

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCHEDULED TRIBES

(A Constitutional Commission set up under Art. 338A of the Constitution to investigate and monitor all matters relating to violation of rights and safeguards provided for STs.)

File No. Policy/2/MHA/2014/RU-III.

Dated 07/04/2015

To
Shri Rajeev Prakash,
Director,
Ministry of Tribal Affairs
Shastri Bhawan,
New Delhi- 110001

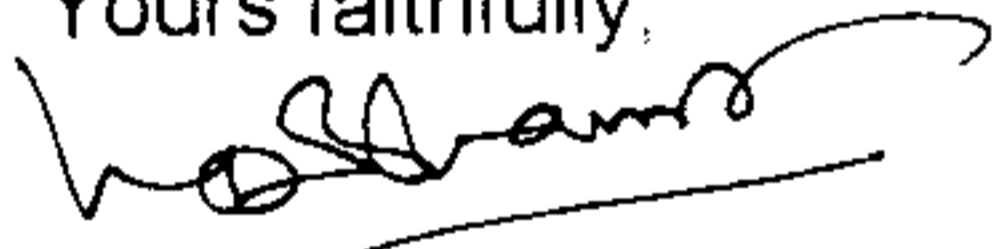
Sub: Inclusion of 'Saura', 'Sahara', 'Soura', 'Saunra'/'Saonra', 'Saora', as synonyms of 'Sawar' and 'Sawara' appearing as ST at Sl. No. 41 in the list of STs of Chhattisgarh.

Sir,

I am directed to refer to this Commission's letter of even No. dated 30/12/2014 (copy enclosed) regarding Inclusion of 'Saura', 'Sahara', 'Soura', 'Saunra'/'Saonra', 'Saora', as synonyms of 'Sawar' and 'Sawara' appearing as ST at Sl. No. 41 in the list of STs of Chhattisgarh State and to state that the subject matter was discussed as Agenda Item No- I in the 69th Meeting of the Commission held on 20/03/2015.

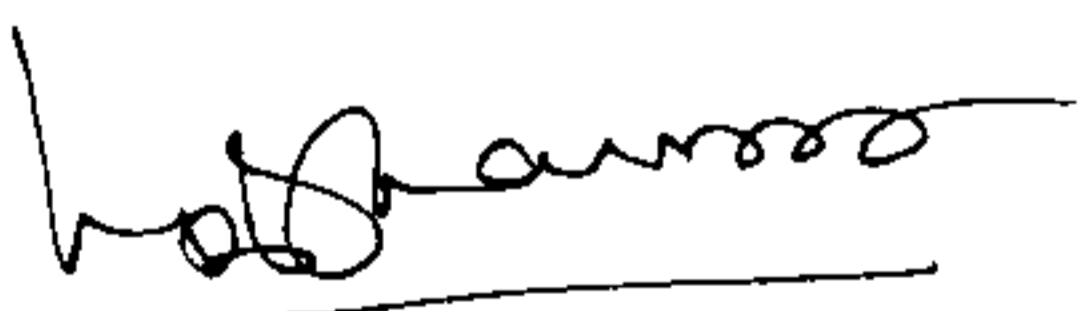
2. The Relevant Extracts from the Summary Record of the meeting of the Commission are enclosed for information and necessary action.

Yours faithfully,


(K.D. Bhansor) Mrs.
Director

Copy with copies of enclosures forwarded for information and necessary action to:-

1. SSA (NIC) for uploading on the Website of NCST
2. Assistant Director (Coordination)


(K.D. Bhansor) Mrs.
Director

MINUTE
OF THE
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCHEDULED TRIBES

SUMMARY RECORD OF DISCUSSIONS

Date: 20th March, 2015 **Time:** 11:30 hours

Venue: Conference Room, NCST, 6th Floor, Lok Nayak Bhawan, New Delhi.

In the Chair: Dr. Rameshwar Oraon, Hon'ble Chairperson, NCST

List of Participants: Annexed as Annexure-I.

