

Today SC Finally Declared 'Cut-off' to be Defined as 'Minimum Eligibility'-
Removed the Central Road Block for Non-Fulfillment of OBC Seats!

United Victory Procession and a Public Meeting with Teachers and Citizens	from Ganga Dhaba, Tonight 18 Aug 9.30 pm
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AISA hails today's historic Supreme Court judgement on the cut-off criterion for OBC reservations. The SC verdict today vindicates the position that AISA had been painstakingly arguing against all opposition and cynicism for the last 3 years.

The **Supreme Court bench** comprising Justices R.V. Raveendran and A.K. Patnaik today **clarified that the relaxation in cut-off for OBC candidates is to be calculated from the minimum eligibility mark, and NOT from the mark obtained by the last selected general category candidate.** In doing so, the SC **dismissed the appeal by the anti-reservation YFE and PV Indiresan** against the Delhi HC verdict of 7 September 2010 and **upheld the 7 Sep 2010 HC Verdict.** Further, the SC has ordered that all central universities which are in the midst of their admission process must make all necessary corrections in their admission criteria, define eligibility marks as cut-off, and fulfill OBC reservations accordingly by 31 August.

The verdict has an all-India implication-it has salvaged the OBC Reservation Act from being scuttled on the ground by deliberate casteist manipulation of "cut-off" norm as we have seen in JNU and DU.

This year, the correct cut-off criteria has been implemented in JNU after a 3-year long struggle with the JNU administration. However, in several universities, including DU, the wrong criteria is being followed. **Today, in DU Law Faculty,** even as the SC judgement was being pronounced, anti-reservation brigade tried to physically stop eligible OBC candidates from taking admission. However, students defending social justice and reservations intervened to ensure that admission process happened according to the HC and SC verdict, As a result almost 300 OBC students, whose admissions were kept hanging all these days, got admission.

The SC verdict today is a vindication of the struggle that was begun by the AISA-led JNUSU three years ago in 2008. Right from the first year of implementation of OBC reservations, AISA and AISA-led JNUSU identified the faulty cut-off criteria as the main stumbling block hindering the fulfillment of OBC reservations. Even other universities like DU and Allahabad University adopted this **clever casteist device** created by JNU, in order to ensure non-fulfilment of OBC quota and diversion of OBC seats.

In 2008, when JNU announced its 2008 OBC admission norm, AISA alerted everyone that this method of fixing 'cut-offs' was flawed and would NEVER allow OBC seats to be filled. AISA waged a **sustained struggle** against this wrong definition of 'cut-off,' using **admission data obtained through RTIs to prove the validity of our argument.** In the three years that followed, AISA launched a sustained campaign and struggle to rectify the distorted implementation of OBC quotas in JNU and elsewhere.

From 2008 till the JNU AC meet in March 2010, all other organizations in JNU ran a vitriolic campaign against AISA on this question, and refused to accept our point about the false definition of cut-off, or participate in a single protest programme or public meeting! Despite this hostility, and these attempts to divert our struggle, AISA never got distracted and conducted a lone battle for correct implementation of OBC quota. Only many JNU teachers saw the correctness of our point, supported the campaign and took bold positions in various forums like the AC or Dean's Committee.

Eventually, in 2010, our stance was vindicated by the Delhi High Court in a landmark verdict. In fact, the SFI was so upset by the Delhi HC's vindication of AISA's position that they could not even welcome the verdict for 48 hours!

YFE however understood the importance of the HC verdict and the verdict's power to stop the YFE's ploy to subvert and deny OBC reservations, and so YFE filed an SLP (special leave petition) challenging the HC verdict in the Supreme Court. **Today's verdict finally vanquished the anti-reservation forces even in the Supreme Court, which firmly upheld that 'cut-off' and 'minimum eligibility' were one and the same thing.**

The episode also exposed the **double standards of the Congress-UPA Central government** on the question of OBC reservations. In the course of the struggle, we repeatedly approached the HRD Ministry and Social Justice Ministry, asking them to step in and settle the matter by clarifying how their own law on OBC reservations was to be interpreted. Not only did the Central Government fail to do so. In fact during the JNU case in the Delhi HC, the Counsel for Central Government actually argued in support of the JNU Administration and YFE advocates, *arguing against* our (correct) interpretation of 'cut-off marks.' It was only after the Delhi HC verdict vindicated AISA's 3-year long struggle that the Central Government changed its posture.

It is indeed a moment of celebration for all those who stand by social justice and the constitutional rights of deprived sections of society to reservations. The whole struggle has exposed how **anti-reservationists occupying high positions inside JNU administration** tried to subvert OBC reservations by hook or by crook – and today, the sustained struggle of the JNU community, including students as well as progressive teachers, against these ploys, has won a huge victory in the shape of the SC verdict.

We appeal to all JNU students and organizations who stand by social justice to join a massive **United Victory Procession from Ganga Dhaba, 9.30 pm tonight (18 August).**