

population percentages. The situation would further aggravate if the Dalith Christians are included in the SC list and the benefits of reservation are extended to them. This would adversely affect the interests of the SC in two ways. The opportunities being limited these have to be shared by the SC of all religion/faith and more significantly in inter-competition the under-privileged Hindu SC would not stand a chance to gain as the benefits would be cornered by the educationally more advanced Christian SC. There is growing tension within the SC that the benefits of reservation are mostly availed by the most advanced among the SC and ST and the benefits, if extended to Dalith Christians would worsen the situation.

The problem of false claims by non-SC/ST for availing the reservation and other benefits on production of fake/false caste certificate is also quite acute. This problem may aggravate in case of SC Christians, as it would not be possible to ascertain their caste prior to their conversion to Christianity since the process is going on since centuries.

The Second Backward Classes (Mandal) Commission recommended that all untouchables converted to any non-Hindu religion shall be considered as backward classes. According to this, the Dalith Christians are to be considered as Socially and Educationally Backward Classes (SEBC) and entitled to benefits granted by the Central Government and State Governments. With the implementation of the Mandal Commission report, the SC converted to Christianity have also been eligible for reservation and other facilities as SEBC (OBC) in the States/UTs in the common lists as OBC.

CONCLUSION

In case the United Front Government is keen to provide benefits for Dalith Christians the most rational way to achieve this without hampering the interests of Hindu SC would be to identify the Dalith Christians and provide reservation for them out of the 27% of reservation provided for OBC as the Christian SC are already included in the common lists as OBC. There is necessity to amend the Constitution also to increase reservation beyond 50% ordered by the Supreme Court of India. Some of the Southern States have passed law extending reservation benefits beyond 50%. On the same analogy Government of India also make law beyond 50% by amending the Constitution, which will enable to increase the percentage now fixed at 2.7%. Reservation for Dalith Christians or Minorities and others as and when promises being made can be accommodated.