

OBC VOICE



Ensure Budgetary Justice for Other Backward Classes (OBCs) –

Demand for Adequate Allocation and a Dedicated OBC
Special Component Plan in Union Budget 2026–27

Budget Allocation for SCs, STs and OBCs (₹ in Crores)

(Schemes like Pre-Matric, Post-Matric, NBCFDC, Fellowships etc.)

(Rupees in crores)

Division	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
SC	6115	7807	9285	7412	10309	10377
ST	5472	6126	8406	7529	10237	14925
OBC.	1507	1780	1773	1838	2064	2565

(Source: Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment – Annual Reports)



Rs.9000
G.O.



BUDGET
LR TO FM



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HALL



OPEN Vs
RESERVED



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30th YEAR CELEBRATION

**6th ALL INDIA
CONFERENCE**

28th FEB 2026

Wallchand Hirachand Hall, IMC Chamber of Commerce & Industry,
Churchgate, MUMBAI



**ALL INDIA UNION BANK BACKWARD CLASSES
(OBC) EMPLOYEES' WELFARE ASSOCIATION**



**FOUNDATION DAY CELEBRATIONS – 8TH JANUARY 2026
UNION BANK OBC EMPLOYEES WELFARE ASSOCIATION, TAMIL NADU
32 YEARS OF AN UNBROKEN JOURNEY FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE**



The Union Bank OBC Employees Welfare Association, Tamil Nadu celebrated its 32nd Foundation Day on 8 January 2026 at the Association Office, marking over three decades of unwavering commitment to social justice and equality. The celebration honoured the vision and sacrifices of the founding members and reaffirmed the Association's role as a strong voice for OBC employees.

Senior Bank executives, Federation representatives, office-bearers, founder members, and staff participated in the event. Floral tributes were paid to Thanthai Periyar, followed by symbolic cake cutting, reflecting unity and collective progress. The occasion concluded with a renewed resolve to uphold constitutional values and continue the struggle for the rights and welfare of OBC employees.



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When “Merit” Fails Medicine: Why NEET Has Become Part of the Problem, Not the Solution

The spectacle of over 18,000 postgraduate medical seats lying vacant even after multiple rounds of NEET-PG counselling is not merely an administrative lapse—it is a **damning indictment of the NEET regime itself**. When qualifying cut-offs are eventually pushed down to **zero percentile** and even **–40 marks out of 800** are deemed acceptable, the central question that arises is unavoidable: **what exactly is NEET screening for, and whom does it truly serve?**

NEET was introduced under the grand claim of enforcing “merit,” standardising admissions, and—most importantly—**eliminating capitation fees and corruption** in medical education. Nearly a decade later, the evidence points in the opposite direction. If merit thresholds can be arbitrarily diluted after the exam to fill seats, then NEET’s role as a gatekeeping mechanism collapses. A screening test that ultimately allows everyone in, after months of anxiety and exclusion, **stands exposed as an instrument of control rather than quality assurance**.

For decades, medical admissions in India were largely based on **Plus Two (Class 12) marks**, combined with state-level counselling. That system, though not perfect, produced generations of competent doctors and ensured **regional balance, social diversity, and affordability**. It respected the role of school education, rewarded sustained academic effort, and allowed States to plan healthcare manpower according to local needs. There was no mass vacancy of seats, no annual spectacle of cut-offs being retrospectively rewritten, and no artificial shortage of “meritorious” candidates.

NEET has disrupted this equilibrium. By centralising admissions through a single high-stakes exam, it has **privileged coaching culture, urban access, and economic capital**, while marginalising rural students, first-generation learners, and those from government schools. The repeated lowering of cut-offs—especially for NEET-PG—proves that **the exam does not reflect the actual availability or capability of medical graduates**, but merely filters them through an arbitrary ranking exercise.

Even more troubling is the **myth that NEET has eliminated capitation fees**. In reality, the opposite has happened. With government seats limited and NEET acting as a bottleneck, **private medical colleges have turned admissions into a luxury commodity**. Today, postgraduate medical seats in private institutions reportedly cost **₹75 lakh to ₹1 crore or more**, far beyond the reach of ordinary middle-class or working-class families. Merit, in practice, has been replaced by **market power**. NEET has not dismantled commercialisation; it has **legitimised and centralised it**.

The irony is stark. On one hand, the country faces an acute shortage of doctors, overworked government hospitals, and underserved rural populations. On the other, thousands of medical seats go waste because an exam designed to rank candidates is mistakenly treated as a measure of competence. As even officials now admit, **NEET is meant to prepare a merit list, not reassess the capability of MBBS-qualified doctors**. If that is so, why impose such an exclusionary filter at all?

The present crisis should force a **fundamental rethinking**. If cut-offs can be zero, if eligibility must be expanded post facto, and if merit is endlessly redefined to prevent national loss, then the logic of NEET itself stands invalidated. Medical education cannot be governed by ideological notions of “merit” divorced from social realities and public health needs.

It is time to ask the uncomfortable but necessary question: **Is NEET reformable, or is it time to abolish it altogether?** Restoring a **decentralised, school-based, state-responsive admission system**, with strong regulation of private fees and transparent counselling, may serve India’s healthcare system far better than a flawed national exam that promises fairness but delivers exclusion, anxiety, and profiteering.

The crisis of vacant seats is not a failure of students. It is a failure of policy. And NEET, far from being the cure, has become one of its most visible symptoms. ■

**தமிழ்நாடு வரலாறு படைத்தது
பிற்படுத்தப்பட்டோர் இடஒதுக்கீட்டின் மீதான “பேரிடி”
(கிரிமிலேயர்) வீழ்த்தப்பட்டது**

**ஒரே நாளில் இரண்டு அரசாணைகள் வெளியீடு: கிரிமிலேயர்
(வருமான வரம்பு) ரத்து செய்யப்பட்டு, பிற்படுத்தப்பட்டோருக்கான
இடஒதுக்கீடு 50% ஆக உயர்த்தப்பட்டது**

**TAMIL NADU CREATED HISTORY
The “Calamity” (Creamy Layer) Imposed on
Backward Class Reservation Was Overthrown**

**TWO G.O.s ISSUED ON THE SAME DAY:
REVOKING CREAMY LAYER AND ENHANCING
RESERVATION TO 50% FOR BCs.**



**முனைவர் க.அன்பழகன்
Dr. K. Anbazhagan**

தாழ்த்தப்பட்ட, பிற்படுத்தப்பட்ட மக்களுக்கு கல்வி மற்றும் வேலைவாய்ப்புகளில் இடஒதுக்கீடு வழங்கிட சமூக மற்றும் கல்வி (Socially and Educationally) அடிப்படையில் அளவீடு செய்திடல் வேண்டும் என்று இந்திய அரசியல் சட்டம் கூறுகிறது. அதன் அடிப்படையில்தான் தாழ்த்தப்பட்ட – பிற்படுத்தப்பட்டோருக்கு இடஒதுக்கீடு வழங்கிடும் முறை கடைப்பிடிக்கப்படுகிறது.

தமிழ்நாட்டில் இடஒதுக்கீடு:

சமூக மற்றும் கல்வி அடிப்படைகளின் அடிப்படையில், தமிழ்நாடு அரசு கீழ்க்கண்டவாறு இடஒதுக்கீட்டை வழங்கியுள்ளது:

எஸ்.சி.	எஸ்.டி.	பி.வ.	பி.வ- முஸ்லீம்	எம்.பி.வ.	பொது
18%	1%	26.5%	3.5%	20%	31%

இதன்படி, தமிழ்நாட்டில் தற்போது மொத்தமாக 69% இடஒதுக்கீடு நடைமுறையில் உள்ளது.

1979-80 ஆம் ஆண்டின் இடஒதுக்கீட்டு நிலை:

1979-80 காலகட்டத்தில் இடஒதுக்கீட்டு அமைப்பு கீழ்க்கண்டவாறு இருந்தது:

எஸ்.சி./எஸ்.டி.	பி.வ.	பொது
18%	31%	51%

பிற்படுத்தப்பட்டோருக்கு வழங்கப்படும் 31% இடஒதுக்கீடு குறித்து பிற்படுத்தப்பட்டோருக்காக அமைக்கப்பட்ட திரு. ஏ. என். சட்டநாதன் தலைமையிலான குழு தனது பரிந்துரையில், பிற்படுத்தப்பட்டோரில் பொருளாதாரத்தில் வளர்ச்சி

The Constitution of India mandates that reservation in education and employment for the Scheduled Castes and Backward Classes must be determined **on the basis of social and educational backwardness**.

It is on this constitutional foundation that the system of reservation for the oppressed and backward sections has been implemented.

Reservation in Tamil Nadu now:

Based on social and educational criteria, the Government of Tamil Nadu has provided reservation as follows:

SC	ST	BC	BC-M	MBC	OPEN / GEN
18%	1%	26.5%	3.5%	20%	31%

Thus, a total of 69% reservation is currently in force in Tamil Nadu.

