

Summary of Sachar Committee Report

Background

On March 9, 2005 the Prime Minister issued a Notification for the constitution of a High Level Committee to prepare a report on the social, economic and educational status of the Muslim community of India.

The seven-member High Level Committee, chaired by Justice Rajindar Sachar, submitted its final report to the Prime Minister on November 17, 2006. The Government tabled the Justice Rajindar Sachar Committee Report in Parliament on November 30th.

The Sachar Committee has compiled data from a number of sources. The report frames these issues as related to identity, security and equity. Barring some generic observations about the causes for the ‘development deficit’ among Muslims, there is no explicit or detailed discussion of the causes of such conditions.

Main Recommendations

The Committee made a number of recommendations to address the status of the Muslim community in India, including:

- Set up an Equal Opportunity Commission to look into grievances of deprived groups like minorities.
- Create a nomination procedure to increase participation of minorities in public bodies.
- Establish a delimitation procedure that does not reserve constituencies with high minority population for SCs.
- Increase employment share of Muslims, particularly where there is great deal of public dealing. Work out mechanisms to link *madarsas* with higher secondary school board.
- Recognise degrees from *madarsas* for eligibility in defence, civil and banking examinations.

The Committee suggested that policies should “sharply focus on inclusive development and ‘mainstreaming’ of the Community while respecting diversity.” For a more detailed summary of the Committee’s recommendations, see Appendix 1.

Terms of Reference

The Committee’s mandate was to:

(a) Obtain relevant information and conduct a literature survey on the relative social, economic and educational status of Muslims in India at the state, regional and district levels;

(b) determine the level of their socio-economic development;

(c) determine the relative share in public and private sector employment;

(d) determine the proportion of OBCs from Muslim community in the total OBC population in various states,

(e) determine access to education and health services, municipal infrastructure and bank credit provided by Government/ public sector entities.

Key Findings

Population. According to the 2001 Census, India’s Muslim population was about 138 million (about 13.4% of the total population), and by 2006 the Muslim population would be over 150 million. The report states, “In India, populations of all major religions have experienced large growth in the recent past, but the growth among Muslims has been higher than average.” Between 1961 and 2001 the percent of Muslim population increased from 10.7% to 13.4%.

Table 1: Population Composition and Growth Rates (Percentage)

	All	Hindu	Muslim	Christian	Sikh	Buddh	Jain	Other
1961	100	83.4	10.7	2.4	1.8	0.7	0.5	0.4
1971	100	82.7	11.2	2.6	1.9	0.7	0.5	0.4
1981	100	82.3	11.7	2.4	1.9	0.7	0.5	0.4
1991	100	81.5	12.6	2.3	1.9	0.8	0.4	0.4
2001	100	80.5	13.4	2.3	1.9	0.8	0.4	0.7
Increase (1961-2001)	134	126	194	124	145	144	108	286
Annual growth (exponential)	2.13	2.04	2.70	2.02	2.24	2.23	1.84	3.38

Muslims have a higher share in the younger age groups.

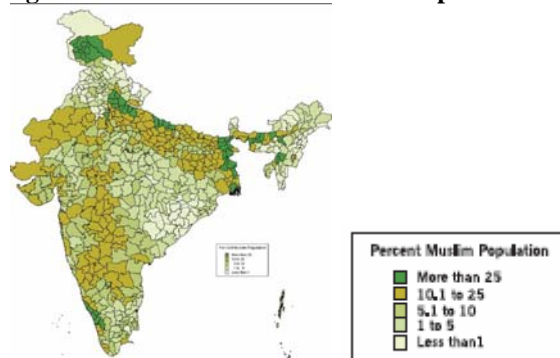
Table 2: Age-Sex Distribution of All Population and Muslim Population, India 2001 (Percentage)

	All religions		Muslims	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
0-9	23.2	23.1	27.1	27.4
10-19	22.4	21.2	24.8	23.8
20-29	16.5	17.2	15.9	16.4
30-39	13.8	14.4	12.4	13.0
40-49	10.3	9.7	8.8	8.3
50+	13.4	14.0	10.7	11.0
Age not stated	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.2

The Committee estimates the proportion of Muslims to rise to 18% to 21% by 2101 under different scenarios. There has been a decline in the growth rate among all groups between 1991 and 2001, including for Muslims

in most states. The states with the highest percentage of Muslims include Jammu & Kashmir (67%), Assam (30.9%), West Bengal (25.2%), and Kerala (24.7%).

