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सदस्य सचिव
राष्ट्रीय पिछड़ा आयोग
भारत सरकार
नई दिल्ली-110 066

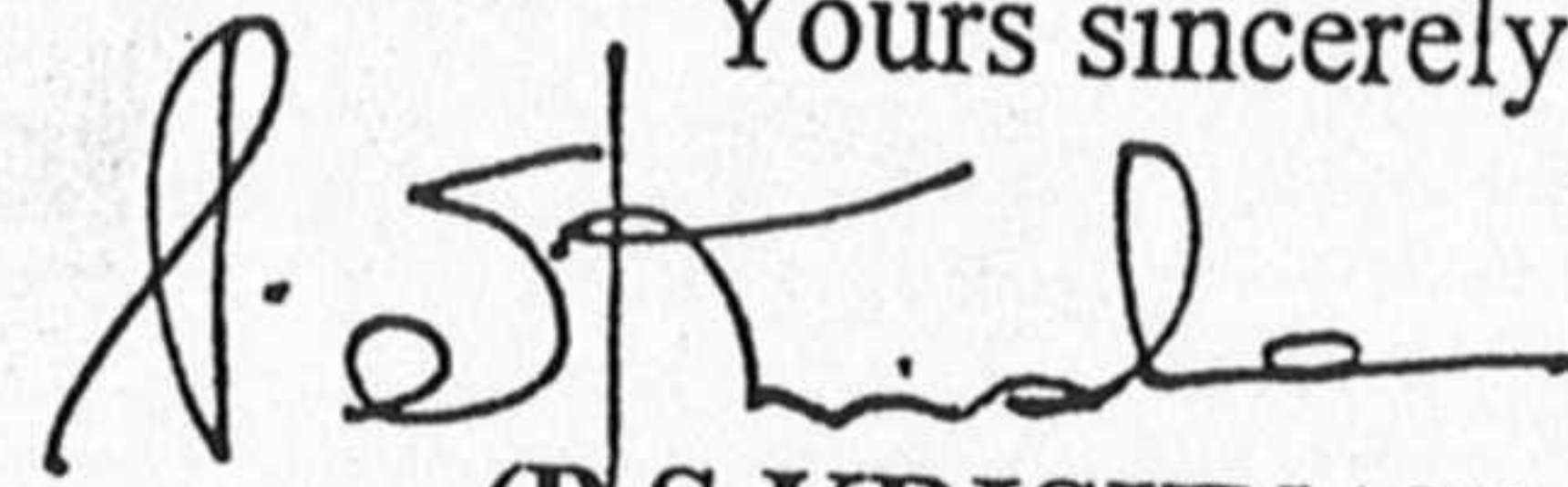
MEMBER SECRETARY
NATIONAL COMMISSION
FOR BACKWARD CLASSES
NEW DELHI-110 066

DO NCBC Advice No. 58 Rajasthan/2000
Dated 25.02.2000

Dear Smt. Das,

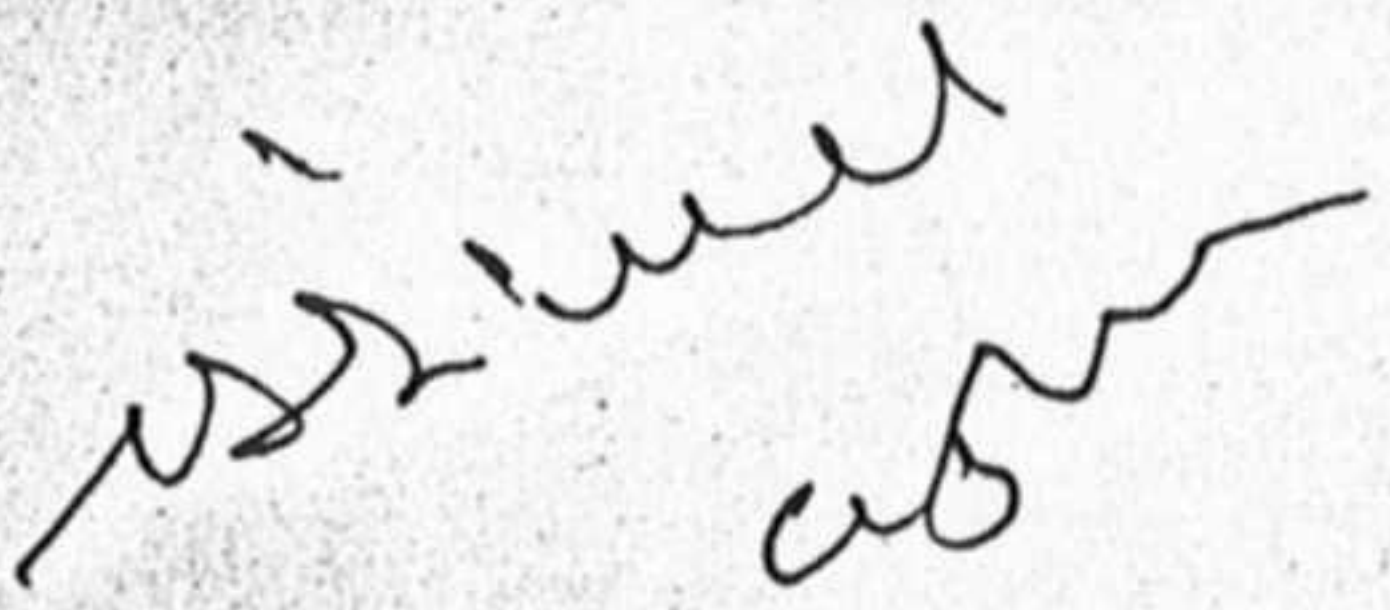
I am sending herewith the Advice of the National Commission for Backward Classes under Section 9(1) of the NCBC Act, 1993 for **Rejection of the Request for Inclusion of "Bishnoi" community in the Central List of Backward Classes for Rajasthan**, duly authenticated, for necessary action by the Central Government under Section 9(2) of the Act.

