

JATS DEMAND FOR RESERVATION IN INDIA AND PROTESTS BY JATS IN HARYANA

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Jats demand for Reservation is a highly controversial topic. Jats have been raising the demand for Reservation, at different forums, for nearly the past two decades. The movement for Jat-reservation has been going on for more than a decade in different states of north India. The agitation by Pro-Reservation Jat organizations has been there in Haryana since 2004. The protests have turned violent many times but the Jat agitation in February 2016 has been the most violent. Violent protests, disruption of train and road traffic and the destruction of public property are allegedly encouraged by the delayed and unresponsive approach of the government. The government both at the Central and the State levels, sleeps over the legitimate demands of the people, till they find an expression in such violence. Reservation as an affirmative action is enshrined in our Constitution to ensure proper representation of economically and socially backward classes who are not well represented in government jobs. The demand for reservation will wither away only when our economy generates sufficient jobs for all aspiring for them. This has not happened despite the sustained high growth in recent years. After so many years of its implementation, the reservation policy has reached a stage where both its supporters and critics are unhappy about it. There are endless debates going on at various platforms and levels. Some vehemently oppose it, some die hardly support and some stay neutral. The present paper attempts to look into the issue of Jat Reservation and Jats agitation for reservation in Haryana in February 2016 in detail and analyse the cause and impact of this agitation.

KEYWORDS- Reservation, Jats, Violent, Demand, Haryana, Protest, Movement, Implementation, Constitution, Agitation, February.

Reservation as an affirmative action is enshrined in our Constitution to ensure proper representation of economically and socially backward classes who are not well represented in government jobs. Caste and traditional occupations have often been used as determinants of social backwardness. To hope that the various government programmes aimed at promoting socio-economic uplift of the rural people will do away with the need and clamour of reservation, as is argued by some, is surely misplaced. The demand for reservation will wither away only when our economy generates sufficient jobs for all aspiring for them. This has not happened despite the sustained high growth in recent years.

Violent protests, disruption of train and road traffic and the destruction of public property are encouraged by the delayed and unresponsive approach of the government. The government both at the Central and the State levels, sleeps over the legitimate demands of the people, till they find an expression in such violence. These demand become more vociferous just before the elections because the leaders, as well as the people, rightly feel that the government is willing to listen to them more

sympathetically during such times. Jats have been raising the demand for reservation, at different forums, for nearly the past two decades.¹

The movement for Jat-reservation has been going on for more than a decade in different states of north India. The agitation by Pro-Reservation Jat organizations has been there in Haryana since 2004.

The protests have turned violent many times but the Jat agitation in February 2016 has been the most violent. The present paper attempts to look into the issue of the Jat agitation for reservation in Haryana in February 2016 in detail and analyse the cause, and of impact of this agitation.

The Jats constitute about 2% of country's population and are spread over several states in north India from Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, UP, Madhya Pradesh and Gujrat. In Uttar Pradesh, the Jats form less than 6% of the population, however, their concentration in western U.P. makes them an important vote bank in more than 50 assembly seats.²

The total Jat population in India is estimated to be around 82.5 million (8.25 crore).³ Jats are 29 per cent of Haryana's total population. In Punjab, Rajasthan and Delhi, they constitute 30, 18 and 17% of the total population, respectively.⁴

Like many other castes (Patels in Gujrat, Gujjars in Rajasthan, Kapus in Andhra Pradesh and Marathas in Maharashtra), the Jats have sought to get themselves included in the OBC category in order to get the reservation benefits. They had already been given OBC status in 7 states: Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Uttarakhand. However, Jats were included in the Central Government list of OBC castes. Also, in Punjab and Haryana, the Jats did not enjoy any reservation benefits.⁵

Rajasthan was the first state to give the OBC status to the Jats. On 3 November 1999, the Indian National Congress state government in Rajasthan included Jats (except those from Bharatpur and Dholpur) in the Rajasthan state OBC list.⁵ The Centre included Jats in its OBCs list through a notification dated October 27, 1999. The Jats of Bharatpur and Dholpur were included in the state OBC list through two separate notifications- January 1, 2000 and January 10, 2000.⁶ 15 years later on August 10, 2015, the Rajasthan High court quashed this decision because of Supreme Court on March 17, 2015, quashed a Government of India's notification dated March 4, 2014⁷ and struck down the Jats of Bharatpur-Dholpur from the Centre's OBC list too.

