

## Teacher and Quotas:

Bill on reservation in central academic cadre provides relief to disadvantaged sections

Legislation to overcome the effects of court verdicts is not always a good idea. However, sometimes an exception ought to be made in the larger public interest. One such law is the Centre's Bill to ensure that reservation for scheduled castes, tribes and other backward classes in appointments to central educational institutions is preserved. The Central Educational Institutions (Reservation in Teachers' Cadre) Bill, 2019, passed by the Lok Sabha, replaces an ordinance promulgated in March. Its main object is to restore the system of treating an institution or a university as a single unit to apply the reservation roster, and thus help fill 7,000 teaching vacancies. It seeks to get around a 2017 judgment of the Allahabad High Court striking down University Grants Commission regulations that treated the institution as the unit for determining the roster, and directing that each department be the relevant unit. In short, reservation should be department-wise, and not institution-wise, the court ruled. The Supreme Court rejected the Centre's appeal against the order. But the narrower basis for applying quotas would mean fewer aspirants from OBC and SC/ST sections would be recruited as assistant professors. In the interest of social justice, it had to restore the system of having a wider pool of posts in which the quotas of 27% for OBC, 15% for SC and 7.5% ST could be effectively applied. From this perspective, the Bill provides welcome relief for aspirants from the disadvantaged sections of society.

### ALSO READ

Students and teachers protesting against government's reservation policies in New Delhi in January 2019.

The Hindu explains: The Central Educational Institutions (Reservation in Teachers' Cadre) Bill

It is not that the court was manifestly wrong in applying the roster based on a smaller unit, that is, a department in a university or institution. The High Court noted that having the whole institution as a unit would result in some departments having only reservation beneficiaries and others only those from the open category. But the counterpoint is equally valid. Having the department as the unit would mean smaller faculties would not have any reservation. In the roster system, it needs 14 posts to accommodate SC and ST candidates, as their turn would come only at the seventh and 14th vacancy. There may be no vacancies in many departments for many years, with none from the reserved categories for decades. On the other hand, taking the institution as the unit would give more opportunities for these sections. According to the UGC's annual report for 2017-18, nearly two-thirds of assistant professors in Central universities are from the general category. Their representation would go up further, as the present Bill also applies the 10% quota for the

economically weak among those outside the reservation loop. Applying the court's department-wise roster norm would have deepened the sense of deprivation of the backward classes and SC/ST communities. To that extent, the new enactment will serve a vital social purpose.

| <b><u>Words</u></b> | <b><u>Kind</u></b> | <b><u>Meaning</u></b>                              |
|---------------------|--------------------|--|
| Verdict             |                    | abjudication, decision, resolution, pronouncement  |
| Disadvantaged       |                    | Poor, deprived, under privileged, needy            |
| Ordinance           |                    | order, edict, decree, injunction, dictum           |
| Promulgate          |                    | make known, make public, publicize, propagate      |
| Determine           |                    | control, decide, regulate, direct                  |
| Roster              |                    | schedule, list, register, agenda                   |
| Relevant            |                    | pertinent, applicable, opposite, suitable, apropos |
| Reject              |                    | repudiate, jettison, rebuff, turn down             |
| Pool                |                    | combine, amalgamate, unite, conglomerate           |
| Manifest            |                    | show, display, exhibit, array                      |
| Beneficiaries       |                    | heir, heiress, inheritor, legatee, recipient       |
| Counterpoint        |                    | compresate for                                     |
| Decades             |                    | a period of ten years.                             |
| Loop                |                    | join, connect, fasten                              |
| Deprivation         |                    | poverty, privation, impoverishment, penury         |
| Enactment           |                    | passing, ratification, sanction, approval          |
| Vital               |                    | essential, crucial, indispensable, imperative,     |
| Preserve            |                    | conserve, protect, maintain, care for              |

## **Power play:**

BJP senses an opportunity to return to power in Karnataka through a series of defections

