

संकल्प "प्रदेश में एक ही समुदाय व व्यवसाय से जुड़े तरखान जाति (OBC) को लौहार जाति की तर्ज पर अनुसूचित जाति (SC) में सम्मिलित करने हेतु प्रस्ताव केन्द्र सरकार को भेजा जाए। के संदर्भ में सूचना।

सदस्य का नाम:- श्री गुलाब सिंह ठकुर

अध्यक्ष महोदय,

हिमाचल प्रदेश राज्य का पुर्नगठन 1966 में होने के उपरान्त पंजाब राज्य के कुछ हिस्से काँगड़ा, हमीरपुर, ऊना कुल्लू, लाहुल-स्पिति, शिमला, सोलन और सिरमौर सम्मिलित किये गये। इन सभी क्षेत्रों में लोहार तथा तरखान जातियां रहती थी और आज भी इन क्षेत्रों में ये जातियां रहती हैं। इसी के अन्तर्गत वर्ष 1977-78 में सरकार ने प्रदेश में सम्मिलित किये गये क्षेत्रों के लोहार जाति के लोगों को अनुसूचित जाति तथा तरखान जाति के लोगों को OBC जाति में रखा।

इस संदर्भ में यह प्रस्तुत है कि चूंकि यह मामला भारत सरकार के कार्यक्षेत्र में आता है तथा विभाग बार-बार भारत सरकार के समक्ष उठाता रहा है तथा इस बारे में अनुरोध कर रहा है। वर्ष 2012 में निदेशक, भारत सरकार, सामाजिक न्याय एवं अधिकारिता मन्त्रालय, नई दिल्ली ने उनके पत्र दिनांक 7-5-2012 अर्न्तगत महा पंजीयक, भारत सरकार की विस्तृत टिप्पणी का समर्थन करते हुए इस विभाग को सूचित किया है, जो कि निम्न हैं:-

1. The Kangra District Gazetteer (1924-25; page-153) states that Tarkhans are classified alongwith Brahman, Bhats, Rajputs, Khattris, Thakars and Rathis within the group of "First Class Gaddis" and the basis of this gradation is on land holding and other economic denominators. The text does not state that Tarkhan are subjected to **untouchability or any other kind of social disability**. Further there is no information that can subscribe to the claim of the State Government that Dhiman,Barhai,Thawin,Kangere, Chitere are the synonyms of Tarkhan.

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2. Before the reorganization of States of Himachal Pradesh had been a part of Punjab. Sir Denzil Ibbetson in his book "The Punjab Castes"; 1916; page: 313 has mentioned that Tarkhan in all probability is the same caste as Lohar but the former's social position is distinctly superior. Till quite lately Jats and the like would smoke with Tarkhans. In the same volume on page-8, the author has emphasized that Tarkhan have been Jats or Rajputs in the region of Sirsa though they have changed their hereditary occupations.
3. It may be mentioned that by using animal hide a community is not subjected to social disability or untouchability. Moreover there is no information that affirms that bellows are made by the Tarkhan. The enclosed report itself states: "as regards norms and modalities, the only reason being advanced for non-acceptance of the demand is that Tarkhans are not sufferer of untouchability".
4. The State Government has given another plea that Tarkhan, a parallel name of Thawin in Mandi State also used to be engaged in stone work and particularly make images of the dead. Thus they were regarded as lower caste and called baharke-outside folk (Scheduled Caste) not permitted inside the houses of the upper castes. The above account deals with Lohars and Thawin. The latter in the plains are also referred to as Tarkhan. To equate the terms baharke with Scheduled Caste is not appropriate since there is clear identification of people living in Plains and people living in hills within a state that has this geospatial distribution of communities. For the people of hills the people from Plains are baharke and vice-a-versa.
5. The State Government's justification that since other castes line Badhi, Dhaugri, Dhau, Dhogri, Dhangri and Siggi share similar occupation with Tarkhan hence the equity demands that the Tarkhan, Takhan,

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Dhiman, Ramgarhiye, Kangere, Chitere too should be listed as Scheduled Caste is not acceptable because Badhi, Dhaugri,.... Siggri are distinct entities having lowest social status in the local caste hierarchy. On the other hand Tarkhan, Dhiman...Chitere are occupational castes having comparatively higher social status. 'People of India; Himachal Pradesh' Vol.XXIV; 1996, brought out by the Anthropological Survey of India states that in upper hills of Kullu, Shimla and Sirmaur the Tarkhan/Badhi is a separate community of the woodcutters/carpenters. In some areas Badhai are considered part to the Dhiman community and this terms is used by the members of the community as their surname. In the outer Saraj areas of Kullu district the Dhiman trace their origin from Vishwakarma and are treated as an upper caste. Badhai are also known by other names like Ramgarhia. The said volume of ethnographic survey of Himachal Pradesh does not affirm that the Takhan Kangere, Chitere, Dhiman, Ramgarhiye are synonyms of Tarkhan.

