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Title: Need to include the Kudumbi Community of Kerala in the list of Scheduled Castes.

SHRI K. P. DHANAPALAN (CHALAKUDY): Thank you. I wish to raise an important matter today in this august House regarding inclusion of Kudumbi Community in Kerala in the list of Scheduled Castes. Kudumbi Community in Kerala is the most backward community in all respects. They are socially, economically, educationally and also in respect of employment backward. They are a migrated community to Kerala from Goa during the 16<sup>th</sup> century due to the Portuguese persecution and were landless. They spoke Konkani language which is the official language of Goa. Kudumbis are the descendants of Kunbis of Goa who led a secluded life, and lived in remote areas; they were classified as OBC till 2002.

**13.00 hrs.**

As per the recommendations of Goa Government, as also on the basis of the parliamentary Select Committee Report, Kunbis of Goa were included in the Scheduled Tribes List in 2002. The same status should be given to Kudumbis of Kerala also. Before Independence the Maharaja of Kochi, by an order, classified the Kudumbis of Kerala under depressed class. After India became a Republic, in 1950 the name of the community was omitted from the list of Scheduled Castes.

Considering the fact that Kudumbis are the most depressed and oppressed class of the society, the State Government in 1967 recommended for inclusion of this community in the list of Scheduled Castes. The parliamentary Select Committee examined the matter and visited Kerala in 1969. It collected evidence from concerned officials, representatives, social workers, etc. On 23<sup>rd</sup> September, 1969 the Committee recommended the Central Government to include Kudumbi community in the Scheduled Castes List.

The Government accepted the recommendation and introduced an Amendment Bill including 42 communities in which Kudumbi community was at the 20<sup>th</sup> place. Out of these 42 communities, 38 communities have already been included in the Scheduled Castes List. Despite the recommendations of the State Government on a number of occasions, in 1978, 1982 and 2007, Kudumbis were deprived of their constitutional rights and benefits of being the Scheduled Castes of Kerala for the last 62 years.

Hence, I would request the Government to include the Kudumbi community of Kerala in the List of Scheduled Castes and redress the grave injustice being faced by the community since long. Thank you.