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Cabinet

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Triple talaq Bill to be sent to Parliament again

Cabinet approves Bill to replace ordinance; it will be introduced in the upcoming session of the new Lok Sabha

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Bill, 2019, paving the way for the legislation to be introduced in the upcoming session of Parliament.

The Bill, which would replace an ordinance, would, once approved, put a curb on the practice of talaq-e-biddat, or instant triple talaq.

"SabkaSaath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas' has been the pivot of NDA government lead by Prime Minister Narendra Modi," the Centre said in a statement, adding the government had fulfilled one of its promises.

"The Bill would ensure gender equality and gender justice to Muslim women. The Bill would also help in protecting the rights of married Muslim women and prevent divorce by practice of 'talaq-e-biddat' by their husbands.

The Bill had been introduced in Parliament in 2018 but had lapsed with the dissolution of the 16th Lok Sabha. The Bill declares the practice of triple talaq void and illegal, making it punishable by three years in jail and a fine.

Faculty reservations
Taking forward decisions made in the last months of the previous NDA government, the Centre has decid-



Women celebrating the passing of the Triple Talaq Bill by the Lok Sabha on December 28, 2018.

ed to introduce a Bill on faculty recruitment in central educational institutions in the coming session of Parliament.

The legislation would provide for 10% reservation for economically weaker sec-

tions (EWS) and restore an older system of reservation which would allow full representation of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes.

The Central Educational Institutions (Reservation in Teachers' Cadre) Bill, 2019, was approved by the Cabinet on Wednesday, and will allow filling up of more than 7,000 existing vacancies by direct recruitment, according to an official statement.

The Bill will replace an ordinance approved by Cabinet in March, just before the Lok Sabha elections, which restored the earlier "200-point roster system" considering the university or college as a single unit for the purpose of faculty reserva-

tions. This had been a longstanding demand of Dalit and Adivasi activists and political parties, with a threat of electoral consequences if denied.

They had complained that the "13-point roster system" considering each department as a separate unit, which was mandated by a controversial Allahabad High Court judgement in April 2018 and upheld by the Supreme Court in January 2019, effectively made reservations negligible.

The new Bill will also pave the way for implementation of the 103rd Constitutional Amendment passed by Parliament in January, mandating a 10% quota in jobs and educational institutions to

economically backward sections in the general category.

The new Bill is "expected to improve the teaching standards in the higher educational institutions by attracting all eligible talented candidates belonging to SCs/STs/SEBCs/EWS" categories, the Centre said.

OBC categorisation
Cabinet also approved a two-month extension to the commission for examining sub-categorisation of Other Backward Classes (OBCs) so that it could consult States and Union Territories on the issue.

The tenure of the commission, headed by retired Delhi High Court Chief Justice G. Rohini, has been extended till July 31.