

## NO 100% QUOTA: ON OVERZEALOUS RESERVATION

### Supreme Court Ruling Stresses That Overzealous Reservation Tends To Affect Rights Of Other Communities.

The Supreme Court is right in considering cent per cent reservation as anathema to the constitutional scheme of equality even if it is for the laudable objective of providing representation to historically deprived sections. The verdict quashing the reservation of 100% of all teaching posts in 'Scheduled Areas' of Andhra Pradesh for local Scheduled Tribes is not against affirmative programmes as such, but a caution against implementing them in a manner detrimental to the rest of society. A five-judge Constitution Bench found that earmarking teacher posts in areas notified under the Fifth Schedule of the Constitution adversely affected the interests of other candidates not only from Scheduled Castes and other backward communities but also other ST communities not native to those areas. Of course, what the State government did, in its original orders of 1986, and thereafter, in a subsequent order in 2000, was not without its own rationale. It found that there was chronic absenteeism among teachers who did not belong to those remote areas where the schools were located. However, its solution of drafting only members of the local tribes was not a viable solution. As the Bench noted, it could have come up with other incentives to ensure the attendance of teachers. Another aspect that the court took into account was that Andhra Pradesh has a local area system of recruitment to public services. The President, under Article 371D, has issued orders that a resident of a district/zone cannot apply to another district/zone for appointment. Thus, the 100% quota deprived residents of the Scheduled Areas of any opportunity to apply for teaching posts.

Affirmative action loses its meaning if it does not leave the door slightly ajar for open competition. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar observed during the debate in the Constituent Assembly on the equality clause, that any reservation normally ought to be for a "minority of seats". This is one of the points often urged in favour of the 50% cap imposed by the Court on total reservation, albeit with some allowance for relaxation in special circumstances. It is still a matter of debate whether the ceiling has innate sanctity, but it is clear that wherever it is imperative that the cap be breached, a special case must be made for it. Such a debate should not divert attention from the fact that there is a continuing need for a significant quota for STs, especially those living in areas under the Fifth Schedule special dispensation. In this backdrop, it is somewhat disappointing that courts tend to record *obiter dicta* advocating a revision of the list of SCs and STs. While the power to amend the lists notified by the President is not in dispute, it is somewhat uncharitable to say that the advanced and "affluent" sections within SCs and STs are cornering all benefits and do not permit any trickle-down. Indian society is still some distance from reaching that point.

### Meanings of Difficult Words:

1. **overzealous** (adjective) – too zealous; excessively sincere, feeling, fervent, impassioned, passionate, enthusiastic.
2. **stress** (verb) – emphasize, draw attention to, underscore.
3. **tend to** (verb) – be liable, gravitate, be likely.
4. **cent per cent** (adjective) – one hundred per cent, complete, total.
5. **anathema** (noun) – a curse; bane, abomination/abhorrent.

6. **laudable** (adjective) – commendable, admirable, praiseworthy.
7. **objective** (noun) – aim, intention, purpose.
8. **deprived** (adjective) – disadvantaged, underprivileged, poverty-stricken, impoverished.
9. **quash** (verb) – cancel, reverse, repeal.
10. **affirmative action (programme)** (noun) – it means positive steps taken to increase the representation of (women and minorities) in areas of employment, education, and culture from which they have been historically excluded.
11. **as such** (phrase) – in itself, intrinsically, by itself.
12. **detrimental** (adjective) – inimical, undesirable, unfavourable, unfortunate.
13. **earmark** (verb) – designate, reserve, set aside.
14. **adversely** (adverb) – unfavourably, disadvantageously, badly.
15. **interest** (noun) – benefit, advantage.
16. **subsequent** (adjective) – following, ensuing, successive.
17. **rationale** (noun) – reason, basis, logic, principle.
18. **chronic** (adjective) – constant, continuing; habitual.
19. **absenteeism** (noun) – non-attendance, non-appearance, truancy/absence.
20. **belong to** (phrase) – be in, be part of, have a home.
21. **viable** (adjective) – manageable, feasible, effective.
22. **come up with** (phrasal verb) – produce, put forward, present/submit.
23. **incentive** (noun) – reason, motivation, encouragement; stimulus, impetus, boost.
24. **take into account** (phrase) – consider, note, bear in mind, take account of.
25. **opportunity** (noun) – opening, option, window, chance.
26. **leave the door open** (phrase) – to allow for the possibility of something.
27. **ajar** (adjective) – slightly open.
28. **clause** (noun) – article, point, section (of a treaty/bill); provision, requirement/condition.
29. **ought to** (modal verb) – must, should.
30. **urge** (verb) – advise, recommend, suggest.
31. **cap** (noun) – ceiling, maximum limit, upper limit, highest permissible level.
32. **albeit** (conjunction) – though, even though, however.
33. **innate** (adjective) – natural, intrinsic, inherent; essential/inbuilt.
34. **sanctity** (noun) – ultimate importance, inviolability; righteousness, goodness.
35. **imperative** (adjective) – vitally important, crucial/critical, essential.
36. **breach** (verb) – violate, infringe, break.
37. **dispensation** (noun) – system, arrangement, plan/scheme.
38. **backdrop** (noun) – situation, scenario, context.
39. **obiter dictum** (noun) – Latin phrase meaning “things said by the way”; an incidental (and non-essential) opinion/expression or a remark made by a judge which does not form a necessary part of the court’s decision. (obiter dicta is a plural of it).
40. **advocate** (verb) – support, promote, champion/espouse.
41. **uncharitable** (adjective) – unkind, inconsiderate, thoughtless.
42. **affluent** (adjective) – wealthy, rich, well-to-do, well off.
43. **corner** (verb) – take over, control, capture, dominate.
44. **trickle down** (effect) (noun) – passing on benefits to the people at the bottom of the pyramid (by those at top of the system).

