

Raja meets Manmohan on OBC reservation

K.V. Prasad – The Hindu Wednesday, Jun 28, 2006

Seeks enabling law for quota policy in monsoon session of Parliament

? Says recognition to educational institutions should be subject to adherence to reservation policy

? Claims that NLC, NALCO divestment will weaken the units

NEW DELHI: The Communist Party of India on Tuesday urged the Centre to introduce legislation in the monsoon session of Parliament to implement the policy of providing reservation for other backward classes in higher education.

Expedite law

CPI national secretary D. Raja, who met Prime Minister Manmohan Singh here, said that since the issue of providing 27 per cent reservation was decided at a meeting of the United Progressive Alliance and the Left parties, the Government should bring in an enabling law without delay.

Mr. Raja handed over a letter to the Prime Minister in this regard and said the law should ensure that recognition to educational institutions by Central agencies such as the Central Board of Secondary Education and the All-India Council for Technical Education was subject to adherence to the reservation policy.

Drawing the attention of the Prime Minister to reports suggesting that the enabling law would have to await the report of the oversight committee, Mr. Raja said: "Certain groups were trying to confuse that the draft bill can be placed before Parliament only after report of the oversight committee." The report had no relation to the enabling law since its recommendations would come into play only after the law was in place. "The oversight committee report is to facilitate implementation of the policy," Mr. Raja emphasised.

Draft bill

Referring to the draft bill, Mr. Raja said it was understood that it took care of only higher education for the disadvantaged sections, and not primary and secondary education. He suggested that the Government bring forward a model law and circulate it to States taking this aspect into consideration.

The Prime Minister told Mr. Raja that the Government stood committed to bringing forward the enabling law in the monsoon session to implement the reservation policy. During his meeting, the CPI leader conveyed the party's opposition to the decision to disinvest in the National Aluminium Company Limited and the Neyveli Lignite Corporation. Dr. Singh said disinvestment would not change the character of the public sector undertakings. Mr. Raja said the move would weaken the units.

In a separate statement, the CPI warned that the "reckless" move resulted in discontent and anger. Besides the Left parties and trade unions, the Orissa and Tamil Nadu Governments and political parties in the UPA were opposed to it.

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