

**COMMITTEE ON THE WELFARE OF
SCHEDULED CASTES AND
SCHEDULED TRIBES
(1984-85)**

(SEVENTH LOK SABHA)

FIFTY-NINTH REPORT

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

Action Taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the Fifty-fourth Report of the Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Seventh Lok Sabha) on the Ministry of Defence—Reservations for, and employment of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in Defence Services.

(Presented to Lok Sabha on 2 JAN 1985)
Laid in Rajya Sabha on



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

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CORRIGENDA

to

59th Report of the Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (1984-85) 7th Lok Sabha.

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**COMMITTEE ON THE WELFARE OF SCHEDULED CASTES
AND SCHEDULED TRIBES
(1984—85)**

Shri A. C. Das—Chairman

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INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman, Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, having been authorised by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, present this Fifty-ninth Report (Seventh Lok Sabha) on Action Taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the Fifty-Fourth Report (Seventh Lok Sabha) on the Ministry of Defence—Reservations for, and employment of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in Defence Services.

2. The Draft Report was considered and adopted by the Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes at their sitting held on the 4th September, 1984.

3. The Report has been divided into the following chapter :—

I. Report

II. Recommendations/Observations which have been accepted by Government.

III. Recommendations/Observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of Government's replies.

IV. Recommendations/Observations in respect of which replies of Government have not been accepted by the Committee and which require reiteration.

4. An analysis of the action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the Fifty-Fourth Report (Seventh Lok Sabha) of the Committee is given in Appendix. It would be observed therefrom that all the seven recommendations made in the Report *i.e.* 100 percent, in respect of which replies of Government have not been accepted by Committee, require reiteration.

NEW DELHI :

December 31, 1984
Pausa 10, 1906 (S)

A. C. DAS
Chairman,

Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled
Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

CHAPTER I

REPORT

This Report of the Committee deals with the action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the 54th Report of the Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes on the Ministry of Defence—Reservations for, and employment of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in Defence Services.

1.2 In Para 2.27 of the Report, as the Committee had only made an observation, reply of Government may be read along with the reply given to Paras 2.29 & 2.30.

1.3. In Para 2.28 of the Report, the Committee had observed that during 1982 the percentage of recruitment of Scheduled Caste Officers in the army was 0.20 and of Scheduled Tribe was 0.05. It was also observed that no records were maintained in the Navy regarding the percentages of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Officers, who had been recruited. In the Air Force, the percentage of Scheduled Caste Officers recruited during 1982 was only 2.8 and for Scheduled Tribes it was Zero. Similarly, regarding recruitment of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in other ranks, it was noticed that in the Army the percentage of Scheduled Caste was only 6.52 during 1982 and 1.67 for Scheduled Tribes during the same year. In the Navy during 1982, only 2 percent of the personnel recruited to other ranks belonged to Scheduled Castes and 0.2 percent belonged to Scheduled Tribes. In the Air Force also during 1982, the percentage of Scheduled Castes recruited in other ranks was 4.8 and of Scheduled Tribes it was 0.5. These figures were revealing in as much as the recruitment of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the Armed Forces was quite negligible as compared to their population in the Country.

1.4 In their reply dated 4th August, 1984, the Ministry of Defence have stated that the Services Headquarters are not keeping separate records regarding the number of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes in the Defence Services. The particulars regarding the number of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes were collected as desired by the Committee and furnished to the Committee. The Ministry has taken special steps so as to increase

the facilities for the Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes candidates to enter into Defence Services by equipping themselves adequately for the same. With a view to increase the intake of officers from SC/ST through the National Defence Academy, the Ministry has liberalised the admission rules in Sainik Schools and Military Schools where special coaching is given for enabling the students to qualify themselves for admission in the National Defence Academy. The liberalised rules of admission to the Sainik Schools and Military Schools are as follows :—

- (i) In the case of entry to the Sainik Schools, reservation of 15% seats for Scheduled Castes and 7½% seats for Scheduled Tribes candidates have been provided, subject to their qualifying in the entrance examination and being found medically fit, irrespective of their position in the merit list.
- (ii) For admission to the Military Schools, all Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes boys who qualify in the admission test are admitted to these schools, irrespective of their position in the overall order of merit.