With two MLAs of the Congress resigning from the Karnataka Assembly, it is clear that horse-trading to pull down the State government is under way. The BJP is not just waiting in the wings; it is actively trying to reenact a script it has perfected over a decade and more. The resignations of Vijayanagar MLA Anand Singh and Gokak MLA Ramesh Jarkiholi can only be seen as a replay of a strategy the BJP used earlier, luring Opposition MLAs to resign from the Assembly, thereby forcing by-elections. The BJP's confidence in winning the by-polls stems from its spectacular showing in the Lok Sabha election. The party is yet to reconcile itself to the role of the Opposition after having emerged as the single largest party in the May 2018 Assembly election. At 105 seats in the 224-strong House, it was eight short of a simple majority and began plans to manoeuvre its way to power. The BJP appears to be convinced that the time is ripe for a strike, both because of its success in the parliamentary

election and the disenchantment in the Congress over the alliance with the JD(S). If enough number of coalition MLAs resign, the BJP could claim a majority with its present strength in an Assembly of reduced strength, and by-polls could follow. The Congress-JD(S) coalition could be facing a stormy Assembly session, scheduled to begin on July 12.

A Karnataka model had come to inspire non-BJP parties nationally after the formation of the coalition government. The Congress decision to concede the Chief Minister's position to junior partner JD(S) in order to prevent it from joining hands with the BJP was remarkable. But it was also remarkable for its opportunism. Instability is inherent in coalitions led by smaller partners, but the present contradictions in the Congress in Karnataka, the only southern State where the party is face-to-face with the BJP, have another dimension. Legislators yearning for positions of power is nothing unusual, but they usually think twice before crossing over to a different party. The skills of leaders and claims of a larger purpose, howsoever meagre those may be, are factors that hold together vastly divergent ambitions within a political party. The Congress is lacking in these aspects and is paying a heavy price. If power is the only glue, it is natural that legislators who are denied ministerial berths would rebel. The party still enjoys significant public support in Karnataka, as was demonstrated in the local body elections weeks after its rout in the Lok Sabha election. The Congress cannot lend itself to brazen business and rent-seeking rivalries that overshadow politics in Karnataka. If the party and its coalition survive the current turmoil it will still be only a hiatus. Their long-term survival will be even more challenging, requiring an ideological reorientation and commitment to addressing the people's larger livelihood concerns.

| <u>Words</u> | <u>Kind</u> | <u>Meaning</u>                                  |
|--------------|-------------|---|
| Defection    |             | desertion, absconding, decamping, apostasy      |
| Pulldown     |             | destroy, wipe out, ravage, lay waste            |
| In the wings |             | ready to do something at the appropriate time   |
| Re-enact     |             | re-approve, sanction again, authorise again.    |
| Decade       |             | period of ten years                             |
| Lure         |             | attract, woo, court, lucrato                    |
| Stem (v)     |             | staunch, stop, halt, check, restrict, control   |
| Confidence   |             | morale, trust, belief, faith, credence          |
| Reconcile    |             | unite, bring together, placate, mollify         |
| Emerge       |             | come out, appear, become visible                |
| Manoeuvre    |             | tricks, artifice, ruses, ploys                  |
| Ripe         |             | opportune, advantageous, favourable, propitious |
| Enchantment  |             | allure, charm, beauty, attractiveness           |
| Coalition    |             | alliance, union, partnership, bloc              |
| Concede      |             | admit, acknowledge, accept, allow               |
| Inherent     |             | intrinsic, innate, connate, immanent            |
| Yearn for    |             | long for, want desperately                      |

|             |   |
|-------------|---|
| Skill       | expertise, ski/ness adeptness, adroitness |
| Meagre      | scarcity, dearth, lacuna                  |
| Divergent   | differing, varying, different expectation |
| Glue        | adhesive, fixative, gum, paste            |
| Rebel       | revolt, mutiny, riot, rise up             |
| Brazen      | shameless, unashamed, unabashed, defiant  |
| Turmoil     | confusion, upheaval, turbulence, tumult   |
| Hiatus      | gap, pause, lacuna, interval              |
| Survive     | sustain, come through, eke out            |
| Concerns(A) | worries, apprehensions, woes, agony       |
| Stormy      | angry, heated, fiery, fierce, furious     |
| Dimension   | size, measurement, proportions, extent    |