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## Decision on including Lingayats in Central OBC list deferred

Issue needs to be discussed with party top leaders: BSY

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
BENGALURU

The State Cabinet on Friday deferred the decision on recommending to the Centre inclusion of Veerashaiva-Lingayat community in the Union list of Other Backward Classes (OBC), apparently under pressure from the Centre as well as some Ministers.

Ahead of the Cabinet meeting, Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa announced that the decision on including the Veerashaiva-Lingayat community in the Central OBC list would be taken after discussions with the central leaders of the party.

"The decision on Veerashaiva-Lingayat will be taken after visiting Delhi. Today, we will not make a decision.



Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa leaving Vidhana Soudha after the Cabinet meeting in Bengaluru on Friday. ■ K. MURALI KUMAR

Even my Cabinet colleagues expressed a similar view. This is an important decision that will need further discussion," the Chief Minister told presspersons before the Cabinet met.

It is learnt that Union Home Minister Amit Shah told the Chief Minister that

the proposal on recommending the OBC status for the Veerashaiva-Lingayat community needed discussions within the party before the Cabinet took a decision. Earlier, it was earlier on the Cabinet agenda.

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## OBC list: Decision on Lingayats deferred

Briefing presspersons, Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister J.C. Madhuswamy said the State Cabinet had to formally recommend its decision on inclusion of the community to the National Commission for Backward Classes for inclusion in the OBC list.

Currently, the entire Veerashaiva-Lingayat community, politically dominant in the State, are included in the Karnataka's OBC list under Category 3B with a 5% reservation based on income. The government had proposed to recommend inclusion of the entire community in the Central OBC list to get benefits in Central government jobs and educational institutions. Currently, only 16 sub-sects of Veerashaiva-Lingayats were considered in the Central list of the OBCs, "which is wrong," he said.

### Other communities too

"There are sub-castes in the Veerashaiva-Lingayats as well as in other major communities that have been left out, such as Kunchitigas among Vokkaligas. We appealed to the Chief Minister that we should move a comprehensive proposal to recommend the OBC status for all such communities that have been left out," said Mr. Madhuswamy. The Veerashaiva-Lingayats constitute an estimated 16% of the

## Anthropological study planned

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
BENGALURU

The Cabinet would decide on recommending inclusion of various communities under the Centre's OBC list after obtaining reports from anthropologists about the nature of backwardness of the communities.

"Anthropologists will be asked to study how people are backward, the percentage of people residing in villages, involved in farming, labour work, artisans etc," Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister J.C. Madhuswamy said.

State's population and is a major vote bank for the ruling BJP.

The Veerashaiva Mahasabha has been demanding the inclusion of the entire community in the Central list of the OBC since 1994. The mahasabha had asked the State government to take forward its demand in 1999.

A few days ago, the government had established the Maratha Development Corporation, following it up with the Karnataka Veerashaiva-Lingayat Development Corporation and allocated ₹500 crore for it.