The scheduled Agenda Item for meeting discussed and decided as below:

Agenda Item 1	Inclusion of 'Saura', Sahara', 'Soura', 'Saunra'/ 'Saonra', 'Saora', as synonyms of 'Sawar' and 'Sawara' appearing as ST at Sl. No. 41 in the list of STs of Chhattisgarh.
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The Ministry of Tribal Affairs in the letter No. 12016/3/2012-C&LM-I dated 24/02/2014 has forwarded a proposal for Inclusion of 'Saura', Sahara', 'Soura', 'Saunra'/ 'Saonra', 'Saora', as synonyms of 'Sawar' and 'Sawara' appearing as ST at Sl. No. 41 in the list of STs of Chhattisgarh. Pursuant to the discussions held in 53rd and 65th meeting of the Commission. The Commission team visited the State of Chhattisgarh from 17/02/2015 to 20/02/2015 and conducted field visits to Pathrla village in Basna Tahsil of Mahasamunda district and Bodadih village in Bilaigarh Tahsil of Baloda Bazar-Bhatapara district, to ascertain the ground position and *characteristics of STs*. During the field visits Commission interacted with Villagers and local leaders of the various Social organizations, officers of the State. The Commission identified, based on the observations of Government, Tribal Research & Training Institute, Anthropologists and Researchers that the proposal of State Government to include the "Saura', Sahara', 'Soura', 'Saora community also as synonym of Sawar, Sawara in the ST list of the State listed at Sl. No. 41. (copy of Report Annexure-I) is justified.


2. After detailed discussion on the report Commission decided to recommend the proposal for Inclusion of 'Saura', Sahara', 'Soura', 'Saunra'/ 'Saonra', 'Saora', as synonyms of 'Sawar' and 'Sawara' appearing as ST at Sl. No. 41 in the list of STs of Chhattisgarh.

Report on inclusion of 'Saura, Sahara, Soura, Saunra, Saonra, Saora' as synonym of Sawar, Sawara community listed at Serial no. 41 in the list of Scheduled Tribes of Chhattisgarh State.

A team of the Commission led by Dr. Rameshwar Oraon, Hon'ble Chairperson, NCST, New Delhi and accompanied by Smt K.D. Bhansor, Director, NCST, New Delhi, Shri R.K. Dubey, Assistant Director, NCST, Regional office, Bhopal and Shri P.K. Das, Senior Investigator, Regional office, Raipur visited Raipur, Mahasamund and Baloda Bazar- Bhatapara districts of Chhattisgarh State from 17-02-2015 to 20-02-2015 to ascertain the ground position in the process of examination of the proposal of the State Government to include the 'Saura, Sahara, Soura, Saunra, Saonra, Saora' as synonym of Sawar, Sawara community listed at Serial no. 41 in the list of Scheduled Tribes of Chhattisgarh State.


Wide publicity was given to the public through print and electronic media about the visit of the team of the Commission. The team visited Pathrla village in Basna Tahsil of Mahasamund district and Bodadih village in Bilaigarh Tahsil of Baloda Bazar – Bhatapara district, which are the habitations of 'Saura, Sahara, Soura, Saunra, Saonra and Saora community, where large number of leaders and individuals of the community across the State had gathered for interaction with the team. Information related to the cultural aspects, rituals, traits, method of worship, marriages, language, occupation, social structure, totem, Gotras, method of agriculture, agricultural equipments, utensils, present status of socio-economic development, representation in Government services, elected bodies etc. were collected by the team through detailed discussion with the representatives of the 'Saura, Sahara, Soura, Saunra, Saonra and Saora, Sawar and Sawara community, other tribal groups and other interested persons. It also discussed the matter with Secretary, Chhattisgarh State Commission for Scheduled Tribes, Assistant Commissioners (Tribal Development), Sub-divisional officers (Revenue) and Tahsildars of the area to understand various aspects of the issue.