¹ Ajit Kumar Singh, "Why Jat Reservations?", *Economic and Political Weekly*, VO1-XLV1 No. 17, April 23, 2011, p. 20.

² *Ibid.*, p.21.

³ Saubhadra Chatterji, "History repeats itself as yet another Central govt. faces a Jat stir," *Hindustan Times*, February 22, 2016, P.5.

⁴ "Why Jats are Protesting in Haryana : All you need to know," *India Today*, February 20, 2016, p.6⁵ Saubhadra Chatterji, *op. cit.*, P.5.

⁵ "Rajasthan was first state to extend OBC benefits to Jats in 1999," *Times of India*, Feb. 23, 2016, p.6

⁶ *Ibid.*, p.6

⁷ "Rajasthan HC quashes quota for Jats in 2 dists," *The Tribune*, Aug. 11, 2015. P.18.

The Delhi government had included Jats within the OBC list in 1999, while Uttar Pradesh did so in 2000.⁸ Haryana, Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir were the only three states where Jats were not given OBC status. Jats of Punjab and Haryana are known to have large landholdings and their economic condition is relatively better compared to Jats in other states.

Reservation has always been a key demand of the Jat Community in Haryana. Jats are demanding to be declared OBCs (Other Backward Class) which will help them secure to share the 27 per cent OBC reservation in govt. Jobs. Ahirs, Gujjars, Sainis, Nais, Luhars, Lodhas and Yadavas who are currently enjoy 27% reservation in govt. jobs and educational institutions and are unwilling to share their quota with the numerically and politically powerful Jats.⁹

In Haryana, the first Backward Classes Commission, the Gurnam Singh Commission, was set up in 1990-91. The Commission recommended 26% reservation for the OBC category in Haryana and inclusion of Jats, Jat Sikhs, Ahir, Bishnoi, Meo, Rajput, Gujjar, Rode, Saini and Tyagi communities within the category of the OBCs. The then Hukum Singh government notified the inclusion of Jats within the OBC category but this was later withdrawn by the Bhajan Lal government in May 1995.¹⁰

Two more Backward Classes Commissions set up in the state to included Jats in 1995 and 2011. But they did not include Jats in their list of castes to be classified as OBC. In 2004, the congress leader Bhupinder Singh Hooda promised the Jats of Haryana a reserved quota, while campaigning for the 2005 State Assembly elections. The Congress won the 2005 election, as well as the 2009 election in Haryana. After an agitation in April 2011, the Hooda government set up the K C Gupta Commission to go into the question once again. In December 2012, the Commission recommended the inclusion of Jats and four other castes, Jat Sikhs, Ror, Tyagi and Bishnoi in the category 'Special Backward Classes' (SBC). The Hooda government accepted the report and 10% quota was granted, but this was later set aside by the Supreme Court.¹¹ According to NCBC, this report was flawed because it was based on a "very selective" survey conducted by the Maharishi Dayanand University, Rohtak. It compared Jats only to the forward castes such as Brahmins, Rajputs and Bania, but not backward castes such as Ahirs, Yadavas and Kurmis. Based on this analysis, on 26 February 2014, the NCBC unanimously ruled that the Jats in Haryana did not meet the OBC classification criteria.¹²

⁸ Radhika Kumar, "Stopping to Conquer : Jats and Reservations in Haryana," *Economic and Political weekly*, Vol-L1 No.16 April 16,2016, p.17

⁹ Varinder Bhatia, "Backward march. Who are the Jats , What do they want," *The Indian Express*, Feb. 22, 2016, P.7

¹⁰ Radhika Kumar , *op. cit*, p.16.

¹¹ Varinder Bhatia, *op.cit*, p.7.

¹² Krishnadas Rajagopal, " Jat quota in public interest," *The Hindu*, August 12,2014., p.5

Despite the NCBC Report the Central govt. included Jats in the OBC reserved category on March 4, 2014. The Supreme Court, on March 17, quashed the Central government's order providing reservation for Jats in 9 North Indian States (Bihar, Gujrat, Haryana, Rajasthan, Madhya Pardesh, Uttar Pardesh Himachal Pardesh, Uttarakhand, and the National Capital territory of Delhi).¹³

The Notification, Which came on the eve of the issuance of the Model Code of Conduct for the Lok Sabha elections ,was issued despite a piece of advice to the contrary by the National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC).¹⁴

