Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

Responses to Information Requests

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IND105526.E

India: Ability of Indian Tamils to relocate outside of Tamil Nadu to areas such as Delhi, Bangalore, Mumbai or Chandigarh; treatment by society and access to housing, employment and social services (2012 - May 2016)

Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

1. Overview

   Article 19 of the Constitution of India states the following:

   19 (1) All citizens shall have the right --
   ...
   (d) to move freely throughout the territory of India;
   (e) to reside and settle in any part of the territory of India. (India 1949)

   In an analysis of interstate migration flows in India, published in the journal Asian Population Studies, R.B. Bhagat and Soumya Mohanty, both of whom are affiliated with the Department of Migration and Urban Studies at the International Institute for Population Sciences in Mumbai, show that between 200,000 and 300,000 people migrated from Tamil Nadu to the state of Karnataka [Bangalore is the capital city of this state], and between 100,000 and 200,000 migrated from Tamil Nadu to the state of Maharashtra [Mumbai is the capital city of this state] between 1991 and 2001 (Bhagat and Mohanty Mar. 2009, 13, 14, 20). Further and corroborating information on migration and demographic statistics of Tamils from Tamil Nadu could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

   In correspondence with the Research Directorate, an associate professor of anthropology at Cornell University, who researches Tamil communities in Malaysia and Bangalore stated, without providing details, that "it is quite common to find Tamils living in other parts of India," and that Bangalore, Southern Karnataka and Mumbai have "large settlements" of Tamils (Associate Professor of anthropology 6 May 2016). Similarly, in correspondence with the Research Directorate, an associate professor of anthropology and Asian studies at the University of Toronto, whose research focuses on Tamil Nadu and Tamils living in Mumbai and Bangalore, similarly stated that based on his knowledge, it is "very common for a Tamil person to relocate to other parts of India, especially to Delhi, Bangalore and Mumbai" (Associate Professor of anthropology and Asian studies 9 May 2016).

   The Associate Professor of anthropology and Asian studies stated that "there are not really any customs that would limit movement" of Tamil people, adding that "customs would be limited to marriage requirements that one marry within one's own caste or community, although this can be achieved in Indian cities" (Associate Professor of anthropology and Asian studies 17 May 2016). Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.
Sources estimated that 20 to 30 percent of the population in Bangalore consists of Tamil speakers (ibid.; Associate Professor of anthropology 6 May 2016). The Associate Professor of anthropology indicated that there are also "large Tamil communities in Mumbai, Delhi and Trivandrum (ibid.). The Associate Professor of anthropology and Asian studies indicated that Mumbai also has a "very significant proportion" of Tamil-speakers, while to his knowledge in Delhi the proportion is smaller (Associate Professor of anthropology and Asian studies 17 May 2016). An April 2012 article published in the New Indian Express, a Madurai-based English daily newspaper (n.d.), notes a "presence of Tamil migrants in many districts" in the state of Kerala (The New Indian Express 19 Apr. 2012). The website of the Chandigarh Tamil Sangam, "a South Indian sociocultural organization" in Chandigarh, indicates that there are "about 50,000" Tamil people in Chandigarh (Chandigarh Tamil Sangam n.d.). Further and corroborating information on the size of the Tamil communities outside of Tamil Nadu, including in Bangalore, Chandigarh, Delhi, and Mumbai could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

2. Treatment by Society

Without providing further detail, the Associate Professor of anthropology and Asian studies stated that "many migrants are discriminated against when they move to a region outside of their own" (Associate Professor of anthropology and Asian studies 9 May 2016). The Associate Professor of anthropology explained that although demonstrations "sponsored by ethnic/linguistic nationalism" have taken place in Bangalore and Mumbai, "in recent years, Tamils have not been targeted or intimidated directly" (Associate Professor of anthropology 11 May 2016). The same source stated that, "no outright discrimination or violence [against Tamil people] has occurred under state or city policies, to the best of [his] knowledge" since 2012 in Mumbai and Bangalore, though "private incidents may have occurred" (ibid.). Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

Without providing details, a October 2014 article in the Free Press Journal, a Mumbai-based English language daily newspaper (n.d.), notes that there have been "hate campaigns" against Tamils in Mumbai in the past (The Free Press Journal 22 Oct. 2014). According to the same source, a Tamil migrant was elected to the Maharashtra legislative assembly for a Mumbai electoral district on 22 October 2014, and was quoted as stating that he had received "immense support from the predominantly higher middle and middle class Gujarati-speaking population, along with huge pockets of slum dwellers" (ibid.). Further and corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

Information on specific incidents of violence and discrimination against Tamil people who relocated to other parts of India between 2012 and May 2016 could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

3. Access to Housing, Employment, and Social Services

The Associate Professor of anthropology and Asian studies stated that "in general," a Tamil person who relocates from Tamil Nadu to another area of India would move to an area where they already have some kin, noting that Bangalore "has such a large percentage of Tamil speakers that most people who migrate there are likely to have some sort of kin to help them access services" (Associate Professor of anthropology and Asian studies 9 May 2016). The same source stated that the level of support required to find housing or employment depends on the caste and socio-economic class of the person; for example, a "well-qualified doctor might easily find employment, whereas a domestic worker or a construction worker might be much more reliant on already existing social networks" (ibid.). The source added that "there are few if any government services available" for a person who relocates to an urban area outside of Tamil Nadu, and that NGOs do not assist Tamil people, specifically (ibid.).