6. It may be mentioned that Tarkhan, as a distinct social entity, is found in neighboring States of Delhi, Punjab, Haryana and Jammu and Kashmir where they are not considered as a Scheduled castes (India's Communities, 1998; Vol. VI; page 313)
7. From the information furnished by the State Government in support of the proposal it may be inferred that Tarkhan is an occupational caste and does not suffer from any form of social disability arising out of the traditional practice of untouchability. Earlier dependable ethnographic literatures of repute have classified Tarkhan along with Brahman, Bhats, Rajputs etc. and placed them superior to Lohars.

In view of the forgoing analysis based on the information contained in the standard ethnographic literatures and justification furnished by the State Government this Office does not support the proposal

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of inclusion of Tarkhan Caste alongwith its synonyms Dhiman, Barhai, Thawin, Kangere, Chitere as synonyms of Lohar in the Scheduled Castes list of Himachal Pradesh.

विभाग ने पुनः मामले को भारत सरकार के समक्ष लोहार तथा तरखान जाति में व्याप्त विसंगति को दूर करने हेतु भेजा है जिसका उत्तर अभी अपेक्षित है।

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**Comments of Office of RG & CCI on the proposal of the inclusion of Tarkhan caste along with its synonyms Dhiman, Barhai, Thawin, Kangere, Chitere as synonyms of Lohar in the Scheduled Castes list of Himachal Pradesh**

The proposal of conferring the Scheduled Caste (SC) status to Tarkhan in Himachal Pradesh has been examined by this office a number of times viz. in the year 1978, 2001, 2003 & 2008. This office examined the matter concerning synonymy of Tarkhan with Badhi, a Scheduled Caste which is listed at S.No.2 of the SCs list of Himachal Pradesh alongwith Nagalu'. Based on the information available in earlier Census Reports of 1881, 1911, 1921 this office vide d.o.letter no.8/3/77-SS dated 6.2.1978 had recommended for inclusion of Tarkhan as synonym/ equivalent name of Badhi, Nagalu- a SC in Himachal Pradesh. It was reiterated in 2001 vide d.o.letter no.8/1/2000-SS(General) dated 1/2 August, 2001.

2. The National Commission for SC and ST had sought more details from the State Government of Himachal Pradesh particularly on the aspect whether the Tarkhan is a separate caste and whether this caste is subjected to social discrimination on account of being treated as untouchable by the neighbouring communities and also the basis on which the Lohar caste in old Himachal was included in the SCs list. The Government of Himachal Pradesh vide their letter dated 09.08.2002 had sent the relevant details to this Ministry
3. As a matter of fact, the information provided by the State Govt. of Himachal Pradesh with regard to Tarkhan should have been given to the National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, as sought by them, for further appropriate decision in this matter. But the requisite details furnished by the State Government were sent to the Registrar General of India vide MSJ&E letter dated 05.09.2002 for comments.
4. The requisite details which were based on field based primary information provided by the district authorities did not substantiate that Tarkhans are suffering or have suffered from any form of social disability. Accordingly, this office vide d.o. letter No. 8/1/2003-SS (Gen) dated 16.12.2003 had conveyed to the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment that it would not be appropriate to list them separately as a Scheduled Caste in the State or to consider them synonymous or equivalent name of any particular Scheduled Caste either Badhi or Lohar. Again in the year 2008 the Government of Himachal Pradesh requested this office to re-consider the proposal for inclusion of Tarkhan Caste in the list of SCs of Himachal Pradesh in light of narrations made in the letter dated 30.1.2008. The various points /facts on the basis of which reconsideration had been sought on the proposal were neither new nor additional. Therefore this office vide the letter of even

number dated 29.2.2008 not supporting the proposal communicated to the M/SJ&E that the comments sent earlier dated 16.12. 2003 remain valid.

**Justifications furnished by the State Government in support of the said proposal:**

- i) The State Government has referred (on page 77) State Gazetteer of Mandi (1904, page: 29) where it has been mentioned that there were marriage alliances between Lohars and Tarkhans even though they belonged to different occupational groups. Tarkhan Lohar, Badhi, Barhai, Khati: All the above names are parallels of the same profession which are used in different parts of the Pradesh. It has further added that in Census Reports 1881, 1911 & 1921: Tarkhan are also known as Badhi, Barhei and Khati.
- ii) Page 78 of the report states that Tarkhan Lohar are Sudras: This is evident from Punjab Gazetteers 1883-84; Page: 62-76. The village menials are first the Tarkhan & Lohar; as a rule the same man is both carpenter & Blacksmith (Tarkhan & Lohar) repairs roofs and mends implements for which he is generally paid in grains( Punjab Gazetteers Kangra District 1924-25; page: 235)
- iii) The Department of Social Justice, Himachal Pradesh does not admit the marriages between Lohar and Tarkhan wards as inter-caste marriages maintaining that both of them do not practice any kind of untouchability among themselves and as such Lohar Tarkhan are one and the same caste(Page:80).
- iv) Tarkhan - a parallel name of Thawin in Mandi State also used to be engaged in stone work and particularly make images of the dead. Thus they were regarded as lower caste and called *baharke*-outside folk (Scheduled Caste) not permitted inside the houses of upper caste. Tarkhan Lohars were used to be paid in grain. No cash for labour was paid to them. There was no literacy among this community(page: 80)
- v) Tarkhan while engaged in black-smithy and masonry work besides carpentry were equally subjected to the menace of untouchability owing to the fact that Tarkhan Lohar are equal and of the same caste. In the work of black-smithy this community used hides of dead goats for pumping air into the hearths to warm up iron and the said pumping set of two hides (locally called Dhokni) which had to be clubbed with the aid of a 'Y' shaped wooden attachment manufactured and attached by carpentry work. Thus the work of Tarkhan Lohar involved use of hides of dead goats i.e. leather - the root cause of untouchability (page:80).
- vi) The revenue entries in certain cases also reveal that Lohar and Tarkhan are one and the same caste as the same family has been recorded as Lohar in

