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Jat quota protests

Why in news?

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The Jat quota agitation, which had been limited to Haryana so far is being extended to Delhi.

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Who are Jats?

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- Jats originally belonged to farming communities and now mostly live in Haryana, Punjab, Delhi, Rajasthan and UP making upto 82.5 million in population.

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- In Haryana, Jats are a politically influential community and constitute nearly 29% of the population.

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What are their demands?

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- Jats, Jat Sikhs, Rors, Tyagis and Bishnois, **are seeking reservation under the OBC category.**

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- They had been promised that the Economically Backward Category (EBC) quota will be increased from 10% to 20% by the state government.

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- In addition to this they were also promised the annual income ceiling from Rs 2.5 lakh to Rs 6 lakh to accommodate more people under the category.

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What happened last year?

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- Jat quota agitation that started Feb 2016, turned violent resulting in deaths of 10 people and dozens, including security personnel, injured.
- The Army was called in to eight districts and over 5,000 security personnel have been deployed in affected districts.

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Timeline of Events:

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- March 2008: All India Jat Mahasabha raises demand for quota at a convention in Jind.
- September 2010: All India Jat Arakshan Sangharsh Samiti(AIJASS), led by Hawa Singh Sangwan, blocks rain traffic in Hisar's Mayyar village. A youth dies during this protest.
- March 2011: AIJASS resumes agitation at Mayyar village, blocks railway tracks.
- December 2012: Haryana government gives special backward status to Jats with 10% quota to five castes.
- **March 2014: UPA government grants OBC status to Jats.**
- March 17, 2015: Supreme Court sets aside the notification that granted OBC status to Jats.
- March 26, 2015: Narendra Modi meets representatives of Khap Panchayats and Jat leaders, supports quota demand.
- February 2016: AIJASS resumes agitation for inclusion of Jats as OBC.

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What are the other reasons behind current protests?

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- The demonstrators want to express solidarity with Jats in Haryana, who have been protesting for one week.
- They will stop with a copy of our memorandum being handed over to the SDM for consideration.
- The Jat community has been demanding immediate implementation of promises made to them by the Chief Minister after the agitations last year.
- They are also demanding that all cases registered against protesters from the community during last year's agitation in Haryana be taken back.
- Additionally a compensation for families of those who lost their lives in the agitation last year, as well as government jobs for at least one member of such families are also demanded.

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Source: The Hindu

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