Since the recruitment is open to all, there should not be any difficulty for the members of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes who possess the required standards to get recruited in the Defence Services

1.5 The Committee are not satisfied with the reply of the Government that "the Services Headquarters are not keeping separate records regarding the number of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes in the Defence Services". The Committee stress that with a view to increase the intake of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in Defence Services, more recruitment centres should be opened in areas having concentration of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe population.

1.6 In Paras 2.29 and 2.30 of the Report, the Committee had observed that Government's policy that entry into the Defence Services should be based "on sheer grounds of merit" was not disputed. The Committee made it absolutely clear during the course of evidence that they were not in favour of any relaxation of standards but they only wanted that there should be a reserved quota for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the Armed Forces. The Committee stressed that in India the Caste prejudices still existed in the society. It was a historical fact that Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes had remained socially and economically back-

ward on account of various factors. The Committee desired to place on record that had there been no reservation in civil services, there would not have been even 1 per cent of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in civil services. The Committee had, therefore, recommended that in order to create a sense of involvement and participation among Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in defence of their Motherland, the principle of reservation should apply without any relaxation in the standards.

The committee pointed out that the Secretary, Ministry of Defence had admitted during evidence the Defence capability had not suffered on account of the principle of reservation being made applicable to Research and Development Organisation. Application of reservations to the Assam Rifles and to the Border Security Force, which were efficient organisations under the administrative control of Ministry of Home Affairs, provided ample proof that the principle of reservation could be applied without affecting the Defence capability of the country. It was thus highly presumptuous to contend that the principle of reservation if applied to the Armed Forces would affect the standard of efficiency.

1.7 In their reply dated 4th August, 1984, the Ministry of Defence have stated that the points raised by the Committee have been carefully examined by the Ministry. After examining all the relevant aspects the Ministry has taken a policy decision regarding the recruitment to Defence Services. As per the present policy recruitment to Defence Services should be kept open to all on grounds of sheer merit.

1.8 The Committee are not satisfied with the reply of the Government. The Committee have already referred to the poor representation of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the three wings of the Defence Forces. The Committee are not happy that Government are adopting a rigid attitude in the matter of providing reservation to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in Defence Forces. The Committee would like to emphasise once again that application of reservation to organisations like Assam Rifles and Border Security Force has not affected their efficiency and capability. As such, the Committee reiterate their earlier recommendation that in order to create a sense of involvement and participation among Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the defence of their motherland the principle of reservation should apply to the Defence Forces.

1.9 In Paras 2.31 and 2.32 of the Report, the Committee had stated emphatically that unless reservations for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled

Tribes were introduced in the Defence Services, no perceptible improvement in their representation in services could be expected. Moreover, when the Constitution provided for reservations for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, "in the making of appointment to services and posts in connection with the affairs of the Union or of a State" there was no reason why the Defence Services should be excluded from the purview of those reservations. The Committee, therefore, recommended that reservations for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes should be introduced in the Defence services immediately as exclusion of Defence Services from the purview of reservations for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes was contrary to the letter and spirit of the Constitution.

The Committee felt surprised that Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe people who were found capable even to run the most sophisticated jobs which they had filled up through reservations, how their entry into the fighting forces would affect the integrity and efficiency of the Defence Forces and in the long run endanger the basic defence performance of the country as contended by Defence Secretary.

1.10 In their reply dated 4th August, 1984, the Ministry of Defence have stated that as per the recruitment policy followed by the Ministry, there is no provision for reservation for Scheduled Castes/Tribes. Article 335 of the Constitution provides that 'the claims of the members of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes shall be taken into consideration consistently with the maintenance of efficiency of administration in the making of appointments to Services and posts in connection with the affairs of the Union or of a State'. After careful examination of the pros and cons of reservation for Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes in every Department, this Ministry has introduced reservation of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in departments wherever it was feasible.