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earlier Jamabandi, then Tarkhan in subsequent Jamabandi and again Lohar in later records which also proves that these are one and the same caste (page: 81).

vii) There are various other castes, too, engaged in carpentry/wood work known by different names in the State of HP viz 'Badhi, Dhaugari, Dhau, Dhogri, Dhangri & Saggi'. These castes are also akin to and synonyms of Tarkhan being of the same profession and already exist at Sl. No. 2, 23 and 24 in the list of SCs of HP. The equity demands that the Tarkhan, Takhaan, Dhiman, Ramgarhiye, Kangere, Chitrere, too, should be listed as Scheduled Caste. The population of this community in the State is very small.

#### **Comments of ORGI:**

The Kangra District Gazetteer (1924-25 ; page-153) states that Tarkhans are classified along with Brahman, Bhats, Rajputs, Khattris, Thakars and Rathis within the group of "First Class Gaddis" and the basis of this gradation is on land holding and other economic denominators. The text does not state that Tarkhan are subjected to untouchability or any other kind of social disability. Further there is no information that can subscribe to the claim of the State Government that Dhiman, Barhai, Thawin, Kangere, Chitere are the synonyms of Tarkhan.

2. Before the reorganization of States Himachal Pradesh had been a part of Punjab. Sir Denzil Ibbetson in his book "The Punjab Castes"; 1916; page: 313 has mentioned that Tarkhan in all probability is the same caste as Lohar but the former's social position is distinctly superior. Till quite lately Jats and the like would smoke with Tarkhans. In the same volume on page-8, the author has emphasized that Tarkhans have been Jats or Rajputs in the region of Sirsa though they have changed their hereditary occupations.

3. It may be mentioned that by using animal hide a community is not subjected to social disability or untouchability. Moreover there is no information that affirms that bellows are made by the Tarkhans. The enclosed Report (page 80) itself-states: "as regards norms and modalities, the only reason being advanced for non-acceptance of the demand is that Tarkhans are not sufferer of untouchability".

4. The State Government has given another plea that Tarkhan-a parallel name of Thawin in Mandi State also used to be engaged in stone work and particularly make images of the dead. Thus they were regarded as lower caste and called *baharke*-outside folk (Scheduled Caste) not permitted inside the houses of upper castes. The above account deals with Lohars and Thawins. The latter in the plains are also referred to as Tarkhan. To equate the term *baharke* with Scheduled Caste is not appropriate since there is a clear identification of people living in Plains and people living in hills within a state

It has this geospatial distribution of communities. For the people of hills the people from Plains are *baharke* and vice-a-versa .

5. The State Government's justification that since other castes like Badhi, Dhaugri, Dhau, Dhogri, Dhangri and Saggi share similar occupation with Tarkhan hence the equity demands that the Tarkhan, Takhan, Dhiman, Ramgarhiye, Kangere, Chitere too should be listed as Scheduled Caste is not acceptable because Badhi, Dhaugri, ....Saggi are distinct entities having lowest social status in the local caste hierarchy. On the other hand Tarkhan, Dhiman...Chitere are occupational castes having comparatively higher social status. 'People of India; Himachal Pradesh' Vol. XXIV; 1996, brought out by the Anthropological Survey of India states that in upper hills of Kullu, Shimla and Sirmour the Tarkhan/Badhi is a separate community of the woodcutters/carpenters. In some areas Badhai are considered part of the Dhiman community and this term is used by the members of the community as their surname. In the outer Saraj area of Kullu district the Dhiman trace their origin from Vishwakarma and are treated as an upper caste. Badhai are also known by other names like Ramgarhia. The said volume of ethnographic survey of Himachal Pradesh does not affirm that the Takhan Kangere, Chitere, Dhiman, Ramgarhiye are synonyms of Tarkhan .

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In view of the foregoing analysis based on the information contained in the standard ethnographic literatures and justification furnished by the State Govt. this office does not support the proposal of inclusion of Tarkhan caste along with its synonyms Dhiman, Barhai, Thawin, Kangere, Chitere as synonyms of Lohar in the Scheduled Castes list of Himachal Pradesh.