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## JOINING OF GIANTS: ON FACEBOOK-JIO DEAL

### The Coming Together Of Facebook And Jio Is Exciting, But There Is A Risk Of A Monopoly

Facebook's decision to invest ₹43,574 crore for a 9.9% stake in Reliance Industries Ltd.'s Jio Platforms marks a rare coming together of two giants who have a reputation for market domination. The focus of their combined might is the India retail sector, a difficult terrain as large parts of it are still unorganized. But then for the same reason, it holds potential for huge disruption. In recent years, the retail space has been an ongoing battlefield for behemoths such as Amazon and Walmart, themselves globally dominant players. The other interested parties in this are payment services companies such as the Softbank- and Alibaba-backed Paytm, and Google, which runs Google Pay. But the combination of Facebook and Reliance will be difficult to beat — they seem to have both the marketplace and the payment solution sides covered. For Facebook's WhatsApp messaging service, India is the biggest market with over 400 million users. It currently awaits regulatory approval for its payment solutions. Jio is now India's No. 1 telecom brand by user base, less than four years after it launched its service. And then, JioMart is a recently-launched commerce marketplace, which seeks to connect local retailers with consumers. And this is why, "the largest investment for a minority stake by a technology company anywhere in the world" (as a Reliance Industries press release put it to describe the Facebook move) has been notably accompanied by an agreement to "further accelerate" business on the JioMart platform using WhatsApp.

In short, it is a win-win deal for both players. While its social media services and messaging services have been extremely popular in India, Facebook has however struggled to get past regulatory concerns in India over some of its ambitious projects such as its free limited Internet offering Free Basics and digital currency Libra. While it stays blocked in mainland China, Facebook now gets to participate in a stronger way in one of the world's fastest growing markets for e-commerce. Reliance can rely on the popular messaging service to accelerate the building of its marketplace. It has also received handy money to reduce its debt. The deal, coming as it does at a time when the world is fighting the coronavirus pandemic, is a thumbs up to India's potential. It is noteworthy that this is the largest foreign direct investment in the technology sector in India. But will the deal that brings together the world's largest social media company and the group that is a leader in everything from oil to data lead to more consolidation and fewer players, as it happened in the telecom sector? It is a big question mark, and the deal should not be passed without closely scrutinizing this. For, the future of India's Internet economy is at stake.

### Meanings of Difficult Words:

1. **monopoly** (noun) – exclusive/complete control of something by a person/organisation.
2. **stake** (noun) – share; financial involvement, equity.
3. **mark** (verb) – indicate, signify, identify, represent.
4. **reputation** (noun) – status, position, stature.
5. **might** (noun) – strength, force, power.
6. **terrain** (noun) – area, territory, domain.
7. **unorganised** (adjective) – unsystematic, unmethodical.
8. **hold** (verb) – have, carry, possess/own.
9. **potential** (noun) – possibility, potentiality, prospects.

10. **disruption** (noun) – disturbance, interference, interruption.
11. **behemoth** (noun) – a large and powerful organization.
12. **regulatory** (adjective) – organizational, governmental.
13. **seek** (verb) – try, attempt, aim, strive, work towards.
14. **notably** (adverb) – especially, particularly, primarily.
15. **accompany** (verb) – go with, set off, augment, be the perfect addition to.
16. **accelerate** (verb) – increase, rise, advance.
17. **in short** (phrase) – briefly, in a nutshell; in conclusion/summary.
18. **win-win** (adjective) – relating to a situation in which each party will gain something.
19. **get past** (phrasal verb) – clear, pass; get over, surmount, overcome.
20. **ambitious** (adjective) – difficult, exacting, formidable/challenging.
21. **Free Basics (by Facebook)** (noun) – it offers people with access to basic online services without data charges.
22. **block** (verb) – prevent, deter, check, obstruct/restrict.
23. **rely on** (phrasal verb) – depend on; resort to, bank on.
24. **building** (noun) – development, formation, creation, setting up.
25. **handy** (adjective) – useful, helpful; accessible, available.
26. **debt** (noun) – liability, financial obligation, borrowed capital.
27. **coronavirus (CoV)** (noun) – a large family of viruses that cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases. common signs of infection include respiratory symptoms, fever, cough, shortness of breath and breathing difficulties. In more severe cases, infection can cause pneumonia, severe acute respiratory syndrome, kidney failure and even death. (Courtesy: **WHO**)
28. **pandemic** (noun) – the worldwide spread of a new disease; The illness spreads around the world and typically affects a large number of people across a wide area.
29. **thumbs up** (phrase) – approval, encouragement, endorsement.
30. **noteworthy** (adjective) – significant, notable, important.
31. **foreign direct investment (FDI)** (noun) – Investment from one country into another (normally by companies rather than governments) that involves establishing operations or acquiring tangible assets, including stakes in other businesses.
32. **consolidation** (noun) – the process of joining several different things into a single & effective one.
33. **scrutinise** (verb) – examine carefully, inspect; investigate.
34. **at stake** (phrase) – at risk, at issue, in question.