The Associate Professor of anthropology explained that in Bangalore "Tamil enclaves provide a comfortable environment for speaking the [Tamil] language, worship, and the arts (film, music, dance)" (ibid.). However, the same source stated that "[i]n North India, where the language is primarily Hindi, Tamils may have a hard time assimilating" because in Tamil Nadu, education is only in Tamil, and therefore Tamils often are "less flu[ent]" in Hindi (ibid.). Similarly, the Associate Professor of anthropology and Asian studies stated that "practical challenges might also be linguistic" for Tamil people who move to another part of India; for example, in Delhi, Hindi is required in order "to get along," and few Tamil speakers would speak Hindi prior to moving (Associate Professor of anthropology and Asian studies 17 May 2016).

3.1 Support and Services Available to Tamil Migrants

Information on available support systems and services for Tamil migrants was scarce among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.
The Associate Professor of anthropology stated that in Bangalore, there are "a number" of Tamil cultural and business associations that would provide support to a Tamil person who relocated there (Associate Professor of Anthropology 6 May 2016). The website of the Mumbai Tamil Sangam, "a confluence of Tamil Speaking Mumbaites," indicates that it provides "Marathi [1] classes for non-Maharastrians," Tamil classes "for others including Tamilians who do not know [how] to read and write Tamil," and "scholarships to school students" (Mumbai Tamil Sangam n.d). According to the website of the Chandigarh Tamil Sangam, the organization provides "philanthropic activities such as free health check-ups, camps for needy people [and] distributions of woollens to [the] poor" (Chandigarh Tamil Sangam n.d). Sources indicate that there is also a Tamil Sangam in Bangalore (Bangalore Tamil Sangam n.d) and Delhi (Delhi Tamil Sangam n.d). Further and corroborating information on these organizations and the services they offer could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

3.2. Living Conditions

The Associate Professor of anthropology and Asian studies stated that the living conditions including access to housing, employment, and social services, as well as the level of safety and security of a Tamil person who relocates outside Tamil Nadu, would depend on the "caste/community and socio-economic class," of the person involved (Associate Professor of anthropology and Asian studies 9 May 2016). The same source noted that "[m]any" Tamils in Mumbai and Delhi "live in slums and extreme poverty," but that "there is a large Tamil middle class in both cities as well" (ibid.). The Associate Professor of anthropology similarly stated that "Tamils who work in manual labour face difficulties associated with their migrant and low socio-economic status" while professionals do well in "all the major cities" (Associate Professor of anthropology 6 May 2016). Further and corroborating information on the living conditions of Tamil communities in India outside of Tamil Nadu could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

Note

[1] According to Ethnologue: Languages of the World, an online catalogue of world languages, Marathi [Maharashtra, Maharathi, Malhatee, Marthi, Muruthu] is an Indian language spoken in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, and in Maharashtra state: Karnataka, Belgaum and Bidar districts. It is a statutory provincial language in Maharashtra State (Ethnologue 2016).

References

Associate Professor of anthropology, Cornell University. 11 May 2016. Correspondence with the Research Directorate.

Associate Professor of anthropology, Cornell University. 6 May 2016. Correspondence with the Research Directorate

Associate Professor of anthropology and Asian studies, University of Toronto. 17 May 2016. Correspondence with the Research Directorate.

Associate Professor of anthropology and Asian studies, University of Toronto. 9 May 2016. Correspondence with the Research Directorate.


Delhi Tamil Sangam. N.d. "Delhi Tamil Sangam." [Accessed 13 May 2016]


**Additional Sources Consulted**

**Oral sources:** Aid India; Asian Human Rights Commission; Assistant Professor, College of International Security Affairs; Bangalore Tamil Sangam; Bombay Tamil Sangam; Chandigarh Tamil Sangam; Delhi Tamil Sangam; People’s Watch; PhD Candidate, Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster; Professor, Princeton University; United Nations – Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

**Internet sites, including:** Aajeevika Bureau; *Afternoon Despatch and Courier*; Agence France Press; Amnesty International; *Asian Age*; *Bangalore Mirror*; Bangalore – Municipal Corporation; BBC; *Business Standard*; Chandigarh – Municipal Corporation; *Citizen Matters*; *Deccan Chronicle*; Delhi – government of National Capital Territory, East Delhi Municipal Corporation, North Delhi Municipal Corporation, South Delhi Municipal Corporation; ecoi.net; Factiva; Fédération Internationale des droits de l’homme; *Financial Express*; Freedom House; *The Hindu*; Human Rights Watch; India – Census India, Ministry for Minority Affairs, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation; *India Today*; *The Indian Express*; Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre; International Organization for Migration; IRIN; *Jane’s Intelligence Review*; Minority Rights Group; Mumbai – municipal corporation of greater Mumbai; *New Delhi News*; *New Delhi Times*; *News Today*; *North India Kaleidoscope*; *The Pioneer*; Radio France internationale; Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty; SHRAM Research Portal and Data Repository; *The Times of India*; Transparency International; *The Tribune*; United Nations – Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Refworld, Reliefweb, UNDP, UNHCR, UN Women; United States – Department of State.

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