



ALL INDIA JAIN MINORITY FORUM

CHAKRESH JAIN
PRESIDENT, JAIN SAMAJ, DELHI
Cell: 98104 16503

3, ANSARI ROAD,
DARYAGANJ,
NEW DELHI-110002
Tel: 011-23274714, 23283363
Fax: 011-23272259

BAL PATIL
SECRETARY-GENERAL,
Ex- MEMBER, MAHARASHTRA STATE MINORITIES COMMISSION
Cell: 098692 55533, Telefax: 91-22-2389 3030

November 5, 2007
To, The Editor, The Hindu,

Your Special correspondent from Kochi in his report published in The Hindu dated 05/11/2007 mentions quoting Vijay Sonkar Sastri, president of the All-India Scheduled Caste Reservation Protection Forum.” that : “The Central government’s reported move to give Scheduled Caste status to Dalit Christians and Dalit Muslims will deprive current SCs (among Hindus, Sikhs, Jains, and Budhists) of their job and education quotas...”

I take a strong exception to such clubbing of Jains among the Dalits. To club together among the “current SCs” Hindus, Sikhs, Jains and Buddhists” Jains is not only misleading but false factually because while there may be SC converts among Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists there cannot a single case of a Jain and that too a Dalit converting to Hindu, Sikh or Buddhist faith for the simple reason that there are no Dalit Jains : the question of any Jain trying to convert himself/herself to a respectable faith to escape the stigma of being a Dalit does not arise. It is also to be noted that while Dalits are non-vegetarians and vegetarian is not strictly followed among the Hindus, Sikhs, and Buddhists for the Jains *ahimsa* –vegetarianism is the sine qua non of their religious faith. There is no casteism among Jains. As a matter of fact Mahavira the last Tirthankara of Jains declared that

न वि मुंडिण समणो न ओंकारेण बंभणो
न मुणी रणवासेण कुसचीरेण न तापसो॥

One does not become a Sramana (a Jain monk) by tonsure (shaving of the head), nor a Brahman by (merely mechanically repeating) the sacred syllable aum, nor an Ascetic, by (merely) living in the woods, nor a Tapasa, by (wearing) garments of kusa-grass and bark.

कम्मणा बंभणो होइ कम्मणा होइ खतिओ
वैसो कम्मणा होइ सुद्धो हवइ कम्मणा॥

(From The Teachings of Lord Mahavir Translated into English By Prof. N.V. Vaidya)

Therefore, I protest and take a strong exception to such clubbing of Jains among the Dalits I request that a correction and clarification be issued immediately.

Yours faithfully,

Bal Patil

Secretary-General, All-India Jain Minority Forum

