


Jharkhand collects OBC data for 'triple test' to determine quotas: All you need to know

Based on the data collected, Jharkhand will determine OBC quotas in the 48 urban local bodies across the state

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Jairam Mahto (on top of the SUV) has emerged as one of the most prominent OBC faces in Jharkhand politics. (Express Photo)

Jharkhand has finished collecting data on the population of Other Backward Classes (OBCs) from all districts of the state, in order to determine quotas for OBCs in urban local bodies.

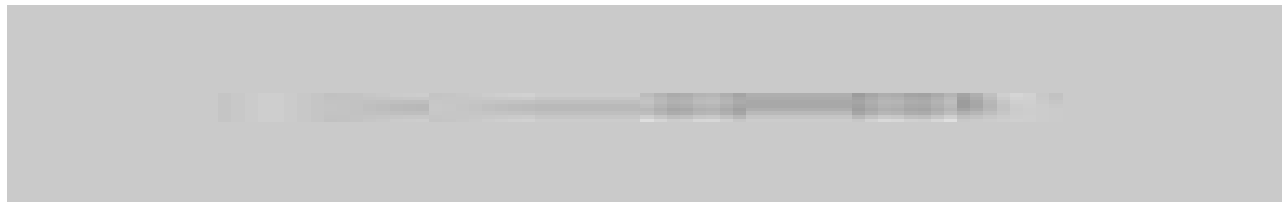
The data collection is a part of the first step of the “triple test”, a three-step guideline laid down by the Supreme Court to ensure OBC quotas in local bodies are determined in a fair and constitutional manner.

What is the “triple test”?

The following are the [three steps](#) of the so-called “triple test”.

- * [Setting up a dedicated commission](#) to conduct a rigorous empirical inquiry into the nature and implications of the backwardness in local bodies;

- * [Specifying the proportion of reservation](#) required in local bodies in light of recommendations of the commission, so as not to fall foul of overbreadth; and



- * To ensure reservation for SCs/STs/OBCs taken together [does not exceed an aggregate of 50 per cent](#) of the total seats.

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The “triple test” was outlined by the Supreme Court in the [Vikas Kishanrao Gawali vs State of Maharashtra and others](#) on March 4, 2021.

What has happened in Jharkhand so far?

Jharkhand set up a dedicated OBC Commission in June 2023. Members of the Commission, including administrative officials, toured Madhya Pradesh to study how the “triple test” was implemented there.

Data collection began in December, with the deadline set for March. However, several districts

missed their submission deadlines, and the complete data reached the Commission this week.

“The compiled data will now be developed into a final report... [which] will be handed over to an empanelled institute for verification and analysis. Institutes such as IIM, Xavier School of Management (XLRI), and Xavier Institute of Social Service will examine the socio-economic and educational condition of OBCs in the state,” Krishna Kumar Singh, secretary of the OBC Commission, told [The Indian Express](#).

The final report will be submitted to the state government, which will then fix OBC quotas accordingly.

That said, at the moment, the Commission chairperson's post remains vacant. As per official procedure, the final report cannot be submitted without the chairperson's approval.

What did the survey look at?

[Jharkhand Mukti Morcha](#)'s (JMM's) Nand Kumar Mehta, a member of the OBC Commission, said a door-to-door survey was conducted in order to identify OBC voters, and estimate their population share in urban local bodies.

Note that this is different from the caste census that the Centre recently announced, in that it only looked at urban areas of the state. The nationwide caste census will enumerate the caste composition of the entire country.

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In addition to data on population, the survey considered political representation of OBCs across various tiers of government, from mayors to panchayat committee members, as well as gathered data on the caste of Jharkhand MPs and MLAs from the State Election Commission.

“The survey won't just determine quotas for the upcoming elections. It will also assess political representation in Jharkhand over the last 25 years. This includes analysis of winners from general seats in the last two ULB elections,” said Mehta.

How are OBCs classified in Jharkhand?

In Jharkhand, OBCs are subdivided into more socially and educationally backward BC-I

(Backward Class I), and the relatively better-off BC-II (Backward Class II) categories.

While both BC-I and BC-II categories are eligible for reservations, the former typically receives a higher share in the pie to ensure equitable representation. Currently, there are 127 castes under the BC-I category, and around 45 under BC-II.

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OBCs make up roughly 50% of Jharkhand's population. The Kudmi community, a subgroup of the Mahato/Mahto caste, is the largest OBC community, accounting for 15% of the electorate, by some estimates.



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Shubham Tigga hails from Chhattisgarh and studied journalism at the Asian College of Journalism. He previously reported in Chhattisgarh on Indigenous issues and is deeply interested in cover

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