Reservation Scenario in 1979-80

During 1979-80, the reservation structure was as follows:

SC/ST	BC	OPEN / GEN
18%	31%	51%

(Total reservation: 49%)

With regard to the **31% reservation for Backward Classes**, the Backward Classes Commission headed by **Thiru A.N. Sattanathan** made a recommendation suggesting that those among the Backward Classes who

பெற்றோருக்கு பிற்படுத்தப்பட்டோர் பாதுகாப்பு தேவையில்லை என்ற ஒரு கருத்தை தெரிவித்தது.

பொருளாதார அளவுகோல்:

இதன்படி, ஆண்டு வருமானம் ரூ.9000/- க்கு கீழ் பெறுவோர் மட்டும் பிற்படுத்தப்பட்டோர் என்றும், ரூ.9000/- மற்றும் அதற்கு மேல் பெறுவோர் முன்னேறிய பிரிவாக கருதப்பட வேண்டும் என்றும் இடஒதுக்கீட்டிற்கு பொருளாதார அளவுகோல் (அரசியல் சட்டத்திற்கு எதிரானது) அன்றைய அ.தி.மு.க. அரசு அதன் முதலமைச்சர் டாக்டர். எம்.ஜி.ஆர் அவர்கள் அரசாணை மூலம் கொண்டு வந்தார். அரசாணை, சமூக நலத்துறை G.O. எண் : 1156, நாள் 2/7/1979.

1979 ஜூலை 2 – அன்று தமிழ்நாடு அரசு வெளியிட்ட அரசாணைக்கு அடுத்த நாளே 03.07.1979 அன்றைய விடுதலை நாளேட்டில் விரிவான அறிக்கை ஒன்றை எழுதி, இது அரசியலமைப்பு சட்டத்திற்கு எதிரானது. சமூக நீதியை அழிக்கத் துடிக்கும் பார்ப்பனச் சூழ்ச்சி என்று தமிழர் தலைவர் மானமிகு ஆசிரியர் கி. வீரமணி தனது எதிர்ப்பைக் காட்டினர்.

திராவிடர் கழகம் சார்பில் கடும் கண்டனத்தை தெரிவித்து உடன் திரும்பப் பெற வேண்டும் என்றும் எச்சரித்தார்.

பார்ப்பனர்கள் சூழ்ச்சி:

இடஒதுக்கீட்டிற்கு பொருளாதார அளவுகோலைப் புகுத்திட கடந்த 20 ஆண்டுகளுக்கு முன்பிருந்தே பார்ப்பனர்கள் “பகீரத” முயற்சி மேற்கொண்டு வந்தனர்.

தமிழ்நாட்டின் முதலமைச்சர் பொறுப்பில் இருந்திட்ட பெருந்தலைவர் காமராசர், பக்தவச்சலனார், பேரறிஞர் அண்ணா, முத்தமிழறிஞர் கலைஞர் ஆகியோர் ஆரிய சூழ்ச்சிக்கு அடிபணியாது அரசியலமைப்பு சட்டப்படி சமூக – கல்வி ரீதியாக என்ற அளவுகோலின் படி சமூக நீதியை காத்து நிலைநாட்டினர்.

1952-இல் முதலமைச்சர் பொறுப்பேற்ற இராஜகோபால ஆச்சாரியாரே செய்யத் துணியாத ஒன்றை அண்ணா பெயரிலான அ.தி.மு.க. அரசு தமிழ்நாட்டில் செய்திருப்பது பெரும் அக்கிரமம் என்று விடுதலை நாளேடு எழுதியது.

ரூ.9000/- வருமான வரம்பால் ஆபத்து:

ஆண்டு வருமானம் ரூ. 9000 என்ற பொருளாதார அளவுகோலின் படி மாதம் ரூ. 750/- வருமானம் வந்தால் அக்குடும்பத்திற்கு பிற்படுத்தப்பட்டோர் இட ஒதுக்கீட்டு கிடையாது. ஒரு கட்டிடத் தொழிலாளியின் ஒரு நாள் ஊதியம் ரூ. 20 மனைவிக்கு 18 (1979 – 80களில்) என்றால் வருமான வரம்பு ஆணைப்படி இவர்களுக்கு இடஒதுக்கீட்டு கிடையாது. தூய்மைப் பணியாளரின் ஊதியம் ரூ. 750/- க்கு மேல் சென்றால், இவர்களுக்கும் பிற்படுத்தப்பட்டோர் இட ஒதுக்கீட்டு கிடையாது.

சமூக நீதி வழங்கிட உருவாக்கப்பட்ட இடஒதுக்கீட்டு திட்டத்தில் ரூ. 9000/- பொருளாதார அடிப்படையிலான வருமான வரம்பாணை மூலம் பெரும் பின்னடைவும் நேர் எதிரான விளைவும்

had achieved economic advancement did not require the protection of reservation.

Introduction of Economic Criterion – A Constitutional Violation

Based on this view, the then **AIADMK Government**, led by Chief Minister **Dr. M.G. Ramachandran (MGR)**, introduced an economic criterion through a Government Order.

Accordingly:

- Only those with an **annual income below ₹9,000** were to be considered Backward Classes.
- Those earning **₹9,000 or more per year** were to be treated as belonging to the “advanced” category and excluded from reservation.

This economic criterion—**clearly unconstitutional**—was introduced through

Social Welfare Department G.O. No. 1156, dated 02.07.1979.

Immediate and Strong Opposition

The very next day, **03.07.1979**, the Tamil daily *Viduthalai* carried a detailed article condemning the Government Order as **unconstitutional** and describing it as a **Brahminical conspiracy aimed at destroying social justice**.

Leader, Asiriyar K. Veeramani, strongly opposed the move and, on behalf of the **Dravidar Kazhagam**, issued a stern warning demanding the **immediate withdrawal** of the order.

A Long-Standing Brahminical Conspiracy

For nearly **two decades**, efforts had been underway by Brahminical forces to introduce **economic criteria** into reservation and thereby dismantle it from within.

Leaders such as **Perunthalaivar Kamarajar, Bhaktavatsalam, Perarignar Anna, and Muthamizh Arignar Kalaigarn Karunanidhi** steadfastly resisted this Aryan conspiracy and upheld social justice strictly on **social and educational grounds**, as mandated by the Constitution.

Viduthalai wrote that what even **Rajagopalachari (Rajaji)**, upon assuming office in 1952, did not dare to do, was now being done in Tamil Nadu by an AIADMK government claiming the legacy of Anna—an act of grave injustice.

The Danger of the ₹9,000 Income Ceiling

Under this income ceiling:

- A family earning just **₹750 per month** would be denied Backward Class reservation.

உருவாகும். அது பார்ப்பனர்களுக்கே முழுப்பயன் தரும்.

எனவே, இவ்வருமான வரம்பாணை உத்தரவினை பிற்படுத்தப்பட்டோருக்கு விழுந்திட்ட “பேரிடி” என்று திராவிடர் கழக பொதுச்செயலாளர் ஆசிரியர் கி. வீரமணி அவர்கள் பதிவு செய்தார். ஒத்த கருத்துள்ள அரசியல் கட்சியினர் மற்றும் சமூக அமைப்புகளை ஓரணியில் சேர்த்தார். அடுக்கடுக்காய் பல முனை எதிர்ப்புப் போராட்டக் களங்களை உருவாக்கினார்.

ரூ.9000/- வரம்பாணையை ஒழித்திட திராவிடர் கழகம் மேற்கொண்ட மாநாடுகள்- தீர்மானங்கள் – போராட்டங்கள் :

03.07.1979 அன்று பிற்படுத்தப்பட்ட சமுதாயத்திற்கு பேரிடி என்று தமிழர் தலைவர் ஆசிரியர் கி.வீரமணி அவர்கள் அறிக்கை எழுதினார்.

04.07.1979 பிற்படுத்தப்பட்ட சமுதாயத் தலைவர் களுடன் ஒரு நாள் இடைவெளியில் அவசர சந்திப்பை நடத்தினார். பிரச்சனையின் ஆபத்தை விளக்கமாக எடுத்துரைத்தார்.

1979 ஜூலை 14,15 இரு நாட்கள் சேலத்தில் பிற்படுத்தப்பட்டோர் உரிமைக் காக்க மாநாடு நடத்தப்பட்டது. மாநாட்டில் ஆயிரக்கணக்கான மக்கள் குழுமினர். அரசியல் கட்சியினர், சமுதாயத்தலைவர்கள் சங்கநாதம் புரிந்தனர்.

22.07.1979 சென்னையில் மாபெரும் பிற்படுத்தப்பட்டோர் பேரணி நடத்துவது என்ற மாநாட்டின் தீர்மானப்படி எழுச்சி பேரணி சென்னையில் நடந்தது.