Yours sincerely


(P.S.KRISHNAN)

Encl: As stated

Smt. Asha Das
Secretary to Govt. of India
Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment
Shastri Bhavan, NEW DELHI 110 001



o/c

NCBC Advice No. 58/Rajasthan/2000

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR BACKWARD CLASSES

RAJASTHAN BENCH

Findings

Case: Request for Inclusion of "Bishnoi" caste/community in the Central List of Backward Classes for the State of Rajasthan.

Per : Shri M.S. Matharoo, Member

I. Request:

1. This case arises out of the Request received from Shri Mangilal Bishnoi, Secretary, Akhil Bharatiya Bishnoi Mahasabha, Jodhpur and Shri Sriram Bishnoi, Sarpanch Dhawa, Distt. Jodhpur, Rajasthan for inclusion of Bishnoi caste/community in the Central List of Backward Classes for the State of Rajasthan.

II. Public Hearing

2. The Two-Member Rajasthan Bench of the Commission consisting of Hon'ble Members S/Shri M.S. Matharoo and Sahu Akshaya Bhai held a Public Hearing at Jaipur on 21.1.2000 to examine the Request. At the Public Hearing the State Government/State Commission was represented by Shri G.D. Garg, Joint Director of the State Commission for Backward Classes; Smt. Rupa Gulwani, Additional Director(B.C.); Shri B.L. Parmar, Additional Director; Shri K.C. Aggarwal, Deputy Director and Shri Bhagwati Prasad Garg, Deputy Director(B.C.) Social Welfare Departments, Govt. of Rajasthan. The Caste/community was represented by the following :

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 Member, Commission
 for Backward Classes

- ### III. Facts

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Division
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on the 19th October 1994. Later on the caste/community has been included in the State List of Backward Classes vide notification No.F11(25)(6) R&P/SWD/01 dated 01.01.2000 at entry no.60.

4. Shri Mangilal Bishnoi , Secretary of the Mahasabha has given the following information in the NCBC's filled in Questionnaire :

- (i) The caste/community's name is Bishnoi and main caste is Jat. Other sub-castes are Ghanchi, Kumhar, Suthar etc.
- (ii) The total population of the caste/community in the State is approximately 20 lakhs.
- (iii) The caste/community is spread over in the Districts of Jodhpur, Bikaner, Jalore, Badmer, Ganganagar, Hanumanagara, Nagaur, Jaisalmer, Palli, Bhilwara and Churu.
- (iv) The caste/community follows Hindu religion.
- (v) According to the filled up questionnaire the caste/community is known as backward .
- (vi) The caste/community's main occupation is agriculture and animal husbandry. The women of the caste/community work as a agriculture labour to supplement their family's income and their children also work as a construction labour, labour in the factory etc. to suppliment the family's income. Sixty five percent people of the caste/community are landless labourers.
- (vii) In the District Gazettier the two sub-castes of Bishnoi i.e. Punia and Godara are included as tribe.
- (viii) The caste/community's members who were elected in the different elective bodies are as follows :

Jilla Parisad -	09
Jilla Panchayat -	35
Sarpanch -	50
- (ix) Ten percent people of the caste /community is literate.

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Member Secretary
National Commission
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- (x) About 98% people of the caste/community in the State live in Kachha house and 2% live in Pucca Houses.
- (xi) The members of the caste/community who are in various group in the govt. services are as follows :