A delegation of Jat leaders met Prime Minister Narendra Modi after the Supreme Court quashed the OBC quota for the community. PM Modi assured the delegation that the Central government was studying the apex court's decision and would try to find a solution to the issue within the legal framework. On April 2, 2015, the Union government moved the apex court submitting a plea for review of its March 17, decision setting aside a 2014 notification of erstwhile United Progressive Alliance (UPA) regime to include Jats in the Central list of the Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in 9 Northern States in India to grant quota benefits to them. The Centre, in its plea, had said "the Centre's power to make available quota for a Community is not dependent on the advice of the NCBC."¹⁵

The Punjab and Haryana High Court July 27, 2015 stayed the Haryana government's move to provide reservations to Jats and four other castes under the 'specially backward class' (SBC) category in the state. Haryana government by its order had put Jats and four other castes Jat Sikhs, Ror, Tyagi and Bishnoi in the category of 'Economically Backward Persons' (EBP) and increasing the quota of EBPs from 10 to 20 percent.¹⁶

The Supreme Court had already rejected the recommendations of the State Backward Commission providing quota to Jats on July 21, 2015. The orders were issued nearly a week after the High Court asked the Haryana government to come out with a definite reply on its move to provide reservation to Jats under the SBC category in the State.¹⁷

Union Minister of State for Agriculture and Food Processing, Sanjeev Balyan on August 25, 2015 courted controversy by describing the Supreme Court's verdict on Jat reservation as 'incorrect' and 'beyond facts'. He reportedly said that it was unfortunate that the SC has not given a right

¹³ "Plea wants Jats out of quota list in Uttar Pradesh," *The Indian Express*, Dec. 8, 2015, p.6.

¹⁴ Krishnadas, Raja and Smita Gupta, "Court terms UPA quota order, 'retrograde governance'," *The Hindu*, March 18, 2015. p.5

¹⁵ Aishwarya Dhakarey, "Union Government moves Supreme Court to review its order quashing Jat Reservation," *The Hindu*, April 2, 2015, p.6.

¹⁶ Nalin Mehta, "Explaining BJP's Jat problem and the reservation bogey," *Times of India*, Feb. 20, 2016.

¹⁷ "HC stays quota for Jats, 4 other castes under SBC category," *The Tribune*, July 28, 2015 p.7.

decision on the Jat reservation issue. The judgment is not based on the facts since it was for the govt. and not the SC to decide on who would be included in the reservation list.¹⁸

But Hawa Singh Sangwan state head of the Akhil Bharatiya Jat Arakshan Sangharsh Samiti (ABJASS) observed, Jat leaders wanted “reservation for Jats separately and not with other castes in EBP”. They want caste based reservation in the OBC category, not on the basis of their economic condition.²⁰

Raj Kumar Saini, BJP's Kurukshetra MP, on November 8, 2015 asked Jats not to demand reservation in the Other Backward Class (OBC) category if they wanted to maintain social harmony. He said the Supreme Court had rejected Jat's review petition.¹⁹ He had argued that the Jat's demand for reservation is "an illegal" one "completely unacceptable" to the state's OBCs. Saini said “India is a democratic country and ruled by the rule of law and principles enshrined in the Constitution. The communities such as Jats and Patels have no right to bulldoze courts and governments to grant them special privilege of job reservation.”²⁰

He said, NCBC found that “Jats were not socially backward”, and not “educationally backward”. It similarly rejected the claim of “inadequate representation in public employment, finding them adequately represented in armed forces, government services and educational institutions”.²¹ Saini openly opposed the Jats, efforts to be included in the OBC category, despite party's warning not to do so.²²

On December 23, 2015 Sarv Jat Khap panchayat leader Sube Singh Sumain said in the state level rally that the State and Central government have started taking us lightly. BJP leaders are inciting some leaders to speak against us. We have decided to start an indefinite strike from February 15. We will block all roads, markets, shops and business establishments till we get reservation".²³

Thus a stage was set for a confrontation between the pro-reservation and anti reservation forces. In the statewide protests by Jat community to be included in the OBC category and get reservations in Central government jobs along with admissions in educational institutes, Haryana witnessed huge agitations, and violent clashes between 2004 to 2016.

Before taking up the detailed account of the February 2016 Jat agitation it is pertinent to have a brief survey of the earlier agitation and protests by Jats in Haryana. During the run up to the 2004 Lok Sabha elections, promises of reservation for Jats once again were made by political parties.

