

‘Reservation’ in the COVID-19 vaccine process?

Chhattisgarh’s Congress CM writes to PM Modi, suggests ‘socially weaker’ be given priority

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- The Indian government has opened the vaccination process for those between the ages of 18 and 45. The state government and private hospitals are now beginning the process of vaccinating those between the ages of 18 and 45, while the central government is moving ahead with its planned vaccination process, focussing on those above the age of 45. In the process, Chhattisgarh CM Bhupesh Baghel has now demanded a form of 'reservation' for the socially weaker sections in the COVID-19 vaccine process.



- Reservation is a system of affirmative action in India that provides historically disadvantaged groups representation in education, employment and politics. Based on provisions in the Indian Constitution, it allows the Indian government to set reserved quotas or seats, which lower the qualifications needed in exams, job openings etc. for "socially and economically backward citizens.



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- With India ready to roll out the third phase of the countrywide vaccination drive, Chhattisgarh has said that the state will first start inoculating the poorest people who have Antyodaya or BPL cards in the 18-44 age group.

- According to state health minister TS Singh Deo, the decision was taken due to a shortage of vaccines.



- Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, has suggested that the government implement a form of reservation in the vaccine process. Writing a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, he has written that an order of priority for vaccination should be fixed in the age category of 18-44 years, and priority should be given to the socially and economically weaker sections, in the light of the shortage of vaccine



Chhattisgarh CM Bhupesh Baghel writes to PM Narendra Modi suggesting to him that an order of priority for vaccination be fixed in the age category of 18-44 years, and priority be given to the socially and economically weaker sections, in the light of shortage of vaccine.

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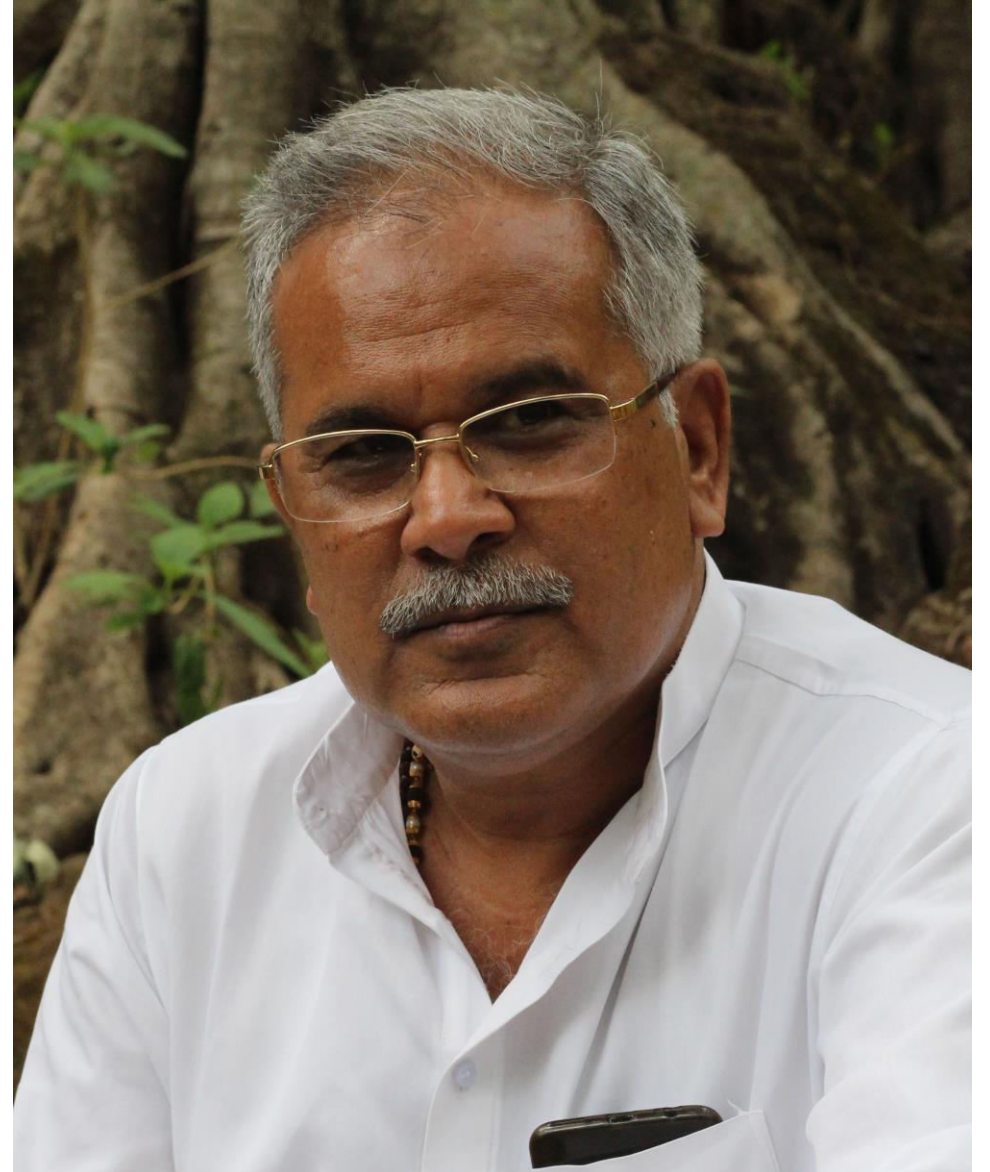
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उपस्थित प्रधानमंत्री

भारत सरकार के दिशा निर्देशानुसार दिनांक 28.04.21 से कोविन पोर्टल पर कोविड के विरुद्ध वैक्सिनेशन हेतु इच्छुक 18 से 44 वर्ष के आयु वर्ग के हितग्राहियों का रजिस्ट्रेशन प्रारम्भ हो चुका है। हालांकि यह जानकारी पोर्टल पर राज्यवार उपलब्ध नहीं है पर प्राप्त जानकारी अनुसार अब तक देश भर में इस आयु वर्ग के लगभग 1.7 करोड़

- Baghel has also suggested that on-sight registration be offered for the preferred lot so that nobody is deprived of the vaccination since right now, the registration is only online.

- Baghel claims that there is a shortage of vaccine and due to that, it is imperative that “socially weaker” and “economically weaker” sections are given the vaccine first.



While phased vaccinations are the norm worldover, demanding that “socially weaker” sections be given priority makes no scientific sense. Government grant prioritisation to those who at a higher risk and offer vaccine for free for those who are economically weaker. The only sense that demanding prioritisation of ‘socially weaker’ sections makes is political and certainly not scientific.

BUT ?

Is it ?

- Is providing Vaccination first to BPL and Antyodaya “reservation”?

- A resounding No!

- Its Humanitarian.

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