

Jharkhand Completes OBC Data Collection for Urban Local Body Quotas under Supreme Court's "Triple Test"

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Triple Test to Determine Reservation for OBCs in Local Bodies Latest News

- Jharkhand has completed the data collection process to determine reservation for Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in Urban Local Bodies (ULBs), complying with the Supreme Court-mandated “triple test” criteria.
- This marks a **significant step in implementing constitutionally valid OBC reservations** in urban governance.

What is the “Triple Test”?

- **About:** The “triple test” is a legal framework laid down by the Supreme Court in **Vikas Kishanrao Gawali vs State of Maharashtra (2021)** to ensure that **OBC reservations in local bodies** are **fair, evidence-based, and within constitutional limits**.
- **It comprises three steps:**
 - **Constitution of a dedicated commission:** A body tasked with **conducting a rigorous empirical inquiry** into the backwardness of OBCs in local bodies.
 - **Recommendation-based reservation:** Determining **quantum of reservation** based on the commission’s findings **to avoid arbitrary or excessive quotas**.
 - **Reservation ceiling:** Ensuring that **total reservation** for SCs, STs, and OBCs **does not exceed 50%** of the total seats in local bodies.

Progress in Jharkhand

- **Establishment of OBC Commission:**
 - The Jharkhand OBC Commission was constituted in June **2023**.
 - Commission members **studied Madhya Pradesh’s implementation** of the triple test as a model.
- **Data collection timeline:** Data collection completed (between December 2023 – March 2024) and submitted (recently, several districts missed their submission deadlines) to the Commission.
- **Verification and analysis:**
 - Data will be handed to empanelled institutions like **IIM, Xavier School of Management (XLRI) and Xavier Institute of Social Service (XIIS)** for **socio-economic and educational analysis**.
 - A final report will be submitted to the state government post-verification. Based on which, **Jharkhand will determine OBC quotas in the 48 ULBs** across the state.
- **Administrative bottleneck:** The Chairperson’s post is vacant, and the report cannot be officially submitted without their approval.

Survey Methodology and Scope

- **A door-to-door survey** identified OBC voters and their population share in **urban areas only**.
- **Focused on:**
 - **Political representation** in urban local bodies in Jharkhand over the last 25 years.
 - Caste-wise data of elected representatives (MPs, MLAs, Mayors, Panchayat members).
 - Historical data of winners from general seats in the last two ULB elections.
- **Not a caste census:** Unlike the all-India caste census, this is **urban-specific** and **focused on ULB quota eligibility**.

OBC Population in Jharkhand

- OBCs constitute ~**50%** of the state's population.
- **Subdivided into:**
 - **BC-I (Backward Class I):** More socially and educationally backward; includes 127 castes.
 - **BC-II (Backward Class II):** Relatively better-off; includes around 45 castes.
- **Kudmi/Mahato** community is the largest OBC group, accounting for 15% of the electorate.

Conclusion

- Successful implementation of the Triple Test in Jharkhand could **set a precedent for other states to follow** in ensuring constitutionally valid and data-driven OBC reservations in local governance.
- This process not only **strengthens grassroots democracy** but also **enhances the inclusivity and representational equity** of India's urban political landscape.

Triple Test to Determine Reservation for OBCs in Local Bodies FAQs

Q1. What is the "Triple Test" laid down by the Supreme Court regarding OBC reservation in local bodies?

Ans. The "Triple Test" requires the constitution of a dedicated commission for empirical inquiry, determination of reservation proportion based on its recommendations, and ensuring total SC/ST/OBC reservation does not exceed 50%.

Q2. How has Jharkhand progressed in implementing the Triple Test for OBC reservation in Urban Local Bodies (ULBs)?

Ans. Jharkhand has completed OBC data collection across all districts and is preparing a final report through empanelled research institutes.

Q3. How does the recent OBC survey in Jharkhand differ from the nationwide caste census?

Ans. The Jharkhand survey focused only on OBC population and political representation in urban areas, unlike the nationwide caste census which aims to cover all castes across the entire country.

Q4. What is the composition and classification of OBCs in Jharkhand?

Ans. Jharkhand classifies OBCs into BC-I (more backward, 127 castes) and BC-II (relatively better-off, 45 castes), with OBCs forming about 50% of the state population.

Q5. Why is the final report on OBC data in Jharkhand yet to be submitted?

Ans. The final report cannot be submitted because the chairperson's post of the Jharkhand OBC Commission is currently vacant.

Source: [IE](https://vajiramandravi.com/current-affairs/jharkhand-completes-obc-data-collection-for-urban-local-body-quotas-under-supreme-courts-triple-test/)