¹⁸ Ravinder Saini, “Jat quota: Union Minister says apex court verdict incorrect,” *The Tribune*, August 26, 2015, p.6. ²⁰ *Ibid*, p. 6

¹⁹ Ravinder Saini, “Saini asks Jats to drop quota demand,” *The Tribune*, November 9, 2015, p.6

²⁰ Pardeep Sharma, “Jats have no right to hold country to ransom: Saini,” *The Tribune*, November 19, 2015, p.6.

²¹ Nalin Mehta, *op cit*, p.6.

²² “MP Raj kumar Saini's Anti-Jat Statement,” *Hindustan Times*, Feb. 20, 2016, p.4.

²³ Parveen Sharma, “Jats call statewide bandh from Feb. 15,” *The Tribune*, Dec. 24, 2015, p.6.

After the elections, when the demands of reservation were not met, small agitations and protests started.²⁴

All India Jat Mahasabha convention held in Delhi on March 9, 2007 under the Chairmanship of its President, Chaudhary Dara Singh, raised the voice of Jat reservation loudly. This time, the demand was more important as the convention was attended by several Central and State Ministers and MPs.²⁷

Chaudhary Yashpal Malik floated Akhil Bharatiya Jat Arakshan Sangharsh Samiti (ABJASS) an Organization to fight for the demand of Jat reservation in 2008. Since its inception, the outfit has organized many protests and rallies, often resulting in clash with the police.²⁵

All India Jat Arakshan Sangharsh Samiti (AIJASS), led by retired commandant Hawa Singh Sangwan, blocked rail on the Delhi Hisar track in Mayyar Village in September 2010. Sunil Lamba of ladwa Village killed during protest in police firing.²⁶

AIJASS resumed stir at Mayyar in March 2011. It spread to adjoining districts; 13 railway tracks were blocked by Jats.²⁷ The agitation continued at intervals for fuel three years.

A youth, Sandeep Kadwasra died in police firing at Ramyana village of Hisar district.²⁸ The Sarv Jat Khap Mahapanchayat spearheaded the agitation in Jind in August 2012.

Haryana government accorded special backward status and 10% quota to five castes, including Jats in December 2012.²⁹

In September 2013 AIJASS and Khaps threatened to resume the stir, if reservation under OBC was not given by the Centre.³⁰

Jats called off three year old agitation after the UPA govt. granted OBC status to them at the Centre.³¹

However the Supreme Court set aside a notification, granting OBC status to Jats. As a result of the SC Judgment the Punjab and Haryana HC stayed the Haryana govt. notification of giving 10% quota to Jats and four other communities under the SBC category.³²

²⁴ "Jat Reservation: Important developments through the years," *The Indian Express*, March, 17, 2015, p.5. ²⁷ *Ibid*, p.5.

²⁵ *Ibid*, p.5.

²⁶ Ajjay Sura, "Jats fight for reservation: Story so far," *Times of India*, March, 18, 2015, p.6.

²⁷ Deepender Deswal, "Jats resume quota stir block rail track," *The Tribune*, Feb. 13, 2016, p.5.

²⁸ *Ibid*, p.8.

²⁹ "Jat quota protests: What is it all about," *The Hindu*, Feb. 21, 2016, p.4.

³⁰ Ajjay Sura, *op.cit.* p.7.

³¹ Deepender Deswal. *op.cit.* p.5.

³² "HC puts a halt on Haryana Jat quota," *Hindustan Times*, May, 27, 2016, p.7.

Agitation in Haryana in February 2016:-

Jat leaders from 12 states assembled in January 2016 at a meeting held in Delhi. Awareness rallies were held in different states including Punjab, Jammu and Kashmir, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan to seek reservation for Jats.³³

Mayyar village of Hisar district was the epicenter of the Jat agitation three years ago, had again been chosen by various Jat groups for the launch of their stir. They held a rally in the village on January 12, 2016.³⁴

Leaders of the 'Samast Jat Samaj Sangathan' had announced to seal the borders at about 40 places of the state from February 15, 2016 at a Jind rally. On February 7, the 'Akhil Bharatiya Adarsh Jat Mahasabha' (ABAJM) had been preparing to launch its agitation from the Narwana sub- division of Jind district.³⁵

