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I HAVE CHOSEN BOMBAY AS A PLACE FOR THE COLLEGE FOR THREE REASONS

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar submitted an application to the Government of India for a loan for setting up a college in Bombay. This is the text of the application—Editors

To,

The Hon'ble Sardar Sir Jogendra Singh,
Member-in-Charge of the Department of Education,
Health and Lands, New Delhi.

Sir,

I beg to submit this application to the Government of India for a loan without interest Rs. 6,00,000 (Rupees Six Lakhs) for setting up College in Bombay for the promotion of Education among the Scheduled Castes and pray that it may be favourably considered.

2. The Hartog Committee which was appointed in 1930 to examine the condition of education in India and its spread among the various communities summarized the position regarding the spread of education among the Scheduled Castes which were then called the Depressed Classes in the two following tables which are taken from its Report (page 220):—

TABLE—XCIV

Number of depressed classes (boys and girls) under instruction by stages and by provinces

Province (1)	Primary stage (2)	Middle stage (3)	High stage (4)	Collegiate stage (5)
Madras	224.873 (a)	2,647 (b)	..	47
Bombay	58,651 (a)	730 (c)	..	9
*Bengal	310,398	8,787	5,996	1,670
United Provinces ..	88,383	1,367	42	10
Panjab	14,284	914	110	Nil
Bihar & Orissa ..	24,574	52	7	Nil
Central Provinces ..	33,123	1,022	59	16

(a) Number in primary schools only.
(b) Number in middle and high stages.
(c) Number in primary, middle and high stages of secondary schools.

*In taking these figures for Bengal the Committee drew attention to the fact that they included class not 'depressed'.

TABLE—XCV

Pupils of the depressed classes in institution for girls by stages and provinces

Province	Primary stage	Middle stage	High stage	Collegiate stage
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Madras	7,276	230	14	2
Bombay	5,739 (a)	159 (a)	1 (a)	Nil
*Bengal	28,086	49 (b)	5 (b)	3 (b)
United Provinces ..	2,204	8	1	Nil
Panjab	398	2	Nil	Nil
Bihar & Orissa ..	2,210 (c)	Nil	Nil	Nil
Central Provinces ..	521 (c)	3 (c)	Nil	Nil

(a) Includes aborigines, Hill and Criminal Tribes.

(b) Includes all backward classes.

(c) Number of girls in boy's school and Girl's schools.

3. This is a most deplorable state of affairs. Between 1929 and now some inprovement might have taken place although there is no exact data to measure the progress. But the fact that the Departments in the Government of India have not been able to fill the quota of the $8^1/_2$ p.c. of the vacancies reserved for the Scheduled Castes by the Government of India by its Resolution of 1943 due to insufficiency of qualified candidates is an indication that the condition of education among the Scheduled Castes reproted to be existing in 1929 has not materially altered during the interval.

4. From the point of view of raising the status of the Scheduled Castes and from the point of view of giving them social security from those elements in Indian Society which are hostile to them higher education particularly College education is more important to them than primary education. The welfare of the Scheduled Castes depends entirely upon a sympathetic public

service and that the public service if it is to be sympathetic must be representative of the different element in the national life of the country, and particularly of the Scheduled Castes. Further the representation of the Scheduled Castes in Public Services if it is confined to ministerial post can be of no use to the community in its struggle for uplift no matter how numerous are the posts that are given to them. Primary and Secondary education for a Scheduled Caste student may be good from the standpoint of providing a career for an individual. But it cannot raise the condition of the Scheduled Castes. The status and condition of the Scheduled Castes will be improved only when the representatives of the Scheduled Castes come to occupy executive posts as distinguished from ministerial posts. Executive Posts are strategic posts, posts from which a new direction can be given to the affairs of the State. The attainment of Executive post, it is obvious, requires a high degree of education. Consequently the primary aim in the education of the Scheduled Castes should be to make provision for those students who reach the College stage so that they may be able to complete it and thereby fit themselves for Executive posts.

