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ಭಾಗ / ವಿಷಯ: DEPARTMENT/SUBJECT: Other State matter

ಪತ್ರಿಕಾ ಹೆಸರು : NAME OF THE NEWS PAPER: Deccan Herald ಛಾಪಿನ ದಿನಾಂಕ : DATE: 17/11/17

27% quota for OBCs gets MP House nod

Rakesh Dixit ^{DH 24/11/17}

The Madhya Pradesh Assembly on Tuesday unanimously passed the bill providing 27% reservation to Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in education and state government jobs.

Hitherto, the quota for the OBCs is 14%, for SCs 20% and the STs 16%, making it up to 50% which is the maximum reservation allowed by the Supreme Court.

If the bill becomes a law, quota will go up to 63% in the state. If the Modi government's 10% quota for EBCs

also gets the state government's nod, the total reservation will rise to 73%.

The Union Cabinet had issued an ordinance in March this year, raising the quota limit to 27% but the Madhya Pradesh High Court stayed the ordinance on the ground that it violated the Supreme Court cap on reservation.

In June, the state Cabinet chaired by Chief Minister Kamal Nath cleared the bill for raising the reservation limit for OBCs in jobs and educational facilities. Just ahead of the 2003 Assembly polls, the then Digvijaya Singh-led Congress government had also made

a similar announcement regarding quota to OBCs, but the party lost the polls and the ordinance could not be implemented. In 1992, a nine-judge Supreme Court bench had ordered in the Indra Sawhney case that caste-based reservations cannot go beyond the 50% limit.

However, Kamal Nath says that the apex court's ruling will pose no hurdle in implementation of the 27% quota for OBCs. "There are many states where caste-based reservations are higher than 50% and we see no problem in the implementation of OBC quota in MP," he said.