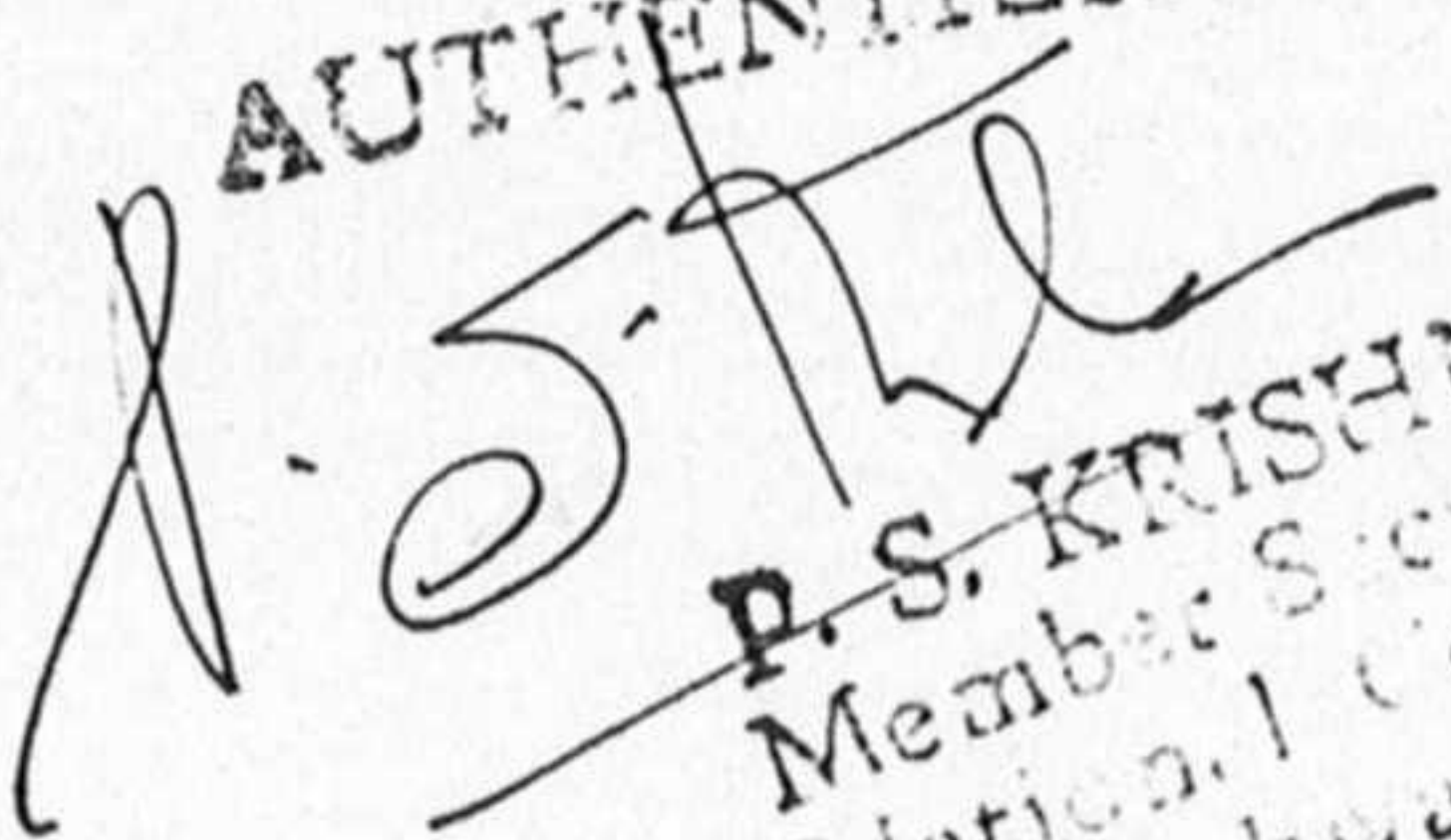
Group I	-	12
Group II	-	20
Group III	-	280
Group IV	-	30

And following number of persons who are in professional jobs :

(a) Lecturers/Professors in College and Universities	-	05
(b) Doctors	-	12
(c) Lawyers	-	13
(d) Engineer and Architects	-	10
(e) Defence	-	02

- (xii) The reason of their backwardness is stated as their social backwardness, social evils like child marriage, Natta Vibah, illiteracy, landlessness etc.

5. At the Public Hearing the representative of the caste/community told the Bench that Bishnoi is a sect which was started by Jambaji and Bishnoi's are the followers of Jambaji, earlier it was a sect and not a caste/community constituted people of different castes/community's who were Jambaji's followers. The jats are in majority in the Bishnoi Sect/caste/community, Paladia, Thori, Bhile, Rajput Daroga and backward muslims are also included in the sect/caste/community. The representatives told the Bench that the caste/community people are pure vegetarian. They don't kill animals and they don't cut the trees. They believe in Ahimsa. They bury their deads, in this respect they are different from Hindus.

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6. K.S. Singh in "People of India, Rajasthan Part One Vol. XXXVIII" pp. 188-191 described Bishnoi as "The Bishnoi, originally a sect of the Hindus have now developed into a strictly endogamous caste. According to J. Wilson, quoted by William Crooke (19th; 120) the name of Bishnoi is connected with that of Vishnu. It is derived from the number 29 (twenty nine – bees and nau) as they follow the same number of precepts of Jambaji – the founder of the Sect. They are distributed in the States of Rajasthan, Haryana, Punjab and Madhya Pradesh. In Rajasthan their main concentration is in the districts of Jalor, Barmer and Bikaner... Among the Bishnoi the social divisions exist at clan level. Members of different communities have adopted Bishnoi's faith. They retained their original clan name. These clans are of equal social status and regulate marriage alliances. The Bishnoi are pure vegetarian, They perceive themselves as pure, clean and highest among the neighbouring communities for their cleanliness and vegetarianism. The neighbouring communities place them in the middle of the local social hierarchy..... The Bishnoi are an endogamous community and maintain class exogamy. There is a trend to marry within the members who are converted from the same stock i.e. Jats or Rajputs or Bania etc... The marriage is solemnised by their own community priest called gayena. Land is the main natural resource of the Bishnoi. They are mainly a land owning community. Their main occupation is agriculture. They are famous as good agriculturist... Some of them are in service and in army... The Bishnoi profess Hinduism and belong to Bishnoi sect. They worship Jambeswar Bhagwan and Lord Vishnu. Nokha in Bikaner is their most sacred centre as Jambaji died at Nokha and his tomb exist there..... The Bishnoi do not accept water or food from anybody, not even from Brahmans... The Bishnoi have businessmen, scholars, teachers, administrators, doctors, engineers. A good number of them is in defense service. They are in white collar jobs. Their political leadership has also emerged. The literacy among the Bishnoi is very high.