Figure 1: Concentration of Muslim Population



Though the sex ratio among Muslims at 936 girls per 1000 boys is only marginally better than the national average of 933, the figure for the 0-6 age group is better at 950 (927 for all religions).

Educational Conditions. The literacy rate among Muslims in 2001 was 59.1%, below the national average (64.8%) with the gap greatest in urban areas. In many states, Muslim literacy levels were higher than those of SCs and STs.

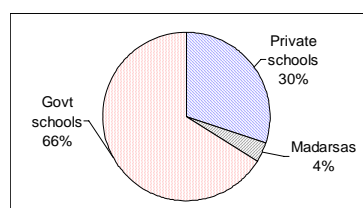
Table 3: Literacy rates (2001)

	All India	Rural			Urban		
		All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female
All	64.8	59	71	46	80	86	73
Hindu	65.1	59	72	46	81	88	74
SC/ST	52.2	49	61	36	68	78	58
Muslim	59.1	53	62	43	70	76	63
Others	70.8	64	77	52	85	90	78

However, the highest increase in school enrolment rates over the past five years have occurred among SCs/STs (with 95% increase) followed by Muslims (65%).

The report also noted that despite a common belief that a large number of Muslim children attend *madarsas* for primary education, only 3% of Muslim children among the school going age go to *madarsas*. Instead, many Muslim children are enrolled in *Maktabas*, which provide supplementary religious education in addition to enrolment in public schools.

Table 4: Distribution of Enrolled Muslim Children Aged 7-16 Years by Type of School



Higher Education. According to the 2001 Census, 7% of the population aged 20 years and above are graduates or hold diplomas, while only 4% among the Muslim population does. The Committee Report notes that the gap between Muslims and other Socio Religious Categories (SRCs) increases as the level of education increases, and that unemployment rates among Muslim graduates is the highest among SRCs both among the poor and the non-poor.

Table 5: Children Currently Studying as a Proportion of Population by Age Groups – 2004-05

Age	Hindus			Muslims	Other Minorities
	Gen	OBC	SCs/STs		
6-13	19.1 (17.3)	36.1 (35.5)	25.7 (27.4)	14.0 (15.1)	5.1 (4.8)
14-15	24.3 (19.1)	36.1 (35.2)	21.4 (25.2)	12.2 (14.5)	6.0 (5.3)
16-17	28.9 (21.1)	33.7 (35.0)	20.2 (24.7)	10.7 (14.0)	6.3 (5.1)
18-22	34.0 (20.8)	30.5 (34.4)	17.7 (25.5)	10.2 (13.9)	7.6 (5.5)
23 & up	35.6 (23.9)	29.2 (35.1)	18.3 (24.1)	7.4 (10.9)	9.5 (5.9)

Note: Figures in parentheses show the proportion of the community in the respective age-group.

Economy and Employment & Government

Employment and Programmes. Worker population ratios for Muslims are significantly lower than for all other SRCs in rural areas, but only marginally lower in urban areas. The lower ratios are mainly due to much lower participation in economic activity by Muslim women.

Table 6: Salaried Workers Employed in Government, Public & Large Private Sectors (2004-05) (%)

	All	
	Govt	Pub/ Pvt
All	34.2	13.1
All Hindus	35.3	13.9
- SC/ST	39.4	9.5
- OBCs	30.4	12.8
- Upper Caste	37.4	17.1
Muslim	23.7	6.5
Others	35.8	12.8

According to the Committee Report, “the most striking feature is the relatively high share of Muslim workers engaged in self-employment activity,” primarily in urban areas and for women workers. Participation of Muslim salaried workers in both the public and private sectors is quite low (as is true for SCs/STs), and the average salary of Muslim workers is lower than others (possibly, as more Muslims are in inferior jobs).

