in the Scheduled Caste list by the entry "Devendra Kulathan". There is no separate and distinct caste under the nomenclature of "Devendra Kula Vellalar" in Tamil Nadu. Even today the people of this community are subjected to the social ostracism and the Stigma of

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SHANAN
Secretary
Commission
Backward Classes

untouchability handed down to them from generation to generation . It was stated that some persons have misrepresented their caste/community for inclusion in the Backward Class list and as such the representation may be rejected.

6. The State Government confirmed that the caste/community "Devendra Kula Vellalar" is the same as "Devendra Kulathan" which is included in the Scheduled Caste list at Sl.No. 17 and there is no caste under the nomenclature of "Devendra Kula Vellalar" in Tamil Nadu.

AUTHENTICATED

[Handwritten Signature]

M. S. VISWANATHAN
Minister, Community Development
and Backward Classes

IV. Findings

7. From the above evidence, it is the finding of the Bench that "Devendra Kula Vellalar" is the same as "Devendra Kulathan" which is included in the Scheduled caste list at Sl.No. 17. Since no community included in the Scheduled caste list can be included in the Backward Classes list, the request for inclusion of 'Devendra Kula Vellalar' in the Central List of Backward Classes for Tamil Nadu should be rejected.

P. K. Shyamsundar
15/11/98
(Justice P.K. Shyamsundar)

U.P. Singh
15.11.98
(U.P. Singh)

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

23.1.98

V. Advice of the Commission

8. The Commission considered and agreed in full with the above findings of the Tamil Nadu Bench and decided to tender the following Advice to the Central Govt. under section 9(1) of the NCBC Act, 1993 for action under section 9(2) of the Act:-

"The request for inclusion of 'Devendra Kula Vellalar' in the Central list of Backward Classes for Tamil Nadu be rejected as it is included in the scheduled caste list."

P. K. Shyamsundar
15/11/98

U.P. Singh
15.1.98

P. S. Krishnan

23.1.98