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F.NO.1-554/2000-TW

(79) PUC is a letter dated 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2003 from AS (Home), A & N Administration addressed to various departments including OBC Commission C/O Director of Tribal Welfare regarding recognition of Bengalee refugees belonging to Namasudra, Poundra etc communities as Scheduled Castes and their inclusion in the list of Scheduled Castes of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and A & N Islands where they have been rehabilitated by the Govt of India.

(80) As per the letter dated 8<sup>th</sup> May 2003 at page 100/C of Govt. of India, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, New Delhi received as enclosure with PUC, this Administration has been requested to furnish detailed ethnographic information on each of the communities alongwith the views of the State Government in the prescribed proforma in connection with amendments to list of SCs.

(81) ✓ As for the A & N Islands, the Bengalee refugees mostly Namasudra, from East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) have been settled in South, Middle and North Andamans under the colonisation / rehabilitation scheme of the Govt. of India. The Bengalee Refugees from East Pakistan had initially migrated to West Bengal, where they were kept in transit camp and from there they were shifted to various States/UTs including the A & N Islands for permanent settlement under rehabilitation scheme of the Govt. of India.

(82) All the Bengalee refugees (Namasudra) settled in the A & N Islands were recognised as SCs in relation to West Bengal, in terms of the instructions issued vide Office Memorandum No.BC/12017/5/84-SC & BCD-I dated 5<sup>th</sup> January 1985 at page 102/C of the Govt. of India, Ministry of Home Affairs, New Delhi. They would have continued to enjoy the status of SC had they stayed in West Bengal. Even now they can get SC Certificate on the basis of SC certificate issued to their fathers/mothers, being SCs of West Bengal in terms of the policy laid down by the Govt of India for issuance of caste certificate in respect of the SC persons migrated from East Pakistan and settled in West Bengal initially.

(83) With regard to their claim for SCs status in relation to this UT, it is stated that though they were all Namasudra and accorded SC status in relation to West Bengal, having been settled there initially, they could not be recognised as such in relation to this UT. All the Bengalee refugees were Namasudra in West Bengal, but they did no longer carry the stigma of Namasudra after they were settled in these Islands under the rehabilitation scheme of the Govt. of India. There is no discrimination on the basis of castes existing here. Rather there is homogenous and casteless society. The