Participation of Muslim workers in the informal sector is much higher than the average population, and the

percentage of Muslim women working within their homes (70%) is much higher than all workers (51%).

Muslims participation rates in traditional manufacturing and trade (especially wearing apparel, auto-repair and electrical machinery) is much higher than for other groups, while their participation in the agricultural section is lower. Also, Muslim participation rates in security related activities, such as the police, was 4% as compared to SCs/STs at 12% and OBCs at 23% each.

Table 7: Percentage Muslims of Total Population engaged in Government-related Employment

Government-related Employment	% Muslim
IAS	3.0
IFS	1.8
IPS/Security Agencies	4.0
Indian Railways	4.5
Education Department (state level)	6.5
Home Department (state level)	7.3
Police constables	6.0
Health Departments	4.5
Transport Department	6.5
Judiciary Employment	7.8

According to the report, the overall participation of Muslims in Central Government departments and agencies is abysmally low at all levels. There is not one state in which the representation of Muslims in the government departments matches their population share.

Table 8: Share of Muslim Employees in Selected State Government Departments

States	Muslim Pop.	Education		Home		Health		Transport	
		HP	LP	HP	LP	HP	LP	HP	LP
Kerala	24.7	13.0	11.7	10.8	10.7	11.2	10.2	9.4	9.2
UP	18.5	-	-	8.1	9.9	4.3	5.6	1.9	4.9
Bihar	16.5	14.8	11.8	5.9	7.1	-	2.6	8.3	10.9
Assam	30.9	-	-	9.3	11.5	8.0	11.1	13.9	11.5
Jharkhand	13.8	-	-	5.7	7.6	6.0	3.2	-	-
Karnataka	12.2	5.0	12.4	3.6	4.2	4.7	5.0	16.8	7.0
Delhi	11.7	5.9	7.2	1.5	2.3	1.0	1.8	1.4	1.1
Maharashtra	10.6	2.9	4.7	4.2	4.2	2.6	3.3	-	-
Gujarat	9.1	1.7	4.5	5.6	5.6	2.2	1.5	9.4	16.3
Tamil Nadu	5.6	5.8	5.3	0.0	2.6	4.6	3.3	1.0	2.6
Sum of states	16.0	5.7	6.2	8.7	5.6	4.4	3.5	1.6	6.9

HP-higher positions; LP-lower positions

Employment of Muslims is also very low in the Universities, Banks, and central PSUs.

Access to Bank Credit. The Committee reports that the access of Muslims to bank credit is low and inadequate. The average size of credit is low compared with other SRCs. The 2001 Census shows that the percentage of households availing banking facilities is much lower in villages with high Muslim populations. Some banks have identified a number of Muslim areas as ‘negative

geographical zones’ where bank credit and other facilities are not easily provided. The average amount lent per account to Muslims is about half that of other Minorities, and one-third of ‘others’.

Table 9: Bank Credit (Amount outstanding) (%)

	Muslims	Other Minorities	Others
Pvt sector banks	6.6	7.9	85.5
PSU banks	4.6	6.3	89.1

The Committee Report states, “The financial exclusion of Muslims has far-reaching implications for their socio-economic and educational upliftment...steps should be introduced to specifically direct credit to Muslims, create awareness of various credit schemes and bring transparency in reporting of information.”

Access to Social and Physical Infrastructure

There is a clear and significant inverse association between the proportion of the Muslim population and the availability of educational infrastructures in small villages. Studies found that, compared to the Muslim majority areas, the areas inhabited by fewer Muslims had better roads, local bus-stops, *pucca* houses, sewage and drainage and water supply facilities.

The Committee highlighted the following points:

- About one third of small villages with high concentration of Muslims do not have any educational institutions.
- About 40% of large villages with a substantial Muslim concentration do not have any medical facilities.

Poverty, Consumption and Standards of Living.

