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The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi today approved a proposal for setting up of a Commission under article 340 of the Constitution to examine the issue of sub-categorization of the Other Backward Classes (OBCs).

The Commission shall submit its report within 12 weeks from the date of appointment of the Chairperson of the Commission. The Commission shall be known as the Commission to examine the sub-categorization of Other Backward Classes.

The proposed terms of references of the Commission are as follows:

- (i) To examine the extent of inequitable distribution of benefits of reservation among the castes/ communities included in the broad category of OBCs, with reference to the OBCs included in the Central list.
- (ii) To work out the mechanism, criteria, norms and parameters, in a scientific approach, for sub-categorization within such OBCs, and,
- (iii) To take up the exercise of identifying the respective castes/communities/ sub-castes/ synonyms in the Central List of OBCs and classifying them into their respective sub-categories.

The Supreme Court in its order dated 16.11.1992 in WP(C) No. 930/1990 (Indra Sawhney and others vs. Union of India) observed that there is no Constitutional or legal bar to a State categorizing backward classes as backward or more backward and had further observed that if a State chooses to do it (sub-categorization), it is not impermissible in law.

Nine States of the country viz., Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Puducherry, Karnataka, Haryana, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Bihar, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu have already carried out sub-categorization of Other Backward Classes.

AKT/VBA/SH

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