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Panchamasali quota: Yatnal threatens dharna

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Ruling BJP's senior member Basanagouda Patil Yatnal has threatened to launch an indefinite agitation from Monday, if the government fails to set a deadline to grant reservation for the Panchamasali community under 2A category of OBC reservation in the State.

Currently, the community is included in 3B category. The Panchamasali leaders have been demanding inclusion of the community in 2A category for availing benefits out of a total of 15% quota in jobs and education.

Speaking at the Legislative Assembly on Wednesday, Mr. Yatnal, a constant critic of Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa, said the go-



Basanagouda Patil Yatnal in the Assembly on Wednesday.

vernment seemed to be not serious on providing reservation to the Panchamasali community, though their demand was more than two decades old. He criticised the "delay tactics" adopted by forming a high-level committee and urged the government to set the dea-

line of three to six months or one year to provide reservation to the community.

In his reply, Home and Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Basavaraj Bommai said 4% reservation was given under category 1 to 391 castes/sub-castes; 15% under 2A for 393 castes/sub-castes; 4% under 2B for minorities; 4% under 3A for 50 castes/sub-castes; and 5% quota under 3B for 48 castes. The Backward Class Commission headed by former chairman H. Kantharaj had recommended that Panchamasali should remain in the category of 3B and opposed its inclusion in 2A.

He said the government was committed to ensure justice to the Panchamasali

community but change in the quota matrix should stand before legal scrutiny.

Mr. Bommai said a decision was taken to constitute a high-level committee headed by a retired High Court judge to study demands made by communities/castes seeking changes in the existing reservation matrix. The three-member committee will have the retired High Court judge, a retired administrator and a social scientist.

Speaking to reporters after the Assembly was adjourned, Mr. Yatnal said the Chief Minister was "missing" and there was no assurance from the government on reservation.

However, jumping to his defence, M.P. Renukacharya, CM's political secre-

tary, said: "The Chief Minister is not missing. He is working for the welfare of all communities, including Panchamasalis."

'Creamy layer is key'

Urging the State government to provide reservation to all communities that are seeking reservation or change in the status, former Minister and BJP member A.H. Vishwanath said the government should impose creamy layer condition for all. Speaking in the Council, Mr. Vishwanath said reservation facilities should reach the last man in the community. "It is not right to seek reservation for both me and my son or senior Congress leader Mallikarjuna Kharge and his son," he said.