1.11 The Committee do not accept the reply of the Government. The statement that "as per the recruitment policy followed by the Ministry there is no provision for reservation for Scheduled Castes/Tribes" goes against the accepted policy of the Central Government for providing reservation to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in services of all Government Departments. The Committee therefore, reiterate their earlier recommendation that reservations for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes should be introduced in the Defence Forces immediately as exclusion of Defence Forces from the purview of reservations for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes goes against the letter and spirit of the Constitution.

1.12 In Para 2.33 of the Report, the Committee had noted that the touch-me-not policy of Defence Ministry in following reservations in Defence Forces would create an unhappy situation and also suspect the bonafides of those classes who were once very good fighters and had two regiments in British Army viz. Mahar and Chamar Regiments including number of commissioned officers. The attitude of the Defence Ministry would create ill feeling and separatism among not only Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes but tend to create prejudicial mentality in the remaining classes. The Committee also recommended that Chamar Regiment should be restored. The Committee desired to be informed about the reasons for disbanding the Chamar Regiment.

1.13 In their reply dated 4th August, 1984, the Ministry of Defence have stated that the Chamar Regiment was disbanded in October, 1946 before independence. The exact reasons for its disbandment are not available. The Ministry have further stated that after independence, the policy of giving preferential treatment to certain classes for recruitment to the Armed Forces which was followed in British India has been discarded and recruitment to Armed Forces has been thrown open to *all eligible Indian nationals irrespective of caste, creed, community and religion*. In keeping with this, it has been the policy of the Government since Independence not to raise any regiment based upon caste/community considerations. The existing regiments based on caste and community were established prior to Independence, though their names are being retained for historical reasons. Although Government has received many requests for raising new Regiments named after a region, State or community, according to the existing policy this cannot be done. Any deviation from the existing policy will be a retrograde step and not in consonance with the concept of broad-basing the recruitment to the Armed Forces.

1.14 The Committee strongly feel that since it is the policy of the Government not to raise any regiment based upon caste/community considerations, there is hardly any justification to allow continuance of Regiments which were raised on Caste considerations. As such the Committee recommend that no Regiment based on Caste or creed should exist any more.

CHAPTER II

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN
ACCEPTED BY GOVERNMENT.

— NIL —

CHAPTER III

**RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS WHICH THE COMMITTEE
DO NOT DESIRE TO PERSUE IN VIEW OF THE GOVERNMENT'S
REPLIES.**

— N/A —

CHAPTER IV

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF GOVERNMENT HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COMMITTEE AND WHICH REQUIRE REITERATION

Recommendation (S. No. 1, Para 2.27)

The Committee note that orders regarding reservation for Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes in services have been made applicable to the Ordnance Factories, Defence Research and Development Organisation, Public Sector Undertakings under the administrative control of the Ministry of Defence and also to a large number of Organisations under the Ministry of Defence which primarily employ civilian employees. As regards reservations for recruitment to the three wings of the Armed Forces, it has been stated that it is not the policy of the Government to apply reservation to the Defence Forces as "in the recruitment to the Indian Army, there is no question of any preference to any caste, any class or any community". It is further argued that as far as Defence Services are concerned, these must be open to all on sheer grounds of merit.

Reply of the Government

Defence Ministry has carefully examined the question of making the orders regarding reservation for Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes in the Departments under the control of the Ministry. These orders have been made applicable to the Ordnance Factories, Defence Research & Development Organisation, Public Sector Undertakings under the administrative control of the Ministry and to those Departments under the Ministry which employ civilian employees. With respect to the Armed Forces it has been decided that recruitment to Armed Forces should be kept open to all without any specific reservation based on caste, creed or community.

