

Record Note of the Meeting of the National Commission for Minorities held on 12th June, 2019

A meeting of the National Commission for Minorities was held at 11:00 A.M. on 12th June, 2019 in the Conference Room.

The following were present:

(i)	Shri Syed Ghayorul Hasan Rizvi	Chairman
(ii)	Shri George Kurian	Vice Chairman
(iii)	Shri Sunil Singhi	Member
(iv)	Ms. Sulekha Kumbhare	Member
(v)	Shri Khurshed K. Dastoor	Member
(vi)	Shri Manjit Singh Rai	Member
(vii)	Shri Atif Rasheed	Member

2. Shri Prashant Sukul, Secretary assisted the Commission.

3. In Attendance: Shri Shariq Saeed, Under Secretary.

Agenda Item No. 1: Confirmation of the record notes of the Meeting of the Commission held on 10.04.2019.

4. Confirmed.

Agenda Item No. 2: Follow up Action on the decisions taken in the Meeting of the Commission held on 13.03.2019

5. Noted. Secretary informed the Commission that pending matters shall be taken up with the concerned officials during the visits of Members and officials of the Commission to the concerned States. He himself has commenced visits to the Chief Secretaries of various States and a detailed programme of such visits is being drawn up.

Agenda Item No. 3: Research Study on "Significance of Bhoti language in the context of ancient cultural heritage of India.

6. Noted. It was decided that the research study on "Significance of Bhoti language" may be given to Professors/Lecturers whose names are available in records of NCM. Approvals be obtained from the Chairman accordingly. Background note on the subject is enclosed as **Annexure-'A'**.

Agenda Item No.4: Tour Report of Shri Sunil Singhi, Member to Vadodara, Gujarat on 7th April, 2019.

7. Noted. The tour report was approved by the Commission.

Agenda Item No.5: Tour Report of Shri Manjit Singh Rai, Member to District Jind, Haryana on 20th February, 2019.

8. Noted. The tour report was approved by the Commission.

Agenda Item No.6: Tour Report of Shri Manjit Singh Rai, Member to District Bhiwani, Haryana on 21st February, 2019.

9. Noted. The tour report was approved by the Commission and it was decided to send the recommendations to Secretary, Department of School Education and Literacy.

Agenda Item No.7: Tour Report of Shri Manjit Singh Rai, Member to District Mathura and Agra, Uttar Pradesh from 8th March, 2019 to 9th March, 2019.

10. Noted. The tour report was approved by the Commission.

Agenda Item No.8: Tour Report of Shri Prashant Sukul, Secretary, NCM to Telangana.

11. Secretary apprised the Commission of the initiatives taken by Govt. of Telangana to provide free education to economically backward communities including Minorities with the vision to provide best quality education to poorest of poor at free cost. It was also informed that other States are also trying to establish similar schools for Minority children. The efforts of the State government were appreciated by the Commission.

Agenda Item No.9: Tour Report of Shri Prashant Sukul, Secretary, NCM to Punjab and Haryana.

12. Noted. The States are responding soon regarding the pending issues and recommendations of the NCM.

Agenda Item No.10: Tour Report of Shri Khurshed K. Dastoor, Member to Mumbai (Maharashtra) and Ahmedabad and Udvada(Gujarat) from 16th May, 2019 to 27th May, 2019

13. Noted. The tour report was approved by the Commission.

Agenda Item No.11: Tour Report of Shri George Kurian, Vice Chairman to Bengaluru, Karnataka from 25th May, 2019 to 27th May, 2019

14. (i) The tour report was approved by the Commission and it was decided to send the recommendations to all concerned specifically informing that self declaration is sufficient for claiming the benefits of minorities.

The Commission also decided that letters may be sent to all State Governments who have not yet constituted a State Minority Commission or where there is inadequate representation of all the Minority communities.

(ii) The Commission decided that a draft note may be sent to Ministry of Minority Affairs for inclusion in the speech to be delivered by the Prime Minister on 15th August. In order to bring awareness among the members of the minority communities, it may be mentioned in the note that National Commission for Minorities is working not only for the betterment and welfare of Muslims but other Minority communities also viz. Buddhists, Jains, Christians, Parsis and Sikhs. The people should be made aware that National Commission for Minorities and other State Minority Commissions have been constituted to protect and safeguard the interest of all the minority communities and several educational and skill development Schemes have been also been launched by the Central and State Governments for their overall development.

Agenda Item No.12: Constitutional status to National Commission for Minorities (NCM)

15. The Members of the Commission wished to be informed about the powers of NHRC.

Agenda Item No.13: Follow-up actions of Tour Reports.

16. Noted.

Agenda Item No.14: Receipt and Disposal Report of G&R Section from 8.04.2019 to 07.06.2019.

17. Noted. Secretary informed the Commission that the position has improved and the number of disposed cases are almost comparable to the new petitions received by the Commission indicating that there is no increase in pendency.

Agenda Item No.15: Tour Report of Ms. Sulekha Kumbhare, Member to Nagpur and Chandrapur (Maharashtra) from 14th March, 2019 to 27th March, 2019.

18. Noted. The tour report was approved by the Commission.

Agenda Item No.16: Tour Report of Ms. Sulekha Kumbhare, Member to Nagpur (Maharashtra) from 28th March, 2019 to 15th April, 2019.

19. Noted. The tour report was approved by the Commission and it was decided to send the recommendations to all concerned.

Agenda Item No.17: Tour Report of Ms. Sulekha Kumbhare, Member to Nagpur (Maharashtra) from 15th May, 2019 to 29th May, 2019.

20. Noted. The tour report was approved by the Commission.

Agenda Item No.18: Tour Report of Ms. Sulekha Kumbhare, Member to Nagpur (Maharashtra) from 1st June, 2019 to 10th June, 2019.

21. Noted. The tour report was approved by the Commission.

Agenda Item No.19: Discussion on administrative issues.

22.(i) The Secretary pointed out extra jurisdictional directions sought from a Member in the administration of the Commission and that it was not under the rules of business in the Commission. It was assured that this would not recur. The administrative issues would be dealt with by Chairman, directly assisted by the Secretariat.

(ii) Regarding exposure to media, in line with the PM's and the Ministers directions, no sensitive matter will be discussed by Commission members with the visual media or press or social media. Interaction will only be confined to programmes of the Government. Any deviation must have the consent of the Chairman or the Minister as the case may be.

(iii) A fresh sound system preferably Bose be installed in the Conference Room with desk microphones and integrated with the presentation equipment.

Supplementary Agenda No. 1:

Note received from Ms. Sulekha Kumbhare, Member on 11.6.2019

23. (i) The matter was considered by the Commission and it was decided that apart from the scheduled Annual Conference of State Minorities Commission and Annual Lecture, another programme may be organized on the occasion of International Minority Rights Day wherein eminent personalities of different minority communities may be felicitated. The Commission decided that budget may be earmarked in advance for all the above functions from the funds allocated to NCM in the current financial year.

(ii) On the issue of hosting United Nations Day of Veshak Celebration next year, it was decided that Secretary, NCM will write a letter to Secretary, Culture and budget estimate for organizing the function shall be provided by Ms. Sulekha Kumbhare, Member. Background note on the subject is enclosed as Annexure - 'B'.

Supplementary Agenda No. 2:

Tour report of Ms. Sulekha Kumbhare, Member to Thailand from 6th March, 2019 to 12th March, 2019

Supplementary Agenda No.3:

Tour report of Ms. Sulekha Kumbhare, Member to Vietnam from 10th May, 2019 to 15th May, 2019

24. Noted. The above tour reports were approved by the Commission. The Commission congratulated Ms. Sulekha Kumbhare, Member on her selection as an

Outstanding Woman in Buddhism by International Women's Meditation Centre, Thailand and her participation in UNDV 2019 Celebrations and Academic Conference in Vietnam.

25. Any other item with the permission of Chairman.

(i) A suggestion was made by Secretary, NCM to cut down the number of papers and photographs in the tour reports to make the agenda compact. The suggestion was accepted by the Commission with the advice that the tour reports may contain a brief summary of the visit along with specific recommendations of the concerned Member/official.

(ii) Vice-Chairman pointed out before the Commission that a number of petitions are received in regional languages and sometimes the same are disposed of without proper examination due to non-availability of the translated version of the petition. It was decided by the Commission that an order may be issued appointing nodal officers for in-house translation of petitions received in regional languages.

Ms. Sulekha Kumbhare, Hon'ble Member, NCM apprised in the NCM Meeting that she had officially visited Himachal Pradesh from 26th May, 2018 to 4th June, 2018 to take review on the implementation of Prime Minister's 15 Point Programme and various Central Government minority development schemes. She took a review meeting on 27th May, 2018 at Conference Hall, SDM Office, Manali, wherein Bhoti Language issue was discussed. Member (SK) apprised that the importance of Bhoti language and its inclusion in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution has been demanded by the Buddhists of the states of Himachal Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim and West Bengal. On 29th May 2018, Member visited the Library run by Dr. Tashi Paljor in Lahaul Spiti District, Himachal Pradesh and appreciated the collection of Buddhist religion books in different languages like Sanskrit, Pali, English, Hindi and Bhoti language.

In connection with the subject "Significance of Bhoti Language in the Context of Ancient Cultural heritage of India" placed in Agenda, the Commission had a meeting on 12.06.2019. She apprised the Commission that the Bhoti Script was originally devised on the model of one of the ancient Indian scripts prevalent during the Gupta Dynasty by ThonmiSanhota, the Minister of first Buddhist king of Tibet SongtsanGampo in the early 7th century AD.

Bhoti language though linguistically belongs to the Tibetan-Burman Group, palaeographically classified as the Kutila variety of Magadha alphabet of the 7th Century AD. Hence, the Bhoti language and its culture forms one of the important aspects of the great Indian cultural heritage especially that of ancient Nalanda Culture.

Bhoti language is presently taught in various government and private schools, monasteries, colleges and universities in the country and abroad as well.

Bhoti peoples living in Indian Himalayas from Ladakh to Arunachal Pradesh. Bhoti is, the language of masses and local people of Himalayan States. It is also link language of the people who live in the borders of Himalaya. Because of the fact that Bhoti language preserves one of the largest Sanskrit Buddhist texts especially those which are composed in Ancient Nalanda Mahavihara, and these texts are none other than the texts collected in Kangyur and Tangyur literature. Bhoti language and literature is not only confined to Buddhist literature but it also covers a wide range of subjects such as Ayurvedic, Astronomy, Sanskrit poetry, Sanskrit grammer, Sanskrit lexicography, Sanskrit Drama etc. Bhot Language is said to be the first language in the world that the translation of Ramayana and the Mahabharata(partial) was made probably in the 8th or 9th Century AD. Hence, the departed Indian cultural heritage could be discovered and restored through the academic studies and preservation of Bhoti Language.

In order to view the larger interests of Buddhist people in Bhoti language in Himalayan States of India, NCM appreciates the subject and resolved to take a research study on Bhoti Language in the Context of Ancient Cultural heritage of India.

Ms. Sulekha Kumbhare, Hon'ble Member, National Commission for Minorities had been invited to attend the 16th United Nations Day of Vesak (UNDV) Celebrations 2019 in Vietnam from United Nations Day of Vesak Celebration 2019, Hanoi, Vietnam. The 16th UNDV was hosted in Vietnam by the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha (NVBS) at the Tam Chuc International Buddhist Convention Centre in Ha Nam Province from 12-14th May, 2019. Hon'ble Member attended this conference as a Buddhist delegate.

In connection with the above subject, the Commission had a meeting on 12.06.2019 and placed the subject in the Agenda. In which she submitted that Every year, since the passing of the resolution by the United Nations General Assembly on 15th December 1999, the thrice-sacred day of Vesak (celebrating the birth, enlightenment, and passing away of the Buddha Gautama) has been celebrated internationally. The International Day of Vesak was celebrated at the United Nations Headquarters in New York for the first time in 2000. This had inspired annual celebrations of the United Nations Day of Vesak (UNDV) by international Buddhist communities. Since 2004, UNDV has been celebrated fifteen times, with twelve celebrations hosted Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University in Thailand, one in Colombo, Sri Lanka, and two in Vietnam.

In the meeting of Commission she also submitted before the Commission that 1,650 international delegates from 112 countries and territories attended the event. Shri M. Venkaih Naidu, Hon'ble Vice-President of India also attended the programme. More than 500 Buddhists did meditation at the same time at Three-fold Palace and 200 domestic and foreign press agencies registered to make reports.

Ms. Sulekha Kumbhare, Hon'ble Member also apprised the Commission that she also got the opportunity to address the auspicious gathering organised on the eve of United Nations Day of Vesak, 2019 in Vietnam. I appreciated that delegates from 120 countries had participated in this Conference and Mr. M. Venkaih Naidu, Hon'ble Vice-President of India who was the guest of honour in the inaugural session had very well repeated that the teachings of Buddhism of peace and humanity is the need of the day for the whole world. I, therefore requested to the organisers that since the United Nations Day of Vesak has been organised by countries like Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam, then India should also host the conference in coming years. I

expressed at the session that I would recommend the Central Government/State Governments to host the UNDV Conference.

Ms. Sulekha Kumbhare, Hon'ble Member, NCM, therefore, proposed that Government of India should come forward to host United Nations Day of Vesak celebrations 2020 in India. This is the reason because Gautam Buddha was born in India, enlightened in India, and passed away in India and this is the reason we are duty bound by the fact that this event should be organized in India for global peace and humanity.

NCM appreciated and agreed the proposal for hosting United Nations Day of Vesak, 2020 put up by Ms. Sulekha Kumbhare, Member in the Meeting. The Commission resolved to request to Hon'ble Union Minister of Minority Affairs to take an initiative to host United Nations Day of Vesak, 2020 in India in collaboration with Ministry of Tourism & Culture, Govt. of India.