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Inter-community marriage is prohibited... They have landlord sharecropper relationship with other community... The Bishnoi protect green plants, animals and birds as a measure to conserve the environment." They protect trees and blackbuck, Unikara etc. They have made preservation of animals and trees as internal part of their faith."

7. W. Crook in "The Tribes and Castes of the North Western India" (Vol. II, pp. 120-127) describes the caste as "Usually, as at the last census, classed a sub-tribe of Banyas, but really a distinct religious sect. The name Bishnoi is of course connected with that of Vishnu, the deity to whom the Bishnoi's give most prominence in their creed, though they sometimes derive it from the twenty-nine(bis-nau) articles of faith inculcated by their founder. It is said that a member of any of the higher Hindu castes may become a Bishnoi ! but as a matter of fact they are almost entirely Jats or carpenters(Khati), or less frequently, Rajputs or Banyas, The man who becomes a Bishnoi is still bound by his caste restrictions; he no longer calls himself a Jat, but he can marry only Jat Bishnois, or he is no longer a Khati and yet cannot marry any one who is not a Khati;..... He names nine endogamous sub-divisions of them - Jat Bishnoi; Banya Bishnoi; Brahmin Bishnoi; Ahir Bishnoi; Sunar Bishnoi; Nai Bishnoi Chauhan Bishnoi; Bayhar Bishnoi".

8. R.V. Russell and Hiralal in "The Tribes and Castes of the Central Provinces of India" (Vol.II, pp 337-344) describes "Bishnoi" as "A Hindu Sect which has now developed into a caste. The name Bishnoi means a worshipper of Vishnu. The founder of the sect was a Panwar Rajput named Jhambaji who was born in a village of Bikaner State in AD 1451..... The Bishnoi's are usually cultivators or money lenders by calling."

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 Member, S. S. C.
 National Commission
 for Backward Classes

IV. Findings

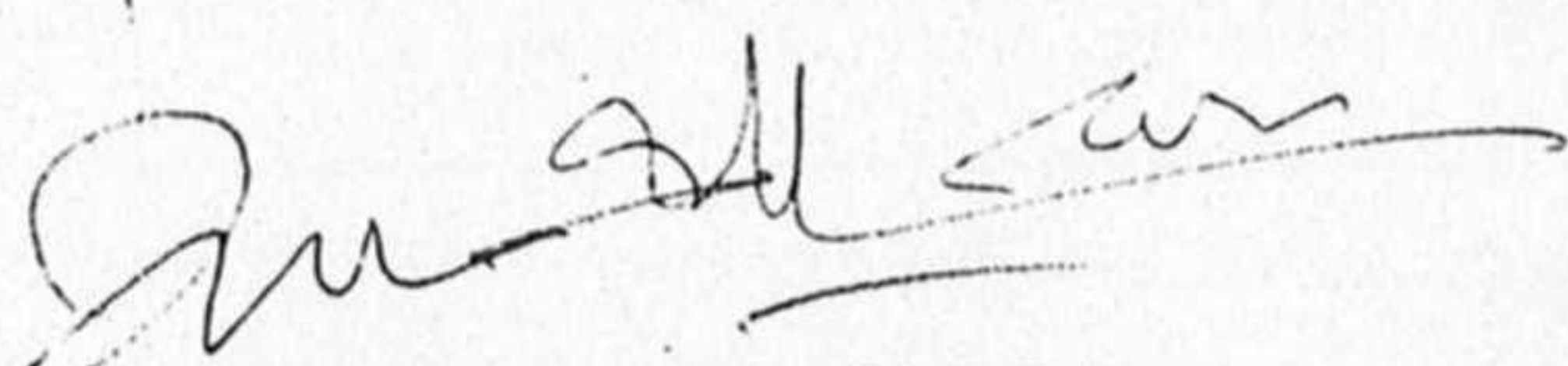
9. As per the above facts and evidences the Bench feels that within 'Bishnoi' there are members of many castes such as Jat, Brahmin, Ahir, Sunar, Nai etc. 'Bishnoi' is not a caste but a religious sect in which people of both higher and lower castes/communities are included. Bishnoi is mainly a landowning caste/community and they do not accept water or food not even from Brahmin has also been attested to by Shri K.S.Singh, in People's of India. There is no need for inclusion of Bishnoi in the Central List of BCs because the same is not a caste and social class, and the inclusion of 'Bishnoi' in the Central List of BCs will make room for some members of certain forward castes/communities to claim and obtain BCs Certificate which is not intended for them. To avoid the scope for such misuse, the 'Bishnoi' should not be included in the list of BCs. Therefore, it is the finding of the Bench that the request for inclusion of 'Bishnoi' should be rejected as it is not a caste/community and merely a sect. However, possibly the representatives of various backward caste/communities like Suthar-Bishnoi, Ghanchi-Bishnoi, Kumhar-Bishnoi, Sunar-Bishnoi, Nai-Bishnoi etc. i.e. members of castes like Suthar/Khati, Ghanchi, Kumhar, Sunar, Nai who have become Bishnoi and are part of Bishnoi sect can make requests separately to this Commission for inclusion in the Central List of BCs. In case they or any of them so apply, such Requests will be examined and if they are found to still retain characteristics of social backwardness the Commission will tender Advices on merits on their Requests for

