

NOT A PANACEA: THE HINDU EDITORIAL ON THE MARATHA DEMAND FOR RESERVATION

Relevant for: Developmental Issues | Topic: Government policies & interventions for development in various Sectors and issues arising out of their design & implementation incl. Housing

To enjoy additional benefits

CONNECT WITH US

November 28, 2023 12:15 am | Updated 12:15 am IST

COMMENTS

SHARE

READ LATER

In a sign of significant socioeconomic churning in various parts of India, there have been demands for reservation by communities that are known to be politically dominant and are not traditionally classified as “backward”. The [agitation for reservation by members of the Maratha community in Maharashtra](#) is one such. The community has had significant representation in positions of political power — over 35% of MLAs since 1967 and 12 of 18 Chief Ministers in the State. It has also traditionally been economically influential in rural areas due to landowning — over 75% of the cultivable land in the State — besides controlling an overwhelming majority of sugar factories. Data from the India Human Development Survey (IHDS) in 2011-12 in the State have shown that [Marathas](#) had a per capita consumption expenditure only lower than that of Brahmins; poverty incidence among Marathas was comparable to that of other forward communities and significantly lower than that of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and marginally lower than that of Other Backward Classes. It is evident why the [Supreme Court in 2021 struck down the 16% quota](#) provided under the Socially and Economically Backward Classes for Marathas in jobs and education in 2018.

And yet the demand is not difficult to fathom. Despite the relative dominance, there are significant intra-community variations in terms of income and educational outcomes. The IHDS survey showed that the highest quintile of the community had an average per capita income of 86,750, while the per capita income of the lowest quintile was one-tenth of this. This disparity, besides the predominant rural nature of livelihoods among the poorer Marathas amid the prolonged nature of the recurring agrarian crisis in the State, has given rise to resentment and the demand for reservations. The Eknath Shinde government bowed to the demands of the latest agitation and set up a committee led by Justice Sandeep Shinde to help expedite the [issue of Kunbi certificates to all Marathas](#) so that they could benefit from reservations as part of the OBCs. But this has led to tensions with OBC leaders, including from the ruling coalition, demanding that the government scrap the committee. The need for a comprehensive socio-economic survey across States, instead of knee-jerk responses to agitations, is a must to evaluate the implementation of reservation, its outcomes, and to find out which group deserves it based on constitutional provisions. More importantly, with government jobs shrinking to a mere fraction of overall employment, reservations cannot be a panacea for the uplift of the poor among Marathas.

COMMENTS

SHARE

[Reservation](#) / [Maharashtra](#) / [Caste](#) / [laws](#)

BACK TO TOP

Comments have to be in English, and in full sentences. They cannot be abusive or personal. Please abide by our [community guidelines](#) for posting your comments.

We have migrated to a new commenting platform. If you are already a registered user of The Hindu and logged in, you may continue to engage with our articles. If you do not have an account please register and login to post comments. Users can access their older comments by logging into their accounts on Vuukle.

END

Downloaded from [crackIAS.com](#)

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

CrackIAS.com