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Representation of Minorities in Civil Services

In view of the controversy over the Rajinder Sachar Committee collecting information about the representation of minorities in the armed forces, it may be recalled that, in the 1980s, the union government's high power panel on minorities had collected information which showed the gross under-representation of Muslims in the civil services.

SYED NAJIULLAH

The recent hullabaloo about the Rajinder Sachar Committee collecting information about the representation of minorities in the armed forces has deflected attention from the real issue: whether the minorities are adequately represented in government services.

In the current controversy, it has been forgotten that there was an earlier government of India committee in the early 1980s, which collected information on the state of the minorities. This article presents information from that all-but-forgotten survey.

In 1983, the government of India's high power panel on minorities (chaired by Gopal Singh) submitted its report to the ministry of home affairs. The report later came to be known as Gopal Singh Committee report. It threw up some disturbing facts.

The civil services are the most prestigious services in India and the poor Muslim presence in these services reflects their pathetic economic conditions. From the list of the officers for all India services it is clear that while Sikhs and Christians and other minorities were doing relatively well in the competitive examinations, Muslims, by and large, did not. For instance, according to the Gopal Singh Committee, 36 years after independence, in 1983 there were only 128 Muslims in the Indian administrative services; in the police service, out of a total of 3,785, there were 57 Muslims and there were only 45 in forest service which gives them

a percentage of only 3.22, 2.64 and 3.14 respectively, while according to their population their representation should be about 12 per cent.

The Gopal Singh Committee reported that the representation of the minorities in the all India services till 1980 illustrated that the percentage of Muslims was far behind their proportion in the population. Table 1 provides comparative data on Muslims, Christians and Sikhs in the all India services.

Table 2 shows the representation of Muslims in comparison with other minorities like Sikhs and Christians, according to data collected by the committee. It is evident from the table that while the representation of the Sikhs and Christians of 4.71 per cent and 5.64 per cent was more than their proportion in the population of 1.89 and 2.6 per cent respectively, the Muslims representation was only

Table 2: Indian Administrative Service
(Percentage to the total in brackets)

Year	Total Intake	Muslims	Sikhs	Christians
1971	87	1 (1.14)	4(4.59)	5(5.74)
1972	142	1 (0.70)	6(4.85)	4(2.81)
1973	124	3 (2.41)	5(4.03)	7(5.64)
1974	141	1 (0.70)	9(6.38)	4(2.83)
1975	129	2 (1.55)	5(3.87)	7(5.42)
1976	138	5 (3.62)	9(6.52)	10(7.24)
1977	158	10(6.32)	4(2.53)	13(8.22)
1978	134	10(7.46)	6(4.47)	13(9.70)
1979	117	3 (2.56)	8(6.83)	7(5.98)
1980	124	1 (0.80)	5(4.03)	3(2.41)
Total	1294	37(2.86)	61(4.71)	73(5.64)

Source: Gopal Singh Committee Report on Minorities, 1983, p 31.

Table 1: All India Services
(Percentage to the total in brackets)

Name of Services	Total No of Officers	No of Muslims	No of Christians	No of Sikhs
IAS	3975	128 (3.22)	109 (2.74)	165 (4.15)
IPS	2159	57 (2.64)	49 (2.26)	117 (5.41)
IFS	1433	45 (3.14)	23 (1.60)	44 (3.07)
Total	7567	230 (3.04)	181 (2.39)	326 (4.31)

Source: Gopal Singh Committee Report on Minorities, 1983, p 33.

2.86 per cent, whereas their share in the population in 2001 was 12.4 per cent (Census 2001).

The representation of Muslims in the Indian police services was also very low. It was only 2 per cent whereas Sikhs and Christians formed 5.34 per cent and 2.27 per cent of the total respectively for the period of 1971 to 1979 as shown in Table 3.

More recent data shows no change in the situation. Table 4 throws light on the poor representation of the Muslims in the all India services from 1981 to 2000.

Table 3: Indian Police Services
(Percentage to the total brackets)

Year	Total Intake	Muslim	Sikhs	Christians
1971	35	-	-	-
1972	59	-	3(5.08)	-
1973	116	1(0.86)	-	1(0.86)
1974	75	5(6.66)	12(16.0)	3(4.00)
1975	65	-	12(18.5)	3(4.61)
1976	92	-	3(3.26)	2(2.17)
1977	212	6(2.83)	3(1.41)	4(1.88)
1978	45	2(2.22)	2(4.44)	3(6.66)
1979	50	2(4.00)	5(10.00)	1(2.00)
Total	749	15(2.00)	40(5.34)	17(2.27)

Source: Gopal Singh Committee Report on Minorities, 1983, p 31.

Table 4: Muslims in Indian Administrative Services since 1981

Year	Total	Muslims	Percentage
1981	126	1	0.79
1982	167	5	2.99
1983	235	1	0.43
1984	233	6	2.58
1985	214	4	1.87
1986	216	6	2.78
1987	178	5	2.81
1988	249	15	6.02
1989	246	13	5.28
1990	298	9	3.02
1991	217	8	3.69
1992	157	3	1.91
1993	147	2	1.36
1994	131	2	1.53
1995	91	8	8.79
1996	81	3	3.70
1997	76	3	3.95
1998	55	1	1.82
1999	56	2	3.57
2000	93	6	6.45
Total	3266	103	3.15

Source: 'Muslim Representation in the IAS and IPS: An Overview'; *Nation and the World*, March 2002, cited in *Muslim India*, No 238, October 2002, p 462.