Muslims face fairly high levels of poverty. Their conditions on the whole are only slightly better than those of SCs/STs, though slightly worse in urban areas. According to NSSO data, overall 22.7% of India’s population was poor in 2004-05 (251 million people), with SC/STs together as the worst off (at 35%), followed by Muslims at 31%.

The report shows comparisons between consumption expenditures across SRCs. Relative deprivation of the Muslim community in terms of consumption expenditure is much higher in urban areas than in rural.

Table 10: Mean Per Capita Expenditure by Place of Residence and SRCs, 2004-05 (Rs)

	All	Muslim	Hindu- General	Hindu- OBC	SC/ST
Urban	1105	800	1469	955	793
Rural	579	553	739	567	468
All	712	635	1023	646	520

A substantially larger proportion of the Muslim households in urban areas are in the less than Rs 500 expenditure bracket. Poverty among Muslims has

declined in rural areas by 12%, whereas the economic conditions of Muslims in urban areas have not improved as much as other of other SRCs.

Muslim OBC and Affirmative Action

The report compares the status of Muslims who are not listed as OBCs and thus do not qualify for reservations with Muslim OBCs. At least 82 different social groups among Muslims were declared OBCs by the Mandal Commission. According to the last round of the NSSO survey, 40.7% of Muslims are Muslim OBCs, which is 15.7% of the total OBC population of the country.

According to the report, “the abysmally low representation of Muslim OBCs suggests that the benefits of entitlements meant for the backward classes are yet to reach them.” The conditions of the general Muslim category are lower than the Hindu- OBCs who have the benefit of reservation. However, the conditions of Muslim-OBCs are worse than those of the general Muslim category. The three groups of Muslims in India- *ashrafs*, *ajlafs* and *arzals*, (in order of “caste” hierarchy) require different types of affirmative action.

(Prepared by Priya Parker on December 7, 2006)

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Appendix 1

Main Committee Recommendations

- Set up an Equal Opportunity Commission to look into grievances of deprived groups like minorities.
- Create a 'nomination' procedure to increase participation of minorities in public bodies.
- Provide legal mechanism to address complaints of discrimination against minorities in matters of employment, housing, schooling and obtaining bank loans.
- Establish a delimitation procedure that does not reserve constituencies with high minority population for SCs.
- Initiate and institutionalise a process of evaluating contents of textbooks to purge them of explicit and implicit material that may impart inappropriate social values, especially religious intolerance.
- Create a National Data Bank (NDB) where all relevant data for various socio-religious categories are maintained.
- Set up an autonomous assessment and monitoring authority to evaluate the extent of development benefits.
- Encourage the University Grants Commission to evolve a system where part of allocation to colleges and universities is linked to diversity in student population.
- Facilitate admissions to the most backward amongst all socio-religious categories in regular universities and autonomous colleges and evolving alternate admission criteria
- Provide different types of affirmative action to three main Muslim groups (ashrafs, ajlafs and arzals): Designate Arzals Muslim group as most backward classes as they need multifarious measures, including reservation. Provide Hindu-OBC-type attention to Ajlaf Muslim group.
- Provide financial and other support to initiatives built around occupations where Muslims are concentrated and that have growth potential.
- Increase employment share of Muslims, particularly where there is great deal of public dealing. Working out mechanisms to link *madarsas* with higher secondary school board.
- Recognise degrees from *madarsas* for eligibility in defence, civil and banking examinations.
- Provide hostel facilities at reasonable costs for students from minorities on a priority basis.
- Promote and enhancing access to Muslims in 'Priority Sector Advances'.
- Include in teacher training components that introduce importance of diversity and plurality and sensitising teachers towards needs and aspirations of Muslims and other marginalised communities.
- Open high quality Urdu medium schools wherever they are in demand and ensuring high quality textbooks for students in the Urdu language.
- Draw Muslims on relevant interview panels and boards.
- Improve participation and share of minorities, particularly Muslims, in business of regular commercial banks.
- Set up a national Wakf development corporation with a revolving corpus fund of Rs 500 crore.
- Create new cadre to deal with specific Wakf affairs.