[Ministry of Defence O.M.No.13(9)/83-D(AG) dated 4.8.1984]

Comments of the Committee

Please see Chapter I, para 1.2

Recommendation (S.No. 2, Para 2.28)

The Committee find that during 1982 the percentage of recruitment of Scheduled Caste Officers in the army is 0.20 and of Scheduled Tribe is 0.05. It is also observed that no records are maintained in the Navy regarding the percentages of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Officers, who have been recruited. In the Air Force, the percentage of Scheduled Caste Officers recruited during 1982 is only 2.8 and for Scheduled Tribes it is Zero. Similarly, regarding recruitment of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in other ranks, it is noticed that in the Army the percentage of Scheduled Caste is only 6.52 during 1982 and 1.67 for Scheduled Tribes during the same year. In the Navy during 1982, only 2 percent of the personnel recruited to other ranks belonged to Scheduled Castes and 0.2 percent belonged to Scheduled Tribes. In the Air Force also during 1982, the percentage of Scheduled Castes recruited in other ranks is 4.8 and of Scheduled Tribes it is 0.5. These figures are revealing in as much as the recruitment of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the Armed Forces is quite negligible as compared to their population in the Country.

Reply of the Government

The Services Headquarters are not keeping separate records regarding the number of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes in the Defence Services. The particulars regarding the number of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes were collected as desired by the Committee and furnished to the Committee. The Ministry has taken special steps so as to increase the facilities for the Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes candidates to enter into Defence Services by equipping themselves adequately for the same. With a view to increase the intake of officers from SC/ST through the National Defence Academy, the Ministry has liberalised the admission rules in Sainik Schools and Military Schools where special coaching is given for enabling the students to qualify themselves for admission in the National Defence Academy. The liberalised rules of admission to the Sainik Schools and Military Schools are as follows :

- (i) In the case of entry to the Sainik Schools, reservation of 15% seats for Scheduled Castes and 7½% seats for Scheduled Tribes

candidates have been provided, subject to their qualifying in the entrance examination and being found medically fit, irrespective of their position in the merit list.

- (ii) For admission to the Military Schools, all Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes boys who qualify in the admission test are admitted to these Schools, irrespective of their position in the overall order of merit.

Since the recruitment is open to all, there should not be any difficulty for the members of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes who possess the required standards to get recruited in the Defence Services.

[Ministry of Defence O. M. No. 13 (9)/83—D (AG) dated 4-8-1984]

Comments of the Committee

Please see Chapter 1, Para 1.5

Recommendation (S). Nos. 3 & 4 Para 5 2.29 & 2.30)

The Committee feel that Government's policy that entry into the Defence Services should be based "on sheer grounds of merit is not disputed. The Committee made it absolutely clear during the course of evidence that they are not in favour of any relaxation of standards but they only wanted that there should be a reserved quotas for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the Armed Forces. The Committee need hardly stress that in India the Caste prejudices still exist in the society. It is a historical fact that Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes have remained socially and economically backward on account of various factors. The Committee desire to place on record that had there been no reservation in civil services, there would not have been even 1 per cent of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in civil services. The Committee, therefore, recommend that in order to create a sense of involvement and participation among Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in defence of their Motherland, the principle of reservation should apply without any relaxation in the standards.

The Secretary, Ministry of Defence had admitted during evidence that Defence capability had not suffered on account of the principle of reservation being made applicable to Research and Development Organisation. The Committee also pointed out that the application of reservation to the Assam Rifles and to the Border Security Force, which are efficient orga-

nisations under the administrative control of Ministry of Home Affairs, provides ample proof that the principle of reservation can be applied without affecting the Defence capability of the country, It is thus highly presumptuous to contend that the principle of reservation if applied to the Armed Forces will affect the standard of efficiency.

Reply of Government

The points raised by the Committee have been carefully examined by the Ministry. After examining all the relevant aspects the Ministry has taken a policy decision regarding the recruitment to Defence Services. As per the present policy recruitment to Defence Services should be kept open to all on grounds of sheer merit.