நாடே அதிர்ந்தது. ஆளும் அ.தி.மு.க அரசு அதிர்ச்சிக்கு ஆளானது.

17.09.1979 தஞ்சையில் மத்திய நிர்வாகக் குழுக் கூட்டத்தை கூட்டி வருமான வரம்பாணைக்கு தீ வைக்கும் போராட்டத்தை 26.11.1979 அன்று நடத்திட திராவிடர் கழக பொதுச்செயலாளர் ஆசிரியர் கி.வீரமணி அறிவித்தார்.

நவம்பர் 1 மற்றும் 23, 1979 ஆகிய இரு நாட்கள் போராட்ட வீரர்களின் பட்டியலை நேரில் சென்று பெற்றிட சுற்றுப்பயணத்தை மேற்கொண்டார்.

ரூ. 9000/- வருமான வரம்பாணைக்கு தீ வைக்கும் போராட்டம்

திராவிடர் கழக மத்திய நிர்வாகக்குழு அறிவித்தபடி 26.11.1979 அன்று ரூ.9000 வருமான வரம்பாணைக்கு தீ வைத்து கொளுத்தப்பட்டு, அதன் சாம்பல் அஞ்சல் உறையில் வைத்து சென்னை செயின்ட் ஜார்ஜ் கோட்டைக்கு மூட்டை மூட்டையாக அனுப்பப்பட்டது. சமூக நீதியை காத்திட தமிழ்நாடு அரசின் அரசாணையை கொளுத்தி அரசுக்கே சாம்பல் அனுப்பப்பட்டது.

1980 நாடாளுமன்ற தேர்தலில் இரண்டு இடம் மட்டும் வெற்றி பெற்று, எஞ்சிய 37 இடங்களில் தோற்ற பின்பு அதிர்ந்து போன அதிமுக அரசு உடன் 21.01.1980 அன்று அனைத்துக்கட்சி கூட்டத்தை கூட்டி மேற்கண்ட வருமான வரம்பாணையை எதிர்க்கும் காரணத்தை கேட்டது. திராவிடர் கழக பொதுச்செயலாளர் மானமிகு.கி.வீரமணி அவர்களின் விளக்கத்தை நேரில் கேட்டறிந்த

- In 1979–80, if a construction worker earned ₹20 per day and his wife ₹18 per day, the family would exceed the income limit and lose reservation benefits.
- Sanitation workers earning above ₹750 per month would also be excluded.

Thus, an income-based ceiling of ₹9,000 would **cripple the very purpose of reservation**, producing consequences **directly opposite** to social justice and benefiting only the privileged classes.

Hence, Dravidar Kazhagam General Secretary **Asiriyar K. Veeramani** described this income ceiling as a “calamity” **inflicted upon the Backward Classes**. He united like-minded political parties and social organizations and launched **multi-pronged struggles** against it.

Agitations Led by Dravidar Kazhagam to Abolish the ₹9,000 Ceiling

- **03.07.1979** – Asiriyar K. Veeramani issued a statement declaring the income ceiling a disaster for Backward Classes.
- **04.07.1979** – Emergency consultations were held with Backward Class leaders to explain the grave dangers.
- **14–15 July 1979** – A two-day Backward Classes Rights Protection Conference was held in Salem with thousands in attendance.
- **22.07.1979** – A massive Backward Classes rally was held in Chennai, shaking the state and shocking the ruling AIADMK government.
- **17.09.1979** – At Thanjavur, the Central Executive Committee resolved to conduct a **burning protest** of the income ceiling order on **26.11.1979**.
- **01.11.1979 & 23.11.1979** – Statewide tours were undertaken to mobilize protest volunteers.

Burning the Income Ceiling Order

On **26.11.1979**, as announced, the ₹9,000 income ceiling order was **symbolically burnt**. The ashes were packed in envelopes and **sent in bundles to Fort St. George, Chennai**, as a declaration that an unjust government order destroying social justice had been reduced to ashes and returned to the government itself.

Government Retreat and Historic Victory

In the **1980 Parliamentary elections**, the AIADMK won only **2 seats** and lost **37 seats**, leaving the government shaken.

On **21.01.1980**, an all-party meeting was convened. Chief Minister **MGR**, after personally listening to the detailed explanation of **Asiriyar K. Veeramani**, understood both the **constitutional error** and the **political consequences** of the income ceiling.



அன்றைய முதலமைச்சர் டாக்டர். எம்.ஜி.ஆர் தெளிவு பெற்றார். தோல்விக்கான காரணத்தையும் அறிந்தார்.

24.01.1980 அன்று தமிழ்நாடு முதல்வர் எம்.ஜி.ஆர் ரூ. 9000/- வருமான வரம்பாணை ரத்து செய்யப்படும் என்று அதிகாரபூர்வமாக அறிவித்தார்.

01.02.1980 அன்று தமிழ்நாடு அரசு வருமான வரம்பாணையை கீழ்க்கண்ட ஆணையின் மூலம் திரும்பப்பெற்றது.

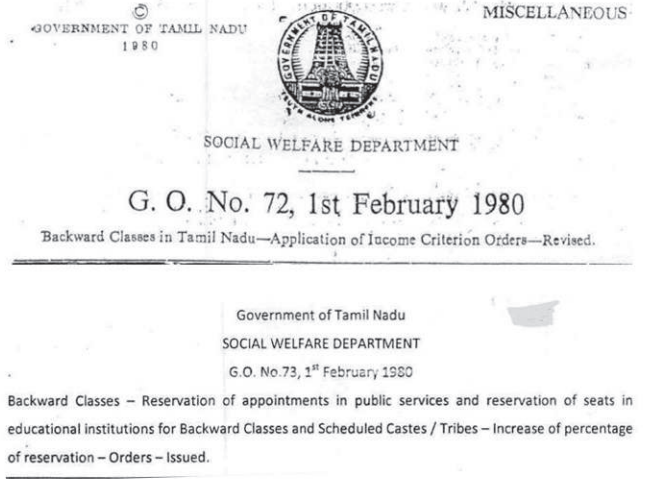
தமிழ்நாடு அரசு அரசாணை எண்: G.O. M.S. 72, 01.02.1980

அதே நாளில் 31% பிற்படுத்தப்பட்டோருக்கு வழங்கப்பட்டு வந்த இடஒதுக்கீட்டை 50% ஆக உயர்த்தி அதற்கான அரசாணையை வெளியிட்டது. சமூக நீதி வரலாற்றில் இட ஒதுக்கீட்டில் ஒரே பிரச்சனைக்கு ஒரே நாளில் இரண்டு அரசாணைகள். ஒன்று ஏற்கனவே இருந்த அரசாணைக்கு எதிரான அரசாணை. மற்றொன்று அதே பிற்படுத்தப்பட்டோர்க்கு இடஒதுக்கீட்டை உயர்த்தி வழங்கப்படும் அரசாணை. இந்த வரலாற்றை உருவாக்கிய சமூகநீதி வரலாற்றின் ஜாம்பவான்தான் திராவிடர் கழகத்தின் இன்றைய தலைவர், தமிழர் தலைவர் மானமிகு ஆசிரியர் கி. வீரமணி அவர்கள் என்பது, இனிமேல் இத்தகு சாதனைக்கு உரியோர் யாருமில்லை என்கிற உலகச்சாதனைக்கு உரியதாகும்.

தமது அரசு போட்ட உத்தரவு தவறு என்பதை உணர்ந்து திரும்பப்பெற்றும், கேட்காமலேயே இட ஒதுக்கீட்டின் அளவை உயர்த்தியும் ஆணையிட்ட பெருமகன் டாக்டர் எம்.ஜி.ஆரை பாராட்டி தமிழக அரசுக்கு நன்றி அறிவிப்பு கூட்டம் நடத்தி முடிவு செய்து அதன்படி 10.02.1980 அன்று நாடெங்கும் நன்றி அறிவுப்புக் கூட்டம் நடத்தியவர்தான் தமிழர் தலைவர் மானமிகு ஆசிரியர் கி. வீரமணி அவர்கள் ஆவார்கள்.

ஆக, 01.02.1980-ம் நாள் பிற்படுத்தப்பட்டோருக்கு பேரிடியான பொருளாதார வரம்பாணையை நீக்கி தமிழ்நாடு அரசு ஆணையிட்ட நாளாகும். இந்நாளில் சமூகநீதிக்கு வரும் சவால்களை எதிர்க்கொண்டு வெல்வோம் என உறுதி ஏற்போம். சமூகநீதி காப்போம்.

(கட்டுரையாளர் – மாநில கிராமப் பிரச்சார குழு அமைப்பாளர், திராவிடர் கழகம்)



On **24.01.1980**, MGR officially announced that the ₹9,000 income ceiling would be withdrawn.