The Jat agitation began in the form of non-violent protest. During February 12-13, 2016, Jats blocked the Delhi-Hisar railway track at Mayyar village in Hisar district. The protest was led by Hawa Singh Sangwan President of 'All India Jat Arakshan Sangharsh Samiti'.³⁶ In 2012, Sangwan had organized a similar protest at the same site, as a result of which the Congress govt. gave community the SBC status.³⁷

The 'All India Jat Arakshan Sangharsh Samiti' (AIJASS) on February 13 night announced to call off the agitation after Agriculture Minister OM Prakash Dhankar assured it that Jats of Haryana would get reservation under the OBC category if the centre gave the benefit to community of nine other states.³⁸

A day after the AIJASS lifted their rail blockade from Hisar's Mayyar village, another faction of the community, led by Khap leaders (from Rohtak, Jhajjar and Sonapat districts), organized a 'Jat Swabhimani Rally' at Sampla (Rohtak) and blocked the Delhi- Fazilka NH-10 on February 14, 2016.³⁹

On February 15-17, the Jats organized more non- violent protests and blockades. Jat protesters also blocked the roads connecting Rohtak with New Delhi, Sonapat, Jind and Panipat even when the CM and Agriculture Minister OP Dhankar were in Rohtak. In Rohtak activists blocked the railway tracks in Ismaila village and blocked roads in Sampla, Jassia.⁴⁰

³³ "Jat quota: Rally in Delhi on May 10, to demand quota in other States and Centre," *The Indian Express*, April, 4, 2016, p.4.

³⁴ Deepender Deswal, "Hisar's Mayyar village to be Centre of Jat agitation again," *The Tribune*, Feb. 9, 2016, p.6.

³⁵ Parvesh Sharma, "Jats divided over date to start quota agitation," *The Tribune*, Feb. 5, 2016, p.5.

³⁶ "Jats make fresh Pitch for OBC reservation," *Times of India*, Feb., 13, 2016, p.7.

³⁷ "Haryana Jats Launch agitation for reservation," *The Hindu*, Dec. 17, 2012, p.4.

³⁸ Deepender Deswal, "Jats call off stir on Dhankar assurance," *The Tribune*, Feb. 14, 2016, p.6.

³⁹ Sunit Dhawan, "Jat protest shifts to Sampla," *The Tribune*, Feb. 15, 2016, p.5.

⁴⁰ "Quota Jats in no mood to relent," *Times of India*, Feb. 16, 2015, p.7.

The agitation was intensified in which college students were roughed up on February 16. Rohtak was completely cut off from not only Delhi, but also the rest of the state. Agitation spread to Sonapat, Jhajjar, Bhiwani and other towns and railway tracks, roads blocked at several points.⁴¹

On February 18, at least 20 persons were injured in clashes between Jats and non-Jats in Rohtak. Non-Jats group claiming to represent 35 non-Jat castes attacked a group of lawyers who were protesting against the JNU row⁴², mistaking them for Jat protesters. The lawyers, who were from several castes, were injured in the clash.

After this incident, violence erupted in the state.

On the night of Feb. 18, when the police tried to open a blockade at Pandit Neki Ram Sharma Government College in Rohtak, some people threw stones at them. Following this, the police entered the hostels of Neki Ram College and Jat college and allegedly beat them up.⁴³ The next day, Jat youth from nearby rural areas came to Rohtak in large numbers, and protested violently. The protesters blocked several roads, set vehicles to fire and damaged business establishment. A mob of 5000 people, mainly college students clashed with the police pelting stones at the office of Inspector General of Police.⁴⁴

Curfew was imposed in Rohtak, Bhiwani, and Jhajjar district on February 19, as the Jat agitation in Haryana turned violent, resulting in the death of three persons. In Rohtak district, a mob set fire to vehicles, shops and a petrol pump at Kalanaur. They also set the local residence of Haryana Finance Minister Capt. Abhimanyu and two other houses owned by his family in sector 14 on fire.⁴⁵

On February 20, the Jats allegedly burnt the shops belonging to Punjabis (Khatris) and Sainis. The Punjabis and Sainis later retaliated by vandalizing the Chhotu Ram dharamshala of the Jats. Six persons were killed as violence spread to other parts of Haryana on Feb. 20.