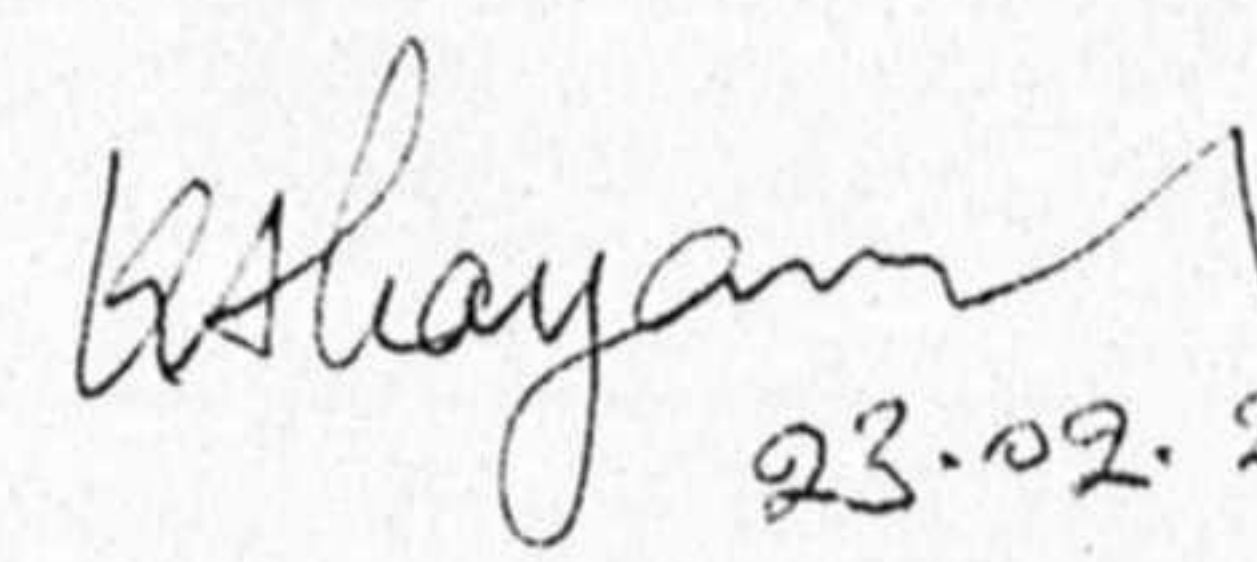
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inclusion of their caste/community in the Central List of Backward Classes.

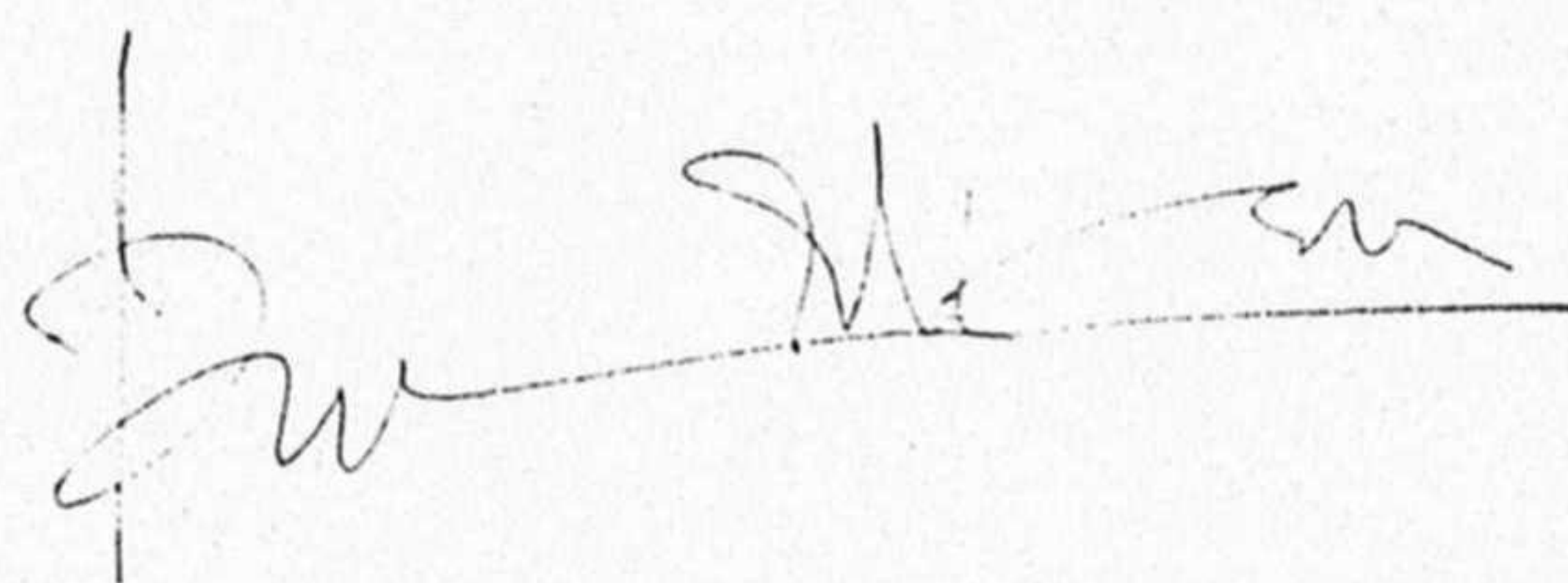

(M.S. MATHAROO)

