



Sub-Categorisation of OBCs

For Prelims: [Commission for the sub-categorisation of Other Backward Classes \(OBC\), Mandal Commission, 102nd Constitution Amendment Act.](#)

For Mains: Historical Evolution of the OBC Reservation Status in India, Need for Sub-categorisation of OBCs.

Source: IE

Why in News?

The [Justice G. Rohini-headed Commission for the sub-categorisation of Other Backward Classes \(OBC\)](#) caste groups submitted its long-awaited report to the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment after nearly six years of work.

- The **details of the recommendations have not been made public yet**, and the government is expected to deliberate on the report before any implementation.

What are the Terms of Reference of the Rohini Commission?

- **About:**
 - The commission was set up on **2nd October, 2017** under **Article 340 of the Constitution (President's power to appoint a Commission to investigate the conditions of the backward classes)**.
- **Terms of Reference:**
 - Examine the inequitable distribution of benefits among OBCs listed in the Central List.
 - Propose a scientific approach and parameters for sub-categorisation within OBCs.
 - Identify and classify the respective castes or communities into their respective sub-categories.
 - Study the entries in the Central List of OBCs and recommend corrections for repetitions, ambiguities, inconsistencies, and errors in spelling or transcription.

What is the Need for Sub-categorisation of OBCs?

- **OBCs get 27% reservation** in central government jobs and educational institutions, but it is perceived that only a **few dominant caste groups among them benefit from this quota**.
- In 2018, the **commission analyzed the data of 1.3 lakh central government jobs and OBC admissions** to central higher education institutions over the preceding years, **revealing that 97% of benefits went to 25% of OBC castes**.
- **Around 983 OBC communities (37% of the total) had zero representation in jobs and educational institutions**, highlighting the need for sub-categorisation.
- Sub-categorisation aims to **create quotas within the 27% reservation to provide more opportunities for historically underrepresented and crowded-out OBC communities**.

What is the Historical Evolution of the OBC Reservation Status in India?

- The journey began with the establishment of the **Kalelkar Commission in 1953**, which marked the **first instance of recognizing backward classes beyond the [Scheduled Castes \(SCs\)](#) and [Scheduled Tribes \(STs\)](#)** on a national level.
- In **1980**, the **[Mandal Commission Report](#)** estimated that the **OBC population constituted 52% and identified 1,257 communities as backward**.
 - To address the inequity, it **suggested an increase in the existing quotas** (which were previously applicable only to SC/ST) **from 22.5% to 49.5%, extending the reservation to include OBCs**.
 - Following these recommendations, the **central government implemented the reservation policy, reserving 27% of seats in union civil posts and services for OBCs under Article 16(4)**.
 - This policy was also enforced in central government educational institutions under **Article 15(4)**.
- In 2008, the Supreme Court intervened and directed the central government to **exclude the "[creamy layer](#)" (advanced sections) among the OBCs** from benefiting from the reservation policy, ensuring that it reaches the most disadvantaged.
- In 2018, **[102nd Constitution Amendment Act](#)** granted **constitutional status to the National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC)**.
 - This elevated the **NCBC from its previous status as a statutory body under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment**, giving it more authority and recognition in safeguarding the interests of backward classes, including the OBCs.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question:

Q. Consider the following organizations/bodies in India: (2023)

1. The National Commission for Backward Classes
2. The National Human Rights Commission
3. The National Law Commission
4. The National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission

How many of the above constitutional bodies?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) Only three
- (d) All four

Ans: (a)