26 communities express ire, want BC status restored

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Hyderabad:

They were officially recognised as backward classes (BC) communities until August 2014. Thereafter, they are being treated as other castes (OCs). Members from over 26 sub-castes like Kalinga, Pondara, Nagavamsam, Gavara, etc., were omitted from the BC list by the TRS government in a GO (No. 3) dated August 14, 2014. Leaders from these communities said it was a politically motivated move and have now approached the National BC Commission, demanding that BC status be restored.

Speaking to TOI, leaders and representatives of these 26 communities’ welfare associations said their communities were omitted from the BC list without giving them an opportunity to defend their cause.

“The decision was politically motivated as Telangana protagonists during the statehood agitation had claimed that these communities had come from Andhra region and settled down in Telangana,” said Kandiboina Srinivas, president of the joint action committee. Interestingly, these 26 communities were recognised as OBCs by the central government. Reservations under BC category are being continued in neighbouring Andhra Pradesh but the Telangana government had discontinued this.

The protesting leaders approached the National BC Commission, which was in the city on Monday, and submitted a memorandum, seeking BC status which would allow them to avail themselves of reservations in education and employment sectors. “There are thousands of families from these 26 communities. Parents pursued their education under BC quota, but their children are pursuing studies under OC category. Several decades ago, our forefathers came from Viziangaram, Visakhapatnam and Srikakulam and settled down in Hyderabad. Then, it was the undivided state. How is it justified to throw us out from the BC category,” questioned Bodepati Srinivas, general secretary of the JAC of 26 communities.

Members of the backward classes communities welcome National Commission for Backward Caste chairman Bhagvan Lal Sahni (centre)