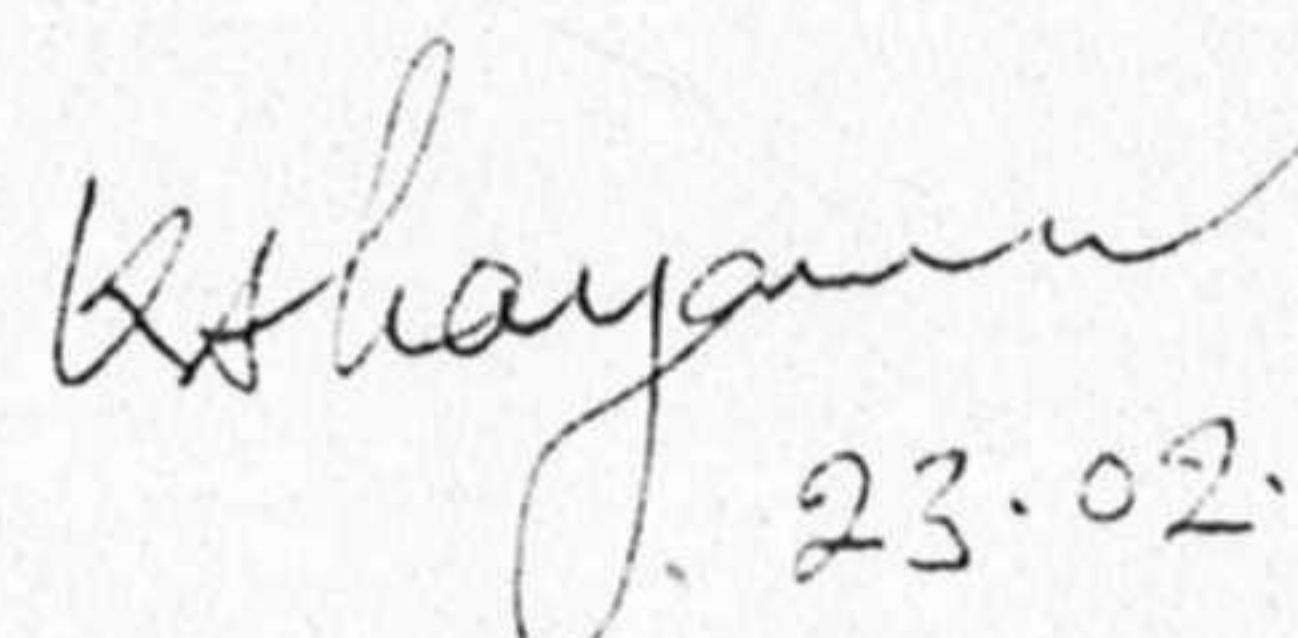

23.02.2000
(SAHU AKSHAYA BHAI)