Table 5: Subordinate Services (Central Government): Representation of Minorities

Religion	Pre Cent of Population	No and Per Cent of Applicants	No and Per Cent of Successful Candidates
Muslims	11.21	5336(2.59)	83(1.56)
Christians	2.60	9502(4.61)	366(3.85)
Sikhs	1.89	3643(1.77)	90(2.47)

Source: Gopal Singh Committee Report on Minorities, 1983, p 33.

Thus, it is clear that while the Muslim population in the country is almost 12 per cent, their representation in the country's highest services was only 3.15 per cent between 1981 and 2000. Similarly, in the Indian police service, out of the total recruitment of 3,284 officers in the same period, only 120 were Muslims with a percentage of 3.65.¹ This is the general trend of Muslim representation in the services all over India with slight variations. There has not been much improvement over the last 20 years.

Subordinate Services

Coming to class III and class IV services, the Gopal Singh Committee's analysis of the data of the subordinate services examinations, which accounts for most of the recruitment for class III employees in the central government, showed that the percentage of Muslim candidates was about 3 per cent. Analysing further, the proportion of their representation in the registration in the employment exchanges, which accounts for the bulk of the recruitment to the remaining class III and class IV services, it was seen that the percentage of their registration was only 5 per cent. The figures for placement were also the same. They had better representation in class IV services. It worked out to be 9.7 per cent. Thus, the employment of Muslims in the government offices, both central and states varied between 5 per cent and 6 per cent of the total employees. Their representation in class I and class II services was between 3 per cent and 4.5 per cent, while in class III and class IV services it was 5 per cent and 6 per cent respectively. Clearly, the overall representation of Muslims in government services was low compared to their proportion in the population.

The sample study conducted by the Gopal Singh Committee, on the results of the examination for recruitment to class III services – clerical cadre in the central secretariat held by the Central Subordinate Services Commission in 1979 showed that Muslims were only 1.56 per cent of the total successful candidates. [PW]

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Note

¹ *Muslim India*, 'Muslim Representation in the Executive: An Overview', No 238, October 2002, p 462.

Banking on the Bangalore Dream

The Bangalore Development Authority has reserved 2,500 hectares of additional land in the city for the IT sector and 1,500 hectares for all the other industries till 2015. But land use planning remains largely inaccessible to the majority of the population, since they can neither rely on the master planning process nor on local politicians to stake claim to land. This raises the question whether developing the city as an IT hub is the only dream that is to be pursued or should a balanced development plan, benefiting a wider constituency be followed.

ASHA GHOSH

In a recent episode of *The Big Fight* on NDTV, Vikram Chandra asked the panelists and audience, "Is the 'Bangalore Dream' dying?"¹ Chandra's reference alluded to an imagination of Bangalore as a global city based on a promising IT sector that now threatens to relocate due to the current government's lack of attention to their infrastructure requirements. The respondents took Chandra off-guard, asking what the dream was exactly and who dreamt it in the first place. While members of the audience agreed that Bangalore's inadequate infrastructure spares no one from daily travails, they, and M P Prakash, deputy chief minister of Karnataka, showed little empathy for the IT representatives' woes. Perhaps the backlash that evening owes to an undercurrent of disenchantment with a sector that has undoubtedly contributed to Bangalore's economy, but has also stood the most to gain, both financially and in terms of government and policy support.

Riding on their success in drawing international attention to Bangalore as an IT hub, corporate leaders have been lobbying for land, infrastructure, and access to policy-making circles. As a priority, they seek to tackle the hurdles in identifying and purchasing land and obtaining sanctions for land use conversions to commercial and industrial uses. However, former prime minister and chief minister of Karnataka and current JD(S) leader Deve Gowda, recently forced a public debate regarding indiscriminate support by the earlier S M Krishna's regime to the IT sector, and particularly to Infosys, in acquisition of real estate, an invaluable

asset in a booming city. Moreover, Deve Gowda contends that Infosys "banks" their land as a corporate asset. Regardless of Deve Gowda's personal political agenda, he has cultivated a critical debate on the role of government in enabling particular economic sectors.

Land Acquisition, Allotments and Regulation

To examine the current conflict, it is essential to understand the institutions and processes that govern land acquisition, allotment and regulation. Clearly, the Karnataka state government supports the IT sector, as encapsulated in the millennium IT policy, which states, that the government will set up "electronics cities" and these will be supplied with adequate infrastructure and residential facilities. Furthermore, the government will provide financial assistance to IT firms in the form of equity, seed capital, and reduced interest rates.² To fulfil these objectives, state agencies acquire land for sale and lease to industries at costs lower than prevailing market rates through two acts: the Land Acquisition Act (LAA) and the Karnataka Industrial Areas Development Act (KIADA). The government invokes the LAA to acquire land for "public purpose" and the KIADA for broader industrial uses, according to their judgments. [Lawrence Liang 2005].

Concurrently, the Karnataka Industrial Areas Development Board (KIADB) allocates the land and grants concessions on stamp duty, registration charges, and other taxes.³ And Karnataka Udyog Mitra offers industries a "single-window cell" that assists in the identification and