

At reservation to the
backward classes,
scheduled



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At the time of Independence, the makers of the Constitution had rightly envisioned that the deprived section of society needed to be improved through education and employment opportunities. Reservation to the backward classes, scheduled tribes, and scheduled castes was essential in order to bring them at par with the others. It was an attempt to create equality and equity in educational, economic and social areas. However, this affirmative action was to be in force for only 10 to 20 years. It was an attempt to strive for an egalitarian society. Even after 65 years of independence, the minorities and the oppressed are still deprived because only the creamy is being benefited with reservations. Reservations are actually not reaching the people for whom they are really intended rather it has today become a slogan for the political parts to win voters from the backward classes/tribes. The game plan of the politicians is clearly evident in this 'Quota Raj'.

Reservation today is not just an affirmative action but has become a means for getting more and more benefits. As a matter of fact, the scope of reservation has enlarged to quite an extent. Does it mean that backwardness has increased? Today, it is sad to say that different religious communities are also demanding reservation as they want the privilege of reservation to be extended to them. As a matter of fact, it has triggered competition among communities for proving their backwardness. Reservation provides some benefits in the employment and education to the backward, creating vested interests. Today, many communities want to be considered backward rather than forward. Is it not injustice to give special privileges on the basis of birth? Does this not take away the right of a brilliant student for securing a seat in

higher education and getting a job in the Government sector? In an equitable society rights of all citizens are protected.

In India caste is the predominant factor used for reservation in Government jobs and in higher education. As a matter of fact in States like Tamilnadu, there is reservation of 69% seats. Reservation on the basis of caste actually leads to exclusion. If one looks at it closely, other backward classes are comparable to forward classes on many parameters.

They outshine forward castes in business ownership, rural employment, land holding and are wealthier than their forward counterparts. Allocating quotas or reservation is nothing but a form of discrimination and an election gimmick. 65 years of reservations, and India still harping on backwardness, clearly proves that reservation has in no way improved the status of the lower classes. ' Meritocracy' has been sacrificed at the altar of reservation which is very damaging, especially when India is moving towards becoming an economic super power, Merit is the only tool which can help India compete with the developed countries of the world. If our politicians continue to divide our country on the basis of caste, religion and community by offering privileges to some sections of the society then brain drain of our intellectuals would continue, leaving the country starved of brilliant students which are evident from the number of students seeking admission abroad and migrating permanently to other countries. With paucity of jobs in our country, stiff competition and reservation, the Indian youth is left with no option but to seek greener pastures.

Is it not ironical that the same political parties, who blow the trumpet of reservation, do not prefer to be treated by doctors, coming from the backward caste and, rightly so, where the cut off % for a general class candidate is nothing less than above 90 - 95%. For a backward class, there is no lower limit. It simply depends on the number of reserved seats available. In the end, I would like to say that reservation is no solution, especially in higher education and professional colleges. As a matter of fact, proper facilities of education and other incentives should be provided at the level to school education so that the children coming from the backward community are able to stand on their two feet and compete with the others for seats in higher education. Reservations are like crutches which will always prove to be a handicap for the deprived section of the society.

India does not need handicapped people to achieve its goal of becoming a super power but needs people with substance who can represent it on the global arena. In short, Reservation is a curse, which is dividing our country on the basis of caste, community and religion. We need to be united not divided for becoming a force to reckon with " United we stand - divided we fall"