

not represent a single ethnic group. Since, the Clause (2) of the Article 341 provides, provision for inclusion of a caste, race or tribe or part of or group within a caste, race or tribe, in fact the group of the members belonging to more than one Scheduled Castes professing Christian religion does not fall under the purview of Clause (2) of the Article 341 of the Constitution.

In case of Soosai Vs. Union of India & Others (WP 9596 of 1983 and also in the WP No. 1017 of 1984). The Supreme court of India has observed that to establish that paragraph 3 of the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950 discriminates against Christian members of the enumerated castes, it must be shown that they suffer from a comparable depth of social and economic disabilities and cultural and educational backwardness and similar levels of degradation within the Christian community necessitating intervention by the State under the provisions of the Constitution. It is not sufficient to show that the same caste continues after conversion. It is necessary to establish that the disabilities and handicaps suffered from such caste membership in the social order of its origin-Hinduism -continue in their oppressive severity in the new environment of a different religious community. References have been made in the material before us in the most cursory manner to the character and incidents of the castes within the Christian fold but no authoritative and detailed study dealing with the present conditions of Christian society have been placed on the record in this case."

Therefore, the above judgment of the Supreme Court of India on the question whether a Hindu belonging to a Scheduled Caste retains his caste on conversion to Christianity makes the position clear.

Earlier, in the year 1978 while sending the comments of this office on the draft Cabinet Summary relating to the revision of the list of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes to the then Ministry of Home Affairs, in response to Item (VI) relating to retention of Scheduled Caste status in respect of converts to Christianity and Buddhism. This office clearly stated that this issue involve policy decision the Social disability arising out of the traditional practice of untouchability are recognized by Hindu and Sikh religions only. No doubt, the converts from these communities to Buddhism and Christianity do not show at least immediately after conversion any effective improvement in their social status or condition.....As Buddhism and Christianity do not recognise the practice of untouchability, the Neo Buddhist -the Mahars in Maharashtra (estimated more than 50 lakhs were given the status of OBC in the State. Before the suggestion is