Protesters blocked National Highway-1, cutting off Delhi and disrupting water supply to the National capital from the Munak canal. In Rohtak, there were reports of gas leak after a Vita Milk Plant was set ablaze. The state DGP, Yashpal Singhal, said a police station and petrol station was set ablaze in Meham.⁴⁶ Several trains were cancelled and many buses remained off roads leading to Delhi, Hisar and Jaipur blocked by protesters, helicopters were used to drop Army troops at the Police Lines ground early morning on Feb 20.⁴⁷

On February 21, Jat agitation spilled over to more areas, including Panchkula, Delhi, Bharatpur in Rajasthan and UP. The Jats blocked roads and held up a train in Bharatpur district and

⁴¹ Naveen S.Garewal, "Farce of a failure in Haryana," *The Tribune*, May, 29, 2016, p.15.

⁴² Deeptiman Tiwary, "Jat quota stir: How violence started; a protest on JNU row, hostel raid by cops", *The Indian Express*, Feb. 25, 2016, p.5.

⁴³ "Students go on rampage after police beating them in college Hostel," *Times of India*, Feb. 20, 2016, p.5.

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, p.5.

⁴⁵ Sushil Manav and Sunit Dhawan, "Jat agitation runs amuck, 3 die, Army out," *The Tribune*, Feb. 20, 2016, p.1.

⁴⁶ Sushil Manav, "Haryanarchy; Arson spreads despite Army 6 more dead," *The Tribune*, Feb. 21, 2016, p.1.

⁴⁷ Ravinder Saini, "Roads blocked, copters drop troops," *The Tribune*, Feb. 21, 2016, p. 3.

west UP threaten to seal Haryana border.⁴⁸ The prices of air tickets from Chandigarh to Delhi had shot up from Rs 2000-Rs 5000 to a whopping Rs 20,000- Rs 27,000. Haryana had suffered a loss of around Rs 20,000 crore on account of burning and destroying of public and private property and halting trade, industry small business and transport due to Jat stir, said Industry body Assocham.⁴⁹

The protesters blocked highways and other roads in Chandigarh, Karnal, Kaithal and Rewari districts. Railway tracks in Panipat and Sonapat were damaged and uprooted at several places between New Delhi and Ambala. At least 20 persons were injured, 2 persons were killed in chhawani Mohalla, and mob setting several houses on fire in Jhajjar. In Bhiwani district, the house BJP MP Dharambir was vandalized and several buses were set on fire in Tosham. In Sonapat district, the railway station at Ganaur was vandalized. In Sonapat district, the protesters vandalized a hotel and college owned by Member of Parliament they also set fire to a rice mill. In Gohana, a mob burnt several shops and vehicles. The district administration clamped curfew on Kaithal and Kalayat on Feb. 21 and staged a flag march with army contingents and police at both places.⁵⁰

The government on Feb. 22, decided to bring a bill for granting OBC status to Jats in ensuring, Vidhan Sabha session. The decision was taken at a high level meeting between Home Minister Rajnath Singh, Jat leaders, National Security Advisor, Army Chief and Delhi Police Commissioner. The Haryana Government announced compensation for the damage caused to private properties as well as 10 lakh ex- gratia to the kin of those killed in the Jat agitation. On Feb. 22, violence and arson were reported in the state as the agitation entered the ninth day. Rohtak, Jhajjar, Bhiwani, Jind, Hisar, Sonapat and Gohana, continued to be under curfew.⁵¹

Vehicles with woman passengers were reportedly stopped on the national highway near Murthal in the wee hours of Feb. 22 morning, they were dragged out into the nearby fields and raped. Though the police dismissed the incident as rumour eyewitnesses said at least 10 women were sexually assaulted.⁵²

On Feb 23 curfew was lifted completely from Hisar and Jind cities. However, Section 144 of Crpc shall remain imposed in these areas.⁵³ Rajasthan's Jats called off agitation after the State govt. gave them an assurance that a Bill will be brought in the coming Assembly session to include them in the OBC category. The bus service from Hisar and train services were also coming back on track. Markets opened in Hansi town of Hisar district after ten days. In Jind district peace returned with the opening of markets, school and colleges.

⁴⁸ "Jats agitation spills over to Bharatpur, in Rajasthan," *Hindustan Times*, Feb.22, 2016, p.14.

⁴⁹ Rajinder Nagarkoti, "27,000 for a Delhi flights Taxi operators stop operating between Dhile and Chandigarh," *The Tribune*, Feb 21, 2016, p.1.