Accordingly:

- On **01.02.1980**, the Government of Tamil Nadu formally withdrew the income ceiling through **G.O. Ms. No. 72, dated 01.02.1980**.
- On the **same day**, the Backward Class reservation was enhanced from 31% to 50% through another Government Order. (**G.O. Ms.No.73 dated 01.02.1980**)

An Unparalleled Moment in the History of Social Justice

Never before in the history of reservation had **two Government Orders been issued on the same day**:

1. One **revoking** an unjust earlier order.
2. Another **enhancing reservation** for the very same Backward Classes.

This historic achievement stands as a **global example**, credited to the towering leadership of **Dravidar Kazhagam's present leader, Thamizhar Thalaivar Asiriyar K. Veeramani**—a feat unlikely to be replicated.

Recognizing MGR's decision to correct his government's mistake and to enhance reservation even without being asked, **Asiriyar K. Veeramani** organized statewide **Thanksgiving Meetings** on **10.02.1980**, expressing appreciation to the Chief Minister and the Tamil Nadu Government.

Conclusion

Thus, **01.02.1980** stands as the historic day on which the **economic income ceiling (creamy layer concept) — a calamity imposed on Backward Classes—was abolished** by the Government of Tamil Nadu.

Let us pledge on this day to **resist all challenges to social justice** and to **safeguard social justice at all costs**.

(The writer is Dr. K. Anbazhagan, State Organiser, Village Propaganda Committee, Dravidar Kazhagam)

ENSURE BUDGETARY ALLOCATION FOR OBCs



Sub: Ensuring Budgetary Justice for Other Backward Classes (OBCs) – Demand for Adequate Allocation and a Dedicated OBC Special Component Plan in Union Budget 2026–27

Letter addressed by AIOBC Employees Federation dated 6th Jan 2026 to Hon'ble Union Minister of Finance Tmt. Nirmala Sitaraman and marked copy to Hon'ble Union Minister of Social Justice & Empowerment and Hon'ble Chairperson & Members, Parliamentary Committee for OBC

On behalf of the **All India OBC Employees Federation**, we respectfully submit this representation seeking your urgent and compassionate intervention to ensure **adequate, proportionate and justice-oriented budgetary allocation for the Other Backward Classes (OBCs)** in the forthcoming **Union Budget 2026–27**, to be presented in February 2026.

Madam, the **Other Backward Classes constitute a majority of India's population** and remain one of the most economically vulnerable and socially disadvantaged sections. Multiple studies and official data indicate that **nearly 27% of OBCs continue to live below the poverty line**, with a significant proportion trapped in multidimensional poverty. Yet, **their share in Union Budget allocations for social development remains disproportionately low**, especially when viewed in comparison with other deprived communities.

The Union Government has rightly established **Special Component Plans / Development Action Plans** for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, ensuring **earmarked, non-divertible and outcome-based funding** across Ministries.

Budget Allocation for SCs, STs and OBCs (₹ in Crores)

(Schemes like Pre-Matric, Post-Matric, NBCFDC, Fellowships etc.)

(Rupees in crores)

2020-21 TO 2025-26

Division	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
SC	6115	7807	9285	7412	10309	10377
ST	5472	6126	8406	7529	10237	14925
O.B.C.	1507	1780	1773	1838	2064	2565

(Source: Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment – Annual Reports)

These figures underline a **persistent pattern of underfunding of OBC welfare**, while allocations for SCs and STs have benefitted from **institutionalised planning mechanisms**.

Madam, the Union Government has rightly operationalised **Special Component Plans / Development Action Plans** for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, ensuring **earmarked, non-divertible and outcome-oriented funding** across Ministries and Departments.

In this regard, we would like to mention that during the Union Budget 2022–23, an amount of ₹89,265 crore was allocated for the Scheduled Tribes Component (STC), while ₹1,42,342 crore was allocated for the Scheduled Castes Component (SCC). Further, in the Interim Budget 2024–25, the total allocation for the welfare of Scheduled Castes stood at ₹1,65,492 crore and that for Scheduled Tribes at ₹1,21,023 crore.

These substantial allocations clearly reflect a **planned and structured commitment** to the welfare of SCs and STs through dedicated component plans. **However, no such Special Component Plan or comparable earmarked allocation exists for OBCs**, resulting in fragmented schemes, inadequate funding and absence of accountability.

Madam, the **absence of an OBC Special Component Plan** contradicts the **constitutional vision of equality, substantive justice and inclusive development**, and undermines the very spirit of *Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas*.

In this context, the **AIOBC Employees Federation earnestly demands:**

1. **Introduction of a dedicated “OBC Special Component Plan (OBC-SCP)”** in the Union Budget 2026–27, on the lines of SCSP and STSP.
2. **Substantial enhancement of budgetary allocation for OBC welfare**, commensurate with their population share and poverty levels.
3. **Earmarking of OBC-specific funds across Ministries and Departments**, including Education, Skill Development, MSME, Rural Development, Housing, Health and Entrepreneurship.
4. **Statutory safeguards to prevent diversion or dilution of OBC funds**, ensuring transparency, outcome monitoring and social audit.

Madam, budget is not merely a financial statement; it is a **moral document reflecting the State’s commitment to social justice**. The continued marginalisation of OBCs in budgetary priorities cannot be reconciled with India’s constitutional promise of equality and fraternity.

We sincerely hope that the **Union Budget 2026–27 will mark a historic correction**, by recognising OBCs as a distinct focus group requiring planned, targeted and adequately funded intervention.

We trust in your sense of justice, constitutional responsibility and inclusive vision, and **earnestly request your favourable consideration** of this long-pending and legitimate demand.

With respectful regards,
Yours sincerely,

(G. Karunanidhy)
General Secretary

NEET-PG 2025: Vacant Seats, Cut-off Revision, and the Debate on Merit and Capacity

18,000 seats remain vacant, NEET-PG cut-off lowered after second round of counselling

Bindu Shajan Perappadan
NEW DELHI

More than 18,000 post-graduate medical seats remained vacant in government and private medical colleges across India despite the completion of the second round of counselling, prompting the National Board of Examinations in Medical Sciences (NBEMS) to revise the qualifying percentiles for the postgraduate National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET-PG) 2025 admissions, a senior Health Ministry official told *The Hindu* on Wednesday.

The NBEMS, earlier this week, said the qualifying cut-off for the



Qualifying percentile cut-off for the third round of NEET-PG this year has been reduced to zero for reserved categories.

who scored in negative (there is negative marking for wrong answers) are now eligible to take part in counselling.

The cut-off for the general category has been reduced to seven percentile

and Family Welfare issued on January 9, "the minimum qualifying percentile cut-off for counselling of the third round of NEET-PG 2025-26 for various categories of candidates has been reduced", the NBEMS said in an official notice.

timal utilisation of available seats, which are vital for expanding India's pool of trained medical specialists. Leaving such seats vacant undermines national efforts to improve healthcare delivery and results in the loss of valuable educational resources."

The source further said that all NEET-PG candidates were MBBS-qualified doctors who had completed their degrees and internships.

"The previous percentile thresholds restricted the pool of eligible candidates despite the availability of seats," the source said.

The Health Ministry maintained that "sions" remain "striv rit-based, deterr NEET-PG rank a

rect or discrimination are inter-se merit based allocation to distribute? The? there? of ac the mer ar y

NEET-PG cut-off score now fixed at -40 out of 800

New Delhi: The govt on Tuesday lowered qualifying cut-off for NEET-PG 2025, paving the way to fill over 9,000 vacant PG medical seats, amid concerns that a big chunk of training capacity was being wasted at a time of acute doctor shortages, reports Anuja Jaiswal.

Under the revised criteria, qualifying percentile for general and EWS candidates has been reduced from 50th to 7th percentile, and for general persons with disabilities

TIMES OF INDIA 14.01.2026

Test meant to draw up doc merit list, not reassess competence

Continued from P1

The decision was notified by National Board of Examinations in Medical Sciences (NBEMS), which revised qualifying percentiles across categories to expand eligibility for counselling and admissions. Officials said around 2.4 lakh candidates appeared for NEET-PG this year, but a high cut-off had left thousands of seats unfilled. Officials said India has 65,000-70,000 PG medical seats, and allowing nearly one in seven seats to remain vacant would weaken teaching hospitals and strain healthcare delivery, particularly in govt institutions that rely heavily on resident doctors. The relaxation followed a representation by Indian Medical Association (IMA), which had written to Union health minister JP Nadda on Jan 12, seeking a rational revision of cut-offs to prevent large-scale wastage. Explaining the move, Nadda said the entrance exam was meant to draw up a merit list, not to reassess competence.

Despite the completion of the second round of NEET-PG 2025 counselling, **over 18,000 postgraduate medical seats**—across government and private institutions—have remained vacant nationwide. This unprecedented shortfall prompted the **National Board of Examinations in Medical Sciences (NBEMS)**, under directions from the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, to **substantially lower the qualifying percentile cut-offs** for the third round of counselling.

