

Karnataka State Implementation of the SCs & STs (Prevention of Atrocities) Act 1989

CMs and Political Parties Report Card (2015)

Every government does the ritualistic garlanding of Ambedkar's statue on 14 April every year, while ignoring the plight of the SCs and STs. Under the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Rules 16(2), the State level vigilance and monitoring committee (SVMC) meeting is mandatory in the months of January and July each year. It has met only once in 2013 against the mandatory two meetings and has not met subsequently. The present government has issued the notification constituting the SVMC under Rule 16(1) on 19 July 2013 and met on 7 November 2013.

Given that the rules were notified on 31 March 1995 and that SVMC meetings were conducted only on 11 March 2000, 12 December 2006, 27 September 2010 and 7 November 2013, the score card of the state stands at a dismal 4 meetings conducted out of the mandatory 41. Therefore, in fulfilling its constitutional mandate towards the SCs and STs under the Act the state scores 4 on 41—just 9.76%, a dismal 'F'. It must also be noted that none of the meetings were held in January or July as mandated by the law.

The score cards of the chief ministers and their parties are given below:

SVMC meetings conducted: A report card								
Sl No	Term		Chief Minister	Party	Meetings		% compliance	Grade
	From	To			Mandatory	Held		
1	11-12-94	31-05-96	H D Devagowda	Janata Dal	3	0	0%	F
2	31-05-96	07-10-99	J H Patel	Janata Dal	7	0	0%	F
3	11-10-99	28-05-04	SM Krishna	Congress	9	1	11%	F
4	28-05-04	28-01-06	Dharam Singh	Congress	4	0	0%	F
5	03-02-06	08-10-07	H D Kumaraswamy	Janata Dal (S)	3	1	33%	C
6	09-10-07	11-11-07	President's rule	-	NA			-
7	12-11-07	19-11-07	B S Yeddyurappa	BJP	NA			-
8	20-11-07	27-05-08	President's rule		1		0%	F
9	30-05-08	31-07-11	B S Yeddyurappa	BJP	7	1	14%	F
10	03-08-11	11-07-12	D V Sadananda Gowda	BJP	2	0	0%	F
11	12-07-12	12-05-13	Jagadish Shettar	BJP	1	0	0%	F
12	13-05-13	In office	Siddaramaiah	Congress	4	1	25%	F
Total					41	4	9.76%	F
Source: Government of Karnataka, from information got under RTI								

The present chief minister began well by conducting a mandatory meeting soon after assuming office, but subsequently has not conducted any. H D Kumaraswamy is the only CM with a respectable score having conducted one of the three mandatory meetings, earning him a 'C' grade. B S Yeddyurappa conducted one of seven. All other CMs fail miserably—most having not conducted a single meeting. S M Krishna, in whose term the Kambalapalli massacre took place conducted just one of the mandatory nine meetings he was supposed to. The rate of SVMC meetings is eerily close to the dismal conviction rate. The record under president's rule follows the same pattern.

The record when compared party-wise is not much better, though all parties profess social justice. Only Janata Dal (Secular) has any respectable score, though only just.

SVMC meetings conducted					
Sl	Party	Mandatory	Actual	%	Grade
1	Congress	18	2	11%	F
2	Bharatiya Janata Party	10	1	10%	F
3	Janata Dal (S)	3	1	33%	C
4	Janata Dal	10	0	0%	F
Total		41	4		

The Committee Monitoring and Strengthening Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in Karnataka (CMASK) strongly recommends that the Chief Minister should ensure that the SVMC meetings are convened and conducted on time (January and July each year).