

National Commission for Backward Classes had proposed to divide OBC category in 3 sub-groups with 9% quota each

MLC to PM: Will you ever give justice to 40 crore downtrodden Indians?

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Maharashtra Legislative Council (MLC) member Haribhau Rathod has taken up the issue of National Commission for Backward Classes' (NCBC) proposal to sub-categorise the Other Backward Classes (OBC) category. The proposal was made nearly a year ago, and seems to have been put in the cold storage by the Narendra Modi-led BJP government, possibly due to its political ramifications.

In a letter to the prime minister, Rathod has reminded him of the commission's forgotten but "very important" proposal.

"Sub-categorisation has the potential to uplift the most downtrodden communities in the country, benefitting over 40 crore people. Hence, the commission's recommendations must be implemented at the earliest," wrote Rathod, who has led several campaigns in Maharashtra and Delhi to press for the same demand in

Sub-categorisation of Other Backward Classes has the potential to uplift the most downtrodden communities in the country, benefitting over 40 crore people. Hence, the commission's recommendations must be implemented at the earliest



File photo of members of the OBC category holding a rally at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi. As per Mandal Commission recommendation, Central government has granted 27% reservation to the community

Creamy layer cap likely to go up ahead of UP polls

In October last year, in its supplementary report, the commission had suggested to the Centre to raise the creamy layer limit of OBCs from ₹56 lakh to ₹15 lakh. Sources said relaxation was likely to be implemented, mainly as the Assembly polls in UP were coming, when OBCs held a sway. "The cap could be raised to ₹8 lakh or ₹10 lakh. The NCBC suggestion is unrealistic and may backfire. People would question the validity of reservation then," said a highly placed source at the Union Social Justice and Empowerment Ministry. Union minister for social justice and empowerment, Theerwarthand Gehlot, could not be reached for comments.

semi-nomadic tribes, groups whose traditional occupation was begging or pig-rearing, snake-charming and agricultural labourers. The MBCs would comprise groups with traditional occupations such as doll-making, toddy tappers, oil-pressing, silk-weavers, potters, sheep-rearing, jute-weaving, butchering, tailoring, fishing, gardening, barbers and dalit Christians. The third category dubbed the "forwards among the

backwards" would comprise land-owning, cultivating castes, business and trading castes and other advanced sections among OBCs. If implemented, the NCBC proposal would force socially and politically strong backward castes, such as Yadavs and Kurmis, to fight among themselves for the 9% quota, rather than the whole 27%. Naturally, the proposal and social have huge political and social ramifications, forcing the government to drag its feet.

Rathod, who is a Congress man and had been a BJP member of parliament in the past, said, "As per recommendations of the Mandal Commission, the Central government has granted 27% reservation to OBCs. The benefits of reservation, however, are being enjoyed by only a few castes, such as Yadav-Kurmis. The most backward ones, such as nomadic and denotified tribes, are consistently being pushed behind."

The sub-grouping was proposed by the Mandal Commission as well, added Rathod. "J.R. Naik, one of the Mandal Commission members had submitted a dissent note, which is annexed to the commission report. He had suggested two sub-groups. The Supreme Court had also suggested the same, but the suggestions were ignored," he said.

judgments into account, the NCBC had submitted an ambitious proposal to the Centre in February 2015, which sought to segregate the least backward communities from the most backward ones, so that quota benefits could be distributed proportionately. The NCBC recommended sub-categorisation of OBC into three sub-groups with 9% quota for each - Extremely Backward (EBC), More Backward (MBC) and Backward classes. It aimed at rationalis-

ing 27% quota among 1,206 communities and advocating a level playing field among Mandal groups. Several community leaders had pleaded with the government and the NCBC that weaker OBCs were unable to compete with the "forwards" among backwards, owing to the gap in their educational and financial status. According to the NCBC draft, the EBCs would comprise aboriginal tribes, denotified tribes, nomadic and

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— Haribhau Rathod, MLC