

Agenda Item II

Proposal of Inclusion of 'Medara' community as a synonym of 'Meda' community in the ST List of Karnataka.

[redacted] community was included in the list of Scheduled Tribes in respect of Karnataka State vide the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Orders (Amendment) [redacted]. During the year 1995, the State Government wrote to the Government of India for inclusion of four synonyms of Meda, namely, [redacted] the ST list. The matter was processed by the Government of India and vide the SCs & STs Orders (Amendment) Act, [redacted] Medari, Gauriga and Burud were included in the list of STs as synonyms of Meda [redacted]. In March, 2003, the Government of Karnataka raised the issue with the Government of India requesting that if the non-inclusion of 'Medara' in the ST list [redacted] action may be taken to include 'Medara' also as synonym of Meda in the ST list. The matter was examined by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs in consultation with the erstwhile NCSCST and it was found that the [redacted] of RGI were not specific in regard to the proposal of inclusion of Medara in the ST list as a synonym of Meda.

Why

2. In June, 2007, the Ministry of Tribal Affairs informed the Commission (Annexure-I) that RGI had, vide their letter, dated 27.12.06, [redacted] of [redacted] synonym/equivalent of 'Meda' in the ST list of Karnataka. The Ministry requested for the views of this Commission in the matter.

what were the actual recommendations

3. The earlier papers were not available with this Commission as the relevant file of the erstwhile NCSCST was not received in the Commission from NCSC (who are keeping the old records of erstwhile NCSCST). Relevant papers were therefore obtained from the Ministry of Tribal Affairs. The Ministry forwarded copies of the Karnataka Government's letters, dated 19.10.1995, 10.01.2001 and 19.03.2003 (Annexure -II) - relating to the above proposal.

4. The matter was examined in the Commission and it was decided to write to the Government of Karnataka for obtaining information about the social customs, the dialect, level of economic and educational development, religious practices, marriage between the persons belonging to Meda and Medara communities. A d.o. letter, dated 21.09.07 (Annexure -III) was accordingly issued to the Principal Secretary, Social Welfare Department, Govt. of Karnataka. As no reply was received from the State Government, a d.o. letter, dated 16.11.2007 (Annexure -IV) was addressed to the Chief Secretary, Karnataka requesting for the reply of the State Government in the matter. However, no response from the State Government has been received so far.

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5. As the requisite information was not received from the State Government, Member(TS) visited the districts of Dharwad, Belgaum, Haveri and Uttar Kannada from 04.01.2008 to 11.01.2008 to conduct a random spot verification of the claim of the Karnataka Government that Medara community is a synonym of Meda community. The report submitted by Member (TS) is enclosed as **Annexure-V**. While recommending the inclusion of Medara as synonym of Meda, Member (TS) has recommended inclusion of Medar community also as a synonym of Meda in the ST list of Karnataka. Member (TS) has observed that (i) the **professions of Meda, Medar and Medara communities** is similar (they are engaged in the profession of making Mats, Baskets, Ladders and storages out of Bamboo materials) (ii) **the marriages** are held among Meda, Medar, Medari and Medara only and their marriage ritual and ceremonies are similar (iii) their **deities** are the same and the modes of worshipping are also similar (iv) **the language** spoken by the people of their communities is same as they speak Kannada (**but in bordering areas, they speak different languages also**) (v) **economically** the people of these communities are very poor and the rate of literacy is hardly 15%.

6. It would be observed that the report of Hon'ble Member indicates some difference of language among the Meda, Medar, Medari and Medara communities. Medaras are a long settled community living in towns. Besides, language and other differences between the Meda and the Medara are also indicted in the Compilation 'The Scheduled Tribes (Vol. III)'. Relevant extract of the Compilation is enclosed as **Annexure- VI**. It is therefore for consideration whether the information called for from the State Government of Karnataka **vide d.o. letter dated 21.09.07, cited** in para 4 above, may be obtained before a final view is taken by the Commission in the matter.