

SC Rejects Review Plea on Loss of SC Status After Religious Conversion

Supreme Court dismissed a review petition challenging its verdict that Scheduled Caste status is lost upon converting to religions other than Hinduism, Sikhism, or Buddhism.

Judicial re-affirmation that converting to religions outside Hinduism, Sikhism, or Buddhism forfeits Scheduled Caste constitutional protection and reservation benefits.

KEY EXAM POINTS

- The **Supreme Court** dismissed a review petition challenging its judgment dated **March 24, 2026** on Scheduled Caste status.
- The apex court held that a person from a Scheduled Caste community converting to religions other than **Hinduism, Sikhism, or Buddhism** loses **SC status**.
- The bench rejected the application seeking an **oral hearing** for the **review petition**.
- The court stated there was **no error apparent** on the record in its original judgement.
- The ruling upholds constitutional limits on **SC reservation** benefits based on religious affiliation.

STATICS & SYLLABUS FOCUS

Article 341 of the Constitution empowers the **President** to specify the castes, races, or tribes to be deemed as Scheduled Castes.

The **Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950** originally restricted SC status strictly to individuals practicing Hinduism.

In **1956**, the Scheduled Castes Order was amended to include followers of **Sikhism** within the SC category.

In **1990**, a constitutional amendment extended Scheduled Caste benefits to individuals practicing **Buddhism**.

Under **Article 341(2)**, **Parliament** alone possesses the authority to include or exclude any caste from the SC list by law.

The Union Government constituted the **Justice K.G. Balakrishnan Commission** in **October 2022** to examine SC status for converts to Islam and Christianity.

REVISION FLASHCARD

Article 341 regulates SC status; restricted by 1950 Order (amended 1956, 1990) to Hindu, Sikh, and Buddhist followers.

Syllabus Relevance: High relevance for TNPSC Group 1 & Group 2 under Unit 5 (Indian Polity - Constitutional Articles and SC Judgements).

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