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Supreme Court refers Gujarat govt's EWS quota plea to larger bench

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Friday referred the issue of allowing 10% reservation for economically weaker sections (EWS) in government jobs and colleges in Gujarat to a larger bench.

A bench led by chief justice T.S. Thakur said that the issue needs to be examined by a larger bench. However, the court did not specify the strength of the larger bench.

The Gujarat government asked for the case be heard by a Constitution bench as it concerns the issue of reservation.

A Constitution bench comprises five or more judges and looks into cases that have constitutional aspects.

Last month, the state moved the apex court challenging a Gujarat high court decision to strike down an ordinance allowing 10% reservation for the EWS category in government jobs and college admissions.

On 4 August, the Gujarat high court called the 10% reservation for the EWS unconstitutional and illegal.

The Gujarat government had on 1 May promulgated an ordinance providing for a 10% quota in government jobs and colleges for EWS—people in the general category with an annual family income of less than Rs.6 lakh.

The Gujarat government's 10% reservation for the EWS was in addition to the 49.5% set aside for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes.