

Sixteenth Lok Sabha

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Title: Need to provide Scheduled Caste status to Dalit Christians - Laid.

SHRI JAYADEV GALLA (GUNTUR): Dalits who converted into Christianity have been fighting since 1950 when a Presidential Order absolved SC status to Dalits who have converted into a religion other than Hinduism. But, Dalits who have converted into other religions like Sikhism and Buddhism have been given SC status in 1956 and 1990 respectively through Constitution amendment and since then they have been enjoying the benefits at par with SCs. But, conspicuously, Government of India is not extending the same status to Dalits who have converted into Christians.

Hon'ble Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, Shri N. Chandrababu Naidu while moving Resolution in Assembly on 06-02-2019, stated that Dalit Christians had been fighting for SC status for decades and their demand is genuine and justifiable. Hence, there is an urgent need to treat Dalits Christians at par with Dalits forthwith.

Secondly, Justice Ranganath Mishra Commission in 2007 has also recommended that SC status be given to all Dalits who have converted into Christians. The Commission recommends delinking of SC status from religion and abrogation of 1950 Scheduled Caste Order which still excludes Muslims, Christians, Jains and Zoroastrians from the SC status.

Government of Andhra Pradesh issued GOMS No. 341 in 1977 and extended non-statutory benefits to Dalit Christians through AP SC Cooperative Financial Corporation. Again, GOMS No. 191 issued in 1986 which gives 12% reservation in admissions in Scheduled Hostels and Residential Schools for Dalit Christians.

In view of the above, I request Government of India to immediately amend Constitution and grant SC status to Dalits who converted to Christianity and other religions.