Under the revised criteria, the **qualifying percentile for SC, ST and OBC candidates has been reduced from 40 to zero**, while the **general and EWS categories have been lowered from the 50th to the 7th percentile**. For candidates with benchmark disabilities, the cut-off has also been significantly reduced. In score terms, this means eligibility at **-40 marks out of 800**, owing to negative marking. As a result, **all MBBS-qualified candidates who appeared for NEET-PG, including those with negative scores, are now eligible to participate in counselling**.

The authorities have justified this move as a **pragmatic response to massive seat wastage**, which threatens to undermine India's medical training capacity. With nearly **65,000-70,000 PG medical seats available nationally**, leaving thousands unfilled would weaken teaching hospitals, worsen the shortage of resident doctors, and strain healthcare delivery—especially in government and peripheral institutions. Officials have repeatedly clarified that **NEET-PG is**

designed to generate a merit list for allocation, not to reassess the clinical competence of doctors who have already cleared MBBS and university examinations.

The Health Ministry has also stressed that **there is no dilution of merit or academic standards**, as admissions will continue to be **strictly rank-based and preference-driven**, routed only through authorised counselling mechanisms. The cut-off relaxation merely **expands eligibility**, ensuring optimal utilisation of existing educational infrastructure and human resources.

However, the decision has sparked **sharp criticism from sections of the medical fraternity**. Some doctors' associations argue that drastic cut-off reductions risk lowering entry standards and could lead to sub-optimal training outcomes, with broader implications for patient care and public health. Critics contend that repeated post-exam relaxations erode the credibility of the examination system and point to deeper structural issues in medical education planning.

In essence, the NEET-PG 2025 cut-off revision reflects a **policy dilemma between safeguarding perceived merit thresholds and preventing large-scale national loss of medical training capacity**. While the government views the move as an unavoidable corrective measure to fill seats and address doctor shortages, the controversy underscores the urgent need for **systemic reforms in medical education, seat planning, and assessment frameworks** to avoid such crises in the future. ■

THE CRADLE OF THE DRAVIDIAN AWAKENING: VICTORIA PUBLIC HALL

- G.SARASWATHI



The Victoria Public Hall stands out as a unique symbol shining in the historical and cultural identity of Chennai. 'From the beginning of the Justice Party, the foundation of the Dravidian model celebrated by the nation, to the first film screening in Chennai, this hall has carried countless historical pride, and we have renovated and reopened it without changing its antiquity,' Chief Minister M.K. Stalin mentioned in his X post, strongly emphasizing the historical significance of this restoration.

Chief Minister M.K. Stalin officially reopened the doors of the Victoria Public Hall on December 23, 2025, marking the end of a long period of silence for this 137-year-old landmark.

Victoria Public Hall, popularly known as Chennai's Town Hall, is a historically significant landmark located on E.V.R. Periyar Salai (Poonamalle High Road), Chennai between Ripon Building and Chennai Central Railway Station. Victoria Public Hall is not just a building; it is a time capsule that holds the history of Chennai from the British era to the modern day.

Victoria Public Hall, or the **Town Hall**, is one of Chennai's finest surviving examples of British-era architecture. Named in honour of **Queen Victoria, Empress of India**, the building was conceived to commemorate her **Golden Jubilee**. It was formally opened to the public in **1887** by **Lord Connemara**. An outstanding specimen of **Indo-Saracenic architecture**, the hall was designed by the eminent architect **Robert Fellowes Chisholm (1840-1915)**, incorporating elements of the **Romanesque style**. The construction was executed by **Namperumal Chetty** between **1888 and 1890**, resulting in a landmark that continues to stand as a testament to Chennai's rich colonial and architectural heritage.

Today, reclaimed and repurposed, it stands as a powerful example of how Tamil Nadu transforms inherited structures into instruments of people-centric culture. The meticulous ₹32.62-crore restoration under the Singara Chennai 2.0 initiative has ensured structural safety, modern functionality, and historical authenticity—demonstrating governance that respects both heritage and progress.



Political Significance: The Justice Party

It was within these very walls, on 20 November 1916, that the South Indian Liberal Federation—later known as the Justice Party—was formed. This moment marked the ideological beginning of the Dravidian movement, which challenged caste hierarchies, asserted social equality, and laid the groundwork for the rational, welfare-oriented governance model Tamil Nadu is known for today. In this sense, Victoria Public Hall is a sacred political and cultural space, where ideas that reshaped society first took collective form.

The Tamil Nadu government undertook the task of restoring this historical monument, which had crumbled over time, 'in a way that revives many memories of Chennai city before our eyes.' Under the orders of Chief Minister M.K. Stalin, and under the Singara Chennai 2.0 project, the Greater Chennai Corporation carried out the redevelopment at a cost of Rs. 32.62 crore, ensuring it is earthquake-resistant, preserves its antiquity, and incorporates modern technology.

Carrying 135 years of history within its walls, Victoria Public Hall, now reopened for public viewing and use, stands as a symbol of the Dravidian model of governance with the motto 'Protecting history is protecting the future.' Proudly representing the city of Chennai and serving as a cultural landmark of Tamil Nadu, Victoria Public Hall will continue to stand as a living history that connects generations.

Its revival is not just an act of conservation; it is a reaffirmation of Tamil Nadu's identity, where history is honoured, voices are remembered, and the future is consciously shaped.

(The writer G.Saraswathi is the Treasurer,
Union Bank of India Backward Classes Employees
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VBSA BILL ISSUE

T.N. body urges MPs to prevent passage of VBSA Bill, says it curtails academic freedom

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

The State Platform for Common School System-Tamil Nadu on Saturday urged Parliamentarians to save education by preventing the passage of the Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhishthan (VBSA) Bill, 2025.

In a statement, it said the VBSA Bill was referred to the Joint Parliamentary

Committee. "A JPC cannot discuss a Bill that doesn't fall within the parliamentary jurisdiction. Parliament has no power to deliberate on a subject entered in List 2," it added.

P.B. Prince Gajendra Babu, general secretary of SPCSS-TN, said the VBSA Bill, 2025, would deny education to the "bahu-jan". "As the government

withdraws from education funding and allows total access to private players – more importantly, foreign players – the State governments will have no authority and control to stop education from becoming a commercial commodity," he said.

The statement noted that every research, every faculty member, and every student would be un-

der the watchful eyes of the Union government as academic freedom would be lost. "A reading of Entry 44 of List 1, Entry 32 of List 2, and Entry 25 of List 3 under Schedule 7 of the Constitution of India will help understand that the Union government can only coordinate and determine the standards in higher education," the statement said.

The Vikshit Bharat Shiksha Adhishthan (VBSA) Bill, 2025 has triggered strong opposition in Tamil Nadu, with the State Platform for Common School System – Tamil Nadu (SPCSS-TN) urging Members of Parliament to prevent its passage. The body argues that the Bill poses a serious threat to academic freedom, federalism, and public education in India.

At the heart of the concern is the allegation that the VBSA Bill would centralise control over education, effectively placing higher education institutions under the direct oversight of the Union government. According to SPCSS-TN, this would undermine the constitutional distribution of powers, as education is a subject in the Concurrent List, where States have a decisive role. The organisation contends that a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) cannot legitimately deliberate on a Bill that intrudes into matters falling within State jurisdiction, thereby raising constitutional and procedural objections.

The critics warn that the Bill would lead to a withdrawal of the State from education funding and regulation, opening the door for unchecked entry of private and foreign players. This shift, they argue, risks turning education into a commercial commodity, rather than a public good aimed at equity and social development. Once States lose regulatory authority, they would be powerless

to prevent profiteering, exclusion, or dilution of academic standards.

A major fear articulated in the statement is the erosion of academic freedom. If higher education institutions function under constant supervision of the Union government, faculty members, researchers, and students may lose autonomy in teaching, research, and expression. Such an environment, critics argue, is incompatible with the idea of universities as independent spaces for critical thinking and knowledge creation.

The SPCSS-TN also grounds its opposition in constitutional provisions, citing Entry 66 of List I, Entry 32 of List II, and Entry 25 of List III of the Seventh Schedule. These entries, they argue, clearly limit the Union's role to coordination and standard-setting, not total control. Any attempt to override this balance would weaken India's federal structure and marginalise States' role in shaping education policy according to regional and social needs.