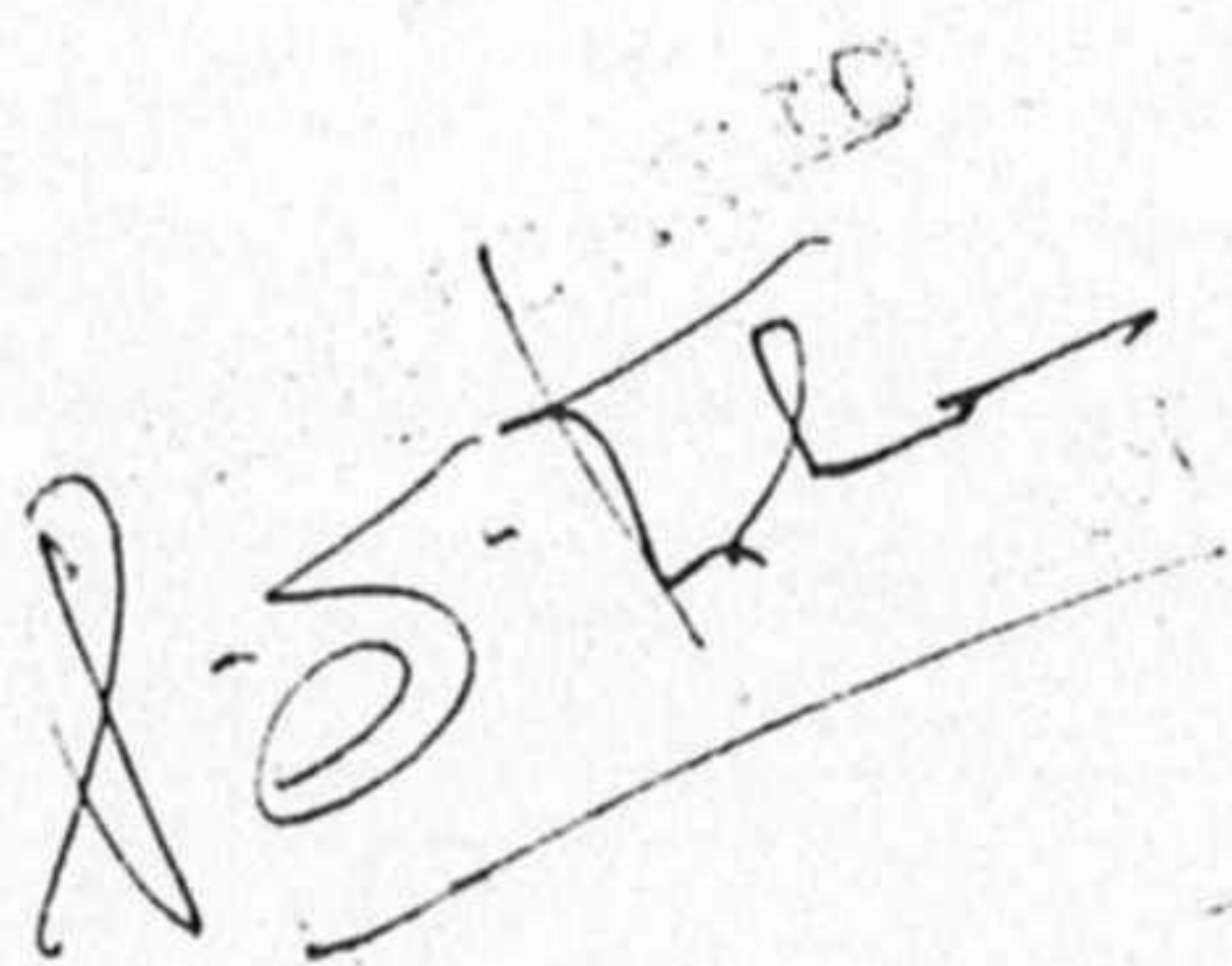
V. Advice Of The Commission

10. The Commission considered and agreed in full with the Findings of the Rajasthan Bench and decided to tender the following Advice to the Government as per Section 9(I) of the National Commission for Backward Classes Act 1993 for necessary action by the Central Government under Section 9(2) of the Act.

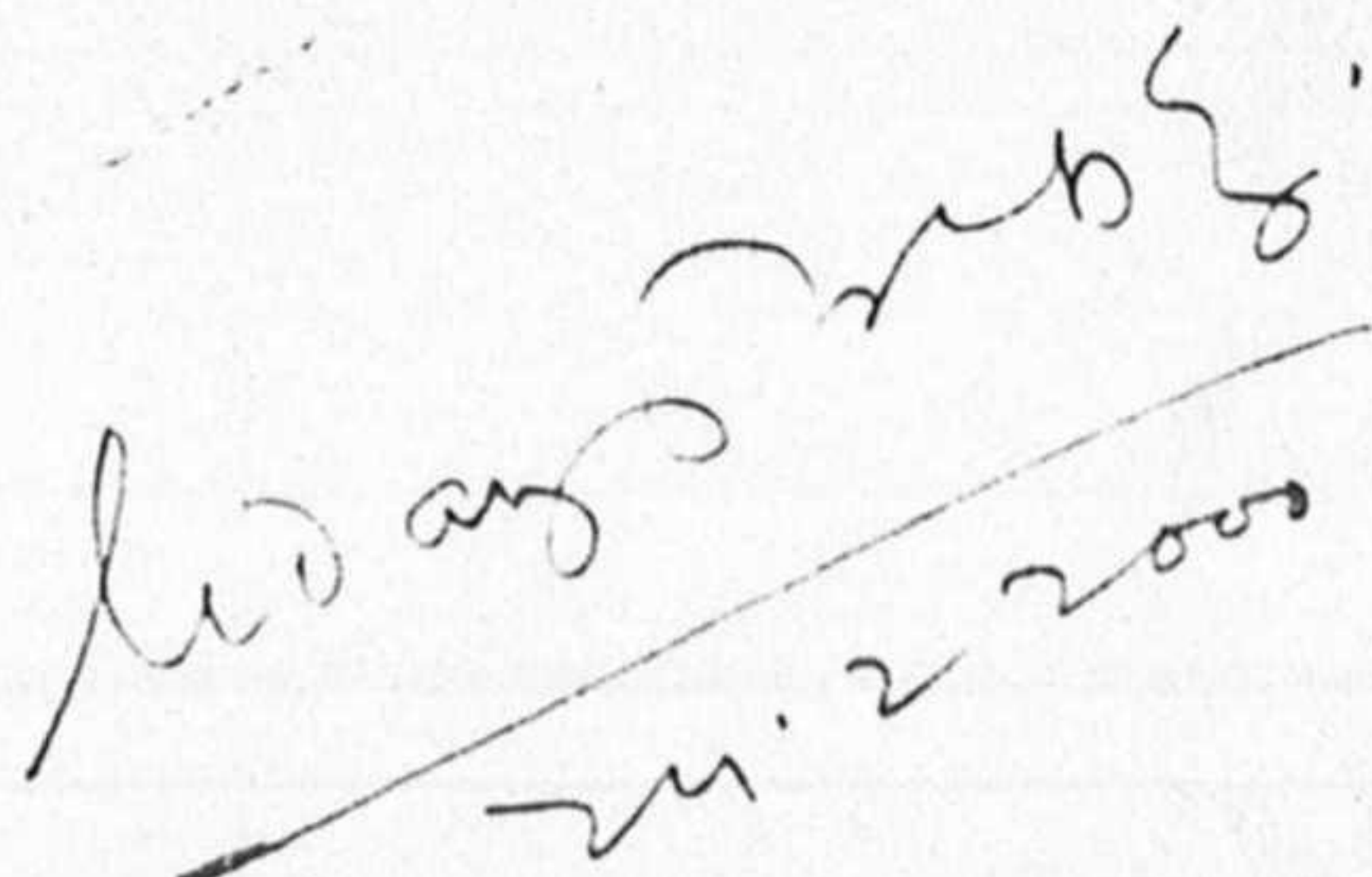
"The request for inclusion of Bishnoi in the Central List of Backward Classes for Rajasthan be rejected being a sect and not a caste/community."