[Ministry of Defence O. M. No. 13 (9)/83—D (AG) dated 4-8-1984]

Comments of the Committee

Please See Chapter 1, Para 1.8.

Recommendation (Sl. Nos. 5 & 6, Paras 2.31 & 2.32)

The Committee are convinced that unless reservations for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are introduced in the Defence Services, no perceptible improvement in the representation of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in those services can be expected. Moreover, when the Constitution provides for reservations for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, "in the making of appointment to services and posts in connection with the affairs of the Union or of a State" there is no reason why the Defence Services should be excluded from the purview of those reservations. The Committee, therefore, recommend that reservations for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes should be introduced in the Defence services immediately as exclusion of Defence Services from the purview of reservations for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes is contrary to the letter and spirit of the Constitution.

The Committee are at a loss to understand that when Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe people are found capable even to run the most sophisticated jobs which they have filled up through reservations, how their entry into the fighting forces will affect the integrity and efficiency of the Defence Forces and in the long run endanger the basic defence performance of the country as contended by Defence Secretary.

Reply of Government

As per the recruitment policy followed by the Ministry, there is no provision for reservation for Scheduled Castes/Tribes. Article 335 of the Constitution provides that 'the claims of the members of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes shall be taken into consideration consistently with the maintenance of efficiency of administration in making of appointments to services and posts in connection with the affairs of the Union or of a State.' After careful examination of the pros and cons of reservation for Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes in every Department, this Ministry has introduced reservation of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in departments wherever it was feasible.

[Ministry of Defence O.M. No. 13 (9)/83—D (AG) dated 4-8-1984]

Comments of the Committee

Please see Chapter 1, Para 1.11

Recommendation (S. No. 7 Para 2.33)

The Committee are constrained to note the touch-me-not policy of Defence Ministry in following reservations in Defence Forces. This attitude will create an unhappy situation and also suspects the bonafides of these classes who were once very good fighters and had two regiments in British Army viz. Mahar and Chamar Regiments including number of commissioned officers. The attitude of the Defence Ministry will create ill feeling and separatism among not only Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes but to create prejudicial mentality in the remaining classes. The Committee also recommend that Chamar Regiment should be restored. The Committee would like to be informed about the reasons for disbanding the Chamar Regiment.

Reply of Government

The Chamar Regiment was disbanded in October, 1946, before independence. The exact reasons for its disbandment are not available.

After independence, the policy of giving preferential treatment to certain classes for recruitment to the Armed Forces which was followed in British India has been discarded and recruitment to Armed Forces has

been thrown open to *all eligible Indian nationals irrespective of caste, creed, community and religion*. In keeping with this, it has been the policy of the Government since Independence not to raise any regiment based upon caste/community considerations. The existing regiments based on caste and community were established prior to independence, though their names are being retained for historical reasons. Although Government has received many requests for raising new Regiments named after a region, State or community, according to the existing policy this cannot be done. Any deviation from the existing policy will be a retrograde step and not in consonance with the concept of broad-basing the recruitment to the Armed Forces.

[Ministry of Defence O.M. No. 13(9)/83-D(AG) dated 4. 8. 1984]

Comments of the Committee

Please see Chapter 1, Para 1.14

NEW DELHI

December 31, 1984
Pausa, 10, 1906 (S)

A.C. DAS
Chairman

*Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled
Castes and Scheduled Tribes*

APPENDIX

(Vide Para 4 of Introduction)

Analysis of Action by Government on the recommendations contained in the Fifty-Fourth Report (Seventh Lok Sabha) of the Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

I. Total number of Recommendations	7
II. Recommendations/Observations which have been accepted by Government	NIL
III. Recommendations/Observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of Government's replies	NIL
IV. Recommendations/Observations in respect of which replies of Government have not been accepted by the Committee and which require reiteration (Vide Recommendation Sl. Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7)	
Number	7
Percentage to Total	100%

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