In essence, the VBSA Bill is viewed by opponents as a centralising, market-oriented intervention that threatens public education, State autonomy, and academic freedom. The demand to MPs is therefore to halt the Bill, protect the constitutional framework, and ensure that education remains a democratically governed public responsibility rather than a centrally controlled or commercialised sector. ■

4 of 10 faculty posts vacant across 11 AIIMS, reveals RTI

Newer AIIMS Face Steeper Staffing Gaps

Anuja Jaiswal



26%, and AIIMS Bhopal 25.6%. Health experts warn that prolonged faculty shortages at teaching hospitals affect outpatient services, surgery schedules, ICU supervision and the training of undergraduate and postgraduate

AIIMS Faculty Vacancy Crisis (RTI Data – Jan 2026) Status of Teaching Faculty Positions across 11 AIIMS

Overall Snapshot (11 AIIMS Combined)

Total Sanctioned Posts	Total Vacancies	Overall Vacancy Rate
4,099	~1,600	~40%

AIIMS Institution	Sanctioned Faculty Strength	Vacant Posts	Vacancy %
AIIMS Delhi	1,306	524	40.0%
AIIMS Jodhpur	405	189	46.7%
AIIMS Gorakhpur	—	—	45.5%
AIIMS Jammu	—	—	44.3%
AIIMS Kalyani	—	—	44.0%
AIIMS Nagpur	373	137	36.7%
AIIMS Bathinda	—	—	37.4%
AIIMS Raipur	—	—	34.8%
AIIMS Bhubaneswar	—	—	~35%
AIIMS Bilaspur	—	—	>33%
AIIMS Bhopal	—	—	25.6%

RTI disclosures reveal a **serious faculty shortage across 11 AIIMS**, with **about 40% of sanctioned teaching posts vacant (1,600 out of 4,099)**. This staffing crisis affects both older and newer AIIMS, undermining patient care, medical education, and research.

Even **AIIMS Delhi**, the country's premier medical institution, has **around 40% vacancies (524 of 1,306 posts)**. Newer AIIMS face even sharper gaps: **Jodhpur (46.7%)**, **Gorakhpur (45.5%)**, **Jammu (44.3%)**, and **Kalyani (44%)**, indicating severe recruitment and retention challenges.

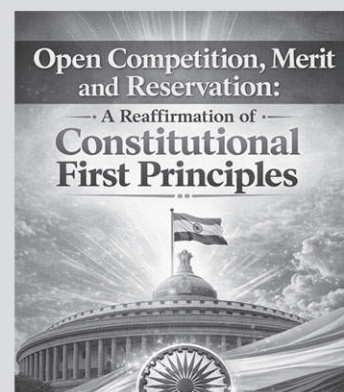
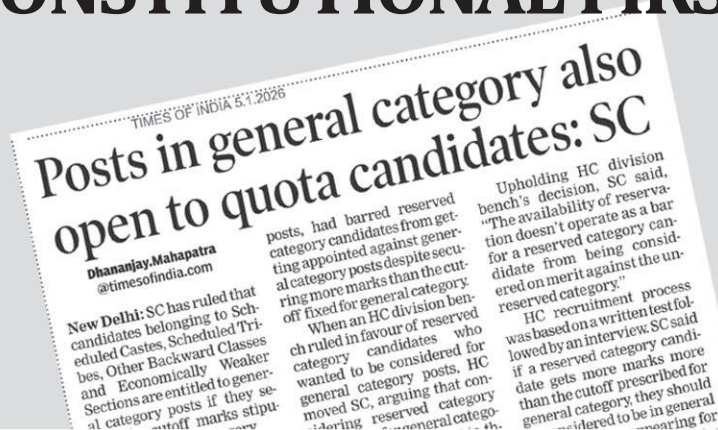
The shortages span **critical specialties** such as medicine, surgery, anaesthesia, pediatrics, neurology, and oncology. As a result, hospitals face **overcrowding, delayed procedures, strained ICUs, and compromised training** of undergraduate and postgraduate doctors.

Experts warn that rapid expansion of AIIMS infrastructure **without parallel human resource planning** has created this imbalance. Overburdened faculty face burnout, while patient outcomes and academic standards suffer.

In essence, the AIIMS faculty crisis highlights a systemic policy failure. Urgent reforms in recruitment, incentives, and coordinated Centre–State planning are essential to protect India's public healthcare and medical education system.

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF INDIA
CIVIL APPELLATE JURISDICTION CIVIL APPEAL NO. 14112 OF 2024
RAJASTHAN HIGH COURT & ANR. VS. RAJAT YADAV & ORS
WITH CIVIL APPEAL NO(S). 3957-4009 OF 2025
JUDGES: JUSTICE DIPANKAR DATTA AND JUSTICE AUGUSTINE GEORGE MASIH
DATE OF JUDGEMENT: DECEMBER 19, 2025.

OPEN COMPETITION, MERIT AND RESERVATION: A REAFFIRMATION OF CONSTITUTIONAL FIRST PRINCIPLES



- G.KARUNANIDHI

I. The Core Constitutional Question

At the heart of the present controversy lies a deceptively simple but repeatedly contested constitutional principle: What does “Open Competition” or “Unreserved / General Category” actually mean?

The recent Supreme Court ruling reported in The Times of India (5 January 2026) once again clarifies that **general category posts are not the exclusive preserve of so-called “general” candidates**, but are **open to all candidates, including SC, ST, OBC and EWS**, provided they secure the **same cutoff marks prescribed for the general category**. This principle is neither novel nor revolutionary—it is embedded in constitutional equality, administrative instructions, and long-settled judicial precedent.

Yet, the persistence of contrary interpretations by recruiting agencies and even some High Courts reveals a deeper structural misunderstanding—if not resistance—to the constitutional philosophy underlying reservations.

II. DoPT O.M. 8.9.1993: Administrative Clarity Ignored

The Department of Personnel & Training’s Office Memorandum dated **8 September 1993**, issued in the aftermath of Indra Sawhney (1992), laid down

an unambiguous rule:

“Candidates belonging to OBCs recruited on the basis of merit in an open competition on the same standards prescribed for general candidates shall not be adjusted against the reservation quota of 27%.”

This instruction was meant to operationalise two constitutional imperatives simultaneously:

1. Merit cannot be caste-penalised, and
2. Reservation quotas must not be artificially inflated or distorted.

In essence, the DoPT recognised that **meritorious reserved-category candidates do not consume reservation**. They belong to the **open pool**, not as beneficiaries of affirmative action but as equal competitors.

Despite this clarity, premier recruiting agencies—most notably the UPSC—continued to adopt practices that effectively **re-segregated candidates by caste at the threshold itself**, thereby defeating the very concept of open competition.

III. UPSC v. A. Cletus (2001): Judicial Correction of an Unconstitutional Practice

The discriminatory approach of the UPSC was squarely challenged in **Union Public Service**

Commission vs. A. Cletus (2001). The facts revealed a deeply troubling practice:

- Candidates were **compartmentalised by caste at the preliminary examination stage itself**,
- Even before merit could operate across categories.

The **Central Administrative Tribunal** and the **Madras High Court** both rejected UPSC's defence and held the practice to be **unconstitutional**. The Supreme Court affirmed this position, holding that:

- **Meritorious reserved-category candidates must be treated as part of the unreserved pool at every stage of selection.**
- Open competition **cannot be artificially closed** by administrative categorisation.

This judgement reaffirmed that **"open" means open in substance, not merely in form**. Any other interpretation converts open competition into a euphemism for caste monopoly, which the Constitution does not permit.

IV. The Rajasthan High Court Deviation and Its Implications

Against this settled backdrop, the Rajasthan High Court's ruling—restricting reserved candidates who secured general cutoffs to reserved posts alone—represented a **serious doctrinal regression**.

The HC's reasoning rested on the flawed assumption that allowing such candidates into general seats would amount to a "double benefit". This argument has been **consistently rejected** since *Indra Sawhney* and explicitly negated in *A. Cletus*.

The Supreme Court, while overturning this view, emphatically clarified:

"The availability of reservation doesn't operate as a bar for a reserved category candidate from being considered on merit against the unreserved category."

This observation strikes at the root of the "double benefit" myth. **Merit is not a benefit; it is a constitutional entitlement.**

V. Reasserting the Meaning of "General Category"

The Supreme Court's recent ruling powerfully reiterates that:

- **General category seats are not a caste category.**
- They are **category-neutral, merit-based vacancies**.

As Justice Dipankar Datta observed, the word "open" means exactly that—**posts earmarked as open do not fall into any category**. Candidates

enter or exit these posts **only on merit**, not on social identity.

The Court further clarified the correct procedure:

- If a reserved-category candidate clears the **general cutoff**, they are treated as general.
- If they fall short at the final stage, they revert to consideration under their respective reserved category.

This approach preserves both **equality of opportunity** and **the integrity of reservation quotas**.

VI. A Disturbing Pattern: Why Does This Issue Keep Returning?

The real tragedy is not the Supreme Court's correction—but the fact that such correction is repeatedly required.

Despite:

- Constitutional text (Articles 14, 16),
- Administrative instructions (DoPT 1993),
- Binding precedents (*Indra Sawhney*, *A. Cletus*),

institutions continue to **misinterpret or dilute the concept of open competition**. This suggests not ignorance alone, but a structural bias that views reservation not as a tool for equality, but as a disqualification from merit.

Such thinking directly contradicts Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's constitutional vision, where **reservation and merit are not adversaries, but complementary instruments of substantive equality**.

