

50, Pedder Road,
Cumballa Hill,
Bombay 26.

CONSULATE OF ISRAEL

19th May, 1961.

Dear Sir,

In view of the recent article in the press about the Benei-Israel community who have emigrated to Israel, and further to our letter of 15-5-1961 in this connection, I wish to bring to your notice the following facts:

1. Members of the Benei Israel community in Israel are, and have always been regarded as jews by both the Government of Israel and the Rabbinical Authorities, nor is there any question of their purity. Moreover, the very fact that they are enjoying the right to emigrate to Israel under the provision of Law of Return, as any other jew elsewhere, proves their unquestionable jewishness.
2. In Israel as in many other countries marriage ceremonies of members of various communities are performed by their Religious Authorities. The Government having no jurisdiction, has no authority to decide on this matter. The Benei Israel community in Israel, as other communities, is also subjected to the Jewish Religious Authorities, as far as religious ceremonies are concerned, a fact which again proves undoubtedly their jewishness.
3. In their country of origin there was little encouragement given to marriages between members of Benei Israel communities and other jewish communities. In fact such marriages rarely took place. This custom was imported to Israel and whilst a few Rabbis have seen fit to follow this tradition, the others have not, and for that reason marriages of Benei Israel jews with jews of other communities are performed.
4. With the election of a new Chief Rabbinate it is hoped that the problem will be brought to its attention.
5. I am authorised by my Government to state that there is no, there has never been, and never will be, any question of discrimination of any community in Israel.

Yours sincerely,

Y. Yatin

(Michael Th. Michael)

Consul General of Israel