

M Athar Ali Scholar and Teacher

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[Commentary](#)

[IRFAN HABIB](#)

Census are important for the country. However in India caste identity of an individual is important. Class identity is associated with caste. Backwardness in India is four-dimensional: caste, class, status and power. The SCs/STs, the lowest in the caste hierarchy are still the poorest. Caste, wealth, status and learning have been the monopoly of the superior castes. Caste has even travelled beyond the social system to religious communities. Even the converts are known more by their caste than religion. Caste, social and economic inequality are so interwoven in Indian society that the only way to transform it is by recognising it. By ignoring the reality of caste, we will perpetuate it permitting millions of people to live in inhuman conditions. Only when the state is able to identify the socially and educationally backward classes on the basis of caste, such castes can be provided with their legitimate rights. Since the basis of the past oppression has been caste, the basis of liberation too has to be by recognising the root of oppression.

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