VII. Conclusion: Eternal Vigilance and Constitutional Memory

The concluding reflection is unavoidable:

"Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty."

For OBCs, SCs, STs and other marginalised communities, this vigilance is not abstract—it is a lived necessity. Each dilution of "open competition" erodes constitutional guarantees incrementally, often under the guise of administrative convenience or misplaced notions of fairness.

The Supreme Court's ruling of January 2026 is not merely a legal verdict; it is a **reminder**—to institutions, courts, and society—that:

- **Merit cannot be monopolised,**
- **Open competition cannot be closed,** and
- **Constitutional ideals must be defended repeatedly, even decades after they were first articulated.**

The struggle, therefore, is not only for reservation—but for the **true meaning of equality itself**.

(The writer is the General Secretary, AIOBC Employees Federation and Member, Social Justice Monitoring Committee, Govt. of Tamil Nadu)



THOUGHTS OF PERIYAR: Wake-Up Call

पेरियार के विचार: जागृति का आह्वान

People who eke out their living by foul means should always be protested against by loud and clear voice of contempt, ignoring the toxic forces that rush to stifle it. This is possible only when we wake up from the slumber of ignorance. Our awareness alone can reform the erring coteries. Those who refuse to give up their vices are condemned to perish with the passing of time, as evident through historical records. Longing for a luxurious life without labour for it, is unpardonable. Such lethargic morons who love to be shirkers, rather than to be workers, are detrimental to communal harmony and peace. People who never sweat for their survival are harmful pests to human society. The world has begun identifying such gluttons and has also started eradicating them.

Our endless resistance

Religions and traditional customs related to them are the prominent shields protecting these human worms. There are many other fences safeguarding these venomous shrubs. Dismantling these fences is indeed an arduous task for us. These fanatics resist every step of reform. They can never tolerate any change in their outdated views and beliefs. How are we to tame them without annihilating religions and castes? Even the countries in the west sympathise with our helplessness. In the east, our existence is certainly pitiable. Religions, born from idiocy has been flourishing with the passing of time. It transfuses animal instinct in people and makes them wild brutes. When we endure their torture and retaliate we are being accused as anti-religions, anti-social and anti-brahminists.

Insensitive victims

People who reap a harvest of benefits from religions, caste system and brahminism would naturally frown at

अनुचित और अनैतिक तरीकों से अपना जीवनयापन करने वाले लोगों के विरुद्ध घोर तिरस्कार की ऊँची और स्पष्ट आवाज़ में सदैव विरोध किया जाना चाहिए, चाहे विषैली शक्तियाँ उसे दबाने के लिए कितना ही भागदौड़ क्यों न करें। यह तभी संभव है जब हम अज्ञान की नींद से जागें। केवल हमारी जागरूकता ही भटके हुए समूहों में सुधार ला सकती है। जो लोग अपनी बुराइयों को छोड़ने से इंकार करते हैं, वे इतिहास के प्रमाणों के अनुसार समय के साथ नष्ट हो जाते हैं। बिना श्रम किए जीवन में ऐशो-आराम की इच्छा रखना अक्षम्य है। ऐसे आलसी और अकर्मण्य मूर्ख, जो श्रमिक बनने के बजाय काम से बचना चाहते हैं, वे सामाजिक सौहार्द और शांति के लिए घातक हैं। जो लोग अपने अस्तित्व के लिए कभी पसीना नहीं बहाते, वे मानव समाज के लिए हानिकारक परजीवी हैं। दुनिया ने ऐसे पेटू लोगों को पहचानना शुरू कर दिया है और उन्हें समाप्त करने की प्रक्रिया भी आरंभ हो चुकी है।

हमारा अंतहीन प्रतिरोध

धर्म और उनसे जुड़े पारंपरिक रीति-रिवाज़ इन मानव-कीड़ों की रक्षा करने वाली मुख्य ढालें हैं। इनके अलावा भी अनेक दीवारें हैं जो इन विषैली झाड़ियों को सुरक्षित रखती हैं। इन दीवारों को तोड़ना हमारे लिए अत्यंत कठिन कार्य है। ये कट्टरपंथी सुधार के हर कदम का विरोध करते हैं। वे अपने पुराने विचारों और विश्वासों में किसी भी परिवर्तन को सहन नहीं कर सकते। धर्म और जातियों का उन्मूलन किए बिना हम इन्हें कैसे वश में करें? पश्चिम के देश भी हमारी इस विवशता के प्रति सहानुभूति रखते हैं। पूरब में तो हमारी स्थिति निश्चय ही दयनीय है। मूर्खता से जन्मे धर्म समय के साथ फलते-फूलते गए हैं। वे लोगों में पशु-वृत्तियों का संचार करते हैं और उन्हें जंगली बना देते हैं। जब हम उनके अत्याचारों का प्रतिकार करते हैं तो हम पर धर्म-विरोधी, समाज-विरोधी और ब्राह्मण-विरोधी होने का आरोप लगता है।

us. But I am shocked to find some of our own victimized people remaining insensitive to their sufferings and turning against us. They think they can enjoy a larger percentage of privileges by compromising with the rivals. This makes them oppose us, forgetting the truth that we have been actually struggling for their welfare, development and rehabilitation, upliftment and redemption.

A group of our own people have fallen a prey to the exploiting forces. They seem to enjoy their own degradation and slavery. They are being used by the vested interest coteries. The Chief Minister Omandur Ramasamy Reddy in the present Congress headed ministry is a profound theist and spiritualist soaked in religious, affinity. But he himself recently passed a Bill ordering investigation of maladministration and corruption in hundreds of temples and monasteries in the state. Some of our Dravidian comrades are found raising hue and cry against the Bill concerned.

Maladministration of temples

Overflow of funds in hundreds of temples and mutts is an unsolved mystery. Probing into this issue is the right of the state rulers. Monopoly of human bandicoots, cannot go unchecked. The source of funds and the financial management must be examined to curb further corruption. Hence, the Bill Presented by the Chief Minister is a welcome move. But Brahmins have begun screaming that the Bill is detrimental to religion. Some of our own people have joined them in the cry.

The Bill concerned is not aimed at all the temples but only at those temples that have become dens of corruption. Wealth is generated by labour. How could all the corrupt temples and monasteries amass so much wealth when no act of labour and hardwork takes place under their roof? Should it not be found out and exposed? This Bill asserts the right of the Government to intervene in the temple affairs and its authority is unquestionable.

Most of these temples are found to be dark chambers of obnoxious activities too. Obese temple priests have been indulging in carnal pleasures under the guise of religion, god and worship. Gullible people and their fear are being taken advantage of. Ignorant people have been pouring their hard earned money into the coffers of these unabashed temple administrators. A government of the people, existing for the people, has the right to excavate the facts. To protest against it, is in fact social injustice.

Embezzlements punishable

Temples are accountable to the common public. The wealth accumulated should be reasonably spent. Embezzlement and misuse of temple wealth is certainly a criminal offence. Renowned temples are in no way superior to small temples at street corners and pavements. Justice is equal to both. A government

संवैदनाविहीन पीड़ित

धर्म, जाति-व्यवस्था और ब्राह्मणवाद से लाभ उठाने वाले लोग स्वाभाविक रूप से हमसे नाराज़ होंगे। किंतु मुझे यह देखकर गहरा आघात लगता है कि शोषण झेल रहे हमारे ही कुछ लोग अपने कष्टों के प्रति असंवेदनशील बने रहते हैं और हमारे ही विरुद्ध खड़े हो जाते हैं। वे सोचते हैं कि प्रतिद्वंद्वियों से समझौता कर वे अधिक विशेषाधिकार प्राप्त कर सकते हैं। इसी कारण वे हमारा विरोध करते हैं और इस सच्चाई को भूल जाते हैं कि वास्तव में हम उनके ही कल्याण, विकास, पुनर्वास, उत्थान और मुक्ति के लिए संघर्ष कर रहे हैं।

हमारे ही लोगों का एक वर्ग शोषणकारी शक्तियों का शिकार बन चुका है। वे अपनी ही अवनति और गुलामी में आनंद लेते प्रतीत होते हैं। स्वार्थी गुट उनका इस्तेमाल कर रहे हैं। वर्तमान कांग्रेस-नेतृत्व वाली सरकार के मुख्यमंत्री ओमंदूर रामासामी रेड्डी एक गहरे आस्तिक और आध्यात्मिक व्यक्ति हैं तथा वे धार्मिक आस्था से ओत-प्रोत हैं। फिर भी उन्होंने हाल ही में राज्य के सैकड़ों मंदिरों और मठों में कुप्रशासन और भ्रष्टाचार की जाँच का आदेश देने वाला विधेयक पारित किया है। हमारे कुछ द्रविड़ साथी इस विधेयक के विरुद्ध शोर मचा रहे हैं।