As per para (c) of the modalities for deciding claims for inclusion in, exclusion from and other modifications in the orders specifying Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes list approved by The Cabinet Committee on Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Minorities in its meeting held on 15-06-1999 and 25-06-2002, experts in the field of anthropology were also associated. In this regard, a meeting was held with **Secretary and Commissioner, Tribal & SC Development Department, Govt. of Chhattisgarh, Director and Deputy Director, Tribal**


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Research & Training Institute, Raipur and Deputy Director, Anthropology of Survey of India, Sub-regional Centre, Jaganpura, Raipur. During course of the above issue, it was discussed in detail by the team of the Commission, Survey of India, Anthropological Survey of India, Sub-regional centre, Jaganpura (C.B.) presented copies of published articles on anthropological and ethnological studies related to the community. The observations and findings of the Commission's team on the subject are, as under:

1. Sawar and Sawara community is listed at Sl. no. 41 in the list of Scheduled Tribes of Chhattisgarh. The Community is predominantly found in Mahasamund, Baloda Bazar-Bhatapara, Raigarh and Janjgir- Champa districts, which are nearer to or bordering Odisha State but the community is also found in almost all the districts of the State. In Odisha, Saora, Savar, Saura, Sahara etc. is listed at Sl. no. 59 of the list of Scheduled Tribes of the State. Similarly, Sawar, Sawara is listed at Sl. no. 45 of the list of STs of Madhya Pradesh. It is also listed as Scheduled Tribe with same or similar community names in the lists of Scheduled Tribes of Maharashtra, Jharkhand and West Bengal States.
2. In the pre-independence old revenue records and publications of Chhattisgarh State, the name of this community has also been written as 'Saura, Sahara, Soura, Saunra, Saonra and Saora which are one and the same as 'Sawar, Sawara' which is listed at Sl. no. 41 in the list of Scheduled Tribes of the State. The name of the community has been recorded differently in the pre-independence old revenue records / *misal Bandobast* due to degeneration/corrupt form of **Savar** word, phonetic variation and nasal pronunciation in different parts of the State. Previously, the persons having 'Saura, Sahara, Soura, Saunra, Saonra and Saora written in their pre-independence old revenue records were issued ST caste certificates by the revenue authorities treating them as 'Sawar, Sawara' which is listed at Sl. no. 41 in the list of Scheduled Tribes of the State.
3. The Supreme Court, in AIR 2001 SC 393 (State of Maharashtra Vs. Milind), observed 'that *the Scheduled Tribes order must be read as it is. It is not even permissible to say that a tribe, sub-tribe, part or group of any tribe or tribal community is synonymous to the one mentioned in the Scheduled Tribe order if they are not so specifically mentioned in it*'. Pursuant to the above order of the Supreme Court, the revenue authorities started denying issuance of ST caste certificates to the persons having 'Saura, Sahara, Soura, Saunra, Saonra and Saora written in their pre-independence old revenue records.


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Earlier, they spoke a dialect of Avar's language group, which was a dead
language. Presently, they speak Chhattisgarhi and Hindi. They speak a dialect
and a dialect features. The community is engaged in hunting and collection of
forest produces and agriculture. Due to ban on hunting now a days they
are indulged in collection of forest produces and labour work. Marriage with
maternal sister is permissible in the community and exchange of money and
commodities for bride is a common practice known as 'Suk'. Similar to other
tribal groups, this community does not take services of Brahmins during
births, marriages and deaths. All the rituals are performed by head of the
family or old members of the family. Presently, this community is taking
services of barber and washer man in births and deaths. The main gotras of
the community are Bagh, Nag, Bhoy, Nayak, Suryawanshi, Sai, Savar,
Vishwar, Bhaisa-Vanmula, Hans, Rajhans, Ashwa, Parwa, Parewa, Suvarn,
Nak, Kisan, Bhoi, Sandu etc. The different gotras use different totems.
Nature worship and appeasement of souls of deceased is also common
practice. Dulhadev, Thakurdev, Karia-ghuruwa, Mata-Dewala, Kankali Mata,
Sahada-Dev, Bhainsasur, Goraiya, Sambalpurhin, Satbahini, Shabar- Shabri,
Khada-path, Samlai Mangala etc. are the main deities worshipped by the
community. The community relates itself with Mata Shabri who had offered
berry to Lord Ram during his "vanvaas" (stay in forests). The 'Binjhar,
Kanwar, Kharia, Bhaina and Gond' Tribes are equivalent tribal groups of
Sawar, Sawara in the social order. They treat 'Binjhar' as paternal cousin in
the society. The main festivals of the community are Akhati (Akshaya
Tritiya), Hariyali, Raksha Bandhan, Janmashtami, Pola, Nawakhai, Ganesh
chaturthi, Pitra-paksha, Bidri, Nag -panchami, Rath-Yatra, Navratra,
Dussehra, Deepawali, Chher-chhera, Til- Sankrant, Holi, Madai etc. 'Dalkhai,
Rahas and Danda' are the folk dances of the community and folklores of
Chhattisgarhi like 'Bihavgeet, Dalkhai, Gaurageet and Dadaria' are common
in the community.