⁵⁰ Satish Seth, "Curfew clamped on Kaithal,Kalayat," *The Tribune*, Feb. 21, 2016, p.2.

⁵¹ Vikas Vasudeva , "Govt. blinks, Jats to get OBC status ," *The Hindu*, Feb 22, 2016, p.4.

⁵² Naveen S. Garewal and Parveen Arora, "Woman Commuters violated by highway goons", *The Tribune*, Feb. 24, 2016, p.1

⁵³ "Jat reservation row, curfew lifted in Hisar, Jind, cities," *The Indian Express*, Feb. 24, 2016, p.4.

As many as 30 persons were killed and 320 other injured and property worth 34,000 crores of rupees was destroyed in Haryana during the violence in February. The state remained paralyzed for nearly 10 days.

The Prakash Singh Committee was constituted by Haryana govt. The Committee in its Report to probe acts of omission and commission on part of police and civil administration officials during the February Jat quota violence had indicted 90 officials including IAS and IPS officers, for mala fide and deliberate negligence. The Report was submitted to Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar on May 13, 2016. The committee visited all eight affected districts Rohtak, Jhajjar, Sonapat, Jind, Hisar, Kaithal, Bhiwani, and Panipat, The committee heard 2,217 persons from different walks of life and statements of 395 person were recorded on the spot.⁵⁴

The Supreme Court on May 5, 2021, struck down the Maharashtra government's decision to exceed 50 per cent reservation for the Maratha Community in education and jobs. The Court said the Maratha Community was not Educationally and Socially Backward Category (ESBC). The court said, "The 2018 Maharashtra State law violates the right to equality. We won't reexamine the 1992 verdict which capped reservation at 50%".⁵⁸

Since the 1992 order, several states have passed laws breaching the 50% ceiling, including Haryana, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh and Maharashtra. Laws made by many as these states have either been stayed or are facing legal challenges. The 10% quota for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) announced by the Centre in 2019 is also effective in the States. But after the Supreme Court order on the Maratha reservation, the total reservation of the state stands at 62% including 10% for EWS.⁵⁵

The Supreme Court's decision to scrap a quota for Maratha has brought under focus similar agitations for reservation by other dominant communities. In Haryana, where a law granting 10% quota for Jats is being held in abeyance.

All India Jat Aarakshan Sangharsh Samiti Chief Yashpal Malik, who was leading the agitation for Jat reservation said, "We will call a meeting of representatives of Jat, Maratha, Patel and other communities whose reservation has been struck down."⁶⁰

⁵⁴ "Ex-DGP, four Dcs among 90 indicted by Jat stir probe, panel," *Hindustan Times*, May 14, 2016 p.5. ⁵⁸
<https://www.indiatoday.in/news-analysis/story/existing-reservation-quota-limit-of-the-indian-states-1799705-2021-05-07>.

⁵⁵ *Ibid*.

He said the governments have fooled people by giving them reservation without following norms. Violence broke out in Haryana on Feb 2016 over demands for a separate Jat quota or including the community in the other backward class category. Later, the state government enacted a law to provide 10% reservation in government jobs and educational institutions to Jats and five other castes. In September 2017, the Punjab and Haryana High Court ordered this law be kept in abeyance till the Haryana Backward Classes Commission, determines extent and quantum of quota in jobs and educational institutions.⁶¹

Jat Reservation agitation in Haryana in February, 2016 was the bloodiest of all the agitations. The agitation resulted in wide spread violence, loss of human lives and properties worth crores of rupees. However the problem remain where it was. There are strong points which are put forward by the groups spearheading the reservation demand and those opposing it. The vested political interests of the parties compel them to commit for reservation as the Jats are a politically strong community. The Jats' power quotient in Haryana cannot be ignored. Jats comprise at least 27% of state's electorate and are considered to be the "King- makers" in the State. Nearly, one-third of the 90 Assembly Constituencies in the state are dominated by Jats. Seven of the ten CMs have been Jat. The Jats' demand may be 'unacceptable' since the Supreme Court on March 17, 2015, has already quashed the UPA govt. decision to provide reservation to Jats under OBC category. However the Jatreservation pot is boiling. The electoral mathematics counts more for the political parties and human lives and peace in society get crucified at the altar of such politics.

⁶⁰ <https://www.hindustantimes.com/cities/chandigarh-news/apex-courts-ruling-brings-jat-quota-demand-under-focus-101620241958.5555.html>.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*