मंदिरों का कुप्रशासन

सैकड़ों मंदिरों और मठों में धन की भरमार एक अनसुलझा रहस्य है। इस विषय की जाँच करना राज्य के शासकों का अधिकार है। मानव-परजीवियों का एकाधिकार अनियंत्रित नहीं छोड़ा जा सकता। भ्रष्टाचार पर अंकुश लगाने के लिए धन के स्रोत और वित्तीय प्रबंधन की जाँच आवश्यक है। इसलिए मुख्यमंत्री द्वारा प्रस्तुत यह विधेयक स्वागतयोग्य कदम है। लेकिन ब्राह्मण यह कहकर चिल्लाने लगे हैं कि यह विधेयक धर्म के लिए हानिकारक है। कुछ हमारे लोग भी उनके साथ इस शोर में शामिल हो गए हैं।

यह विधेयक सभी मंदिरों के विरुद्ध नहीं है, बल्कि केवल उन मंदिरों के लिए है जो भ्रष्टाचार के अड्डे बन चुके हैं। धन श्रम से उत्पन्न होता है। फिर जिन मंदिरों और मठों में कोई श्रम और कठोर परिश्रम नहीं होता, वे इतना धन कैसे इकट्ठा कर लेते हैं? क्या इसका पता लगाना और इसे उजागर करना आवश्यक नहीं है? यह विधेयक मंदिरों के मामलों में हस्तक्षेप करने के सरकार के अधिकार को स्थापित करता है और उसकी वैधता निर्विवाद है।

इनमें से अधिकांश मंदिर घृणित गतिविधियों के अंधे कक्ष भी पाए गए हैं। मोटे-ताज़े पुजारी धर्म, ईश्वर और पूजा की आड़ में कामुक सुखों में लिप्त रहे हैं। भोले-भाले लोगों और उनके भय का लाभ उठाया जा रहा है। अज्ञानी लोग अपनी मेहनत की कमाई इन निर्लज्ज मंदिर प्रशासकों की तिजोरियों में डालते रहे हैं। जनता के लिए और जनता द्वारा बनी सरकार को सच्चाई उजागर करने का अधिकार है। इसका विरोध करना वास्तव में सामाजिक अन्याय है।

गबन दंडनीय है

मंदिर सामान्य जनता के प्रति उत्तरदायी हैं। इसमें एकत्रित धन का उचित उपयोग होना चाहिए। मंदिर की संपत्ति का गबन और दुरुपयोग निश्चित रूप से आपराधिक कुकृत्य है। प्रसिद्ध मंदिर सड़क-किनारे और फुटपाथों पर बने छोटे मंदिरों से किसी भी प्रकार श्रेष्ठ नहीं हैं। न्याय दोनों के लिए समान

adhering to secularism cannot be a silent spectator to the temples that hoodwink society.

Street corner temples spend paltry sums to conserve divinity, whereas reputable temples spend lavishly under the pretext of conventional rituals and divine celebrations. This disparity is to be curbed by the state governments. Every economic offence is punishable. The government expects temples to manage such things themselves. There is nothing undesirable about it. Our Dravidian nationalists should realize this. In fact, besides welcoming this Bill, we also wish it is enacted as a law at the earliest.

Gandhi had also criticized South Indian temples on many occasions. He had pointed out the maladministration in most of them. But the corrupt Brahmin temple priests have not reformed. Gandhi is no more. But there is no change so far in the condition of South Indian temples. Most of the activities in them are inexplicably nauseating. Let this conference be a "wake-up call" to all our people. Join hands and fight for reformation in this particular issue.

As an outcome of this Bill of the government, if the temple revenue is used atleast to some extent for public welfare, I would be really glad. I urge all our cadres to stay away from misguiding forces and tread on the right path from this day. Ignore religious fanatics.

A leading newspaper published by a Brahmin management has frankly admitted that there is corruption and maladministration in most of the temples and mutts. But, the paper concerned wants senior Hindu religious leaders to undertake the task of reformation. I disagree with them. The government ruling the state has the right to take steps and annihilate the maladministration of temples. I hope, all our Dravidian Cadres and friends would wake up by my call for awareness.

(‘Kudi Arasu’ Editorial, 29.01.1949)

Translated by: M.R.Manohar

है। धर्मनिरपेक्षता का पालन करने वाली सरकार समाज को ठगने वाले उन मंदिरों को चुपचाप देखते नहीं रह सकती।

सड़क-किनारे के मंदिर अल्प धन से देवत्व की रक्षा करते हैं, जबकि प्रतिष्ठित मंदिर पारंपरिक अनुष्ठानों और दैवी उत्सवों के नाम पर अपार धन खर्च करते हैं। इस असमानता पर राज्य सरकारों को रोक लगानी चाहिए। प्रत्येक आर्थिक अपराध दंडनीय है। सरकार चाहती है कि मंदिर स्वयं इन मामलों का प्रबंधन करें। इसमें कुछ भी अनुचित नहीं है। हमारे द्रविड़ राष्ट्रवादियों को यह समझना चाहिए। वस्तुतः इस विधेयक का स्वागत करने के साथ-साथ हम यह भी चाहते हैं कि इसे जल्दी ही कानून बना दिया जाए।

गांधी ने भी कई अवसरों पर दक्षिण भारतीय मंदिरों की आलोचना की थी। उन्होंने उनमें व्याप्त कुप्रशासन की ओर संकेत किया था। लेकिन भ्रष्ट ब्राह्मण और मंदिरों के पुजारी सुधरे नहीं। गांधी अब नहीं रहे, किंतु दक्षिण भारतीय मंदिरों की स्थिति में अब तक कोई परिवर्तन नहीं आया है। उनमें होने वाली अधिकांश गतिविधियाँ अवर्णनीय रूप से घृणित हैं। यह सम्मेलन हमारे सभी लोगों के लिए एक "जागृति का आह्वान" बने। आइए, इस विशेष मुद्दे पर सुधार के लिए हम एकजुट होकर संघर्ष करें।

यदि इस सरकारी विधेयक के परिणामस्वरूप मंदिरों की आय का कुछ भाग भी सार्वजनिक कल्याण में उपयोग हो, तो मुझे अत्यंत प्रसन्नता होगी। मैं अपने सभी कार्यकर्ताओं से आग्रह करता हूँ कि वे आज से ही भ्रामक शक्तियों से दूर रहें और सही मार्ग पर चलें। धार्मिक उन्मादियों की उपेक्षा करें।

एक ब्राह्मण प्रबंधन द्वारा प्रकाशित प्रमुख समाचार-पत्र ने स्पष्ट रूप से स्वीकार किया है कि अधिकांश मंदिरों और मठों में भ्रष्टाचार और कुप्रशासन है। लेकिन वह पत्र चाहता है कि वरिष्ठ हिंदू धार्मिक नेता सुधार का कार्य करें। मैं इससे सहमत नहीं हूँ। राज्य की शासन करने वाली सरकार को मंदिरों के कुप्रशासन को समाप्त करने के लिए कदम उठाने का अधिकार है। मुझे आशा है कि जागरूकता के मेरे इस आह्वान से हमारे सभी द्रविड़ कार्यकर्ता और मित्र जाग उठेंगे।

(‘कुड़ी अरासु’ संपादकीय, 29.01.1949)

अनुवाद: एम. आर. मनोहर

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10th Annual General Body Meeting of NIRT–ICMR Employees Association Robert Koch Auditorium, NIRT, Chennai – JANUARY 6, 2026



Madam K. Devika, President of the Association, presided over the function. The gathering was addressed by Dr. Srinath Sathiyararayana, Director, NIRT; G. Karunanidhi, General Secretary, AIOBC Employees Federation; Dr. Jayakumar, OBC Liaison Officer; T.S. Gopakumar, Senior Administrative Officer; Dr. C. Ponuraja, SC/ST Liaison Officer, and other senior leaders of the organisation. S. Iyappan, Joint Secretary of the Association and Assistant Treasurer of the Federation, extended a warm welcome to all the dignitaries and members present. M. Asokan, General Secretary, presented the Annual Report, comprehensively outlining the activities undertaken and the achievements of the Association during the year.

7th BIENNIAL CONFERENCE OF UNION BANK OBC EMPLOYEES WELFARE ASSOCIATION, ODISHA BHUBANESHWAR – JANUARY 4, 2026



The Conference was addressed by S. Natarajan, General Secretary, All India Body; Prof. Dhaneswar Sahoo, Odia Sahitya Academy Awardee; Hare Krishna Das, General Manager, Bhubaneswar Zone; Niranjan Barik, Deputy General Manager, Regional Head, Bhubaneswar; Bibekanda Sarangi, Assistant General Manager, Regional Head, Cuttack; and Prasant Kumar Sahoo, Founder General Secretary, Odisha Unit. The Conference unanimously elected the new office-bearers, with Ajaya Kumar Parida as President and Bikram Keshar Mantry as General Secretary, along with other members of the executive body.

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