9. During the field visit, it was observed that the community resides in the remote areas and villages adjoining forests. They reside in Kuchha houses built with mud. The roof is made up of locally available wood, grass and Khaprial (earthen tiles). The size of land holding in this community is very small. Most of them are landless. They keep Goats, Cows and Hens with them to supplement the meager income from agriculture or labour work. As per the information furnished by the Tribal Research & Training Institute, Raipur, the literacy in Sawar, Sawara community was 65.83% which included 77.2% male and 53.78% female literacy. As per the information given to the team during field visits, their representation in government jobs is very less

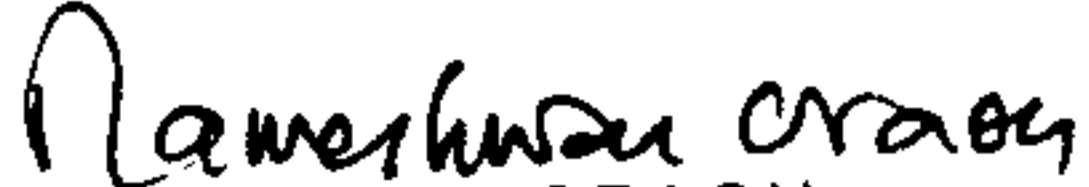

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and mainly of the level of class 10 and 12 passes. The number of professional qualifications of the community are also very low. It is clear that this community can be concluded that the community is academically, educationally and socially backward.

10. It is noticed in the records furnished to the Tribal Research and Training Institute, Raipur that the different records of 1927-28 and 1929-30 like Misal Bandobast index and Khasra panji (Misal records) received from various districts shows that the caste of the same person belonging to the community has been differently written in them which proves that different community names other than 'Sawar, Sawara' existed much before the scheduling of 'Sawar, Sawara' community in the ST list of the State. **The old evidences, research materials and publications furnished by the Tribal Research & Training Institute, Raipur in support of the proposal are reliable.**
11. It is noteworthy that the names of 'Saura, Sahara, Soura, Saunra, Saonra, and Saora' are not included in the list of Scheduled Castes or Other backward classes of the State (Central or State list). Hence, there is no possibility of attempt of inclusion of non-deserving community having similar nomenclature for inclusion in the ST list of the State.
12. In the field visit, the team of the Commission also observed that the society, at large treat the 'Saura, Sahara, Soura, Saunra, Saonra, and Saora' as 'Sawar, Sawara', a ST community. They have marital relation as one and same. No objection was raised by any other tribal groups, organisations or individuals against the inclusion of the 'Saura, Sahara, Soura, Saunra, Saonra, and Saora' in the ST list of the State in the public hearings or meetings taken by the Commission.

Conclusion:

It shall be appropriate to agree with the views of ORGI to include Saunra, Saonra as synonyms of Sawar, Sawara in the ST list of the State. Further, on the basis of observations during field visits and discussions with local leaders of the various Social organizations, officers of the State Government, Tribal Research & Training Institute, Anthropologists and Researchers, the proposal of State Government to include the 'Saura, Sahara, Soura, Saora community also as synonym of Sawar, Sawara in the ST list of the State listed at Sl. No. 41 is found justified and hence, 'Saura, Sahara, Soura, Saora should also be added in the above list.


Dr. RAMESHWAR ORAON
Chairperson
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