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ಪತ್ರಿಕೆಯ ಹೆಸರು: NAME OF THE NEWS PAPER: Indian Express ದಿನಾರಕ: DATE 28 Show

Suggestions sought for more stringent **Anti-Defection Law**

FOR those complaining about erosion of values in politics, especially due to party-hopping by elected representatives, here is an opportunity to give their suggestions to strengthen the Anti-Defection Law.

State Assembly Speaker Vishweshwar Hegde Kageri has sought suggestions from political leaders, experts and the general public on the matter. Suggestions can be sent to the assembly secretary's office before June 10.

Kageri, who is part of a three-member committée constituted by Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla to suggest measures to strengthen the law will hold a meeting with elected representatives in Karnataka on Thursday

"The process has been delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the report will be submitted to the Lok Sabha

speaker soon," Kageri said here on Wednesday. The report will be placed before the Lok Sabha. Kageri said suggestions will be discussed with other members of the committee and taken into consideration when it prepares the report.

Party-hopping has been a big menace since the 1960s and several steps have been taken to deal with it. This is an effort to further strengthen the Anti-Defection Law under the Schedule 10 of the Constitution, he said.

The Anti-Defection Law and its efficacy was debated extensively last year when rebel Congress and JDS legislators resigned from their parties and assembly member-ship to support the formation of the BJP government in Karnataka. They had challenged the then Speaker's decision of disqualifying them in the apex court. The Speaker's order was upheld, but they were allowed to contest the subsequent bypolls.