5. There are a number of reasons why the Scheduled Castes students drop out when they have reached the College statge. The first and foremost reasons is their poverty, second is difficulty in getting admission in a College, third is absence of freeships and fourth is want of hostel accommodation. Some of these difficulties can of course be overcome by financial aid from Government. But there is one difficulty that cannot be solved by financial aid. It relates to admission in Colleges. Admission in Colleges are fixed in number either by University or by Government. Only a certain number of boys can be admitted. This creates a great difficulty in the way of the Scheduled Castes students who wish to pursue College education. This appears to be a general difficulty. But it hits hard the Scheduled Castes students far more than it does students of other Communities. This is due to the fact that College education is in Private hands, and most of the Colleges are run by private bodies which are communal in their organization and in

the matter of their staff. The outlook of the Colleges is on this account largely communal. This communal outlook has its effect on granting admissions. The result is students belonging to special communities or higher communities get preference in the matter of admissions and students belonging to the Scheduled Castes are either refused admissions on the ground that the numbers are full or are considered last when only a few vacancies are left. The situation has been considerably worsened by the influx of population in large towns where most of the Colleges are concertrated. The enormously increased number of students wanting to enter Colleges has made admission a matter of greater difficulty than it was before.

6. Such a situation cannot be allowed to continue. It must be remedied immediately. The only effective remedy seems to be to establish Colleges in Selected Centres which have the education of the Scheduled Castes as its primary aim. The other Communities do not mind this competition for the simple reason that most have got their own Colleges. This is true of other Minority communities such as Sikhs, Muslims, Indian Christians and Anglo-Indians, each of which" maintain under their control various Schools and Colleges in which the education of their communities receives first consideration. But the Untouchables having no such institution at their command suffer most from this competition for admission. 1 propose to make a beginning by starting a College in Bombay which will have such an aim and will endeavour to carry it through. According to my calculations it will require a sum of about Rupees Six Lakhs to set up such a College. In pre-war time it could have been done with a lesser amount. But having regard to the rise in the cost of material I do not think that the College could be stalled on anything less than this amount. As to the rasing of this amount it is impossible to expect the Scheduled Castes who are the poorest community in India to be able to raise this amount. I am therefore obliged to request the Government of India for a loan of the amount without interest to be repaid by suitable instalments. The properties of the proposed College will be mortgaged to Government as a security for the loan.

7. I mention below some important particulars about the proposed College in order to indicate how it will function :—

I. It will be managed by a duly constituted body registeredunder the Charitable Societies Act,

II. It will have two sides Arts and Science.

III. It will be non-Communal in as much as :

(i) It will be open to students of all Castes and creeds, only it will pay special regard to the educational interests of the Scheduled Castes students.

(ii) The teaching staff will be mixed staff. There will be no bar on the ground of race, religion or community.

(iii) Subject to the Regulations of the Universities in India it will be open to Scheduled Castes students of all Provinces without any kind of discrimination.

8. I have chosen Bombay as a place for the College for three reasons. Firstly, I propose to take upon myself the duties of the Manager of the College and also take part in teaching as soon as I am free from the responsibilities of my present office. In the initial stage I feel I must take these responsibilities on my own shoulders. This I can do better if the College is located in Bombay. Secondly, there is an acute need for more Colleges to provide College Education to the enormous number of students who have now congragated in Bombay and who cannot find admission in any of the existing Colleges. According to press reports applications for opening ten new Colleges are pending before the Senate of the University of Bombay which shows how vast in the number of students in want of admission. With the prospect of drawing a large number of these into the College I feel confident that the College will pave its way and there is every chance of the College showing profit. Thirdly, having been a professor of Economics in the Sydenham College of Commerce, Bombay, Principal of the Government Law College, Bombay, a Member of the Senate and Syndicate of the Bombay University I feel that 1 can get recognition for the proposed College more readily from the Bombay University than from a University outside that Province.

9. I have selected a site for the College with an approximate area of six acres. It belongs to the Bombay Municipality. It is the only site left in Bombay which can be regarded as suitable for a College. If I lose the site I shall have to abandon my project which will be a great valamity. I can proceed with the negotiations only on the assurance that I can raise funds which is I have said I can do only by way of loan from the Government of India. I do not proposed to draw the amount of loan immediately. It will remain with the Government of India. It will be drawn as and when need to draw arises.

10. As I am anxious to secure the site I shall be grateful if my application is granted without delay.

1st February 1945,
22, Prithviraj Road,
New Delhi.

I remain,
Yours faithfully,
(Sd.) B. R. Ambedkar.

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