

Karnataka Govt Eliminated 4% Quota For Muslims Under OBC Category

Vokkaliga And Veerashaiva-Lingayat Communities Get Additional 2% Quota

The Karnataka government eliminated the 4% quota for Muslims under the Other Backward Classes (OBC) category and allocated an additional 2% to each of the dominant Vokkaliga and Veerashaiva-Lingayat communities. In order to offer internal reservation for various Dalit communities under the Scheduled Caste (SC) category, the BJP government has additionally developed four subcategories. The elimination of Muslim reservations brings to mind the 2015 repeal of the Muslim 5% quota in Maharashtra, where impoverished Muslims will now have to fight with the general category for the 10% "Economically Weaker Sections" quota.

Other Communities Under Reservation in Karnataka

Contrary to the impression that has been produced along the reservation narrative, the Vokkaligas and Veerashaiva-Lingayats would not be the only community to benefit from the Karnataka Cabinet's decision to grant them 6% and 7% of the newly created categories of 2C and 2D respectively. The Vokkaligas, Kodavas, and Balijas, who were a member of 3A and shared a 4% reservation, have been transferred to the newly formed 2C, which now has a total of 6% quota. Similar to this, Veerashaiva-Lingayats, Marathas, Christians, Bunts, Jains, and Satanists who previously shared a 5% quota in 3D have been transferred to 2D, which now contains 7%.

Why Did Karnataka Make Such A Reservation Decision?

Given the state's deteriorating infrastructure and the pervasive sense of corruption and inefficiency around it, the state government has few accomplishments to display. As of now, several surveys indicate that the Congress has the electoral advantage. The BJP was under pressure as the group led by Kudalasangama Seer Sri Jayamruthyunjaya Swami has been agitating for two years seeking 2A status for the community in the OBC list. The Panchamasalis, a Veerashaiva-Lingayat subsect with a sizable population, provide support for the community. As far as the Vokkaligas are concerned, the decision was made well before they exerted any significant pressure on the BJP, which is having difficulty entering the Vokkaliga heartland of Old Mysore.

What is the Commissions' Report on Reservation?

Experts contend that Muslims were included based on the recommendations made by the L.G.

Havanur and Chinnappa Reddy Commissions, which were established earlier, despite the BJP leaders' claim that the OBC percent quota cannot be extended based on religion. The same is advised in the Sachar Committee report. Legally, it is stated that the Karnataka Backward Classes Commission should conduct an empirical assessment before adding or removing a community from the reservation matrix. No study was conducted with the intention of excluding Muslims, and the commission's final report was not submitted to support the expansion of Vokkaliga and Veerashaiva-Lingayat reserve. The Commission hasn't even begun to address the Vokkaliga demand. Therefore, the desires of the two communities are not met by dividing the Muslim reservation evenly between the Vokkaligas and Veerashaiva-Lingayats. The Panchamsalis requested 2A classification, which includes a 15% quota, whereas the Vokkaligas demanded 12% reservation based on population. Panchamsalis will now have to continue competing for their portion of the new category with other comparably wealthy and educated Veerashaiva-Lingayat sub-sects. Political commentators assert that it is too soon to predict how these choices will play out in the electoral setting.

The Way Forward on Quota Decision By Karnataka

The quota decision, however, might be the genius that guarantees the BJP's victory in the hustings because it will allay the anger of the Vokkaligas and Lingayats, who have been upset about the reservation issue. It is quite evident that they and the scheduled castes are the main targets of the BJP's electoral campaign. There is no doubt that the Muslims are irrelevant to the party's goals. While it is unacceptable to grant reservations solely on the basis of religion, it appears that the Karnataka State Backward Classes Commission has not made a recommendation to deny Muslims the benefits of reservations. The BJP has attempted to portray the 1995 implementation of Muslim reservations as an example of minority appeasement. It is uncertain whether the BJP's electoral tsunami will continue unchecked.