

The Backward Classes Commission, 1955 (Kalelkar Commission)

- appointed by the President in pursuance of Article 340 on 29 January 1953 to enquire into the problems of the OBCs.
- 1. Shri Kakasaheb Kalelkar, M.P., Chairman
- 2. Shri N.S. Kajrolkar, M.P.,
- 3. Shri Bheekha Bhai, M.P.,
- 4. Shri Shivdayal Sing Chaurasia
- 5. Shri Rajeshwar Patel, M.P.,
- 6. Shri Abdul Qaiyum Ansari, M.L.A. (Bihar),
- 7. Shri T. Mariappa, M.L.A. (Mysore),
- 8. Shri Atma Singh Namdhari, M.P.,
- 9. Shri Lala Jagannath,
- 10. Shri N.R.M. Swamy, M.P.,
- 11. Shri Arunanshu De (Member-secretary)

Its terms of reference were as follows:

- (a) To determine the criteria to be adopted in considering whether any sections of the people in the territory of India (in addition to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes specified by notifications issued under the Article 341 and 342 of the Constitution) should be treated as socially and educationally backward classes; and, in accordance with such criteria, prepare a list of such classes setting out also their approximate number and their territorial distribution;
- (b) To investigate the conditions of all such socially and educationally backward classes and the difficulties under which they labour; and make recommendations (i) as to the steps that should be taken by the Union or any State to remove such difficulties or improve their conditions; and (ii) as to the grants that should be made for the purpose by the Union or any State and the conditions subject to which such grants should be made;
- (c) To investigate such other matters as the President may hereafter refer to them; and
- (d) To present to the President a Report setting out the facts as found by them and making such recommendations as they think proper.

The Commission was required to submit its report to the President by 31 January 1954 (the date was, however, later extended to 31 March 1955).

The Commission worked for about two years and submitted a three volume report to the President of India on 30 March 1955, making among others the following important recommendations:

- (i) That caste was the main cause of backwardness of the OBCs;
- (ii) That after taking into consideration the social position which a community occupied in the social hierarchy, the percentage of literacy and its general educational advancement; and its representations in the government service or in the industrial and other economic spheres, 2399 castes comprising about 32 percent population stood at a low level in the Indian society as OBCs;
- (iii) That women and backward communities among the Muslims, Christians, etc. be also treated as OBCs;
- (iv) That to bring these people to the national mainstream, reservation of 70 per cent seats in all technical and professional institution for their qualified sons and daughters be made;
- (v) That special economic measures be taken to uplift the OBCs economically through such programmes as extensive land reforms, reorganisation of village economy, Bhoohan movement, development of livestock, dairy farming, cattle insurance, bee-keeping, piggery, fisheries, development of rural housing, public health and rural water supply, adult literacy programme, etc.; and
- (vi) That to enable the OBCs to come on a par with the high castes in the government/local bodies services, the following reservations be made for them for some time: Class I : 25 %, Class II & III : 33 1/3 % and Class IV : 40 %.

Source: India's Unequal Citizens, A Study of OBCs, K.C. Yadav, Published by Monohar publications.