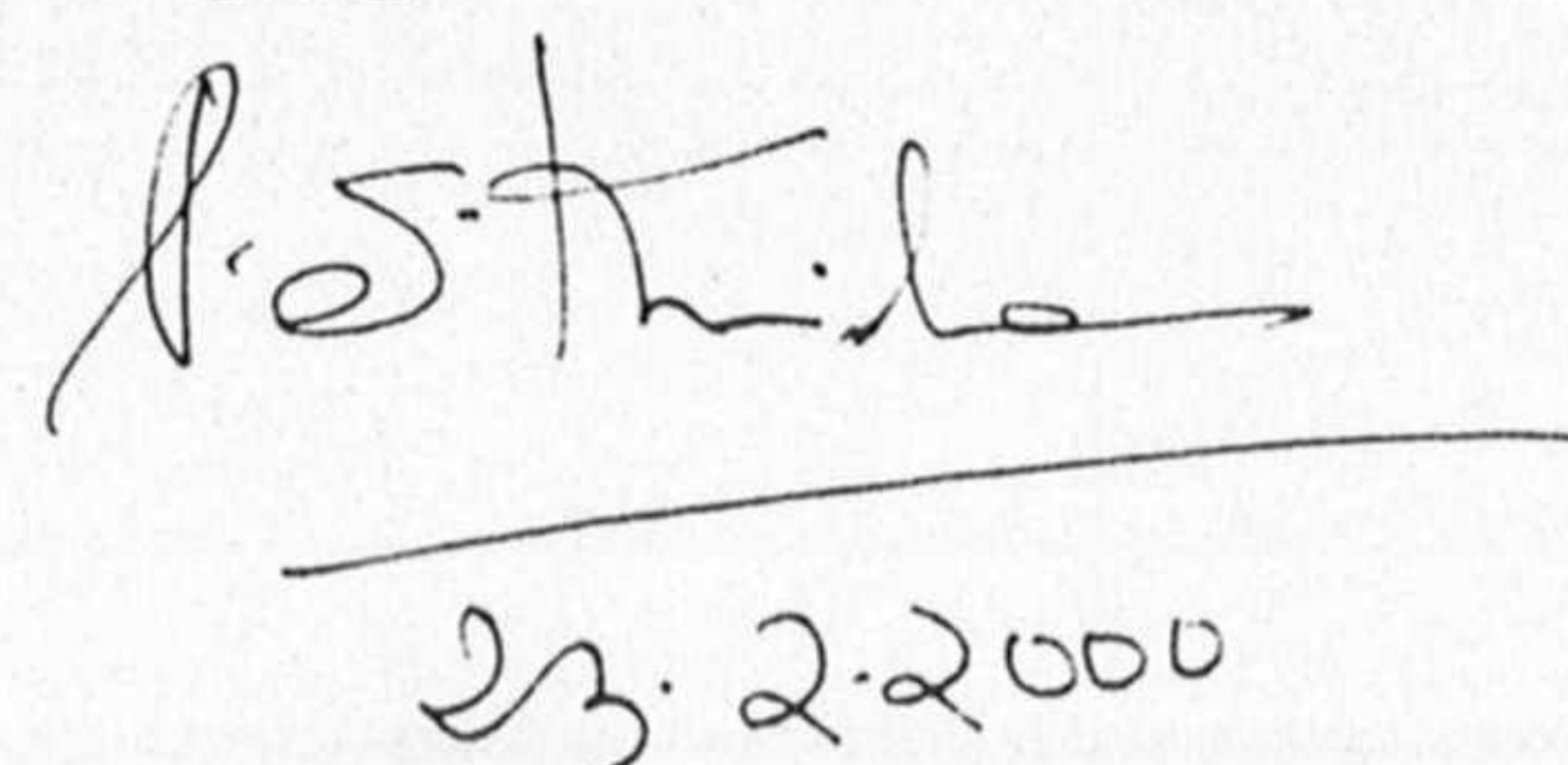



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P. C. Narasimhaiah
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